

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT [E.I.A.]

The concept of impact assessment in the equality field is relatively new and the Trust understands that this may cause some additional work for departments. Undertaking equality assessments is mandatory and the Trust will provide support available through the equality and diversity lead to ensure that the process runs as smoothly as possible.

It is envisaged that this process will quickly become mainstreamed into everything that each department does and therefore as it becomes standard practice the amount of work and resources required to complete the task will diminish. EIA tools will be reviewed and amended, in consultation with staff who use them.

What Is An Equality Impact Assessment [E.I.A.]

According to Section 7 of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 an equality impact assessment is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, procedure or practice whether this is written or unwritten, formal or informal.

It is the primary function of the EIA to determine the extent to which policies, procedures, practices and services impact upon individuals and groups in relation to one or more of the equality categories [gender, age, sexuality, religion or belief, disability, transgender and transsexual people]. If the policy, procedure, practice or service is found to have an adverse impact, the author/s or service developers must consider all other alternatives, which may more effectively achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity. This may include the development of specific measures to mitigate the adverse impact.

Aims/Objectives

- Introduce policy makers and service developers to impact assessment.
- Steer policy makers and service developers to where to seek help, including key requirements and additional information sources.
- Provide a useful source of research information to support the assessment process.

The process of conducting an EIA should not be seen as the completed package, it should be recognised that the aim of the assessment is the promotion of equality of opportunity and therefore the outcomes/resulting development plans are of primary concern.

In conducting an EIA there are specific methods and procedures that must be considered:-

- In order to assess policy, procedure and practice a full analysis of relevant data is required.
- All people who are likely to be effected by Trust policies, procedures, practices and services must be consulted throughout the assessment process.
- Policies, procedures, practices and new services should be reviewed, revised or reorganised in light of the above consultation.

Data analysis should include the gathering of all relevant knowledge and should include:-

- Demographic data and other statistics, including census findings and staff equal opportunity information.
- Available research findings and best practice.
- Comparisons with similar policies, procedures and services in other organisations, especially those from partnership organisations such as a local Primary Care Trusts.

Screening

The initial phase of an Impact Assessment involves listing all policies functions/services and assessing how relevant they may be. By using screening process, public authorities can ensure that the most relevant functions/services and policies are given priority for equality impact assessment. The screening process should include:-

- Listing all functions and policies
- Assessing relevance [using evidence]
- Selecting policies and functions/services for impact assessment

Listing Functions and Policies

When undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment, public authorities should set out all functions and policies [current and proposed] that are relevant to meeting the general duties of the Race Relations [Amendment] Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2006. In addition, organisations may also wish to impact assess policies and functions/services that are relevant to other strands of Equal Opportunities legislation such as age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

What are Functions and Policies?

- The formal and informal decisions about how a Public Authority carries out its duties and uses its powers.
- All internal and external functions, including regulation and service delivery

Relevance

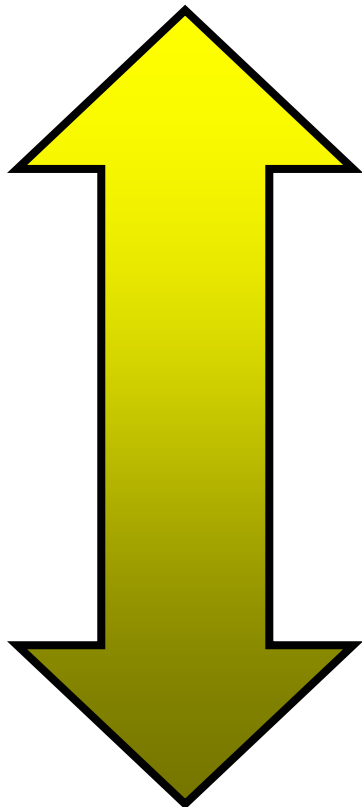
Certain functions and policies will be more relevant, and have higher impact, than others and so policies should be prioritised for impact assessment. Prioritising policies should take into account the proportionate impact on different groups and the resulting priority given to taking action. Consider:-

- Who are the groups/individuals like to be affected by the policy or service [e.g? users, clients, staff, recipients].
- Is there a relevance or likely relevance for disability equality, race equality or other aspect of equality and diversity?
- Is there a differential or likely differential impact on different groups?
- Is this differential impact having or likely to have an adverse outcome?
- Is this policy relevant to the delivery of the organisation's key business objectives?

Assessing for relevance will require evidence to be collected and examined. Your monitoring statistics, customer and service delivery information, and feedback from stakeholders, will help you to assess for relevance and prioritise policies for impact assessment.

Based on the assessment of relevance, you can decide which policies and functions should be prioritised for impact assessment [although all policies and functions must be assessed at some point during the period of time covered by your Equality Scheme].

For example, you may choose to conduct impact assessments for policies and functions with **high relevance** in Year 1 of the Equality Scheme, followed by policies and functions with **medium relevance** in Year 2 and the remaining policies and functions in Year 3.



High Relevance

- The function is relevant to *all* or most parts of the general duty/duties
- There is *substantial* evidence that certain group are [or could be] differently affected by the function
- There is *substantial* public/employee concern about the function

Medium Relevance

- The function is relevant to *most* parts of the general duty
- There is *some* evidence that certain groups are [or could be] differently affected by the function
- There is *some* public/employee concern about the function

Low Relevance

- All remaining functions

Procurement

Public authorities are responsible for ensuring all functions carried out by external suppliers meet the general duties of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Race Relations [Amendment] Act 2000, the Equality Act 2006 and other strands of equal opportunities legislation such as age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT MODEL

