



PHE Advisory Board

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| Title of meeting | PHE Advisory Board |
| Date | Wednesday 26 February 2020 |
| Sponsor | John Newton |
| Presenter | Lina Toleikyte, Abbie Colwell |
| Title of paper | Equality in Public Health England: How we met the Public Sector Equality Duty in 2019 |

1. Purpose of the paper

- 1.1 The Equality Duty, as described in the Equality Act 2010, is a duty on public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It ensures that public bodies such as PHE consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees.
- 1.2 Under the Act, public bodies are required to publish annually information about how they have met the Equality Duty.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Advisory Board is asked to **NOTE** the publication of *Equality in Public Health England: How we met the Public-Sector Equality Duty in 2019*.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Equality Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies such as PHE to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 3.2 The Equality Duty is supported by two specific duties which require PHE to (i) publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty annually, and (ii) set and publish equality objectives at least every four years.
- 3.3 PHE's Equality Objectives were published in January 2017 for the period 2017 to 2020. Equality Human Rights Commission (EHRC) requires public bodies to review the relevance of equality duty objectives every four years. SROs for each objective have a lead role and responsibility to report on actions achieved

throughout the year and will also be reviewing and refreshing PHE's equality duty objectives during 2020/21.

4. Development of the draft equality duty report

4.1 The Health Inequalities Unit co-ordinated the response to the first section of the report (Aim 1: Supporting the health system), whilst People Directorate led on the second section (Aim 2: Engaging and developing PHE staff).

4.2 The report is retrospective as it captures key pieces of work PHE has done across the organisation to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty in 2019. It covers key activities and publications across PHE's main business functions and describes equality and diversity information about our staff.

Lina Toleikyte

Public Health Manager, Health Inequalities Unit, February 2020

Abbie Colwell

Support Manager, Health Inequalities Unit, February 2020