

# EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

## Public Authority Annual Progress Report 2006 - 2007

This report template includes a number of self assessment questions regarding implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties from **1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007**. Please enter information at the relevant part of each section and ensure that it is submitted electronically (by completing this template) and in writing, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive to the Commission by **31 August 2007**.

Name of public authority (Enter details below)

EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Equality Officer (Enter name and contact details below)

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## **Executive Summary**

- *What were the key policy/service developments made by the authority during this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations?*

As an independent organisation, which represents the views and opinions of the general public in all areas of health and social services, mainstreaming the need to promote equality into the work of the Council is essential to it fulfilling its primary role.

As a small organization the Council is provided with administrative support by the EHSSB. The Board screens all administrative policies, including recruitment and selection.

The Council did not produce any new policies in the past year

- *What are the main initiatives planned in the coming year to ensure the authority improves outcomes in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations for individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75?*

The EHSSC will cease to exist on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 and will be replaced by the Patient Client Council. As a result, no new policies will be formulated by the EHSSC.

Engagement with individuals and representative groups is a core function of the Council's work programme. In the Course of the year the Council commissioned a research report on patient and Public Involvement. The aim of the report is to help health and social care organizations engage effectively with individuals and communities. The report was completed in March 2007 and promoting effective Health and Social Care Patient and Public Involvement (including the nine groups) will form a key theme of the Council's work programme in 07/08

## **Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties**

- *Outline evidence of progress made in developing and meeting equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets in corporate and annual operating plans during 2006-07.*



EQIA Timetable – April 2006 - March 2007

<b>Title of Policy EQIA</b>	<b>EQIA Stage at end March 07 (Steps 1-6)</b>	<b>Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals, and the relevant equality &amp; good relations categories due to be affected.</b>

Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities April 2006- March 2007

The Council did not produce any new policies in the past year

<b>Title of EQIA subject to Stage 7 monitoring</b>	<b>Indicate if differential impacts previously identified have reduced or increased</b>	<b>Indicate if adverse impacts previously identified have reduced or increased</b>

2007-08 EQIA Time-table

The EHSSC will cease to exist on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 and will be replaced by the Patient Client Council. As a result, no new policies will be formulated by the EHSSC.

<b>Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2007 – March 2008</b>	<b>Existing or New policy?</b>	<b>Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6</b>

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- *Where the EQIA timetable for 2006/07 (as detailed in the previous annual S75 progress report to the Commission) has not been met, please provide details of the factors responsible for delay and details of the timetable for re-scheduling the EQIA/s in question.*

No EQIAs have been undertaken by the Council in 2006/2007

#### **Section 4: Training**

- *Outline training provision during the year associated with the Section 75 Duties/Equality Scheme requirements including types of training provision, numbers attending, and conclusions from any training evaluations.*

The Council undertakes a series of training sessions in the year for all it's staff. The Council has a staff compliment of 8. The following is a list of the training undertaken by staff in the year under the equality agenda

- Training on engaging with people with "mental health" issues (all staff)
- Training on "Blind Awareness" (all staff)
- Training on "Domestic Violence" awareness (3 members of staff)
- English as a Second Language (all staff)
- Deaf Awareness training (6 members of staff)

The Council considers ongoing "awareness" training for staff to be essential in developing individuals to ensure the Council delivers on its equality agenda.

#### **Section 5: Communication**

- *Outline how the authority communicated progress on delivery of the statutory duties during the year and evidence of the impact/success of such activities.*

The Council provides a quarterly report to its members on all its activities incorporating any activity in relation to its equality obligations. The annual activity report is placed on the Council's internet site.

The Council submitted its annual equality scheme progress report to the Equality Commission on time and also its 5-year Review of the scheme. Both these submissions have been placed on the EHSSC web site and are available on request from the Council offices in accessible formats.

### **Section 6: Data Collection & Analysis**

- *Outline any systems that were established during the year to supplement available statistical and qualitative research.*  
No new systems were established during 2006-07 to supplement available statistical and qualitative research
- *Outline any research undertaken/commissioned to obtain information on the needs and experiences of individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75.*  
No research was undertaken/commissioned during 2006-07 to obtain data/information relating to the nine equality categories

### **Section 7: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services**

- *Detail any initiatives/steps taken during the year to improve access to services including provision of information in accessible formats.*  
The Council provides its complaints assistance leaflet in spoken word, Braille and the following languages
  - Lithuanian
  - Irish
  - Ukrainian
  - Urdu
  - Chinese
  - Portuguese
  - Russian
  - Latvian
  - Polish
  - Arabic

The Council provides its core 8 key information leaflets in Irish, Urdu, English and Chinese.

## **Section 8: Complaints**

- *Identify the number of Section 75 related complaints:*
  - *received by the authority;*
  - *resolved by the authority (including how this achieved);*
  - *which were not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant;*
  - *which were referred to the Equality Commission.*

There were no complaints made to the Council on Section 75

## **Section 9: Consultation and Engagement**

- *Provide details of the measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with individuals and representative groups during the year.* Engagement with individuals and representative groups is a core function of the Council's work programme. In the Course of the year the Council commissioned a research report on patient and Public Involvement. The aim of the report is to help health and social care organizations engage effectively with individuals and communities. The report was completed in March 2007 and will form a key theme of the Council's work programme in 07/08.

## **Section 10: The Good Relations Duty**

*Provide details of additional steps taken to implement or progress the good relations duty during the year. Please indicate any findings or expected outcomes from this work.*

The Council is a co-signee to the Eastern Area Equality Best Practice statement on Good Relations launched in 11 March 2005.

As part of the Knowledge and Skills Framework for health and social care, equality (and good relations) is a key competency to be addressed in individual objectives. The KSF model was fully implemented in 06/07 with each member of staff undertaking training in its development and the drafting of their own annual plan.

## **Section 11: Additional Comments**

- *Please provide any additional information/comments*

The Council has a specific work theme on Diversity and Exclusion within its annual work programme. Council recognizes the need to ensure equal

access to high quality services for all patients and users as individuals. Council recognizes also that for some patient/user groups specific initiatives are necessary to achieve this for all people.

In 2006/2007, Council part funded (£3000) the post of Health Advocacy Worker with the Chinese Welfare Association in pursuit of this aim. This was a follow up to an initial support annual funding of £3000 in 2004/2005 and 2005/2006. Through this pilot the Council aims to address adequately and well the needs of one excluded community and to apply the lessons learnt from this in a model of practice/action for the Council it can apply then to other identified minority groups within its catchment area.

The Council is a key stakeholder in the setting up of a Northern Ireland Chinese Patients Forum.