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Background information

What is equality?



Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

When we experience equality of opportunity, we have higher chances of positive outcomes in our lives. Supporting equality involves enabling people to access places, information, services, work and social opportunities. It fosters embracing our differences and the things that bring us together as a community.

- ✓ Actively removing barriers that prevent people from participating equally is a central part of equality.
- ✓ Acting to improve equality is a fundamental way to offer dignity and respect to those around us, and to honour human rights.
- ✓ Listening to and making efforts to understand the needs of everyone, not just the majority.

The Public Sector Equality Duty was created by the UK government to formalise the role of public authorities in contributing to a more equal society. It is sometimes known as the <u>General Equality Duty</u>. Public authorities in Scotland are also required to comply with rules created by Scottish Government, known as <u>specific duties</u>.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires UK public authorities (organisations that are publicly funded to benefit the public) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010,
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not,
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Both the general and specific duties are closely related to Equality Act 2010, a UK law that sets out what is legal and not legal in different contexts (work, personal care, in the community etc). The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine protected characteristics that people may have. These characteristics are legally protected, which means that these characteristics cannot be the basis or cause of a decision or action as this may put the person at a disadvantage in comparison to a person that does not have this characteristic.

References to protected characteristics will feature throughout this report. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation



What is an Equality Mainstreaming Report?

As a public authority, East Lothian Integration Joint Board are required to produce and publish an equality mainstreaming report every two years. This is one of the ways that we demonstrate our commitment to and compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

This report should communicate in a meaningful and simple way how the East Lothian Integration Joint Board has met the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty over the last two years.

What is the East Lothian Integration Joint Board?

East Lothian Integration Joint Board (IJB) is the governing body that is responsible for allocating funds, planning delegated services and overseeing the delivery of health and social care in East Lothian.

Its role is to direct East Lothian Health and Social Care (East Lothian HSCP) to deliver services to the community in line with national standards and levels of service.

East Lothian HSCP is a cooperation of staff employed by East Lothian Council, NHS Lothian, contracted service suppliers and third sector partners to deliver health and social care services to the community.

The services that East Lothian IJB directs (delegated services) include:



Acute and Ongoing Care	Adult social work	East Lothian		Community, Mental Health and Learning		
		Rehabilitation Service		Disabilities		
 East Lothian Community Hospital Internal care homes Hospital at home Care at home Services 	Community Hospital and review team Internal care homes Hospital at home Care at home Services and review team buty / adult social work Community review team Justice social work		delay itation ation vice	 Adult day services Adult learning disability services Community mental health team Intensive Home Treatment Team Psychological services 		
	Mental health officers	Physiotherapy serviOccupational thera		CWIC mental healthSubstance use service		
Nursing and Quality Planning and Perfo		ance Primary Care				
 District Nursing 	 Strategic planning 	 Strategic planning 		Contract (supporting medical practices		
Care home nursing tea	m • Performance and i	Performance and improvement		managed primary care services including:		
 Palliative care 	 Commissioned services 	Commissioned service		 Care When It Counts (CWIC) Service 		
 Health visiting team 	 Workforce and org 	Workforce and organisational		Community Treatment and Care Service (CTACS)		
 School nursing 	development	development		 Pharmacotherapy 		
	 Communications a 	ind engagement	Vaccii	nation Programme		
			Comn	nunity Link Worker Service		

East Lothian IJB directs services through creating a plan that sets out its strategic priorities over a three-year period (Strategic Plan). The current strategic priorities are:

- Developing sustainable health and social care services
- Focusing on early intervention and prevention
- Increasing access to community-based services
- Shifting the balance of care from hospital to homely settings
- Keeping people safe
- Tackling health inequalities

To advance strategic priorities, East Lothian IJB must identify the areas of East Lothian HSCP where action will take place to move towards the goals of the strategic priorities and issue instructions to the delegated service areas informing how the services should be delivered. These instructions are called Directions.



The East Lothian IJB can influence how services are delivered through their Directions and via their role in overseeing (checking) that services are meeting required standards for the community.

East Lothian IJB is legally required to satisfy a variety of Scottish and UK-wide requirements to demonstrate how they contribute as a publicly funded body to the aims of Scottish and UK government. This takes the form of complying with laws and duties outlined in the <u>Joint Working Act</u> and in other relevant guidance.

Update on Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

In 2021, East Lothian IJB committed to take action on five equality outcomes:

- 1. **Equitable access to services** People know what support and services are available and know how to access them
- 2. **Equitable access to premises** People with protected characteristics are able to access our premises easily and find them easy to use
- 3. **Keeping people safe** We will protect people at risk in our communities.
- 4. **An inclusive place to work** We will be proactive in developing an inclusive staff culture at all levels.
- 5. Mental health We are committed to supporting better mental health for all



A mid-point progress report covering 2021 – Spring 2023 was published in April 2023. You can view the report here.

1. Equitable Access to Services

People know what support and services are available and know how to access them



What we did

A broad suite of work has been done to improve community understanding of support and services available to them. This was initially led by the Senior Communications Officer, implementing a systematic approach to clear, inclusive communication delivered to the community via formats suited to their needs.

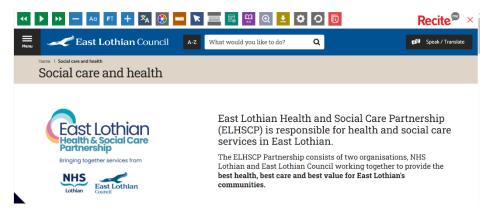
How it contributes to mainstreaming equality

Improving the accessibility and range of communication types has multiple benefits to the community and strongly supports our commitment to inclusion via eliminating barriers to accessing information and participation, meeting the communication needs of everyone and empowering people to steer their own health and social care journey through informed choices.

Improved online information

We reviewed our webpages improving its usability and accessibility. This has simplified the way the community accesses our information making it easier for people to find and access services. The focus was on providing an online information resource where webpage navigation was in tune with the customer journey, their challenges and needs, directing them to services, and how to access them, rather than simply presenting what services are available.

The website has built in features using the tool "Recite Me", that assist the public to access our online content. This provides options for website content to be read aloud, translated into different languages, change the background colour and magnify text.

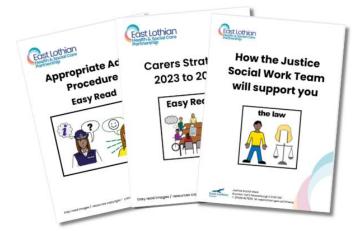


Easy Read

We are especially proud of our improvements in providing community information in Easy Read format. In 2024, our teams were empowered to create their own Easy Read documents based on an Easy Read image library carefully created by our communications professionals and shared with staff. Guidance was produced to assist people in understanding the purpose and benefits of the Easy Read format.

It has resulted in:

- 7 easy read documents for adult support and protection including advice for adults, a 'next steps' brochure, a communication highlighting the rights of service users, information about procedures, case conferences and a service user questionnaire
- 2 service strategies in converted to Easy Read (Carers Strategy 2023-26 and Dementia Strategy 2023)
- 4 easy read versions related to the <u>Shared Lives</u> initiative (Shared Lives Week 2023 and 2024, Duncan's Story and the Shared Lives recruitment campaign 2024/2025)
- 1 Justice Social Work easy read brochure related to how the social work justice team can support service users
- 1 guardianship letter
- 1 brochure explaining annual health checks aimed at people with learning disabilities.



2. Equitable Access to Premises

People with protected characteristics are able to access our premises easily and find them easy to use



As an Integration Joint Board with responsibility for planning and commissioning delegated health and social care services, this outcome does not sit within an area that we can control. The IJB does not own or operate spaces but directs them in spaces owned or operated by ELC, NHS Lothian or our partners (e.g. care homes).

In order to avoid double reporting, we will not present what our partners, ELC and NHS Lothian have done for accessibility.

We will ensure in the future that our outcomes fall within areas that we can influence. In order to do this, we will adopt the NHS Lothian format of equality outcomes that lists the actions we plan to take beneath the outcomes. This will help us to check the applicability of future outcomes to our areas of responsibility to avoid pledging to take action on things we cannot influence.

3. Keeping People Safe

We will protect people at risk in our communities



What We Did

We have taken actions to improve collaborative working across East Lothian and recognise the risks presented by drug and alcohol misuse. Specifically, identifying some of the reasons people turn to drugs and alcohol, and promoting recovery by addressing those reasons while supporting a range of treatment paths. When we work effectively with our partners NHS Lothian, East Lothian Council and local third sector organisations we are better equipped to provide holistic care that recognises the complexities of life and how different challenges affect each other.

How it contributes to mainstreaming equality

Keeping people safe begins with understanding the types of things that can lead to people becoming vulnerable. Addressing health, housing, social and economic challenges reduces personal risks to people and improves their chances of living a life that is safe, comfortable, healthy and fulfilling.

By embedding partnership working with the third sector and East Lothian Council and NHS Lothian, we recognise that people are looking for solutions that explicitly recognise the complexities of life rather than find solutions for discrete issues separate from the whole. By focusing on the whole person, we can assist people to notice when they are becoming more vulnerable and support them to take action to prevent issues from escalating or intervene early in potentially unhealthy life choices.

Supporting people to overcome challenges

We created a webpage called Moving On which aims to signpost people in the process of overcoming all sorts of challenges to services that can help them move towards a more positive future.

The website uses simple images to point people towards services that assist with managing money, training, employment, addiction, women's wellbeing, men's health and wellbeing, housing, mental health and victim support. www.eastlothian.gov.uk/moving-on

Drug and alcohol recovery

We have expanded the opening hours of our drug and alcohol support telephone services, increasing the capacity of the service to work with people that reach out for support with recovery.

www.eastlothian.gov.uk/substance-use

We have created a simplified patient information leaflet that outlines step by step what to expect when converting from prescribed Methadone to Buvidal so patients can make an informed decision about their treatment. This helps people that have become dependent on Methadone to transfer to Buvidal as part of their recovery, helping them to take control of their lives and move towards a better future.

Good mental health care at an early stage of challenges can vastly improve outcomes for people and reduce their chance of experiencing a crisis. Whilst this is a crucial aspect to keeping people safe in East Lothian, we will outline our progress in the stage below.

4. We will be proactive in developing an inclusive staff culture at all levels



As an Integration Joint Board, we have very limited control over staff culture initiatives conducted by our partners that employ the staff that deliver our delegated services (NHS Lothian, East Lothian Council, third sector and private contractors that are commissioning to deliver services on our behalf).

Where we can influence staff is through:

- Training opportunities
- Commissioning via tenders for services

Regrettably, this outcome is where we have made least progress however, we will take a different approach in Equality Outcomes 2025-2029. We will focus on creating a charter to illustrate good behaviour which honours dignity and respect. The charter will incorporate positive examples and the consequences for demonstrating behaviours which fall below standard.

The Equality Outcomes 2025-2029 (Dignity and Respect and Anti-Racism) are a recalibration and extension of this outcome. We have ambitious plans to make meaningful, sector leading progress in the first half of the outcomes period.

5. Mental Health

We are committed to supporting better mental health for all



What We Did

We established a group of individuals across East Lothian involved in direct or indirect work affecting mental health and wellbeing. We provided the group with opportunities to meet regularly to discuss issues arising in the community and within health, social care and emergency services.

We also focused on designing new approaches to suicide prevention. Data suggests that suicide effects some groups of people disproportionately and through our approaches we hope to reduce suicides and support individuals and families to move towards hope.

How it contributes to mainstreaming equality

Mental health challenges are at the core or a range of different health, social and justice issues affecting the community. When we focus on supporting mental health, we can improve outcomes for some of the most vulnerable in our community. When we talk about mental health, we can identify some groups that are affected disproportionately to the general community. These groups include men, women post-partum and during menopause, older people, people participating with the justice system, people from gypsy/Roma/traveller communities, the fishing community, the farming community, people struggling with gambling and debt and people using drugs and alcohol as an aid to mentally coping. If we can improve access to mental health support, we can improve lives across the community, not just those suffering with poor mental health but also their families.

Mental Health Partners Group

The Mental Health Partners Group is a collection of third sector mental health and advocacy organisations, emergency services representatives and health and social care staff. The group has approximately 90 members and meets every two months to raise issues and share information about what is going on and services available. It is a forum where people can communicate across different parts of the community and services to better support everyone to look after their mental health.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Information Hubs

The community told us that it needed to be easier to find support and wellbeing opportunities. We worked with Public Health to develop information hubs across all East Lothian localities that provide information about resources to support mental health and wellbeing.

The Adult Mental Health Team has established a drop-in mental health event every Wednesday at the Wellbeing Hub at East Lothian Community Hospital offering the community a chance to find out about the mental health and wellbeing opportunities available to them.

Suicide prevention

The Adult Mental Health Team has established a collaboration with East Lothian Council and local mental health partners to identify gaps in preventative mental health services that could improve outcomes for people struggling with feelings of suicide. The result of the collaboration is a suicide prevention focussed forum that will be established in early 2025.

Other ways we fulfilled the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

1. Eliminating discrimination and other unlawful conduct

What we did

- Co-designed new eligibility criteria for carers to more realistically measure the impact caring had on carer's lives in order to eliminate indirect discrimination.
- Enhanced our model of Day Centre provision to include community-based support which meets the needs of those who don't want to or are unable to access support based at premises used by us.

How it contributes to mainstreaming equality

Realigning the eligibility criteria for carers offers a number of important improvements for carers:

- It centres carer voices and experiences in planning and assessment.
- It improves our understanding of the impacts of caring on the carer and ways that they experience discrimination in more subtle ways. When we understand the impacts better, we can identify ways to eliminate the causes of discrimination where we can through our planning and directions.
- The overall aim is to improve outcomes for carers, improve their opportunities and recognise their key role working alongside health and social care.

Co-designing these criteria with the community and their representatives ensured we were taking a human-rights approach to planning. By improving our Day Centre provision model, we are improving access to community-based support for people that might otherwise be excluded from services delivered in premises that we use. This eliminates discrimination experienced by this group of people, some of which are among the most vulnerable in society. When we plan in a way that addresses incidental exclusion, we are bringing more inclusive priorities to the heart of planning and direction which is an important step in the right direction.

2. Advancing equality of opportunity

What we did:

Prolonging independent living

We enabled people living in East Lothian that require home adjustments to understand what was available to them to support independent living at home. The <u>Well Wynd Hub</u> is a model living space containing different technologies and supports that help people at risk of losing their independence to continue living in their homes for longer. Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy staff run assistive technology drop-in events at the Tranent hub to showcase the different ways that people can use supports to stay living independently in their homes for longer. (Article: Drop in events showcasing technology to support independent living)

Used our role as planners and commissioners to take a co-production approach to service strategy Demonstrated commitment to co-commissioning as a part of community/HSCP co-production.¹

- Planning for Older People's Services You can learn more about the engagement/co-production of the plan on its <u>engagement</u> webpage and by reading the final update to the Planning for Older People's Services Independent Community Panel (this includes the plan).
- Dementia Strategy You can learn more about the Dementia Strategy co-production process through the Strategy's IIA.
- Support for Carer's Procurement (commissioning) process and tender paperwork ² Our Planning and Commissioning Officer worked closely with carers and groups representing them across East Lothian to understand what was their key priorities and concerns were in relation to receiving support and what we should know in relation to eligibility criteria and replacement care. The result was a number of changes to the tender prior to its release that best reflected the voices of the community. The tender was released in late 2024 and awarded in early 2025.

¹ Equality Act 2010 Section 149: 'involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:(b)take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; (c)encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportion ately low.'

² 149c) Committed to co-commissioning as a part of co-production (East Lothian Commissioning Strategy 2023-2025)

Developed new means of improving access

We directed services and allocated budgets to enable new ways of organising assessments, triaging, discharging and supporting patients to improve access overall.

We took innovative action to free up appointment space or beds for people with complex or specific health needs by establising:

- <u>CWIC Direct Appointments Service</u> Working towards improving access to GP appointments for patients with complex needs, disabilities, pregnant people and children (under age 12) by drastically improving the speed or onward referrals and same day assessments for less complex health needs via the CWIC Direct Appointments Service.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs across the county We committed to and delivered new approaches to community mental health support through improved mental health and wellbeing information in high traffic community spaces such as libraries and East Lothian Community Hospital.
- <u>Physiotherapy In-Reach Project (Royal Infirmary Edinburgh)</u> East Lothian Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists visited patients admitted to Royal Infirmary Edinburgh to provide information about community and home-based care packages available to them. This intervention improved patient discharge substantially and honoured our strategic commitment to offer community, home-based or home-like locations for care.
- Increased capacity for <u>Care at Home</u> packages to support the flow of patients from hospital environment to home-based and community care.³

• Creation of a Single Point of Contact targeting prevention of attendance and admissions at RIE.

• Increased Allied Health Professional (AHP) capacity to support 7-day service at the RIE front door. '

³ Direction 21 Unscheduled care - Increased care capacity for Hospital to Home (pg 17). Link to strategic object to deliver care at home. 'East Lothian deliverables supported by this funding are as follows:

[•] Increased care capacity for Hospital to Home.

[•] Increased Social Worker and Community Care Worker capacity to support assessment over 7 days at the RIE front door.

How it contributes to mainstreaming equality

Helping people to establish and maintain independence has a range of positive effects on physical and mental health, confidence, life opportunities (employment and social) and autonomy. Our progress in this outcome assisted people of all ages to realise their potential for independence working with technology and allowed greater numbers to remain living in their homes. The groups most positively impacted include adults experiencing living independence for the first time, people with physical and learning disabilities and people in older age groups seeking to maintain an independent life that compliments their changing health and needs.

By embedding equality and community voices into our role as planners and strategic commissioners, we improve equality of opportunity by ensuring we are planning and commissioning in the way that the community would like us to. This in turn improves our own internal processes and helps us to better understand the people that we serve.

By increasing capacity through directing resources (Care at Home) and improving assessment process (CWIC Direct) we ensure that equality of opportunity to access services improves and that people receive the right care at the right time.

Fostering Good Relations

What we did

Established long-term, high quality community engagement groups:

- Mental Health Partners Group (outlined in the Mental Health section of this report).
- Carer's panel Carers of East Lothian continue to develop their carers panel which was included in the service specification, to empower carers to use their collective voice for action, carers now engaged with local businesses and GP's to bring about change.
- Independent Community Panel (initially an Older People's Services Independent Community Panel).

Laid the foundations for a co-designed activity to establish a care/carer charter promoting cultural understanding between people being cared for and the staff that care for them.

How it contributes to mainstreaming equality

All these actions contribute to establishing the structures, forums and relationships for embedding community voices firmly into the centre of planning services and promoting deep, practical understanding between people in the community with different characteristics.

Creating the Mental Health Partners Group established a space for raising and collaborating to solve mental health issues experienced in the community including challenges with accessing services. One of the key achievements of this group was the discussions which led to decisions to establish a simplified, streamlined, trauma informed and person-centred way to access mental health services in East Lothian (Single Point of Contact for Mental Health – covered in the Mental Health section above).