



**Torbay and South Devon**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# **Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)**

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Action Plan 2025/26

# Introduction

- The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) is a workforce standard that all NHS Trusts are required to submit which involves collecting and analysing data across a series of metrics to help to improve the workplace experiences of staff identifying as having a disability across the NHS.
- Torbay and South Devon NHS Trust submitted its annual WDES report on 31st May 2025 which can be found [here](#)

Metric 1	Percentage of staff in each of the AfC Bands 1-9 or Medical and Dental subgroups and VSM compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce disaggregated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Non-Clinical staff</li> <li>b. Clinical staff - of which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Non-Medical staff</li> <li>ii. Medical and Dental staff</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Metric 2	Relative likelihood of non-disabled staff compared to disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts
Metric 3	Relative likelihood of disabled staff compared to non-disabled staff entering the formal capability process
Metric 4a	Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients/service users, their relatives of the public in the last 12 months
Metric 4b	Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from managers in the last 12 months
Metric 4c	Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues in the last 12 months
Metric 4d	Percentage of staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it
Metric 5	Percentage of staff who believe that the organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion
Metric 6	Percentage of staff who have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties
Metric 7	Percentage of staff satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work
Metric 8	Percentage of staff with a long-lasting health condition or illness saying their employer has made reasonable adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work
Metric 9	Staff engagement score
Metric 10	Board membership

# Key Themes

- Disabled staff are underrepresented in senior roles, particularly in clinical and medical & dental groups.
- Disabled staff are less likely to be appointed from shortlisting and more likely to enter the formal capability process compared to non-disabled staff.
- Disabled staff consistently report experiencing higher levels of bullying, harassment, or abuse from both managers and colleagues compared to non-disabled staff.
- Disabled staff are significantly less likely than non-disabled staff to believe the organisation provides equal opportunities for progression and promotion, with a declining trend.
- Disabled staff consistently report feeling more pressure from managers to work while unwell.
- There is currently no disabled representation at executive level, despite overall Board-level representation slightly exceeding workforce proportions

# Metric 1,2 & 4

Metric	Objective	Action	Timeline
1	Improve representation in senior roles	<p>As part of our trust improvement plan, we will establish a mechanism to proactively analyse, respond to and act upon data from the staff survey, WRES and WDES reports.</p> <p>Career progression resources have been launched on our learning and development platform, HIVE – including modules on career planning, job applications, and access to mentoring schemes. Additional resources on mock interviews are in development. We will proactively promote these opportunities to colleagues with disability.</p> <p>The relaunch of staff networks is currently underway, with one of the focus on providing peer support and creating safe spaces to discuss career progression, workplace challenges, and personal aspirations.</p>	August 2026
2	Reduce disparity in the likelihood of staff with disability being appointed from shortlisting.	<p>Review our recruitment practices as part of our regional approach to inclusive recruitment</p> <p>Establish RCN ambassadors in the organisations to support more inclusive practices</p>	<p>March 2027</p> <p>RCN ambassadors training planned to commence October 2025</p>
4a,b,c	Reduce incidents of bullying, harassment and abuse from patients/service users, managers and staff	<p>Work closely with Communications and security team to re-promote messaging across all services so that it reinforces expectations for respectful behaviour from patients/service users.</p> <p>Establish a just and learning culture approach and the Patient Safety Incident Framework to establish more confident in our processes and reporting</p>	January 2026

# Metric 5 & 6

Metric	Objective	Action	Timeline
5	Improve staff confidence in equal access to career development and progression opportunities	<p>We are in the process of establishing the disability network. We aim to engage with network members and better understand the challenges and blockers they face in career progression. The concerns will then be escalated to People Committee and Board.</p> <p>Promote career development resources and mentoring services to all staff.</p> <p>Share stories of staff members who has successfully progressed within the organisation through staff networks.</p>	August 2026
6	Promote a supportive culture that prioritises health and wellbeing.	<p>Raise awareness among managers the importance of supporting staff wellbeing and recognising signs of ill health.</p> <p>Empower staff to have wellbeing conversations without fear of negative consequences. One of the workstream for our trust improvement plan focuses on improving culture which also promotes psychological safety.</p> <p>Ensure our reasonable adjustment policy is refreshed to support staff needs</p>	March 2026

# Metric 10



Metric	Objective	Action	Timeline
10	Increase the diversity of Board membership representation	Raise awareness at Board membership level of the data we currently hold and plan more diverse representation.	March 2026