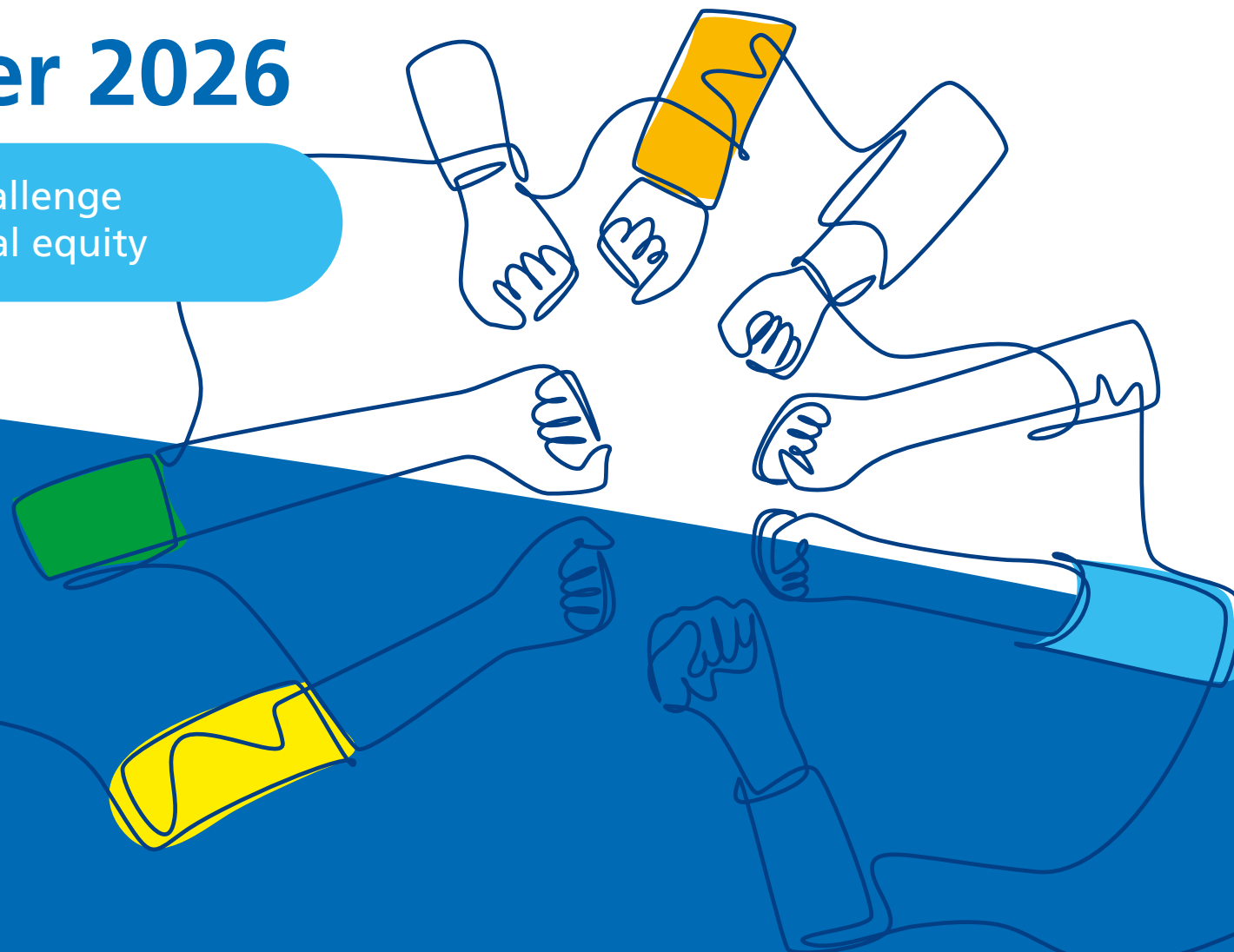


Anti-Racism Plan and Charter 2026

Working together to challenge
racism and improve racial equity



**We care
We respect
We are inclusive**





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Introduction

At East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT), we are committed to tackling racism in all its forms. This is an overarching Trust-wide plan and charter, applying to our patients, workforce, governance and policies, and communities. It builds on the North East London Integrated Care System (NEL ICS) Anti-Racist Strategy (2025) and our ongoing anti-racism strategy within the Central East Integrated Care Systems.

This reflects our statutory and moral duties under:



Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)



NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)



Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF)



Trust HR, recruitment, disciplinary, and safeguarding policies

Racism is structural and systemic. It affects life outcomes, workforce progression, health equity, and service quality. For ELFT, tackling racism is both a moral imperative and a requirement for delivering safe and equitable care.

ELFT recognises that periods of heightened societal tension, hate incidents, civil unrest, or major incidents may disproportionately impact racialised communities and other marginalised groups. As part of our commitment to anti-racism, cultural competency, and psychologically safe leadership, the Trust will continue strengthening operational guidance relating to staff safety, inclusive communications, wellbeing support, lone working, escalation arrangements, and culturally responsive leadership during such periods.

The Trust also recognises that racism can affect different communities in different ways, including antisemitism, anti-Muslim hostility, anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, and discrimination experienced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and others. Our commitment is to apply our values consistently, ensuring that all forms of racism are recognised and addressed fairly and equitably.



What our data tells us

ELFT has one of the most ethnically diverse workforces in the NHS, with 59% of staff identifying as BME (Black and Minority Ethnic). This reflects the diversity of the communities we serve and is something we value. However, diversity in our workforce does not mean equity, and our own data shows that significant inequalities remain for both staff and service users.

Our Workforce

Our WRES reporting continues to show inequity for BME staff. BME staff are more likely to enter into a formal disciplinary process than white staff. BME staff are also less likely to be appointed from shortlisting, less confident that the Trust provides equal opportunities for career progression, and more likely to report experiencing discrimination from managers or colleagues. Bullying and harassment from other staff has continued to increase for BME staff, and BME representation at senior and Board level continues to fall below the overall workforce average.

Our Services

Our PCREF (Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework) data highlights persistent inequities in access, experience, and outcomes for racialised service users. Nationally, Black or Black British people are detained under the Mental Health Act at nearly four times the rate of White people. Across ELFT directorates, we see variation in lengths of stay, restraint incidents, and access rates by ethnicity, with Black, Asian and Mixed ethnicity service users disproportionately affected in a number of areas. In CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), access rates for Black children and young people remain below 1% across boroughs. Ethnicity data completeness also remains a challenge, which limits our ability to fully understand and address inequities at a local level.



Why this matters?

This plan is grounded in that evidence. It sets out what we intend to do differently, how we will measure progress, and how we will remain accountable to our staff, service users, and communities over time.



What is the Anti-Racism Plan and Charter?

This plan sets out ELFT's long term commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist organisation.



The Anti-Racism Plan explains:

- why anti-racism matters at ELFT
- the inequalities and issues we are seeking to address
- the priorities and actions the Trust will focus on
- how progress will be monitored and reported

The Charter is our public commitment to staff, service users, carers, and communities. It describes the principles and behaviours we expect across the organisation and the commitments we are making to improve equity, inclusion, and accountability.

Together, the Plan and Charter are intended to:

- guide decision making and improvement work across the Trust
- support fairer experiences and outcomes for staff and service users
- strengthen accountability and transparency
- ensure lived experience and co-production remain central to our work
- support ongoing organisational learning and cultural change

This is not a standalone piece of work. The Plan and Charter align with wider Trust priorities including PCREF, WRES, workforce equality, quality improvement, patient safety, and cultural competency development. Progress will be reviewed through existing governance arrangements and informed by staff feedback, lived experience, workforce data, and service user outcomes.





ELFT Anti-Racism Charter

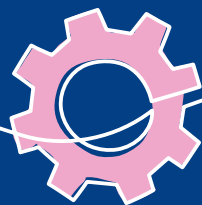
This Charter is ELFT's public commitment to staff, service users, carers, and communities. It reflects our commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist organisation where equity, inclusion, dignity, and accountability are embedded across our services, workforce, leadership, and partnerships.

We recognise that racism exists within society and institutions, including healthcare, and that tackling it requires sustained action, cultural humility, and organisational accountability. **Through this Charter, we commit to:**



1. Acknowledge

Acknowledge racism as real, systemic, and harmful, and recognise the impact it can have on people's health, wellbeing, opportunities, experiences, and trust in services.



2. Act

Take meaningful action to embed anti-racist practice across our workforce, services, leadership, governance, and decision-making processes.



3. Be Accountable

Promote transparency, measurable improvement, and organisational accountability through reporting, governance, and continuous learning.



4. Collaborate

Work in partnership with staff networks, service users, carers, communities, and partner organisations to ensure lived experience informs improvement and change.



5. Sustain Change

Support long term cultural change through leadership, training, quality improvement, co-production, and ongoing organisational reflection and learning.

What this means:



For Staff

We will work to create fair opportunities, psychologically safe workplaces, and inclusive environments where staff feel respected, valued, and able to thrive.



For Service Users and Carers

We will work to improve equitable access, culturally safe care, communication, experience, and outcomes, while recognising and respecting identity, culture, and lived experience.



For Communities

We will strengthen partnerships with communities and organisations to reduce inequities, build trust, and improve health and wellbeing outcomes together.



Our Anti-Racism Statement

“At East London NHS Foundation Trust, we believe racism has no place in our services, our workplaces, or our communities. We know that tackling it requires courage, humility, and sustained action — and we commit to being an organisation that listens, confronts inequity, and is accountable for making measurable progress.”





Defining Racism

We recognise that experiences of racism are not uniform and may differ significantly across racialised communities, identities, cultures, faiths, and lived experiences. Racism is more than prejudice. It is a system of advantage and disadvantage based on race, reinforced through policies, culture, and structures.

Race is not only about skin colour. Racism can affect people because of their ethnicity, nationality, culture, heritage, or shared ancestry. This includes, but is not limited to, racism affecting Black, Asian, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, Jewish, Muslim and other racialised, ethnic and faith communities.

Racism operates at:

- Interpersonal: harassment, microaggressions, prejudice
- Institutional: bias in recruitment, progression, disciplinary processes
- Structural: health, education, housing, justice inequities

Intersectionality matters: race interacts with gender, disability, sexuality, and socio-economic status, compounding inequalities.

Our definition of anti-racism mirrors the NHS: taking intentional action to address and eliminate racism, recognising that simply being “non-racist” is insufficient.

ELFT recognises anti-Black racism, antisemitism and anti-Muslim hostility as forms of racism and is committed to challenging them alongside all other forms of racial discrimination.

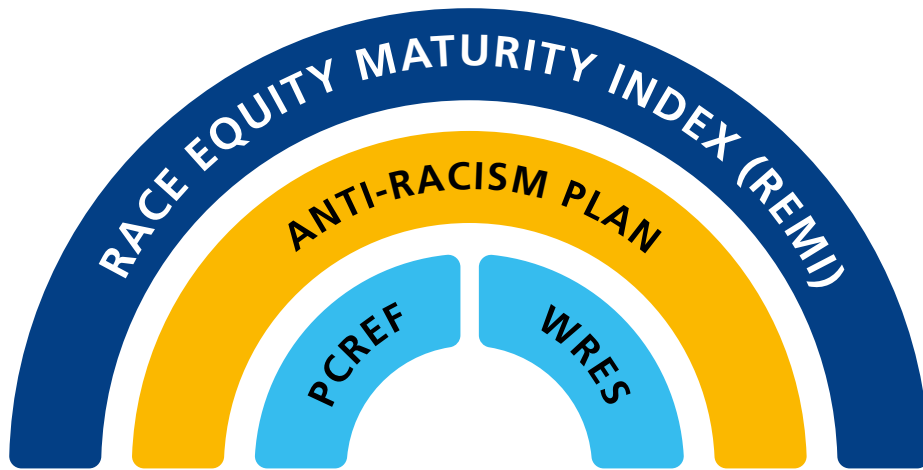




Our Anti-Racism Framework

Our Anti-Racism Framework provides a structured approach to achieving meaningful and measurable change across our workforce and services.

ELFT will use the Race Equity Maturity Index (REMI), developed by the London Anti-Racism Collaboration for Health (LARCH), to assess and strengthen our progress. Its six stages support organisations to move from awareness and commitment to embedding and championing race equity in everyday practice.



To support meaningful and measurable change, ELFT will use the Race Equity Maturity Index (REMI), developed by the London Anti Racism Collaboration for Health (LARCH). The REMI is a self-assessment framework designed to help healthcare organisations understand, measure, and strengthen their anti-racism journey. It outlines six stages of organisational maturity, supporting organisations to move from awareness and commitment through to embedding and championing race equity in everyday practice.

How the frameworks work together

Framework	Purpose
Race Equity Maturity Index (REMI)	Assessment framework used to measure overall organisational progress and anti-racism maturity.
Anti-Racism Plan and Charter	Sets the Trust's overall strategic direction, priorities, and organisational commitments.
Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF)	Supports delivery of racial equity improvements within mental health services and service user experience.
Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES)	Measures racial disparities in workforce experience, progression, and representation.



Stages of the Race Equity Maturity Index (REMI)

Stage	What this looks like
 Being Aware	At this stage the organisation builds an understanding of the key concepts and realities related to anti-racism and ensures that some of the basic elements, such as the necessary personnel, are in place. This is in many respects the most important stage of the process in which the organisation builds the foundation for the remainder of the journey.
 Showing Commitment	At this stage the organisation is demonstrating commitment by conducting more practical preparation work; putting in place the structures needed to operate in an anti-racist way.
 Integrating	At this stage the organisation begins to implement the race equity plan using it to guide the policies and processes that shape everyday operations. Alongside this, the plan is a reality for leadership and staff who understand their role in implementing the plan.
 Embedding	At this stage, race equity is now embedded in the procedures and decision-making processes of the organisation; it is not an afterthought.
 Creating	At the stage of creating, the organisation has the knowledge, experience and confidence to create or adapt innovative tools that address the challenges of race equity faced by the organisation. The organisation uses current data to either create these tools from scratch or adapt existing tools to its specific purposes.
 Championing	The organisation shares learning, supports other organisations through partnership, mentoring and peer review, and works beyond its own boundaries to advance anti-racism while continually reviewing and improving its own approach.



Our Journey Towards Anti-Racism

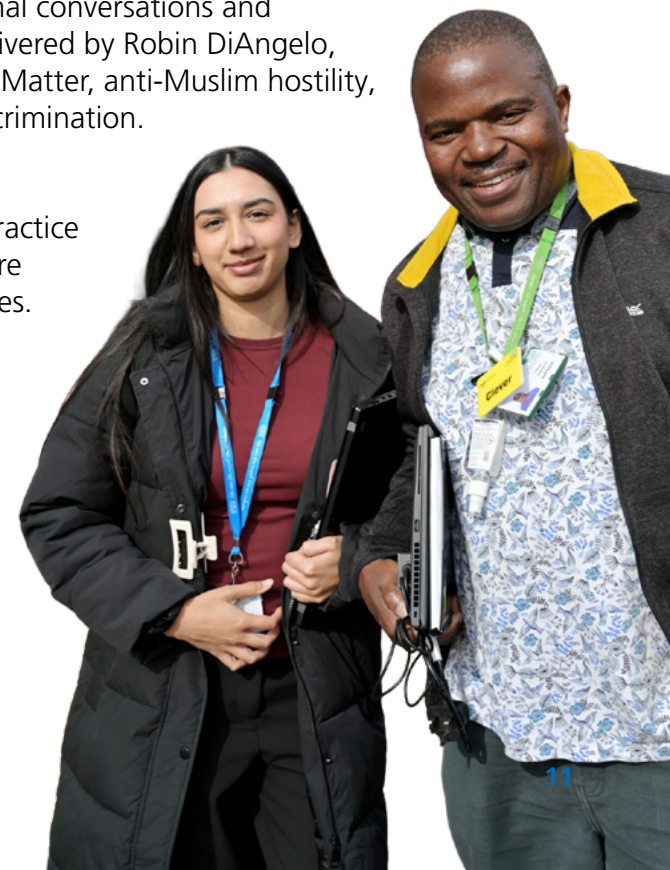
Becoming an anti-racist organisation is an ongoing journey that requires reflection, accountability, learning, and sustained action across all areas of the Trust. It is not a single initiative or piece of work, but a long term commitment to improving equity, experience, culture, and outcomes for staff, service users, carers, and communities.

This work has been developing across the Trust since 2020 and reflects wider organisational learning from:

- Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) findings
- Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF) engagement and data
- National NHS Staff Survey feedback
- Ongoing engagement, feedback, and lived experience shared through the RaCE Staff Network
- FLAIR reporting, which captures staff experiences relating to fairness, leadership, inclusion, accountability, and respect
- Anti-racism engagement sessions and lived experience discussions across the Trust

The plan has also been informed by wider organisational conversations and learning sessions, including commissioned sessions delivered by Robin DiAngelo, Stop Hate UK, and Trust-led discussions on Black Lives Matter, anti-Muslim hostility, antisemitism, and wider experiences of racism and discrimination.

The REMI stages on the previous page describe how organisations may progress in embedding anti-racist practice over time. The commitments and actions in this plan are designed to support ELFT's journey through those stages.





Wider System and Partnership Working

ELFT provides services across North East London (NEL) and Central East Integrated Care Systems including local authorities, NHS providers, education, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations, and other community partners.

Our Anti-Racism Plan aligns with the North East London Integrated Care System Anti-Racism Strategy. Whilst there isn't a similar plan within Central East ICS, the Trust will apply its principles consistently across all ELFT services, workforce and governance arrangements, including those in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK). Through partnership working, we aim to support a coordinated system-wide approach to tackling racial inequalities and improving the experiences and outcomes of our staff, service users, carers and communities.

Self-assessment

We commit to delivering reductions in inequalities, especially where these are driven by structural racism and bias, and to building the trust of our communities that we will collectively deliver the change we desire. Understanding which parts of our system are structured to advantage some communities and disadvantage others will enable us to put in place actions and a culture that mitigates the drivers of these inequalities.

Listening and responding

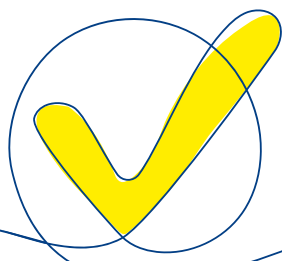
By listening, learning and responding to the lived experiences within our ethnically diverse communities we can address the issues which are felt most acutely by our population and staff. We must be open and consistent with how we communicate these changes to our communities and staff so that they can hold us as a system to account to the aims of our anti-racism plan.

Strategic focus and commitment

As a system we work together to address both the causes and effects of inequalities within our communities and staff, working collectively to target those interventions at the areas where we have the highest degree of inequalities. Initiatives need to be delivered as part of a wider anti-racist approach, recognising the intersectionality with other factors such as deprivation or immigration status, with all we do being seen through an anti-racist lens with the goal of reducing racial inequalities.

Accountability and outcomes focused

Racism saps the power of the whole community and has a cost to the whole population. We must recognise the harmful effects and trauma that our communities and staff experience because of racism within our organisations and services and work to mitigate them. We need to deliver on our mission to ensure that ELFT is an actively anti-racist, equitable and positive place to live and work in. We need to gain the trust of our staff and communities and ensure they have the confidence that we will make improvements in their access, experience and outcomes, and that we will hold each other to account to deliver change.





We adopt the following pillars and apply them locally across four areas:

To turn our commitments into meaningful action, we have organised our work into four priority areas. These priorities describe how we will embed anti-racism across our workforce, services, governance and partnerships



Leadership and Workforce

- Use WRES data to track workforce equity
- Strengthen inclusive recruitment, progression, and disciplinary processes
- Expand mentoring, sponsorship, and leadership programmes
- Directorate PCREF leads embed anti-racism in services



Engagement and Feedback

- PCREF lived experience spaces inform patient care
- WRES and WDES staff survey data shapes workforce priorities
- Use complaints, disciplinary, and grievance data to identify and address systemic bias
- Strengthen engagement with VCSE (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise) and community partners



Resources and Enablers

- Equality Impact Assessments embedded into all major policies and service changes
- HR, Estates, and Digital ensure environments and processes are inclusive
- Allocate resource to PCREF implementation and anti-racist initiatives
- ELFT prevention framework's principle on act fairly utilised in learning and development programmes and service design



Celebrating and Evidencing Success

- Publish WRES, WDES, and PCREF reports annually with actions
- Showcase local quality improvement projects on equity and anti-racism
- Recognise staff and services leading change at our annual Staff Awards





Our Commitments

We recognise that trust is built through visible action, measurable improvement, transparency, and accountability.



For Patients and Service Users

- Use PCREF data to identify and act on inequities in detention, waiting times, missed appointments, restrictive practice, and outcomes — with directorate-level improvement plans reviewed quarterly.
- Co-produce service improvements with service users, carers, and communities, ensuring lived experience shapes decisions rather than just informing them.
- Improve ethnicity data recording across all services, with completeness reported annually in the EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) Annual Report.
- Support teams to use local inequity data to drive quality improvement and strengthen prevention, with progress tracked through the PCREF Steering Group.



For Workforce

- Ensure recruitment, progression, and disciplinary processes are fair and transparent, measured annually through WRES indicators.
- Provide anti-racism and cultural competency training for all staff, including recognising different forms of racism, facilitating respectful conversations, and responding confidently to discrimination and hate incidents.
- Strengthen psychologically safe leadership so staff feel confident raising concerns about racism or discrimination without fear of consequences.
- Use the RaCE (Race and Culture Equity) Network to shape workforce priorities, with network feedback feeding directly into governance.



For Governance and Policies

- Apply Equality Impact Assessments to all major policies and service changes, with quality reviewed through an annual audit.
- Include race equity on the Trust Risk Register, monitored by the Board.
- Report on anti-racism progress quarterly through Board sub-committees, and annually through a published Anti-Racism Progress Report.
- Review organisational learning following significant external events or incidents where racialised communities may be disproportionately affected, ensuring lessons inform future policy, communications and leadership practice.
- Use the REMI framework to assess organisational maturity annually and identify where improvement is needed.



For Communities

- Strengthen partnerships with local authorities, schools, and VCSE organisations to address health inequities, including Black maternal health and mental health.
- Ensure community voice informs Trust priorities through structured engagement, not one-off consultation.
- Publish progress openly so communities can see what has changed and what still needs to improve.



Review and Monitoring

Progress against the Anti-Racism Plan and Charter will be monitored through existing Trust governance, assurance, and accountability structures to ensure commitments translate into measurable and sustained improvement.

Oversight will include:

- Quarterly reporting through EDI, Workforce, Quality, and relevant Board sub-committees
- Annual publication of Anti-Racism, PCREF, WRES, NHS Staff Survey, and workforce equity reporting
- Annual publication of Freedom to Speak Up data analysed by ethnicity, reporting themes relating to psychological safety, discrimination, and inequity
- Monitoring of inequities in workforce experience, patient experience, access, outcomes, complaints, restrictive practice, and organisational culture
- Continuous organisational learning informed by lived experience, workforce feedback, staff surveys, inequity data, hate incident themes, patient feedback and service outcomes
- Ongoing engagement with staff networks, service users, carers, and community partners to inform improvement priorities and accountability
- Alignment with the NEL ICS Anti-Racism Framework, NHS England standards, and wider Trust strategic priorities

The Trust recognises that meaningful anti-racism work requires transparency, accountability, cultural humility, and a willingness to continuously reflect, learn, and adapt in response to feedback and evidence.

This plan is supported by a separate Implementation Plan, which sets out the key actions, leads, timelines, and measures that will guide implementation from 2026.



Appendix 1:

Anti-Racism Delivery and Accountability Plan (Summary)

The full Delivery and Accountability Plan is published as a separate document. The table below provides a summary of the key priority areas and governance arrangements.

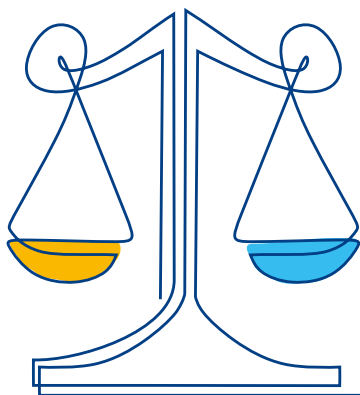
Priority Area	Key Actions	Lead	Governance
Leadership and Accountability	Embed anti-racism and cultural competency in leadership expectations and governance	Chief People Officer; Executive and Service Directors	People Plan Delivery Board; Service Delivery Board; People and Culture Committee; Trust Board
Workforce Equity and Culture	Strengthen anti-racism capability, psychologically safe leadership, and inclusive development	Chief People Officer; Executive and Service Directors	People and Culture Committee
Patient and Carer Equity (PCREF)	Reduce inequities in access, experience, restrictive practice, and outcomes	Chief Nurse; Director of People Participation	Quality Assurance Committee; People Participation Committee
Data, Insight and Transparency	Improve ethnicity recording, inequity analysis, and reporting	Chief People Officer; Chief Digital Officer and Executive Directors	People and Culture Committee; Digital Strategy Board
Co-production and Community Partnership	Strengthen lived experience involvement and VCSE partnerships	Chief Nurse; Director of People Participation	People Participation Committee; Quality Assurance Committee
Organisational Learning and Improvement	Embed learning from lived experience, feedback, and inequity trends	Chief People Officer; All Executive Directors	All Committees and Trust Board



Appendix 2:

Equity, Psychological Safety and Support During Periods of Heightened Tension

ELFT recognises that periods of heightened societal tension, hate incidents, protests, civil unrest, international events, or major incidents may disproportionately affect racialised communities and other marginalised groups.



As part of our commitment to anti-racism, cultural competency, inclusion, and psychologically safe leadership, the Trust aims to ensure that operational responses consider the differing experiences, vulnerabilities, and wellbeing needs of staff, service users, carers, and communities.

The principles below support leaders, managers, and teams to respond in a compassionate, culturally responsive, and inclusive way during periods of heightened tension or disruption.

1. Leadership Visibility and Psychological Safety

Leaders and managers should maintain visible, compassionate, and culturally responsive leadership during periods of heightened tension or uncertainty. This includes:

- creating psychologically safe environments where staff, service users and carers feel able to raise concerns
- supporting respectful dialogue while challenging racism, antisemitism and other forms of hate
- acknowledging the potential emotional impact of incidents on different communities
- promoting respectful dialogue and inclusive behaviours
- ensuring concerns relating to racism, discrimination, harassment, or safety are responded to appropriately and consistently





2. Inclusive and Culturally Responsive Communication

The Trust will seek to apply the same values, principles and decision-making framework irrespective of which community is affected by an external event or humanitarian crisis.

Communications should be timely, accessible, accurate, and sensitive to the differing experiences of staff and communities. Considerations include:

- using clear and inclusive language
- avoiding assumptions or unnecessarily inflammatory language
- recognising the emotional impact incidents may have on different groups
- ensuring staff know how to access support, escalation routes, and wellbeing resources
- providing accessible communication formats where appropriate

3. Staff Safety and Lone Working

The Trust should continue to promote safe working arrangements during periods of heightened risk or disruption. This includes:

- reinforcing incident reporting and escalation processes
- reviewing lone working arrangements and local safety procedures where appropriate
- promoting use of approved safety systems and check-in processes
- ensuring staff know how to access security support and advice
- considering the impact of travel disruption, community tensions, or local safety concerns on staff wellbeing

4. Wellbeing and Trauma Informed Support

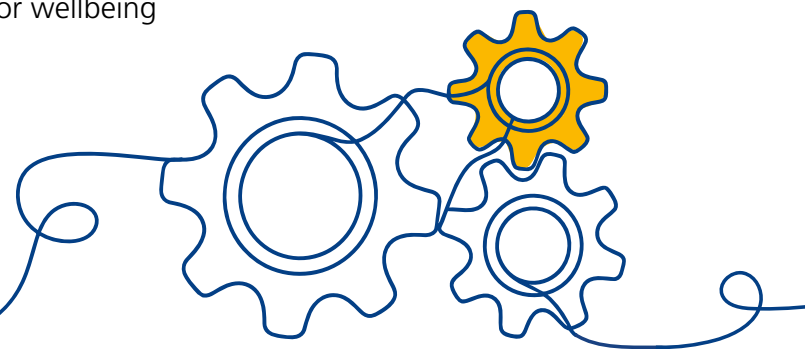
Managers and leaders should proactively promote staff wellbeing and access to support services, recognising that incidents may affect staff, service users, and carers differently depending on lived experience, identity, trauma, or previous experiences of discrimination. This includes:

- signposting occupational health, wellbeing, counselling, and employee assistance support
- encouraging supportive check-ins and reflective conversations
- considering trauma-informed approaches following distressing incidents or experiences

5. Flexibility and Practical Support

Where operationally possible, services should consider flexible and supportive approaches during periods of heightened tension. This may include:

- temporary adjustments to working arrangements
- flexible rostering or remote working where appropriate
- reviewing staffing and contingency arrangements
- supporting staff who express concerns relating to safety or wellbeing





6. Engagement, Inclusion and Co-Production

The Trust should continue to strengthen engagement with staff, service users, carers, staff networks, trade unions, and community partners. This supports:

- understanding the differing impact of incidents and disruption
- improving culturally responsive approaches
- strengthening trust and organisational learning
- ensuring lived experience and community voice inform future planning and improvement activity
- ensuring different communities have equitable opportunities to share concerns and influence organisational learning

7. Organisational Learning and Accountability

The Trust will continue to strengthen organisational learning relating to equity, inclusion, staff safety, and wellbeing during periods of disruption or heightened tension. This includes:

- reflecting on feedback, hate incidents, lived experience and organisational responses
- identifying opportunities for improvement
- considering equality impacts within operational responses and recovery activity
- embedding learning into future planning, training, communications, and leadership approaches





East London
NHS Foundation Trust

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