

## Inequalities – 2024/2025 Social Values – People Plan

### Identifying employment/skills inequality

With FedBucks representing all 47 Bucks GP practices, we have good insight into areas impacted by employment/skills inequality as we interact with patients and compare trends/issues across Bucks. We supplement this knowledge with Bucks Council information (eg JSNAs) & eg Indices of Deprivation (2019). Employment deprivation indicates greater effects eg High Wycombe (Disraeli ward), Aylesbury (Aylesbury Vale) & Chesham (Chiltern). These areas also map to deprivation in education, skills & training (also some impact in Princes Risborough & Stokenchurch & Radnage).

As a founding member of Bucks Health & Social Care Academy and part of its primary-care faculty, we have extensive experience of working with other Bucks partners to identify skills inequality for BHSCA to target via courses/events. We also sit on Bucks New University Board. We also identify skills inequalities is by talking to staff for their perspectives on why disparities exist & reviewing internal employment data. In addition to regular 1:1s supplementing our appraisals & pulse surveys, we will introduce reverse mentoring, which will help managers explore barriers faced by junior staff (especially those from ethnic minorities). Other information sources include exit interviews & complaints.

**MONITORING WORKFORCE FOR EQUALITY:** Since we pay staff according to assigned bands/grade that depend only on role requirements & qualifications/experience, we have no differences due to protected characteristics. Previous pay levels do not affect new starters' assignments. We monitor gender pay gap (7.66% versus 14.9% TUC 2023) & racial/gender diversity. We will be setting internal HR KPIs. We expect to include collection of disclosed equalities data within our payroll documentation next year.

### Tackling employment and skills inequality

#### a) Social-value strategy

FedBucks will use the Social Value Portal targets, outcomes & measures model to measure social value related to the themes of jobs, innovation, environment, social & growth (aligned to the Government Social-Value Model). Bucks Council also uses this TOMs model. The jobs theme includes action to tackle employment & skills inequality.

#### b) Equality during recruitment

FedBucks targets recruitment towards under-represented groups to encourage a workforce from wider & diverse backgrounds. We advertise in eg LGBT Jobs, Evenbreak, Restless, Ethnic Jobs, BME Jobs & Mumsnet. We will develop connections with Bucks employability services via Oasis Partnership & Adviza & other 3rd-sector organisations in our Bucks stakeholder map through we can promote employment opportunities & BHSCA. Our adverts refer to disability inclusion & we are registered as a Disability Confident Employer, Mindful Employer & an Armed Forces Covenant signatory. Aspects of our recruitment process that aid equity include name-blind selection, debiasing job descriptions/adverts, offering informal pre-application chats with potential for site visits to experience the healthcare setting. Interview best practice includes panels & offering reasonable adjustments. Processes are built on best practice & the ethos in our equalities-related policies, which align to requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

#### c) Ongoing tackling of employment/skills/pay inequality

**CULTURE:** FedBucks fosters an inclusive & open culture, allied to our values of caring, integrity, respect, excellence, listening & collaborative. Our vision is to be a brilliant place to work where we are trusted to provide remarkable, innovative healthcare services. Through listening groups, pulse surveys, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian & establishment of staff-selected staff networks, we are creating a psychologically safe environment where staff are comfortable to disclose information that will facilitate reasonable adjustments & remove promotion barriers & bias/discrimination. Staff networks will provide opportunity for FedBucks to

better understand barriers, discrimination & microaggressions faced by various staff groups. We encourage use of visible diversity support eg rainbow lanyards & See Me First or Pride pins.

**TRAINING:** Our range of training will increase understanding & awareness of inequalities (eg culture competence, disability confidence, mental health first aid, trauma-informed practice, unconscious bias). It will help us interact better with both colleagues & patients. Training such as management & HR masterclasses will help those being promoted to management positions & those participating in panel interviews.

**WELLBEING & OTHER INITIATIVES:** Initiatives in the wellbeing strand of our staff-retention strategy also aim to help with the higher levels of senior women being affected by burn out from constant work-environment stress (LeanIn.org & McKinsey 2021). Our anti-racism toolkit will include reverse mentoring, See Me First, allyship & active bystanders. Consultation on benefits package content will enhance their relevance (& value) to staff. FedBucks has a zero tolerance approach to staff bullying & harassment.

**ROLE MODELLING:** FedBucks is proud of the numbers of staff who have progressed up the organisation, providing visible proof to others of being able to progress to senior positions. Our Operations Director started as a receptionist, 2 Service Managers were despatchers/drivers & our Lead GP started as a trainee GP Registrar.

**DIVERSITY:** In addition to our workforce being more ethnically diverse than Bucks (eg 25.5% Asian versus 12.4%), we have good representation of women across our workforce, including in senior positions. Of salaried GPs & practitioners, 60.8% are women, our executive team & Board are 50% & 40% female, respectively. We see the positive effect with the UK pay gap being 14.9% (TUC Feb 2023), but FedBucks pay gap is 7.66%. We ensure pay **equity** across eg drivers (predominantly male) & administrators (predominantly female) by pay variation solely reflecting role requirements.

### **NHS Long Term Workforce Plan needs**

Our considerations include:

- ▶ Growing our own workforce though development opportunities to reach career-progression steps, (non)clinical apprenticeships, BHSCA & Bucks New University involvement & NHSE(HEE) connections for placements from Deanaries
- ▶ Varied skill mix across our services, deploying roles such as ANPs, Physician Associates, pharmacists, physiotherapists & the range of UCPs including nurses (prescribing & non-prescribing) & paramedics
- ▶ Retaining our existing workforce through our 3-strand retention strategy (Q2.2) eg flexible working policies that assist staff with caring & childcare responsibilities & NHS pension changes to encourage >50s to remain & recent retirees to return
- ▶ Widening participation through targeting recruitment to under-represented groups (as above)
- ▶ Reform of our technology eg use of Credentiaally to simplify & accelerate onboarding

We will be adding other NHS strategies to maximise effectiveness & deployment of effort.