



**Midlothian**  
**Health & Social Care**  
**Partnership**

# **Equalities Outcomes & Mainstreaming (IJB)**

**2021 – 2025**

# Equality in Midlothian

We believe that everyone should have equal opportunities. No one should have worse life chances because of their sex or gender, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. Equality does not mean that everybody should be treated in the same way; sometimes services should be provided in a different way to meet the different needs of people. This belief is supported in law by the Equality Act 2010.

Midlothian Integrated Joint Board (IJB) plans and allocates funding to all community health and social care services for adults and some hospital-based services. It directs the work of the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP).

We reviewed the evidence from the UK, Scotland, and Midlothian and worked with public bodies in Lothian such as NHS Lothian, to help us understand the biggest equality issues. We carried out a joint online consultation with partners across the Lothians (November – December 2020) and heard from **266 different people and groups**. We also held online public events and consulted with staff and groups.

## Protected Characteristics

It is against the law to treat a person or group of people differently, unfairly or exclude them because of the following 'protected characteristics':

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

People who share a protected characteristic, may:

- not have the same access to services as people without a protected characteristic
- be more likely to experience things such as hate crime, poor health, housing and poverty

This is because of many things including laws, policies and events in the past, or because they may have different needs which haven't been understood, provided for, or have been ignored.

# Our Equalities Outcomes 2021-2025

We will improve equality by focussing on groups and areas where there is the most discrimination, or the biggest inequalities and are areas we (IJB and HSCP) can change over the next 4 years.

They are focussed on the following areas - the General Equality Duty:

- Stopping discrimination and harassment.
- Making things more equal between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.
- Helping to build good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

**1. Improve access to health and social care services and information** – especially for older people, people with disabilities and people from minority ethnic groups.

**2. Improve access to community mental health support, information and treatment** – especially for people with disabilities, adults identifying as LGBT, and men.

**3. Improve safety and inclusivity of communities** – especially for people with disabilities, women people from ethnic minorities and adults identifying as LGBT.

**4. Ensure older people can enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms when residing in care or treatment facilities, or receiving care in their own home** including the right to make decisions about their care and the quality of their lives.

**5. The Midlothian Integration Joint Board will support the participation of, and more accurately reflect, the community it serves.**

# Mainstreaming Equality – day to day

Mainstreaming Equality means meeting the General Equality Duty in all day-to-day work of the HSCP. This includes the way decisions are made; the way people who work for and on behalf of us behave; how we decide how we spend money and measure how well we are doing, and how we improve our services.

## Current mainstreaming work 2019 - 2021

- **Staff training, awareness and understanding**

Employees of NHS Lothian and Midlothian Council can take part in their organisation's equality and diversity awareness training. All Health and Social Care Partnership staff were invited to attend a Human Rights and Commissioning workshop delivered by the British Institute for Human Rights in November 2020. This supported staff to include Human Rights in the commissioning, planning and delivery of public services.

- **Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA)**

An IIA helps us consider how a change to a service or a new proposal might impact groups of people. Training sessions on these have been organised by Midlothian Council. Completed IIAs are published on the Midlothian Council or NHS Lothian websites.

- **Integration Joint Board**

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Act) 2014 outlines who the members of the Integration Joint Board should be, and which members should have a vote. Membership includes citizens with lived experience of using health and care services and/or experience of caring for those who use health and care services, alongside local councillors, NHS Board members, staff from the Health and Social Care Partnership and a representative from voluntary organisations. A new expenses policy has been developed to support citizens in their roles on the board and ensure these roles are accessible.

Equalities are considered in business planning, Board meetings, other decision-making, and through other policy development and review mechanisms.

- **Gender Composition of Midlothian Integrated Joint Board**

On 18 March 2016 the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016 came into force. A new requirement exists for listed public bodies to publish the gender composition of their Boards, and to produce succession plans to increase the diversity (across all protected characteristics) of their Boards.

The Midlothian Integration Board consists of **4 male** voting members and **4 female** voting members.

- **Leadership and Vision**

Within its Strategic Plan, the IJB sets out its core value of equality “You should not be disadvantaged due to your ability, ethnicity or caring responsibilities. We will do everything we can to reduce health inequalities and respect your dignity and human rights in the planning of health and social care”. Public Protection is also listed “You should feel safe at home and in your community”

- **Health and Social Care Partnership Website (in development)**

This website will make it easier for people to access reports and plans for the HSCP and IJB - with features such as text-to-speech, reading and translation.

- **Engagement Strategy (draft – awaiting IIA)**

A new Engagement Strategy has been drafted to support the engagement of the HSCP with local communities and service users. It commits the IJB and the HSCP to ongoing engagement with people and partner organisations through representatives from the third sector, carers and people with lived experience on all formal planning groups including the IJB, the Strategic Planning Group and service area planning groups. The strategy provides a framework for planning groups, including those leading change programmes.

- **Data and Evidence**

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is updated quarterly to support the IJB and HSCP to understand the current and future health and social care needs of the citizens of Midlothian. This includes research on specific groups with protected characteristics, including older people, people with disabilities, people with mental health problems, people with complex needs and people with palliative care needs.

- **Partnership**

The HSCP contributes to the work of the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership (CPP). The CPP’s Single Midlothian Plan is focused on outcomes and actions that will address equality, diversity and poverty in Midlothian.

## **Mainstreaming work planned 2021-23**

- **Integration Joint Board**

A diversity succession plan for the IJB will be developed. Increasing representation of the board is a focus of one of our Equality Outcomes. The IJB induction and training programme is under review. It is proposed that equalities training will be offered.

- **Staff training, awareness and understanding**

Staff across the HSCP will have opportunities to improve their understanding, knowledge and skills around equality and diversity as well as an understanding of the public sector equality duty and its relevance to their roles. Building expertise across the Partnership will help embed equality and rights in service design, delivery and review.

Membership of The Midlothian Council Equalities Forum will be extended to Midlothian HSCP employees. This Forum is made up of employees representing all nine protected characteristics, and others who support the aims of the forum. The forum will be supported by the Equalities Engagement Officer and Corporate Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Officer. It works to embed equality and fairness of opportunity across the council and HSCP, and to contribute to employee and community equality initiatives. Where required equality and diversity training will be provided to Forum members.

- **Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA)**

IAs will be carried out on new policies and proposed service changes. Training on IIAs will be delivered by Midlothian Council and be offered to Midlothian HSCP staff and volunteers.

- **Health and Social Care Partnership Website**

The website will be developed to ensure a wide range of information on the HSCP is accessible to those with digital access.

- **Engagement**

Staff across the HSCP will be supported to implement the Engagement Strategy.

- **Data and Evidence**

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment will improve equality data that will aid understanding of current and emerging needs.