



South East Coast
Ambulance Service
NHS Foundation Trust



WORKFORCE RACE EQUALITY STANDARD REPORT 2026

V1 – August 2026



A message from our CEO

I am pleased to introduce this year's Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) report. WRES remains an important measure of how effectively we create a fair, inclusive and representative workplace where every colleague feels valued, respected and able to thrive.

This year's data shows positive progress alongside areas requiring continued focus. Recruitment outcomes have improved significantly, with BME candidates now more likely to be appointed from shortlisting than White candidates. Confidence in career progression continues to improve and reports of harassment, bullying and abuse from colleagues have reduced across both groups. Board representation is now proportionate to our workforce population.

However, disparities remain. BME colleagues continue to be more likely to enter formal disciplinary processes, experience discrimination at work and have lower access to non-mandatory training opportunities. These findings reinforce the importance of sustained action, strong leadership and evidence-based interventions.

We recognise that meaningful progress requires sustained focus and transparency. While several indicators show improvement, we will continue to use our data, colleague feedback and lived experience to better understand where inequalities persist and ensure targeted action is taken to address them. Through strong governance and leadership accountability, we remain committed to building a workplace where everyone feels included, respected and able to reach their full potential.

Our focus remains on strengthening staff networks, inclusive recruitment, staff development and the use of data and insight to drive improvement. Through our EDI Plan, we will continue to listen to colleagues, learn from lived experience and hold ourselves accountable for delivering meaningful and lasting change.

I would like to thank our colleagues, members of the Inspire Network, managers and partners who continue to share their experiences and help us build a workplace where every colleague feels valued, respected and able to reach their full potential.

Jen Allen

South-East Coast Ambulance NHS Trust



A message from our Inspire Network



The Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) is much more than a set of statistics. Behind every indicator is a colleague's experience, and every figure represents an opportunity for us to learn, improve and create a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected and included.

As Chair of Inspire, I have had the privilege of listening to colleagues from across our Trust share their experiences, aspirations and ideas. Whilst this year's report highlights encouraging progress in areas such as career progression, leadership development and reductions in bullying and harassment, it also reminds us that there is still more work to do to ensure equity is consistently experienced by all colleagues.

True inclusion is not achieved through policies alone. It is created through everyday behaviours, compassionate leadership, meaningful conversations and a genuine willingness to listen to lived experience. The Inspire Network is proud to work alongside colleagues, our Executive Team and partner staff networks to influence positive change, challenge inequality where it exists and celebrate the diversity that strengthens our organisation.

I would like to thank every colleague who has shared their experiences, participated in our events and supported the work of Inspire over the past year. Your voices continue to shape the future of our Trust.

Together, we will continue building a workplace where everyone feels they belong, where opportunity is open to all, and where every colleague can thrive and achieve their full potential.

Amjad Nazir
Chair Inspire Network



Inspire
Cultural Diversity Network

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INTRODUCTION

The Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) is a mandatory requirement for all NHS organisations with more than 250 staff. Its purpose is to identify and address disparities in the workplace experience of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) colleagues compared with their White counterparts.

WRES provides a critical evidence base to measure progress against our EDI Action Plan, to hold ourselves accountable for change and to ensure we are building a workplace that is fair, inclusive and representative of the communities we serve.

As with previous years, this WRES analysis draws on two core datasets:

- Workforce data extracted from the **Electronic Staff Record (ESR)** as at 31 March 2026, including headcount by ethnicity, pay band, recruitment and disciplinary processes.
- Staff experience data from the 2025 **NHS Staff Survey**, published in spring 2026, which captures the lived experiences of staff across areas such as bullying, harassment, discrimination, and career progression.

The two data sources together provide a balanced picture of both the structural and cultural aspects of race equality within SECamb.

Percentages are based on staff self-declaration.

The WRES covers nine indicators, grouped into three broad areas:

1. **Workforce composition and processes:** representation by pay band, recruitment, disciplinary outcomes and access to training.
2. **Staff experience:** perceptions of career progression, bullying/harassment and discrimination at work.
3. **Leadership:** representation at Board level.

WRES is integrated into SECamb's wider EDI plan, aligned to the EDI four focus areas:

- **Staff networks:** stronger Inspire leadership, clear objectives, and effective sponsorship
- **Inclusive recruitment:** fairer processes, improved progression pathways, and stronger senior representation
- **Staff development:** targeted programmes, including the Ascend programme and mentoring
- **Data insights:** the People Scorecard and Board oversight to track progress

KEYS & SYMBOLS & DEFINITIONS



Positive trend, evidence of improvement



Negative trend, area for improvement



No significant improvement/deterioration



Shift beyond parity – Keep under review

KEY FINDINGS

Data for indicators 1-3 and 9 are taken from the Employee Staff Record(ESR) Indicators 4 – 8 from National Staff Survey



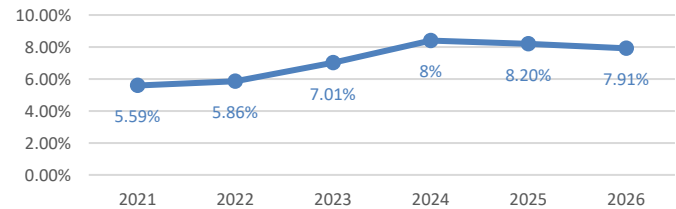
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— BME colleagues — White colleagues *HBA = Harassment, Bullying or Abuse

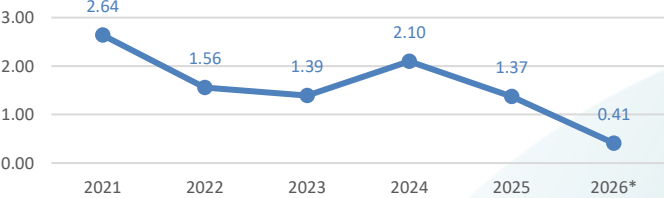
01↔

Workforce representation



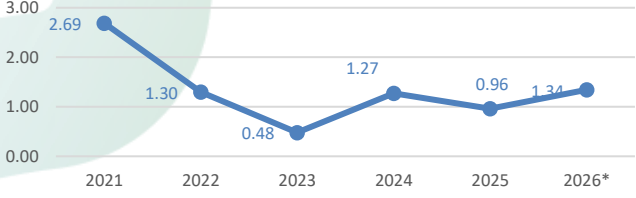
02↓

Relative likelihood of White candidates compared to BME candidates being appointed from shortlisting



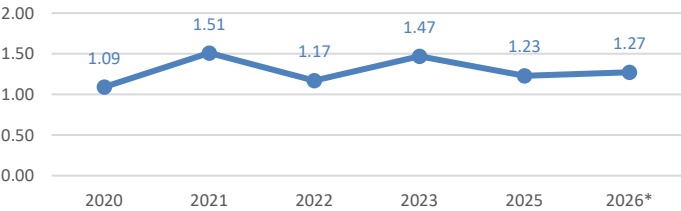
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Relative likelihood of BME staff entering formal disciplinary proceedings compared to White staff



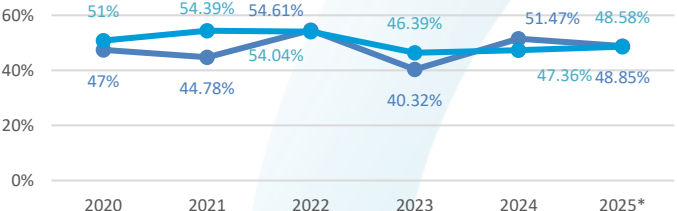
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Relative likelihood of white staff accessing non-mandatory training compared to BME staff



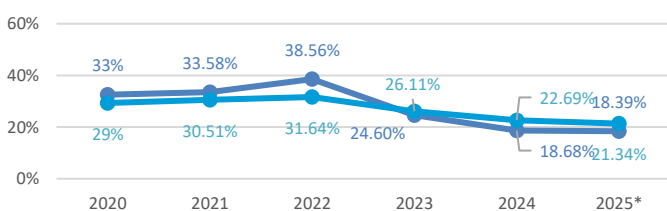
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Percentage of staff experiencing HBA from patients



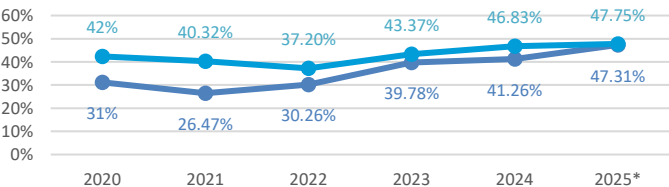
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Percentage of staff experiencing HBA from staff



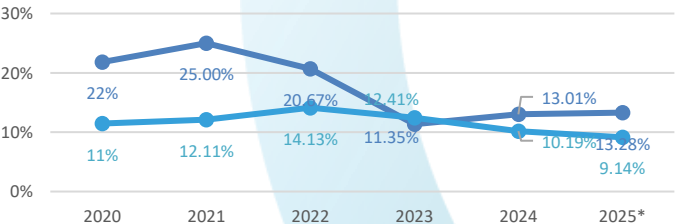
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Percentage of staff believing that the organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion



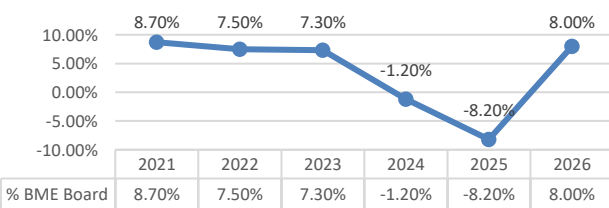
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Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination

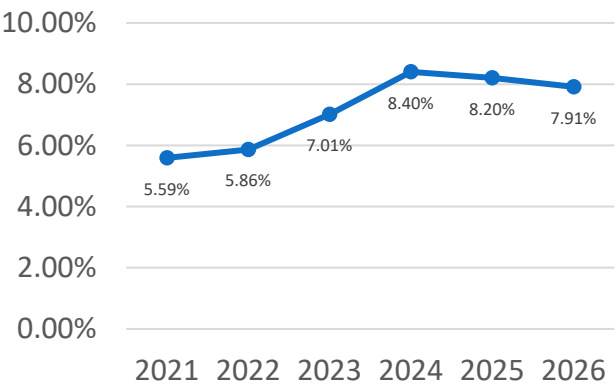


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Board representation

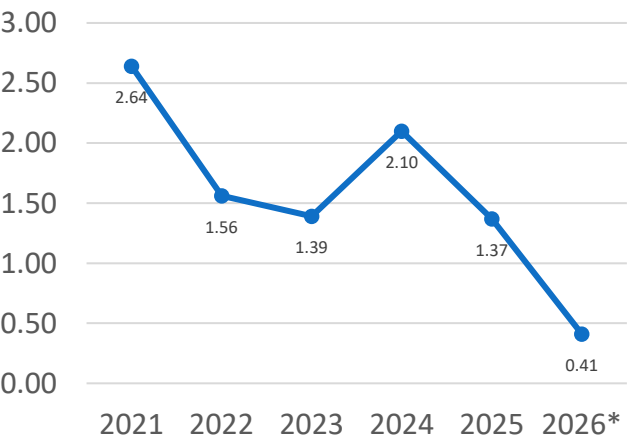


Indicator 1 | Workforce representation



This indicator compares the proportion of BME staff across Agenda for Change (A4C) pay bands with the overall workforce. In 2026, **7.9% of SECamb staff** identified as BME (down from 8.2% in 2025). Representation varies by band, with higher proportion of BME colleagues in Bands 2 – 5 and lower representation at Senior Bands.

Indicator 2 | Relative likelihood of White candidates compared to BME candidates being appointed from shortlisting



This represents a significant improvement, moving from inequity (1.37) to a position beyond parity (0.41), where BME candidates are now more likely to be appointed from shortlisting. This demonstrates strong progress in reducing barriers within recruitment. However, as the ratio is now below 1.00, indicating a shift beyond parity, this will be kept under review to ensure recruitment processes remain consistently fair, balanced and evidence-based for all groups.

*Workforce data from 31 Mar 2026 and Staff Survey results published in 2026 (2025 survey)



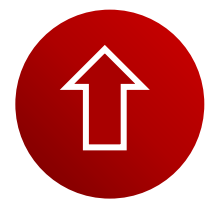
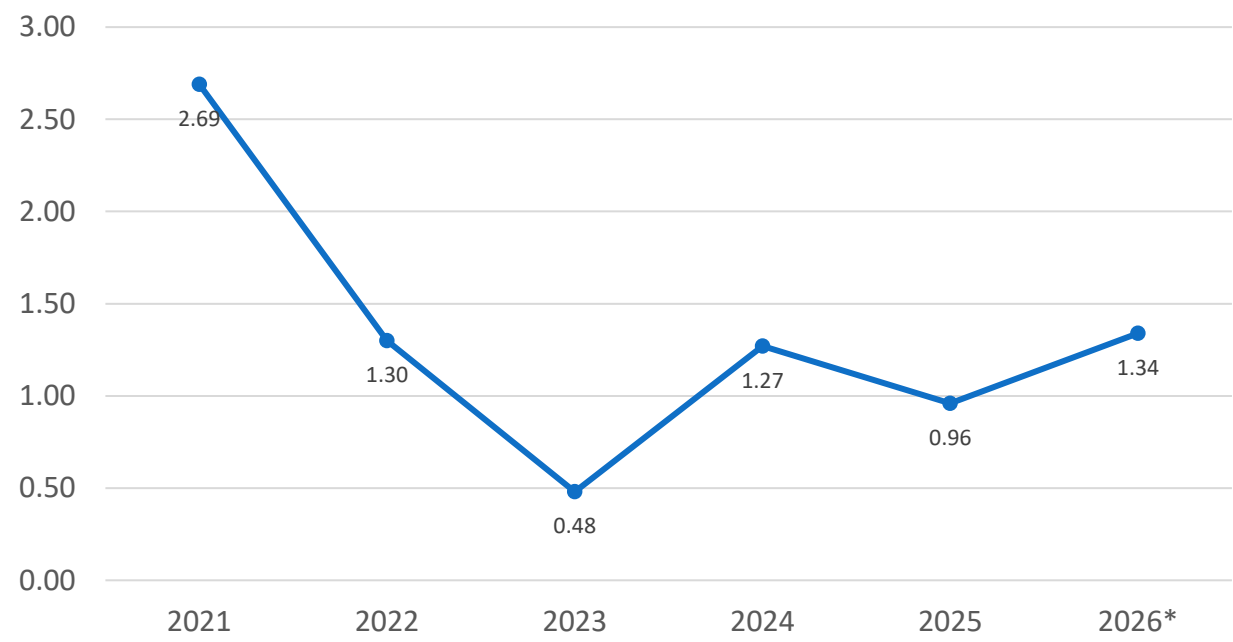
ACHIEVED TO DATE

- Workforce representation has remained broadly stable. The March 2026 Ethnicity Pay Gap Report identified that only 2.1% of colleagues have not declared their ethnicity, with targeted engagement continuing to improve data quality and reporting accuracy.
- Recruitment equity has improved significantly, with appointment ratios now beyond parity and at their most favourable position in the last five years, demonstrating positive progress in reducing barriers within recruitment processes.
- In response to workforce data and colleague feedback, SECamb launched its first Global Majority Nursing and Leadership Event in May 2026. Learning from the event has already informed tangible actions, including the expansion of the ASCEND leadership programme to further support the development and progression of Global Majority colleagues across the Trust.

ACTIVITY PLANNED

- Continue to monitor workforce representation, recruitment outcomes and ethnicity data across Directorates, using insights to inform targeted action where inequalities are identified.
- Continue engagement with Higher Education Institutions and external partners, including Air Ambulance services, to improve diversity within future talent pipelines.
- Deliver targeted outreach and careers engagement events, including a planned careers event in November 2026, to increase awareness of opportunities within SECamb amongst underrepresented communities.
- Launch ASCEND Cohort 5 in October 2026, providing leadership development, mentoring and sponsorship opportunities to support the progression of Global Majority colleagues into leadership roles.
- Roll out Microaggression Awareness Training across the Trust from September 2026 to support inclusive behaviours, increase awareness and strengthen psychological safety for all colleagues.
- Continue delivery of actions arising from the Lord Mann Review, embedding relevant recommendations into the Trust's EDI Plan and strengthening anti-racism leadership, accountability and workforce equality outcomes

Indicator 3 | Relative likelihood of BME staff entering formal disciplinary proceedings compared to White staff



Compares the likelihood of BME staff entering formal disciplinary proceedings compared with White staff. A ratio of 1.0 indicates parity. In 2026 there has been an increase to 1.34 BME colleagues entering formal disciplinaries compared to white colleagues, this is the highest discrepancy since 2021 but is still significantly down on 2021’s figure.

**Workforce data from 31 Mar 2026 and Staff Survey results published in 2026 (2025 survey). A ratio of 1.0 indicates equity; higher values show disproportionate impact on disabled staff.*

ACHIEVED TO DATE

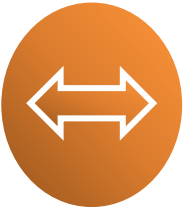
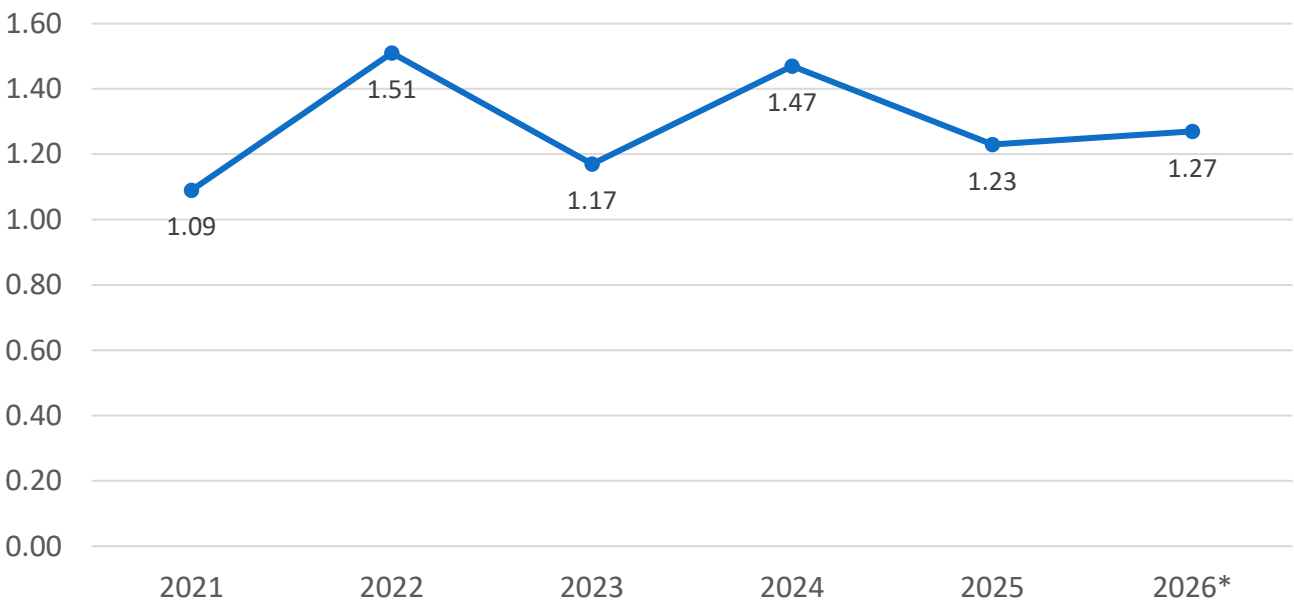
- Early Resolution and Mediation Service embedded across the Trust from February 2026, providing colleagues and managers with greater access to informal resolution and restorative approaches.
- 35 workplace mediation cases have been successfully resolved over the past 12 months, avoiding the need for formal processes and reducing the impact of workplace conflict on those involved.
- Implementation of the Managing Conduct Policy and Resolution Policy in June 2026, strengthening the Trust’s approach to resolving concerns fairly, consistently and at the earliest opportunity.
- Ongoing support and guidance for managers to promote fair, proportionate and consistent people management practices across the organisation.
- Enhanced investigation training for managers to support fair, evidence-based and consistent decision-making, helping to strengthen confidence in formal processes and reduce the disproportionate likelihood of Global Majority colleagues entering disciplinary procedures.

ACTIVITY PLANNED

- Continue to reduce disproportionality through the promotion of early resolution approaches, including mediation and restorative interventions, while strengthening awareness and accessibility of informal resolution pathways for colleagues experiencing workplace conflict.
- Work in partnership with Staff Networks, Strategic People Partners and managers to review workforce trends and colleague experiences, ensuring confidence in the fairness, consistency and transparency of people management processes.
- Provide quarterly assurance reporting to EMB through the EDI Dashboard, monitoring disciplinary outcomes by ethnicity and applying the Lord Mann Review’s “explain or reform” principle to identify, understand and address any persistent disparities.

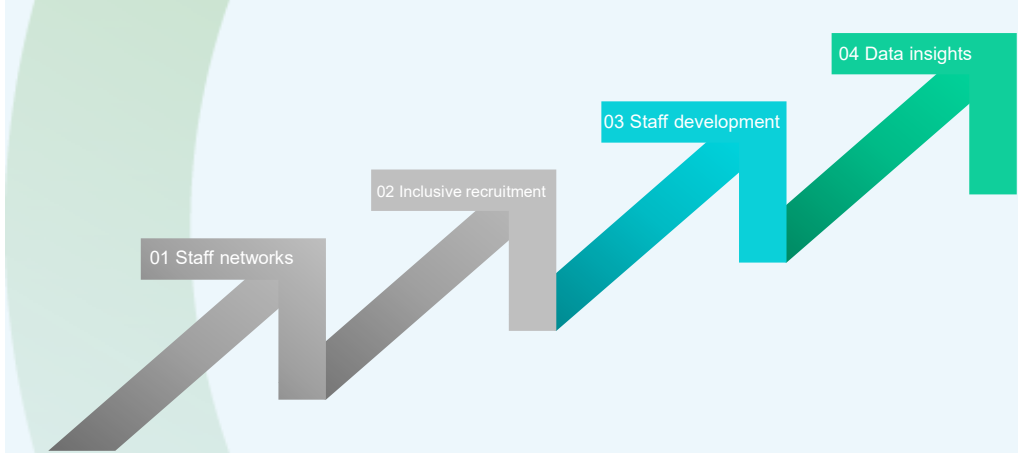


Indicator 4 | Relative likelihood of White staff accessing non-mandatory training compared to BME staff



Measures the relative likelihood of BME staff reporting access to non-mandatory training, learning or CPD compared with White staff. A value of **1.0** = parity. In 2026, White staff were 1.27 times more like than BME staff to access non-mandatory training. This remains broadly consistent with 2025, leaving BME staff at a disadvantage in this metric.

**Workforce data from 31 Mar 2026 and Staff Survey results published in 2026 (2025 survey). A ratio of 1.0 indicates equity; higher values show disproportionate impact on disabled staff.*



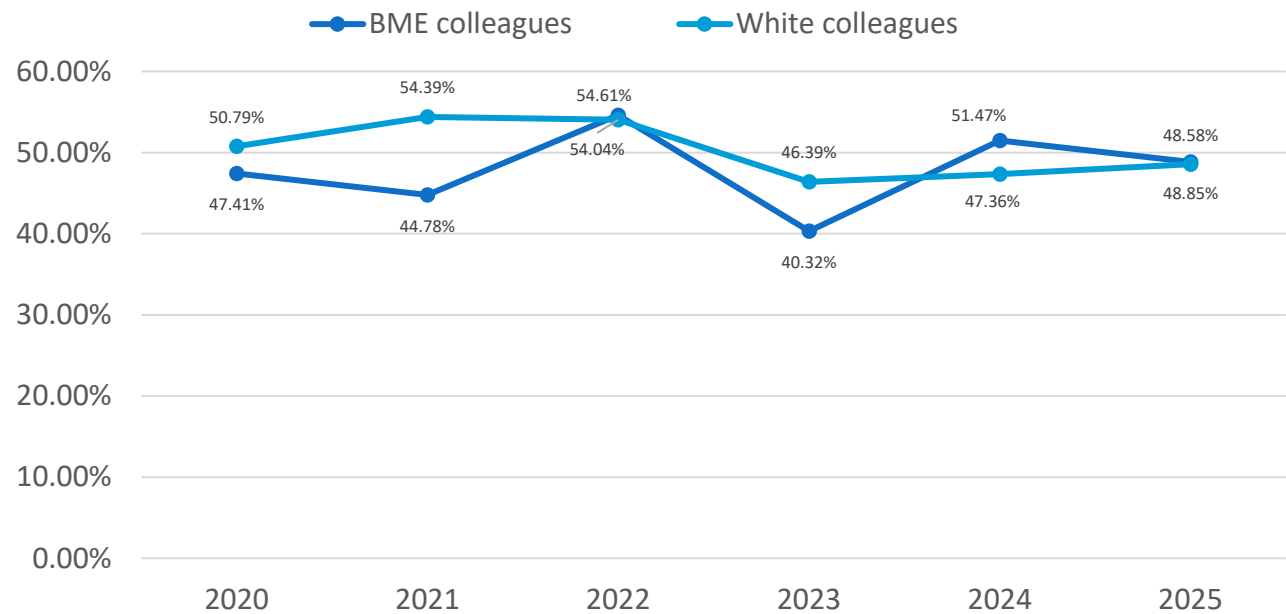
ACHIEVED TO DATE

- Development of Nursing Career Mapping to support the Nursing Blueprint and strengthen career progression opportunities for Global Majority colleagues.
- Successful delivery of ASCEND Cohorts 3 and 4 during 2026, providing targeted leadership development to support the progression, visibility and representation of Global Majority colleagues across the Trust.
- Implementation of a Training and Education Panel, providing greater transparency and support for colleagues accessing development opportunities, including the Training and Education Bursary Scheme.
- Launch of the Trust's Leadership Framework and Development Offer on The Zone, providing colleagues with accessible and inclusive development resources to support career growth, leadership capability and continuous professional development.

ACTIVITY PLANNED

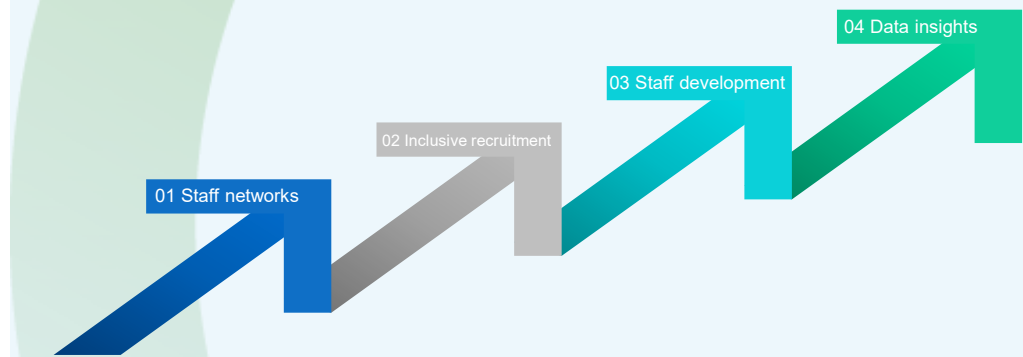
- Launch ASCEND Cohort 5 in October 2026, with all participants matched to a mentor to support their leadership development, career progression and future leadership aspirations.
- Roll out Trust-wide Microaggression Awareness Training from September 2026, reinforcing the Trust's commitment to fostering a respectful, inclusive and psychologically safe working environment for all colleagues.
- Provide development opportunities for EOC colleagues to participate in the preparation and delivery of key skills programmes through their local Operational Units, helping to build capability, confidence and experience in education and workforce development.
- Support colleagues to undertake Level 3 Teaching and Assessing qualifications, increasing access to development opportunities and strengthening the Trust's future educator and assessor workforce.

Indicator 5 | Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, service users, their relatives or the public



BME staff: 48.58% reported harassment, bullying or abuse (HBA). White staff: 48.85% reported HBA. There is less than half a percentage point difference between both staff groups, with BME staff incidents declining by almost 3%, and white staff reporting a 1.5 increase.. The data shows a high overall prevalence across both groups (nearly half of staff who completed the survey reported being affected).

**Workforce data from 31 Mar 2026 and Staff Survey results published in 2026 (2025 survey). A ratio of 1.0 indicates equity; higher values show disproportionate impact on disabled staff.*



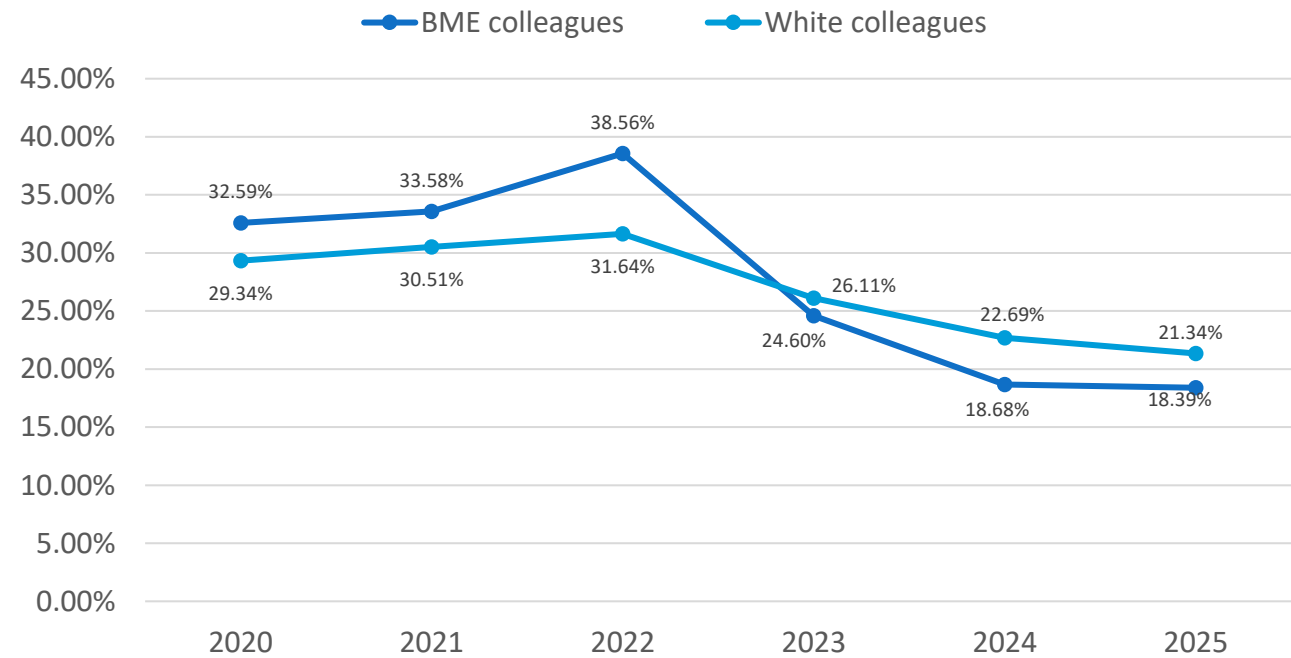
ACHIEVED TO DATE

- Continued expansion of body-worn camera usage and lone-worker safety measures, supporting the Trust's wider approach to reducing workplace conflict, enhancing staff safety and promoting colleague wellbeing.
- Rollout of the lone-worker application across services, alongside a review of history-marking processes, including the implementation of a pilot initiative within Surrey to strengthen risk management and staff protection.
- Engagement with the Shadow Board to help inform and shape the Trust's Violence and Abuse Reduction Programme, ensuring staff perspectives and lived experience are embedded within improvement activity.
- Launch of a targeted violence and abuse reduction initiative in Brighton, using enhanced local intelligence and data analysis to identify risk factors and support preventative interventions.
- 3,578 colleagues have completed Conflict Resolution Training, representing 90.02% compliance, strengthening the Trust's capability to manage challenging situations, reduce conflict and support safer working environments.

ACTIVITY PLANNED

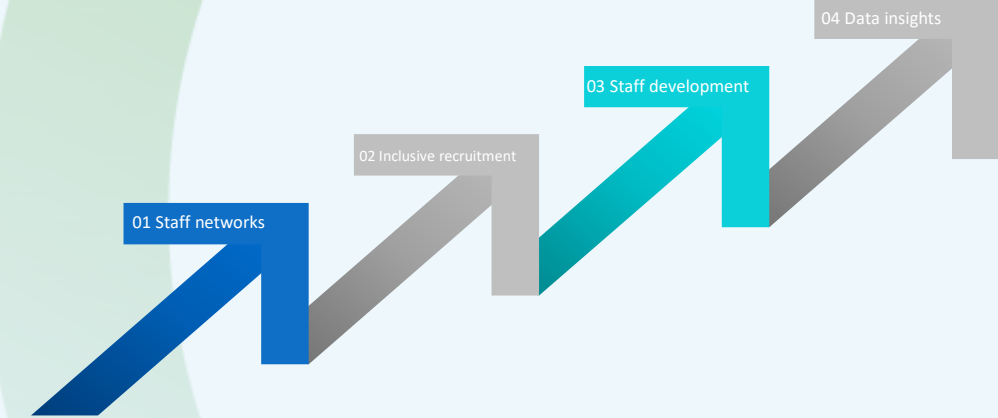
- Continue to analyse violence, aggression and abuse data to identify trends, root causes and opportunities for targeted prevention, early intervention and risk reduction.
- Use insights from data analysis to inform and implement evidence-based actions aimed at reducing incidents, improving staff safety and enhancing colleague wellbeing.
- Evaluate the impact of the Brighton Violence and Abuse Reduction Programme and, where successful outcomes are demonstrated, explore opportunities to replicate effective interventions across other localities.
- Maintain engagement with colleagues, Staff Networks and the Shadow Board to ensure staff voice and lived experience continue to shape the development of violence and abuse reduction initiatives.
- Introduce Action Cards for telephone-based colleagues, providing practical guidance and a consistent approach to responding to, recording and reporting incidents of abuse.

Indicator 6 | Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff



For the second consecutive year BME colleagues have reported less bullying and harassment than white colleagues, both of these figures have dropped since 2024.

**Workforce data from 31 Mar 2025 and Staff Survey results published in 2026 (2025 survey). A ratio of 1.0 indicates equity; higher values show disproportionate impact on disabled staff.*



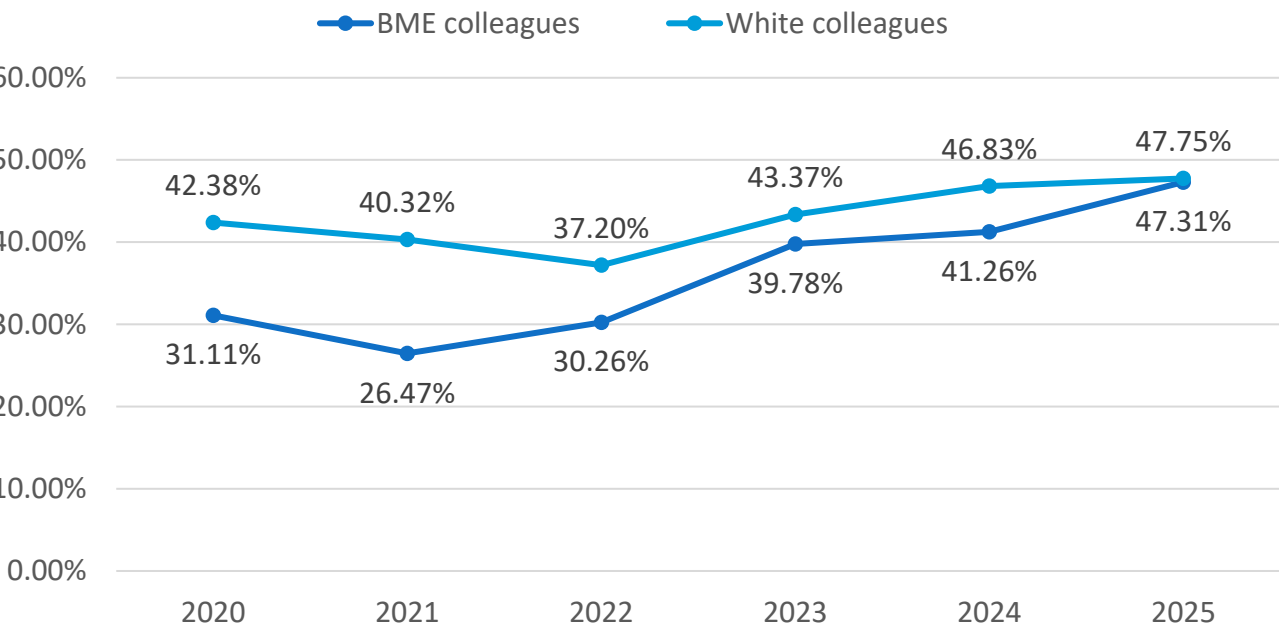
ACHIEVED TO DATE

- Achieved a sustained reduction in reports of harassment from staff since 2022, demonstrating positive progress.
- Continued to strengthen support mechanisms through Staff Networks and Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, providing safe and trusted spaces for colleagues to raise concerns, share experiences and access support.
- Delivered SECamb's first Leadership Conference in October 2025, attended by over 200 leaders and led by Professor Michael West, with a focus on compassionate leadership and creating inclusive workplace cultures.
- Embedded compassionate leadership as a core organisational principle, integrating it throughout leadership development programmes, learning initiatives and corporate communications as a key behavioural expectation aligned to Trust values. Promoted a culture of inclusion, belonging and psychological safety through consistent leadership messaging, development opportunities and colleague engagement activities.
- Introduction of new Resolution Policy in June 26 and updated Sexual Safety Policy

ACTIVITY PLANNED

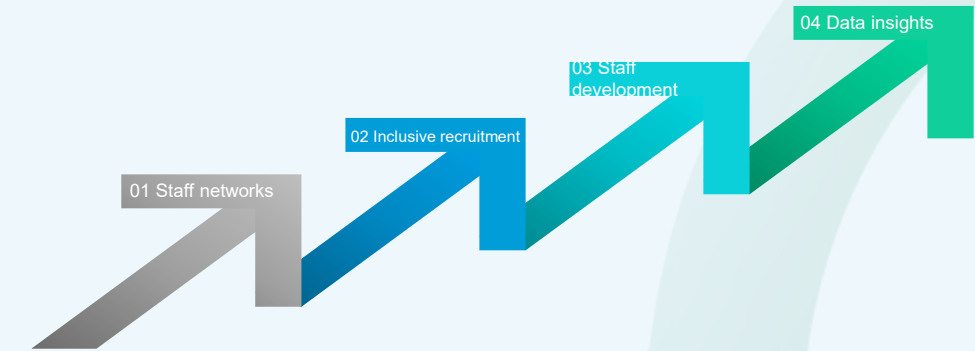
- Expand compassionate leadership development opportunities to ensure leaders at all levels are equipped to foster inclusive and respectful working environments.
- Continue to strengthen the role of Staff Networks and Freedom to Speak Up Guardians in informing organisational improvement and supporting under-represented colleagues.

Indicator 7 | Percentage of staff believing that the organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion



The positive trend for all colleagues believing the organisation provide equal opportunities continues. Both White & BME colleagues sit at 47% for this metric.

**Workforce data from 31 Mar 2025 and Staff Survey results published in 2026 (2025 survey)*



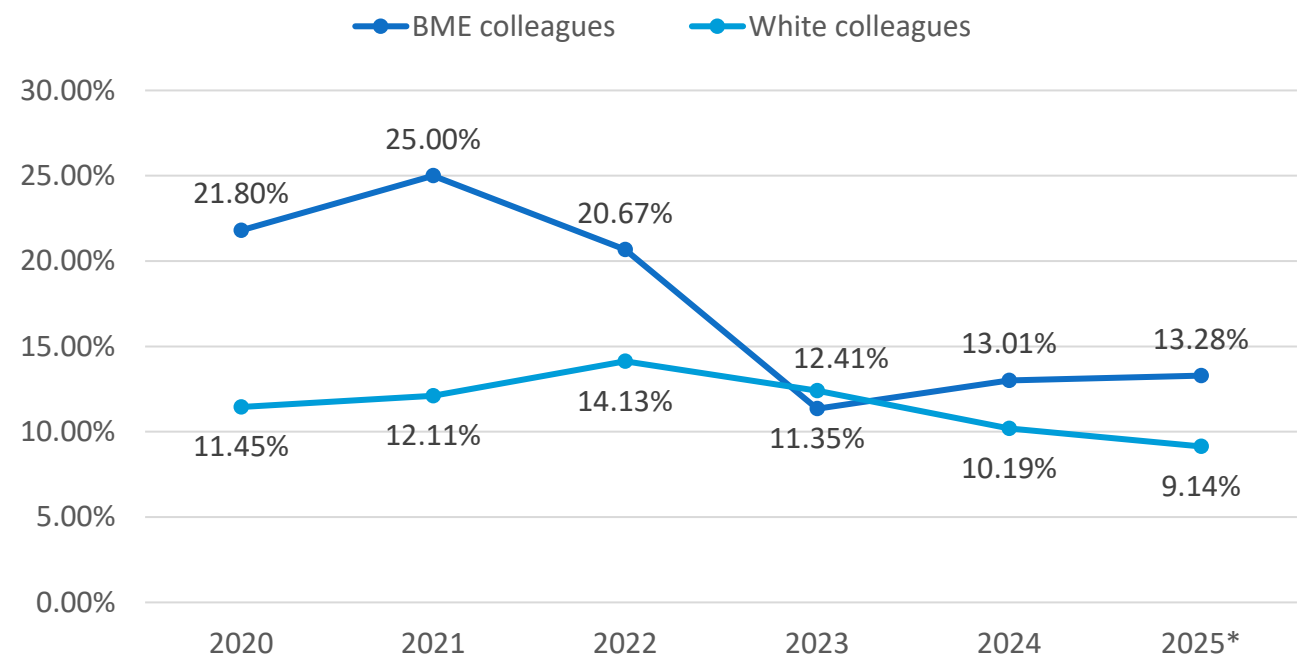
ACHIEVED TO DATE

- Launched and expanded targeted leadership and development programmes, including Springboard, Ascend, Mates to Managers and Aspiring Leaders, creating accessible development opportunities for colleagues from a range of backgrounds and career stages.
- Delivered SECamb's first Leadership Conference, attended by over 200 leaders and focused on compassionate and inclusive leadership, reinforcing the importance of creating equitable opportunities for all colleagues to develop and progress.
- Increased visibility of development opportunities through regular EDI communications, colleague briefings and promotion of learning opportunities across the Trust.

ACTIVITY PLANNED

- Maintain a centrally monitored pool of trained diverse staff for allocation to all Band 7+ recruitment and promotion panels
- Strengthen workforce data analysis to better understand progression outcomes for global majority colleagues and identify opportunities for targeted interventions.
- Embed progression metrics into the EDI data dashboard and monitor across divisions.
- Launch microaggression awareness training from September 2026 to support an inclusive workplace culture where all colleagues feel valued, respected and able to achieve their potential.
- Following on from the Trusts successful Global Majority event , work has commenced to identify career development routes that our GM colleagues in areas that previously may not have been considered such as operations and education .

Indicator 8 | Percentage of staff experiencing discrimination at work from manager / team leader or other colleagues



Whilst a small increase in reported discrimination has been observed during 2026, this sits alongside a reduction in bullying, harassment and abuse from colleagues and a substantial increase in colleague confidence regarding equal opportunities for career progression and promotion. This suggests that actions to improve inclusion, leadership and development opportunities are having a positive impact. However, the Trust recognises that discrimination remains an area requiring focused attention and will continue to work with colleagues, staff networks and leaders to better understand and address the factors contributing to these experiences.

**Staff Survey results published in 2026 (2025 survey)*



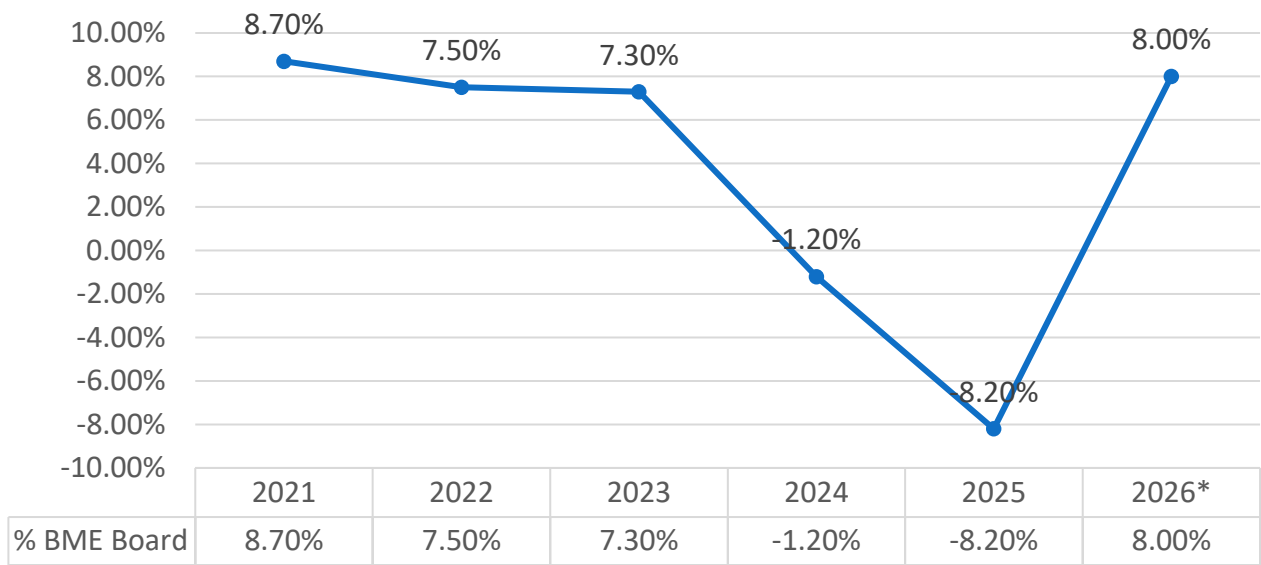
ACHIEVED TO DATE

- Increased colleague confidence in equal opportunities for career progression and promotion from 41.26% in 2025 to 47.75%.in 2026.
- Strengthen escalation and feedback processes to ensure confidence in responses.
- Continued to strengthen EDI governance, WRES reporting and workforce data analysis to identify and address inequalities.

ACTIVITY PLANNED

- Strengthen manager accountability through clearer expectations, training and appraisal measures
- Undertake a deeper analysis of discrimination data to identify themes, hotspots and experiences affecting global majority colleagues.
- Launch Microaggression Awareness Training in September 2026 to increase awareness of behaviours that may contribute to discrimination or exclusion.
- The differing trends across these indicators highlight that experiences of discrimination are often more complex than bullying and harassment alone and may relate to wider perceptions or experiences linked to race, career opportunities, decision-making, inclusion, workplace culture or individual interactions.
- Whilst the increase is relatively small, it demonstrates that further action is required to understand the underlying causes and continue improving the experience of global majority colleagues across the organisation.

Indicator 9 | Board representation



This indicator compares the ethnic diversity of the Trust Board, as declared on ESR (both voting and non-voting members) with the ethnic profile of the overall workforce. It shows whether leadership is proportionate to the staff population.

As of 31 March 2026, 7.9% of the workforce had declared a BME background in ESR, compared with 8% of the Board.

From 2021–2023, Board representation was broadly proportionate to the workforce (around 7–9%), during 2024 and 2025 these figures had dipped, but the most recent data from 2026 shows an increase back up to 8%

*Workforce data (ESR) from 31 Mar 2026



ACHIEVED TO DATE

- All Trust Board Members have EDI Objectives.
- Quarterly reporting of EDI Plan to People and Culture and EMB to strengthen governance and assurance.
- Executive and non-executive sponsors for all staff networks.
- Board development days included lived experience contributions from BME staff.
- Strengthen talent pipeline and succession planning for BME colleagues aspiring to senior leadership.
- 2026 - 7.9% of SECAmbs workforce declared a BME background in ESR compared with 8% of the board demonstrating proportionate leadership to staff population.

ACTIVITY PLANNED

- Launch of reverse mentoring in December 2026 to support and actively sponsored by Executive directors to role model inclusive leadership.
- Continued focus on talent pipelines and succession planning for BME colleagues to aspiring senior leaders, working with Regional Succession Group.

Conclusion and next steps

Focus area	Next steps / activities planned	Linked WRES indicator(s)
1. Staff networks	• Support newly appointed Staff Network Chairs through Radius Training to strengthen confidence in sharing lived experience and influencing organisational change. • Engage with Staff Networks and divisional teams to review disciplinary trends and colleague experiences, ensuring confidence in organisational fairness. • Continue to engage Staff Networks and the Shadow Board in the development and evaluation of violence and abuse reduction initiatives. • Strengthen the role of Staff Networks and Freedom to Speak Up Guardians in supporting under-represented colleagues and informing organisational improvement. • Launch reverse mentoring with Executive sponsorship to strengthen inclusive leadership, understanding of lived experience and cultural competence.	1, 3, 5, 6, 9
2. Inclusive recruitment	• Monitor workforce distribution and recruitment outcomes across directorates and implement targeted actions where disparities are identified. • Continue to strengthen the use of diverse recruitment panels across the Trust. • Increase engagement with Higher Education Institutions and external partners to strengthen diversity within future workforce pipelines, including operational and specialist roles. • Deliver outreach and careers engagement activity to encourage applications from under-represented communities. • Maintain a centrally monitored pool of trained diverse panel members for Band 7+ recruitment and promotion processes.	1, 2, 7

Conclusion and next steps

Focus area	Next steps / activities planned	Linked WDES indicator(s)
3. Staff development	• Launch ASCEND Cohort 5, including mentoring support, to strengthen career development and progression opportunities for Global Majority colleagues. • Launch Trust-wide Microaggression Awareness Training to support a respectful, inclusive and psychologically safe workplace • Continue implementation of early resolution and mediation approaches to support fair and proportionate people management practices. • Extend leadership development opportunities focused on compassionate, inclusive and respectful leadership behaviours. • Provide further opportunities for colleagues to access development pathways, including teaching, assessing and educational delivery programmes. • Identify and promote career development routes into areas such as operations and education following feedback from Global Majority colleagues. • Strengthen manager accountability through training, performance expectations and appraisal measures to support inclusive leadership and reduce discrimination. • Continue talent management, succession planning and leadership pipeline development for Global Majority colleagues aspiring to senior leadership roles. • Continue violence reduction initiatives, including evaluation of the Brighton pilot and implementation of evidence-based interventions to improve staff safety.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
4. Data insights	• Provide quarterly EDI Dashboard reporting to EMB on disciplinary outcomes by ethnicity, applying the Lord Mann Review "Explain or Reform" principle where disparities persist. • Continue analysis of violence and aggression data to identify trends, root causes and targeted interventions. • Strengthen workforce data analysis to better understand progression outcomes for Global Majority colleagues and inform targeted interventions. • Embed progression metrics within the EDI Dashboard and monitor outcomes across divisions. • Undertake deeper analysis of discrimination data to identify themes, hotspots and experiences affecting Global Majority colleagues. Continue monitoring workforce ethnicity declaration rates to improve data quality and workforce insight. • Implement and monitor delivery of the Trust's EDI Plan through quarterly reporting to EMB and People & Culture Committee, ensuring progress against all WRES indicators is tracked and evaluated.	1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9