

Achieving age equality in health and social care: how you can help

This document provides information about how you can help local services achieve age equality and end age discrimination in health and social care.

It tells you about a new requirement for NHS organisations and local authorities to work together with communities and representative groups to prepare for The Equality Act.

The Equality Act 2010

will ban age discrimination (the treatment of some people less favourably than others because of their age) in all services, including health care and social care from 2012.

From 2011, public bodies will be required to promote equality between all age groups.

NHS
South West

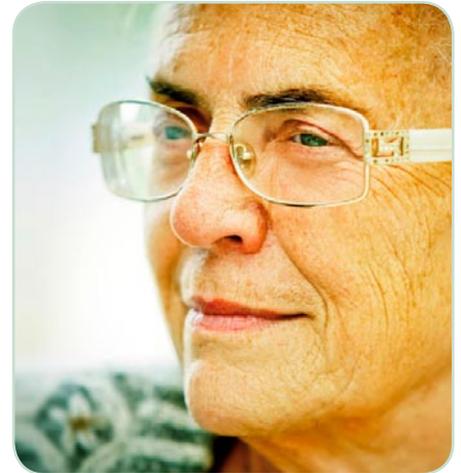
Directors of
adass
adult social services

DH Department
of Health

Why age equality matters

“Age discrimination and unfair treatment based on age have no place in a fair society, which values all its members.”

Department of Health



- Age discrimination is one of the least discussed but most often encountered forms of social injustice in the UK.
- The number of people aged over 85 is set to double in the next two decades. It will become more important than ever to make sure that older people are treated fairly and play a full part in society.
- 60 per cent of people over 65 believe age discrimination exists in the everyday lives of older people, and 64 per cent think health and social care staff don't always treat older people with dignity.

Auditing age equality in your local services

Health and social care is one of the main areas in which people report age discrimination. The 'Achieving Age Equality' report (details overleaf) recommended that local services work together to undertake a **joint audit** of age discrimination and age equality across all aspects of health and social care. Those involved would include local authorities, NHS organisations, voluntary and independent sector providers, community groups, patient/user groups and older people's forums and networks.

See page 2 for more useful information, facts and figures

Contact your local primary care trust for more information about how to get involved and to find out who is leading the audit in your area.

Browse the Achieving Age Equality toolkit at www.southwest.nhs.uk/age-equality.html

The age equality audit tool: criteria

The audit tool is web-based, making it easy to distribute to all likely users, and automating parts of the assessment process so that participants can get instant feedback which they've completed the audit process.

The tool helps you to assess the local situation according to 54 criteria. These are grouped into four headings. The first grouping of criteria addresses the extent to which existing systems and structures promote age equal services:

● Organisational and System Readiness

Three further groupings cover services where we know achieving age equality will pose a challenge:

● Mental Health

● Community-based Health and Social Care

● Acute Care and Treatment

Preview the audit tool at www.southwest.nhs.uk/age-equality.html

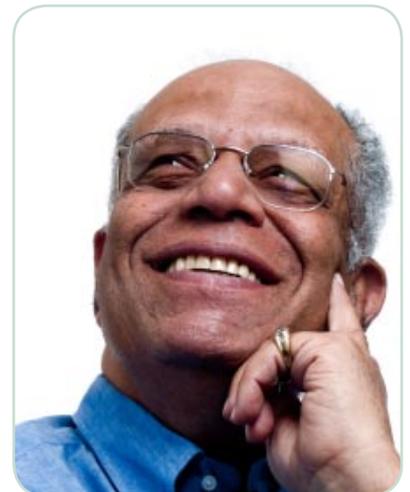
Getting involved in your local audit

Each area will be encouraged to complete their first audit between May and September 2010, using these steps to use the results to improve local services:

- 1 Start the process:** The Primary Care Trust chief executive and director of adult social care will oversee the local audit. A small group will probably be established to undertake the audit.
- 2 Engage public and staff** in understanding why ending age discrimination is important. A wide range of people will need to be involved – this is why it's important that you know how to get involved in your area.
- 3 Understand the current position:** using a web-based audit tool, each local team will assess local performance in relation to a series of 'achieving age equality' criteria.
- 4 Develop a joint local action plan** to address problem areas and build on good practice.

Our aim...

Most experiences of age discrimination involve insensitive behaviour and negative stereotypes about older people that are rooted in ageist attitudes. The audit tool will help identify where such attitudes and associated structural problems exist, and agree local actions to end discrimination and deliver more age-equal services.



Useful reading:

'Achieving age equality in health and social care'
Sir Ian Carruthers OBE and Jan Ormondroyd. Department of Health; October 2009

The Achieving Age Equality audit tool has been developed by the NDTi

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