

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023/24

This is a short version of our EDI Strategy. If you would like a full version, please contact info@recovery4all.co.uk



A Message from our Board

Ara's ambition is to help its clients move towards better purposeful lives. We apply the values of our Charity positively to all the people we encounter including partners, clients, staff and stakeholders. We absolutely believe in treating everybody with dignity and respect regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

As an organisation we continually look to improve our performance as we reach an increasing number of vulnerable people. Our EDI Strategy sets out our plans to deliver on our commitment to EDI, and the wellbeing of our employees and clients. **Tony Collins, Ara Chair**

Introduction

Ara is committed to a policy of equality, diversity and inclusion both in the workplace and when recruiting employees. Many of our clients have experienced discrimination, disadvantage and stigma, and we aim to help to reduce these disadvantages by making our practices and services responsive to both community and individual needs. We actively promote diversity and inclusion for all of our clients and employees. This strategy document sets out how we will make every effort to ensure our services, workforce and governing body reflect the diversity of our local communities, and that all are aware of our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

A shared understanding of EDI:

EQUALITY: This means equality of opportunity for all Ara colleagues and clients, and that difference doesn't matter

DIVERSITY: This means that we are all different, but that these differences are recognised and emphasised, but not leveraged

INCLUSION: This means that Ara views difference as benefit to utilise, and perspectives and differences will be shared leading to better decisions.

Some key benefits to Ara of having a strong organisational EDI culture include:

Being better positioned to attract and retain the most talented staff

Diverse teams are more likely to outperform less diverse counterparts

Diverse and inclusive workplaces can foster community and collaboration

Higher employee retention and lower turnover

A diverse workforce in thought and experience is better equipped to identify opportunities and generate innovative solutions

Inclusion improves business decision making

Our clients deserve services and staff that reflect the communities we serve

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Our Services

Over the past thirty-six years Ara has provided structured treatment, counselling, housing support, education, training and employment guidance as well as many other interventions to promote recovery and a healthier life.

We believe in the equitable treatment of all, and that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, –sex and sexual orientation. Our charity values echo this belief:

Aspiring: (ambitious, purposeful, enterprising, eager, committed and motivated)

Brave: (confident, courageous, fearless, dashing, excited, vigorous and energetic)

Competent: (skilled, expert, accomplished, adept, professional, excellent, capable and proficient)

Determined: (persistent, unceasing, continuous, sustained, relentless, tenacious and passionate)

Data

Gathering diversity data is the first step for Ara to analyse and understand the diversity of our workforce and the inequalities that exist in the workplace. Performing meaningful analysis allows us to implement targeted and focused initiatives to make a real change to workplace culture, achieve their inclusion and diversity goals, and mitigate risks of unconscious bias and discrimination.

Delivering Our Commitments

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy will be delivered under three key themes:

- 1 Building an inclusive workplace
- 2 Take a data-driven approach for strategic EDI decision-making
- 3 Ensuring all of our services are inclusive

Measuring Success

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An Inclusive Culture For All

We are keen to provide a safe and empowering work environment, and to this end we will take the following actions:

- Take advantage of the thought leadership and best practice provided through our membership with ENEI (Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion)
- Ensure appropriate equality, diversity & discrimination awareness for all staff, with additional unconscious bias and other relevant training for senior management and anyone involved with recruitment at Ara.
- Continue to ensure that staff are consulted on their experience of EDI issues via the annual employee survey, with actions agreed and implemented through the You Said We Did reviews.
- Take action to ensure that all staff feel safe and supported in their work and have access to the full range of training, supervision and opportunities for progression.
- Maintain our zero-tolerance approach to bullying, discrimination and harassment.
- Explore options to support recruitment from under-represented groups.

Data Driven Insight & Improvement

We will take the following actions:

- Continue to undertake diversity monitoring at recruitment and annually with staff.
- Check how well our DEI policies and practices are working
- Analyse the impact of other policies and practices on different groups
- Highlight potential inequalities and their underlying causes
- Identify priority areas for action to address any inequalities
- Set targets and timelines to reduce disparities;
- Improve awareness while signalling to applicants and employees that the organisation takes equality and diversity matters seriously; and
- Being transparent around uses of data, and having clear internal communications about why we are collecting data and how it will contribute to lessons learned and improvements

Action to Build a Diverse & Inclusive Workplace

We will:

- Ensure appropriate formal and informal training on equality, diversity and inclusion with all staff
- Recognise through social media and other external means (such as our website) important cultural festivals and dates
- Provide all staff with access to the ENEI resource hub, providing knowledge on a range of EDI topics
- Take complaints seriously, and ensure swift action every time. Maintain the zero tolerance approach to discrimination, bullying and harassment.
- Benchmark ourselves using the TIDE (Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation) tool, and take action to continuously improve in all areas.

Aspiring - Brave - Competent - Determined