

# Anti-Racism

## Statement & Commitment

### 1. Introduction

Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (MWL) is committed to becoming an anti-racist organisation, which actively tackles racism in all its forms (individual, structural and systemic).

We will start by acknowledging that racial discrimination exists, and it can have a profound impact in our own organisation and the communities that we serve.

**Racism is defined as** the unfair treatment of people who belong to a different race. It can also refer to violent behaviour towards people of a different race and as the inability or refusal to recognise the rights, needs, dignity, or value of people of particular races or geographical origins.

**A Racist is defined as** anyone having the belief that some races of people are better than others or having general beliefs about other people based only on their race; showing this through violent or unfair treatment of people of other races.

We therefore take a zero-tolerance approach to racism, where we will challenge and proactively change **policies, processes, procedures, behaviours, and beliefs** that perpetuate racist ideas and actions. Being actively anti-racist in all that we do means we acknowledge the impacts of racism in not only in our own organisation, but across the NHS and the world in which we all operate in.

At MWL we are committed to embedding a culture and environment of belonging central to which is diversity, equality, and inclusion. Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion will be a golden thread throughout our antiracist work. By being open, transparent, and accountable we will become an organisation in which everyone feels supported, happier and empowered to bring their whole self to work.

*Why are we doing this?*

At MWL we believe no one should be treated unfairly because of race, ethnicity, nationality, or skin colour. We all deserve to be treated with respect, dignity and acknowledged for our value as individuals. We strive to prevent discrimination in our services, communities, and workplaces so that everyone feels welcome and at ease.

This is important for staff, patients and our organisation as a whole and wider society.

**One Team:** At MWL every member of staff should feel safe, valued, and have the ability to thrive.

**One Trust:** We recognise the impact of racism on staff and patients and are committed to tackling the issues and leading by example where we can.

**For Wider Society:** Our organisation exists to support our patients and the surrounding communities. Evidence suggests that there are disparities in health outcomes and life expectancy between different ethnic groups. Furthermore, there is strong evidence to suggest that there is disparities in access to, and experience of services. We therefore have a responsibility to ensure that the care and treatment our patients receive is fair and equitable.

Our anti-racism statement is more than just words.

It is built on the foundations and principles of the NHS Constitution, NHS People Promise, MWL Values and ACE Behavioral Standards. In addition, the statement recognises our responsibility and our commitment as a healthcare organisation to stop the things that keep racism going.

Our anti-racism statement details our commitment to patients, staff, visitors, and partner organisations. Through our race equality work, we will take action against structural, individual, or systemic racism within the organisation.

We will address gaps and challenges in our working culture and environment that could have an impact on staff, patients, and the communities we serve. We aim to embed race equality throughout the organisation in all our clinical and non-clinical practice.

## **2. Our Anti-racism statement and commitment**

This statement outlines to our patients, staff, public and the wider community our commitment to becoming actively anti-racist.

### ***1. Key Principles***

In fulfilling our commitment to staff, patients, and the wider community, we will uphold and act on the following key anti-racist principles

1. **Listen and Transform** – Actively listen to staff, patients, and communities, creating genuine opportunities for dialogue that lead to measurable and lasting transformation.
2. **Lead with Accountability** – The Trust Board and Executive Team will provide visible, committed leadership, ensuring anti-racism is a strategic priority with clear responsibilities and consequences.
3. **Zero Tolerance to Racism** – Enforce a genuine zero-tolerance approach to racist behaviour, language, and discrimination, taking prompt, decisive action on all reported incidents.

4. **Value Ethnic Diversity** – Recognise and celebrate the value and contributions of ethnically diverse staff and communities, ensuring inclusion is central to our values, culture, and behaviours.
5. **Dismantle Barriers** – Tackle the systems, structures, and processes that enable racism and hinder behavioural change, identifying and eliminating structural racism in our practices, policies, and procedures.
6. **Equitable Patient Experience** – Guarantee that all patients, carers, and service users—regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, language proficiency, or immigration status—receive the same high quality of care, access, understanding, and support.
7. **Be Transparent and Measurable** – Remain open and accountable, regularly measuring and publishing progress and impact on organisational culture and racial equality.

### *Actions, not Words*

We will be adopting an approach which will challenge racism, by using a wide range of actions which will include: -

- **Accelerate Structural Change** – Hold leaders and the organisation accountable for measurable progress towards racial equality in the workforce, healthcare and in the communities we serve.
- **Speak Out Against Racism** – Foster a culture where racism and inequality are challenged immediately, voices are heard and protected, people feel safe to speak out, and swift action is taken against discrimination.
- **Embed Racial Justice in All Systems** – Ensure every policy, process, and decision actively dismantles structural racism, removes barriers, and creates equitable opportunities.
- **Language Matters** – Use accurate, respectful, and inclusive language, avoiding terms such as “BAME” except where required for aggregated data reporting.
- **Listen, Learn, and Act** – Centre the lived experiences of Ethnic Minority / Global Majority staff, patients, and communities, and take action based on what we hear.
- **Education for Anti-Racism** – Provide training and resources that build understanding of racism’s mental, physical, and emotional impacts, and equip staff to be actively anti-racist.
- **Use Data to Drive Change** – Analyse and act on ethnicity workforce and patient data, ensuring it shapes evidence-based actions, disaggregating data where possible.
- **Representation in Decision-Making** – Ensure leadership and decision-making include diverse voices that reflect the communities we serve.