

Transforming Community Services

***Title: TCS Mobile Working Readiness Assessment
Framework Tool***

Equality Impact Screening Assessment

Short description of policy:

The Mobile Working Readiness Self-Assessment Framework is a tool that has been designed to support all NHS provider services to scope their present mobile technology state of readiness.

- It supports self-assessment at a clinical service level even though some components of the assessment framework may be the same across different services in the organisation
- It aims to provide support for clinical services in decision making as to the readiness of a service to move forward with mobile solutions when working away from their base
- Provide links to guidance on the next steps clinical services must take to prepare for mobile working
- Clearly links with the wider TCS programme and QIPP agenda
- The assessment framework comprises of a series of horizontal and vertical dimensions with definitions for each of the levels of readiness for each of the different aspects of mobile working
- Completion is not mandatory but will provide clinical services with a robust baseline on potential or present rollout
- Completion by a facilitator (a member of staff working within the organisation who has the knowledge and skill to use IT and to understand the different services within the organisation)
- The tool is a single Excel spreadsheet designed to be completed electronically and provide instant results. The tool comprises of instructions, guidance material, context scoring and results.

Negative impact

Could the policy have a significant negative impact on equality in relation to each area?

We do not expect the mobile working readiness self-assessment framework to have a negative impact in terms of creating any problems or barriers, excluding people or having a negative impact on community relations.

The guidance notes and associated sources are intended to be read in conjunction with each self-assessment question and can be used as reference materials to support improving local working practices. This includes the consideration on how mobile working has an impact on current and future working and the likely impact on business alignment and on equality groups of people, including the need for organisations to undertake equality impact assessments and to make reasonable adjustments to implement this process.

Age :

The tool does not specifically address age; but by introducing a self assessment framework for mobile working offers new opportunities of working in new ways for all age groups. It is recommended that organisations undertake an equality impact assessment – in accordance with local policy.

Disability :

The tool does not specifically address disability, however, it is recognised that organisations need to make reasonable adjustments for staff, and it is recommended that organisations undertake an equality impact assessment - in accordance with local policy.

Ethnicity :

The tool does not specifically address ethnicity; however, it is recommended that organisations undertake an equality impact assessment to assess the likely or actual effects of this process on the different racial groups in accordance with local policy.

Gender (including transgendered people) :

The tool does not specifically address gender (including transgendered people); however, it is recommended that organisations undertake an equality impact assessment to assess the likely or actual effects of this process to women, men and transgendered people in accordance with local policy.

Religion or belief :

The tool does not specifically address religion or belief; however, it is recommended that organisations undertake an equality impact assessment to assess the likely or actual effects of this process on staff based on their religion and belief in accordance with local policy.

Sexual orientation :

The tool does not specifically address sexual orientation; however, it is recommended that organisations undertake an equality impact assessment to assess the likely or actual effects of this process on staff based on their sexual orientation in accordance with local policy.

Socio-economic status

The tool does not specifically address socio-economic status; however, it is recommended organisations undertake an equality impact assessment to assess the likely or actual effects of this process on staff based on their socio-economic status in accordance with local policy.

Human rights :

The tool does not specifically address human rights; however, it is recommended that organisations undertake an equality impact assessment to assess the likely or actual effects of this process to staff based on their human rights in accordance with local policy.

Carers :

The tool does not specifically address carers, however, it is recommended that organisations undertake an equality impact assessment to assess the likely or actual effects of this process to carers in accordance with local policy.

Positive impact

Could the policy have a significant positive impact on equality or reduce inequalities that already exist?

Explain how will it meet our duty to:

1. Promote equal opportunities?

The tool aims to promote equal opportunities through the reminder that organisations continue to follow local policy guidance.

2. Eliminate discrimination

The tool aims to promote equal opportunities and eliminate discrimination through the reminder that organisations continue to follow local policy guidance.

3. Eliminate harassment

The tool aims to promote equal opportunities and eliminate harassment through the reminder that organisations continue to follow local policy guidance.

4. Promote good community relations :

The tool aims to promote good community relations through the reminder that organisations continue to follow local policy guidance.

5. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people :

The tool aims to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people through the reminder that organisations continue to follow local policy guidance.

6. Encourage participation by disabled people :

The tool aims to encourage participation by disabled people through the reminder that organisations continue to follow local policy guidance.

7. Consider more favourable treatment of disabled people

The tool aims to consider the need more favourable treatment of disabled people through the reminder that organisations continue to follow local policy guidance.

8. Promote, protect and respect human rights

The tool aims to protect and respect human rights through the reminder that organisations continue to follow local policy guidance.

Evidence

What is the evidence for your answers to the above questions?

What does available research say?

Disability

An article by Eyre (2008)¹ provides information on the discrimination against people with disabilities in the workplace. According to an investigation carried out by the Commission for Disabled Staff in Lifelong Learning, many of the measures taken to increase opportunities for disabled learners have not benefited their disabled teachers or trainers. The Commission also found that disabled staff were awkward about disclosing impairments that were not evidence because of fear of discrimination.

In the month of Dyslexia Awareness Week, Harris and Ricketts explain why failure to recognise the condition in the workplace has implications for both employee and employer.

A report by Harriss and Ricketts (2009)² published in Occupational Health in Dealing with Dyslexia found that failure to recognise the condition in the workplace had implications for both employee and employer. An assessment of fitness to work showed, that an assessment of an employee who is thought to have dyslexia include a history of their difficulties and an occupational and social history, including identification of any difficulties they may have in managing their job.

Dyslexic people may have problems with some elements of their job requirements, but they are likely to have strengths in other areas. Unfortunately, many employees and managers fail to recognise these strengths, and tend to focus on the weakness. They also report that some people with dyslexia find coloured paper or coloured overlays improves reading accuracy. Also, adjusting the background colour on a computer screen may assist. In some cases, referral to an optometrist with an interest in dyslexia may be helpful with coloured (Harris) filters may increase reading speed and be helpful as the provision of a coloured overlay film. The OHN is well placed to advise employee and employer on appropriate technology. This may include a variety of hardware and software, including: voice-activated software; a dictaphone to record discussion and meetings; talk-to-text and text-to-talk software; asking co-workers to send the most important written information in a precise and concise manner to help those with dyslexia to deal with written material most effectively; adjusting the type font and colour paper, or introducing coloured overlays to suite the client; and allowing more time for the worker to deal with the administrative requirements of their post.

¹ Eyre, E (2008) "In case you hadn't noticed, I'm disabled". Training Journal, 01 June 2008, vol./is./ (6-7), 14656523

² Harriss, A and Ricketts K, (2009) Dyslexia Awareness Week - Dealing with dyslexia Occupational Health November 6, 2009

Age

A report by Michael Ball, an employment partner, Halliwells in a Q&A Personnel Today (2008)³ the Office for National Statistics released figures that showed 95,000 more people over the age of 50 were in work than in the last quarter of 2007. But what does this increase of older people in the workplace mean for employers? How can organisations balance the issue of age discrimination with a desire to cater for this potentially well-experienced group of employees? One of the questions asked: Can we offer extra training to over-50s only – for example, in using IT systems, which many of our older employees struggle with? Answer: If an employee is struggling to cope with IT requirements due to lack of skills, then extra training should be offered. If you are able to show that your older employees are at a particular disadvantage in relation to IT skills because they have had less exposure to IT training opportunities in the past, then it may be reasonable to limit access to the training courses by reference to the employee's age.

This would be in the form of permitted training-related positive action to remove a disadvantage that is linked to the employee's age. However, it should not be forgotten that there is a general duty to provide support for all employees, and where an employee is struggling to meet the demands of the job, then the need for training should be considered, whatever their age.

Research carried out by Goodall *et al*⁴ found that governments and businesses are increasingly using the internet and mobile telephones to disseminate information about services and products. However, not all population groups have the resources and capabilities to support equality of access to and use of these technologies. While Australia's ageing population receives attention in a wide variety of literatures, the ageing migrant population has received very little attention in relation to understanding their place in the 'digital divide'. It is not known how this group gathers information used in everyday living, or what role the internet or mobile phones plays within this. At a time when the population is ageing and there is an increasing use of the internet to deliver services and information, there is little research on the effects of ethnicity, migration, socio-economic status, education or gender of older people on the use of information and communication technology (ICT). Addressing this should be a priority in Australia, which has an old and ageing population that includes many post-war migrants from non-English speaking European countries.

³ Ball, M (2008) Legal Q&A Older employees Personnel Today, Employment Law.

⁴ Goodall K, Ward P, Newman L (2010) "Use of information and communication technology to provide health information: what do older migrants know, and what do they need to know?" Quality in Primary Care, 2010, vol./is. 18/1(27-32), 1479-1072;1479-1064.

Older migrants do not use ICT to a great extent to access information in their everyday lives, with many expressing no interest in learning how to do so. However, they access the information they need to function in society with a desired quality of life from multiple sources by various means. Sources include electronic and print media from Australia and their home countries, family and acquaintances, government departments or service providers. Many expressed a preference for receiving information as printed material or directly from another person.

Governments or primary healthcare organisations planning to make health information solely available via ICT should be aware that doing so may lead to an increase in 'information exclusion' and the formation of functional knowledge deficits for older migrants. At the moment at least, our participants do not perceive any functional knowledge deficits as they engage multiple sources to access the information they need for everyday life. We recommend that governments and healthcare organisations evaluate the appropriateness of using ICT to directly provide information to older migrants and consider non-digital means or the engagement of 'information brokers' when communicating with groups identified as low or non-users of ICT.

Ethnicity

An article by Hearnden (2008)⁵ on internationally recruited nurses (IRNs) provide valuable resources to address existing and predicted nurse shortages. Once in employment many IRNs experience difficulties due to differences in language and culture in their new country of practice. Barriers to effective communication have implications for all nurses but particularly those functioning in a second language and culture. This article suggests strategies for IRNs, UK-educated nurses, managers and policy makers to improve the experience of IRNs and to ensure patients receive the best possible care.

What further research or data do you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the policy?

The available research highlights impact on disabled, age and ethnic groups in employment; organisations need to take into account the needs of staff making reasonable adjustments and undertaking equality impact assessments. Further research is being sourced, and this will then be used at a later stage of policy development to ensure all equality groups are considered, if data becomes available.

Have you thought about commissioning new data or research?

No. A wide range of data and research materials such as national and local statistics, reports, journals etc are available from a variety of sources, both internal and external to the DH.

⁵ Hearnden, M (2008) "Coping with differences in culture and communication in health care"

Screening assessment

Now that you have looked at the evidence, do you think that the policy needs a Full EqIA?

No. It is concluded that at this stage of policy development, this does not require a full equality impact assessment, but at the next stage of policy development another EqIA will be undertaken.

Next steps

If you do not need to do a Full EqIA:

What else might you need to do to make sure the policy promotes equality and eliminates discrimination?

At national level TCS programme will continue to promote equality and eliminate discrimination in the development of further policy development.

How will you monitor the policy as it develops and takes effect?

The TCS Mobile Working Group will monitor the tool and implement a review a year after publication.

What further research do you need?

No further research is required at this stage of the assessment.

For the record:

Name of person who carried out the EqIA:

Charlotte Bramley

Date EqIA completed:

26 May 2010

Name of Director/Director General who signed off the EqIA:

Bob Ricketts

Date EqIA was signed:

27 May 2010

EqIA Ref No:

1244