

# Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) Report and Action Plan 2024

**NHS Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support  
Unit**

[midlandsandlancashirecsu.nhs.uk](https://midlandsandlancashirecsu.nhs.uk)

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## Introduction

This report sets out the performance and approach to NHS Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit's (ML) Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) for 2024.

The WRES is an NHS England equality reporting requirement. The aim of the WRES is for NHS organisations to review the workplace experiences and outcomes of ethnically diverse staff. The WRES helps NHS organisations to review their workforce data across nine subject areas (WRES indicators), and to produce an action plan to improve workplace experiences of ethnically diverse staff. The WRES also places an obligation on NHS organisations to improve ethnically diverse representation at Board and senior leader level.

The WRES applies to NHS organisations including service providers, commissioners and independent organisations through the NHS standard contract. WRES is not mandatory for Commissioning Support Units (CSUs), however ML is committed to collecting and analysing WRES data as good practice to gain valuable insight into staff experiences and outcomes.

It is important to note that while WRES data provides an overview of workforce demographics and broad workforce experiences, it does not tell us about the context behind the data. It is recommended that organisations use the WRES data as a foundation to explore lived experiences of staff and gain a deeper understanding of ML's diverse workforce.

Completing the WRES supports ML in meeting commitments made in the NHS People Plan, and NHS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Improvement Plan, including areas such as retaining staff, reducing harassment, bullying and abuse, and in supporting the development of more diverse leadership teams.

## Definitions of Ethnicity

NHS England's national NHS WRES guidance and reporting metrics use the term BME (black and minority ethnic) to define those of all ethnicities other than White British, White Irish, or any other white background.

ML does not view the term BME as an appropriate collective label to identify our staff. As an organisation, the term ethnically diverse is used when collectively referring to ethnicity, and this descriptor will be used throughout our 2024 WRES report and action plan.

Further information regarding ethnic groups included in this definition is detailed in Appendix 2.

## WRES Data Sources

The information presented in this report is taken from the following sources:

- Electronic Staff Record (ESR) data as of 31 March 2024
- NHS Jobs / TRAC recruitment data: 01 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
- Formal disciplinary information supplied by the ML People Services Team: 01 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
- ML learning and development records: 01 April 2023 – 31 March 2024
- National NHS Staff Survey results for ML: 2023

## WRES Reporting Indicators

While completion of the WRES is not mandatory for CSUs, to fully support the implementation of the WRES, ML fully supports the principles and purpose of the WRES and commits to:

- Collect data on the ethnic diversity of our workforce

- Carry out data analyses
- Produce a WRES report
- Publish our WRES report and action plan

With over one million employees, the NHS is mandated to show progress against a number of indicators of workforce equality, including a specific indicator to address the low numbers of ethnically diverse Board members across NHS organisations. When analysing the data collected for each indicator, the data should be compared for white staff and ethnically diverse staff.

There are nine WRES indicators that NHS organisations are required to report on annually\*:

WRES Indicator	Description
<b>Indicator 1</b>	Percentage of staff in each of the Agenda for Change (AfC) Bands 1-9 or Medical and Dental subgroups and VSM (including executive Board members) compared with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce
<b>Indicator 2</b>	Relative likelihood of staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts.
<b>Indicator 3</b>	Relative likelihood of staff entering the formal disciplinary process, as measured by entry into a formal disciplinary investigation.
<b>Indicator 4</b>	Relative likelihood of staff accessing non-mandatory training and CPD
<b>Indicator 5</b>	Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives, or the public in last 12 months
<b>Indicator 6</b>	Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in last 12 months
<b>Indicator 7</b>	Percentage of staff believing that the trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion
<b>Indicator 8</b>	In the last 12 months have you personally experienced discrimination at work from manager/team leader or other colleagues
<b>Indicator 9</b>	Percentage difference between the organisations' Board membership and its overall workforce disaggregated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By voting membership of the Board</li> <li>• By executive membership of the Board</li> </ul>

\* Please note, data should be broken down by ethnically diverse, white and ethnicity unknown groups

## WRES 2024 Key Findings\*

97.85% of ML employees self-declared their ethnicity on ESR

20.40% of the ML workforce is ethnically diverse

6.67% of employees working at VSM level are ethnically diverse

White candidates were **more likely** to be appointed from shortlisting than ethnically diverse candidates

Ethnically diverse employees were **more likely** to experience harassment, bullying or abuse

Ethnically diverse employees were **more likely** to experience discrimination at work

\* A detailed breakdown and analysis of WRES 2024 data can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

## WRES Action Plan

ML’s WRES action plan has been developed in collaboration with ML’s Ethnic Diversity Network and ML Staff Side colleagues. Colleagues shared feedback and ideas for work that the organisation should carry out over the following year to consolidate and improve upon this year’s WRES data findings, and the following co-produced actions are recommended:

WRES Action Number	Action	Deadline	Responsible Team/Lead
1	ML to promote self-reporting of ethnicity and other protected characteristic information via the NHS Electronic Staff Record system	Ongoing throughout 2024-25	OD Team
2	ML to work with the Ethnicity Network, and Staff Side to evaluate current EDI-related training and guidance for managers and assess the wider impact that EDI training has in fostering inclusive culture across the organisation	31 March 2025	OD Team / The Inclusion Team
3	ML to share information with staff regarding its inclusive recruitment processes and procedures (for example, information regarding reasonable adjustments before job interviews and support available when writing job applications and CVs)	31 January 2025	OD Team



4	ML to support staff in skills development and career progression by embedding robust, measurable development plans into ML's appraisal process	31 March 2025	OD Team
5	ML to carry out engagement with ethnically diverse staff regarding NHS Staff Survey results relating to experiences of bullying, harassment, abuse, discrimination in order to understand more about lived experiences	30 June 2025	OD Team / The Inclusion Team
6	ML to carry out engagement with ethnically diverse staff regarding NHS Staff Survey results relating the provision of equal opportunities for career progression or promotion. Engagement will support ML to understand concerns in more detail and develop meaningful actions where necessary	30 June 2025	OD Team / The Inclusion Team
7	To foster a culture where EDI is everybody's responsibility, ML to incorporate EDI objectives into 121 and appraisal processes, and implement measurable EDI-related objectives for Board members and senior staff	31 March 2025	OD Team
8	ML to establish a centralised data collection process for employees applying for and completing non-mandatory training and CPD. Data collection should include capture of ethnicity to allow for future WRES reporting and analysis	31 March 2025	OD Team

The WRES actions will be monitored through the year via ML's Equality Sub-Group, with oversight from ML's Ethnic Diversity Network and ML Staff Side, and progress will be captured in ML's 2025 WRES report.

## Conclusion

Our WRES report provides an overview of NHS Midlands and Lancashire's WRES data for 2023-24. We strive to create an inclusive and positive environment for our workforce, and our WRES reporting data shows that our collective workforce population is broadly reflective of the ethnic diversity of the wider populations that we serve. However, we acknowledge that there is still work to do to support our staff to self-report their ethnicity on the ESR system.

We also acknowledge that there is work to be done to better understand and address experiences of bullying, harassment, abuse and discrimination, and there are actions that we can take to make our staff feel more included and able to thrive.

We are looking forward to working with colleagues in ML's Ethnicity Network, and with colleagues across the organisation to improve the way we work and meet the needs and aspirations of our diverse workforce.



## Appendix 1: ML WRES Data Set 2024 and Analysis

### Indicator 1 and Indicator 9:

**Indicator 1:** the percentage of staff in each AfC pay bands or Medical and Dental subgroups and VSM (including executive Board members) compares with the percentage of staff in the overall workforce<sup>1</sup>

**Indicator 9** the percentage difference between the organisation's Board voting membership and its overall workforce disaggregated: by voting membership of the Board and executive membership of the Board

	2022	2023	2024
<b>Number of staff employed within the organisation (headcount)</b>	2125	2231	1863
<b>Proportion of ethnically diverse staff (headcount and %)</b>	376 (17.7%)	429 (19.2%)	380 (20.4%)
<b>Proportion of ethnically diverse staff in Very Senior Management (VSM) roles %</b>	0	0	1 (6.67%)
<b>Proportion of ethnically diverse Board Members (headcount and %)</b>	0 of 8 (0%)	1 of 15 (6.7%)	1 of 11 (9.09%)
<b>Proportion of staff self-reporting their ethnicity (%)</b>	98.0%	98.3%	97.85%

The WRES 2024 data shows that the number of staff employed by ML has significantly decreased compared to the previous year. There has been a 1% increase in the proportion of ethnically diverse staff working at ML.

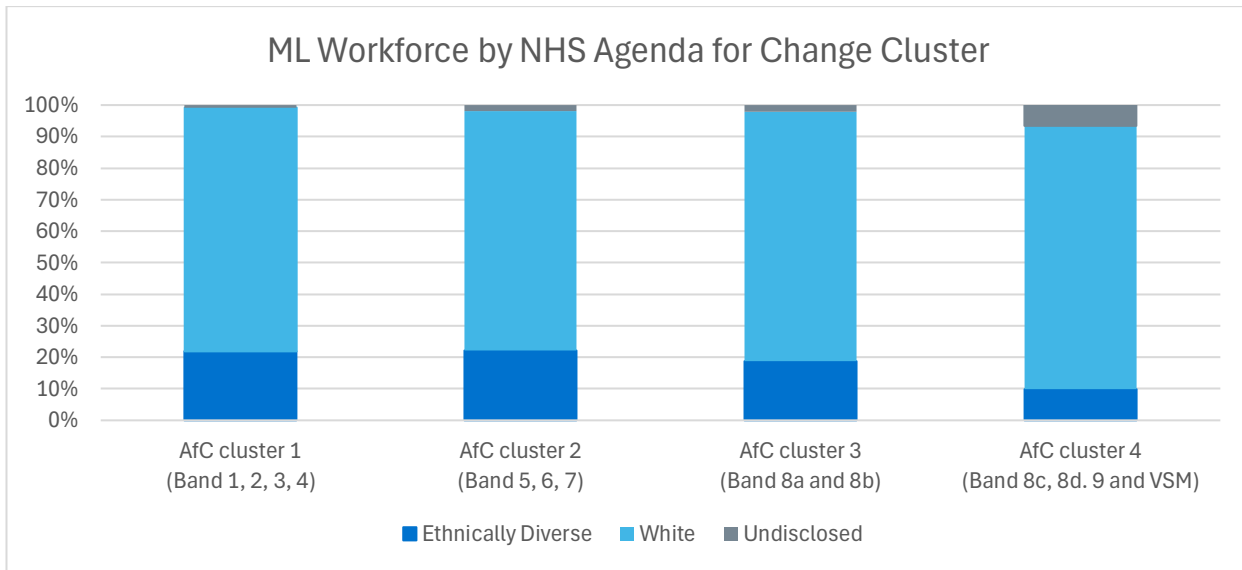
In contrast to previous WRES reporting years, there is now ethnically diverse representation at Board level and at VSM level.

The proportion of staff self-reporting their ethnicity has decreased slightly, by 0.45%

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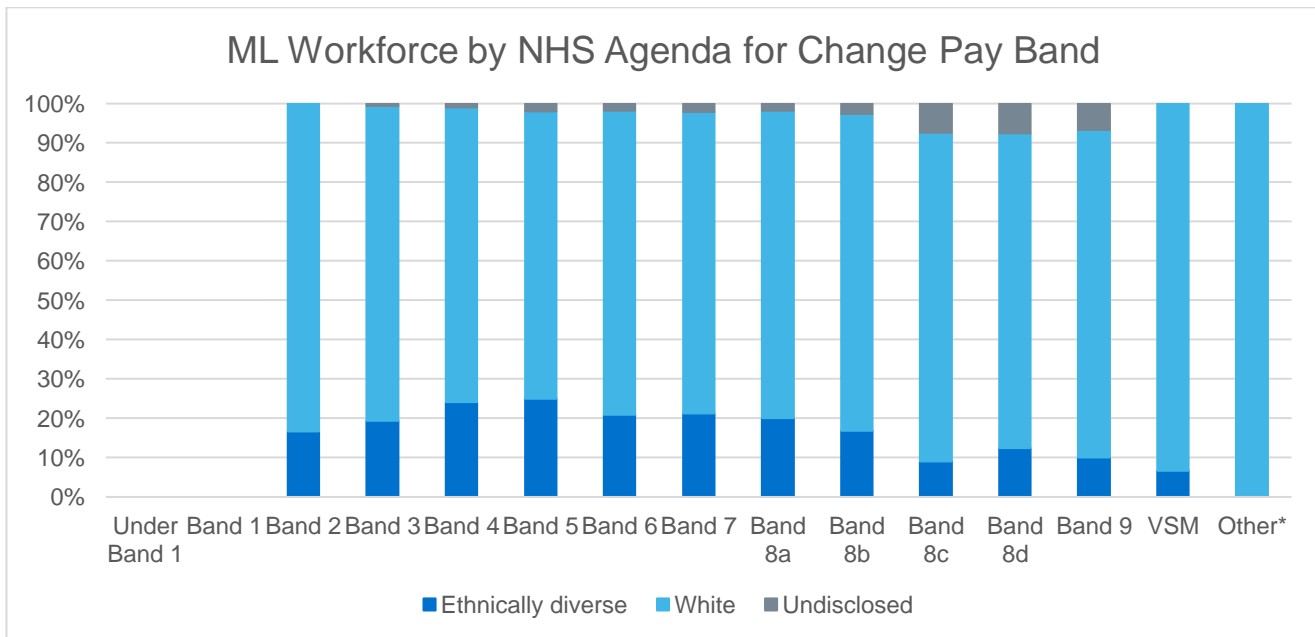
<sup>1</sup> Organisations should undertake this calculation separately for non-clinical and for clinical staff, however, all MLCSU staff are recorded as non-clinical for WRES submission purposes.

**ML workforce broken down by NHS Agenda for Change Cluster:**



The 2024 WRES data set shows that across most AfC pay band clusters, around 20% of staff are ethnically diverse. However, ethnically diverse representation decreases significantly in AfC cluster 4. While there has been an increase in representation at VSM and Board level, the data highlights that there are still gaps in representation at senior manager levels.

**ML workforce broken down by NHS Agenda for Change pay band:**



\*Clinical advisors

A breakdown of the ML workforce by NHS Agenda for Change pay band shows that ethnically diverse representation falls between 15 – 25% across band 2 to band 8b, however at bands 8c, 8d, and band 9, representation decreases to between 8-12%.

A comprehensive analysis of ethnically diverse representation between band 8c - band 9 is difficult to understand as there are significant proportions of the workforce at these pay bands that have not disclosed their ethnicity.



**Indicator 2: Relative likelihood of staff being appointed from shortlisting across all posts**

	2022	2023	2024
<b>Number of shortlisted applicants (headcount)</b>	1279	1625	820
<b>Ethnically diverse shortlisted applicants (headcount and %)</b>	409 (31.98%)	504 (31.02%)	371 (45.24%)
<b>Total number of staff appointed from shortlisting</b>	304	479	198
<b>Ethnically diverse staff appointed from shortlisting (headcount and % from total appointed)</b>	69 (22.7%)	90 (17.86%)	51 (25.76%)
<b>Relative likelihood of appointment from shortlisting for:</b>			
<b>a) White staff</b>	a) 27.07%	a) 37.5%	a) 33.72%
<b>b) Ethnically diverse staff</b>	b) 16.87%	b) 17.86%	b) 13.75%
<b>c) Staff of unknown ethnicity</b>	c) 25.71%	c) 49.28%	c) 13.64%
<b>Relative Likelihood of white staff being appointed from shortlisting compared to ethnically diverse staff</b>	Data unavailable	1.89	2.45

WRES data for indicator 2 shows that there has been an increase in the proportion of ethnically diverse candidates being shortlisted for roles at ML, along with an increase in the proportion of ethnically diverse candidates being appointed from shortlisting compared to last year's WRES report.

However, white candidates are 2.45 times more likely to be appointed from shortlisting compared to ethnically diverse candidates, and the gap in the likelihood of white candidates being appointed from shortlisting compared to ethnically diverse candidates has widened since 2023 (from 1.89 to 2.45).

**Indicator 3: Relative likelihood of staff entering the formal disciplinary process, as measured by entry into a formal disciplinary investigation**

ML can confirm that fewer than five formal disciplinary processes were initiated in the WRES reporting year. A specific data set has not been published within this report because disclosing this information may be personally identifiable, however an overview of information will be shared with the ML Board and NHS England.

Nationally, WRES reporting indicates that ethnically diverse staff are more likely to enter formal disciplinary processes compared to white staff.

**Indicator 4: Relative likelihood of staff accessing non-mandatory training and continuous professional development (CPD)**

It is not possible to report on this WRES Indicator because ML does not currently collect a central database of staff accessing non-mandatory training and CPD.

Opportunities for staff development and CPD are discussed with line managers within individual appraisal discussions and supervision meetings.

Additional information regarding training and development opportunities is sent out via staff newsletters, and via staff portal, which all ML employees are able to access.

### Indicators 5 - 8: questions relating to staff experiences

	2022	2023
<b>Indicator 5: Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives, or the public in last 12 months</b>	White: 10.19% ED*: 4.02%	White: 6.48% ED: 5.56%
<b>Indicator 6: Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in last 12 months</b>	White: 13.31% ED: 8.62%	White: 13.50% ED: 8.64%
<b>Indicator 7: Percentage of staff believing that the organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion</b>	White: 67.37% ED: 51.72%	White: 62.39% ED: 48.77%
<b>Indicator 8: In the last 12 months have you personally experienced discrimination at work from manager/team leader or other colleagues</b>	White: 3.70% ED: 6.94%	White: 4.86% ED: 9.43%

\*Ethnically diverse staff

There has been a significant decrease in the percentage of White staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives, or the public in this WRES reporting year. However, the percentage of ethnically diverse staff experiencing bullying, harassment or abuse from this cohort has increased by 1.5%.

The percentages of white and ethnically diverse staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff has remained consistent with the previous year's WRES report (at 13.50% and 8.54% respectively).

There has been a 3% decrease in the percentage of ethnically diverse staff believing that ML provides equal opportunities for career progression and promotion.

There has been a 2.5% increase in the proportion of ethnically diverse staff stating that they have personally experienced discrimination at work from a manager/team leader or other colleagues.



## Appendix 2: Information Regarding Definitions of Ethnicity Referred to In WRES Technical Guidance

WRES data relating to ethnically diverse groups refer to staff from the following ethnic groups which are categorised by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and cited within NHS England's WRES technical guidance and WRES Additional Information documents:

ONS Category	Definitions
<b>White</b>	1 – White British / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British 2 – White Irish 3 – Gypsy or Irish Traveller 4 - Any other white background
<b>Ethnically Diverse</b>	Mixed and Multiple Ethnic Groups: 5 – White and Black Caribbean 6 – White and Black African 7 – White and Asian 8 – Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background Asian / Asian British: 9 – Asian or Asian British Indian 10 – Asian or Asian British Pakistani 11 – Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi 12 – Asian or Asian British Chinese 13 – Any other Asian background Black / Africa / Caribbean / Black British: 14 – Black or black British African 15 – Black of black British Caribbean 16 – Any other black background Any other ethnic group: 17 – Arab 18 – Any other ethnic group

Within the WRES Technical Guidance it is noted that certain 'white groups' such as Gypsies and Travellers and Eastern European staff may be a significant minority group within an organisation that may experience discrimination. Where this is the case, organisations should explore tackling such discrimination using workforce data, surveys and employing the principles of the WRES to take action.



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