As leaders, we have an obligation to model the changes we expect of others. Consequently we are committed to promoting diversity, equality and human rights principles in the social care sector. We believe that greater workforce diversity is more likely to build a sector that reflects, understands and responds to the diversity of individual needs.

We believe that care and support should be arranged around individuals, their families, carers and communities. To do so effectively we need to recognise differences and individuality to reduce inequality in health and social care outcomes. We believe, in these times of increasing constraint, that supporting diverse approaches can free up resources to work in different ways and address different needs. Building upon the unique assets and contributions of a diverse care sector can deliver improvements in service quality by better reflecting the diversity of those who need care and support.
As we develop the new care and support system we have to ensure equality of access lies at its heart and is clearly demonstrated in the behaviours of all staff. All the organisations that support the sector have a role in promoting the development of care and support that is personal, fair and diverse.

Our starting point must always be the aspirations of people who need care and support and their carers. We must remove the barriers that stop people achieving their potential. In doing this we need to focus on staff in the sector, ensuring employers support them through effective leadership, treat them with respect as professionals and seek to develop them.

Much has already been achieved but inequalities in access, care and outcome still exist, and there are shocking instances where people are not being treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve. By recognising that every person has different needs and circumstances, we can best meet their needs and improve outcomes by delivering personalised care, using and supporting the diverse talents and experiences of our workforce. The Common core strategic equality and diversity principles will help organisations understand how equality can drive improvements, strengthen the accountability of services to those using them, and bring about workplaces free from discrimination.

I believe that the work we do on equality and human rights will have a major impact on how the care system of the future is experienced and perceived. I am certain that with work such as the Common core strategic equality and diversity principles that social care will be described as being personal, fair and diverse, and where everyone counts.

Norman Lamb
Minister of State for Care and Support
Introduction

The **Common core strategic equality and diversity principles** provide a common framework that supports leaders in the adult social care sector adopt a consistent approach to ensuring that equality and diversity issues are informing strategic decision-making.

The publication of these principles signal the sector's leadership commitment to working towards embedding equality, diversity and human rights principles at the heart of strategic decision-making and in doing so, lead the sector by example.

These broad principles recognise that individual organisations across social care will be starting from differing levels of preparedness and face unique challenges, but that the end goal is a shared vision which the following principles underpin.

The principles

P1 **Commitment to equality, diversity and human rights values**

Sector leaders confirm their commitment and vision for equality, diversity and human rights through their core values, mission statement and corporate/strategic plans.

**Actions and behaviours**

Sector leaders will review their high-level strategic documents to ensure that they incorporate a commitment to equality, diversity and human rights values. Where gaps are identified these should be amended through normal governance arrangements.

P2 **Promoting equality, diversity and human rights in decision-making**

Sector leaders confirm their governance, decision-making and partnership working arrangements promote equality, diversity and human rights.

**Actions and behaviours**

Sector leaders should confirm that appropriate measures are in place to ensure that equality, diversity and human rights issues are considered when their organisations develop, amend or review policies or procedures.
Sector leaders will conduct and plan their business so that equality, diversity and human rights are advanced and positive, and constructive relationships are the norm, both within their organisations and beyond.

**Actions and behaviours**

Sector leaders will, when conducting and planning their organisations business, advance equality, diversity and human rights perspectives and advocate adoption of the *Common core strategic equality and diversity principles* in their dealings with other organisations.

Sector leaders will ensure that their products and services are equally accessible to all by identifying any barriers to access and are working towards using more open and accessible solutions that includes compliance with open standards.

**Actions and behaviours**

Sector leaders will ensure that their organisations’ products and services have regard to existing and emerging standards that promote the widest possible access. These include: British Standards Institute (BSI) BS 8878:2010 Web Accessibility Code of practice, World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines WCAG 1.0 and 2.0, the draft European Union ‘Accessibility Act’ scheduled for 2013, and the Governments policy around Open Data and Open Standards. Sector leaders will routinely seek feedback from user testing.
In support of the **Common core strategic equality and diversity principles** sector leaders commit their respective organisation to engage in a range of activities over the course of the next year. It is intended that evaluation of this activity can be pooled to enhance our understanding of what works and what lessons can be learned about strategic approaches to equality and diversity.

The first of these commitments is a shared commitment across all organisations:

- Publication of annual diversity monitoring report – a high-level summary of equality statistics, including workforce profiles and monitoring data.

**Evaluation:** This is a core group commitment to collate each organisation’s data for publication. Combined report published April 2014.
Skills for Care

- Plan and begin a phased implementation of Equality Impact Assessments across all Skills for Care’s operational group policies.

**Evaluation:** Plan in place and on target. A staff ‘matrix’ group established to report on the activities and lessons learned by the various project teams in the context of the equalities impact assessment. Summary review and audit report completed by April 2014.

- Establish an equalities and diversity staff group to inform Skills for Care’s internal equality and diversity work.

**Evaluation:** Groups recommendations informing the development of Skills for Care’s equality and diversity policy and implementation of project team’s work plans.

Association of Directors of Adult Social Services

- Plan and begin a phased implementation of Equality Impact Assessments across all adult services policies and guidance.

**Evaluation:** Plan in place and on target. A staff ‘matrix’ group established to report on the activities and lessons learned by the various departments/units in the context of the equalities impact assessment. Summary review and audit report completed by April 2014.

- Establish an equalities and diversity staff group to inform the Equality and Diversity Network and in turn feed back to the ADSS Board.

**Evaluation:** The Equality and Diversity Network will gather the recommendations in order that they are acted on through the ADSS Board.
The College of Social Work

- Review business planning and development processes to ensure that equality and diversity issues are properly reflected in these processes.

**Evaluation:** Review to begin when first Chief Executive is in post; findings to be reported to the Board by autumn 2014.

- Review all Quality Assurance Processes to ensure that equality and diversity are properly reflected in these processes.

**Evaluation:** Review to begin when first Chief Executive is in post; findings to be discussed with Professional Assembly and reported to the Board and Assembly by autumn 2014.

National Skills Academy for Social Care

- Plan and implement equality and diversity monitoring through the application process for all programmes.

**Evaluation:** Plan and implement the systematic collation of equality and diversity data from across all programme application forms, to monitor equality and diversity across all leadership development programmes.


**Evaluation:** Launch of another BAME 2013 programme that helps to support BAME managers meet a need for specific leadership development for members of the adult care workforce. Working with Stonewall on the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) programme in care based on the BAME model. A series of Care Management Matters articles and sector media promotion around the programme planned to help bring awareness to equality and diversity.
Care Quality Commission (CQC)

- Evaluate how well equality and human rights issues are picked up in CQC regulatory activity, through analysis of the Quality Risk Profiles of each regulated service.
- Undergo a Diversity in Business Award diagnostic, and then apply for accreditation.

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)

- Review procurement policy with reference to equality and diversity.


- Monitor participation in the guideline development groups and project advisory groups that will form part of the work of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Collaborating Centre for Social Care provided by SCIE.


Department of Health (DH)

- As a policy maker, DH is committed to ensuring that equality and human rights is at the heart of policy, based on the best available evidence and understanding of the people we serve.

Evaluation: The equality objectives are embedded in the DH business plan. Accountability for each of the objectives lies with the Director General-level Human Rights Assurance Group. An action plan has been developed and each Director General has chosen to lead the delivery of a number of the objectives.

- As an employer the DH has an ongoing commitment to promoting and achieving equality and diversity in the workplace. We aim to attract, retain and develop people who are the best in their field, with the right skills and competencies from a diverse range of backgrounds. Our equality objectives reflect this approach, support the DH values and confirm our commitment on age, race, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.

Evaluation:

a) Continue to meet external standards of success, as defined by authoritative sources (within central government and across sectors):

- Achieve Cabinet Office targets for the representation of women, disabled and BME staff in the Senior Civil Service.

b) Carry out equalities analysis for people-related policies and initiatives.
Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care

- Build equality and diversity outcomes and measures into self-assessment and peer challenge tools and materials.

Think Local Act Personal (TLAP)

- Develop a set of user and carer-led statements which complement the existing equality and diversity principles.

**Evaluation:** The document will mirror existing principles but see them from the perspective of people who use services and carers. Close links with National Co-production Advisory Group and Making it Real cross cutting themes. By March 2014.

- Monitor membership of the TLAP partnership, to assess levels of representation across the six protected characteristics.

**Evaluation:** A review will take place in parallel with the existing review of partnership arrangements and discussions about TLAP sustainability – by March/April 2014.