



Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard Improvement Programme (SC-WRES)

Supporting anti-racist practice through a continuous improvement programme rooted in social justice and human rights principles.



“ We’re already seeing stronger organisational awareness, richer and more honest conversations about racial equity, smarter use of data to drive action, and deeper collaboration across teams. Leadership, engagement and commitment by our corporate management team and our councillors have been crucial, and SC-WRES is helping us turn our anti-racism commitments into tangible, lasting workforce change.

Bracknell Forest Council



What is SC-WRES?

The SC-WRES Improvement Programme assists local authorities from adults and children's services to identify to make meaningful, ongoing improvements to workforce practice and culture, supporting human rights principles and structured, measurable organisational change that builds and sustains an anti-racist approach.

It has three main components which, to achieve transformative change, cannot be separated and are wrapped in social justice programming:

1. data collection and an internal report
2. peer-to-peer support and monthly Community of Practice sessions
3. individual data reports which feed into action plans.

The three components are designed to ensure that data findings are acted on by local authority employers within a continuous improvement framework. Participation takes place over a 12-month period.

Data collection

Data is collected on nine indicators using the SC-WRES metric and supports organisations to highlight areas of concern, benchmark, reflect on, and improve, outcomes in race equity for their workforce. Local authorities are supported to create their own data report to share locally using a Skills for Care template. A national report is produced from the collected data.

Community of Practice sessions

The monthly Community of Practice sessions are a key element of the SC-WRES Improvement Programme and provide participants with protected time and a non-judgemental space to discuss relevant issues, learn from subject matter experts and share best practice and learning. All work in the Community of Practice, and throughout the programme, follows a strong anti-racism theme.

Action plans

Once local authorities have their data findings, the next step is to share these internally with senior leaders and staff networks and agree on achievable actions in the short, medium and long-term.

Action plans are a vital output of the SC-WRES Improvement Programme which show how local authorities have translated their data report into improvement priorities.

Find out how local authorities participating in the programme are driving tangible change and demonstrable improvements in their services.

Here we share their experiences to inspire others on their own improvement journeys: [The impact of participating in the SC-WRES improvement programme](#)



How individual local authority data is reflected nationally, the 2025-26 SC-WRES report

In phase 3, 2025-26, of the SC-WRES Improvement Programme, 99 local authority employers provided workforce information to produce the annual national report, giving an anonymous reflection of the social care sector.

This information is essential for understanding the current landscape and informing targeted action.

Headline findings show that Global Majority colleagues are more likely to experience disadvantage across most indicators.

Data from responding local authority employees across children and adult social care showed that people of Black, Asian or minoritised ethnicities were:

- 44% less likely to be appointed from shortlist, compared to people of White ethnicities
- 50% more likely to enter the formal disciplinary process and 34% more likely to be referred to the fitness to practise process
- subject to harassment, bullying or abuse from people who use social care, relatives or the public at a rate that was 15% higher than employees of white ethnicities; and from colleagues at a rate that was 48% higher
- 15% more likely to leave the organisation
- 37% less likely to be in senior management roles.

Follow the QR code or the link to [access the full report](#).



SC-WRES' national reach, its ability to illuminate patterns of inequality, and its focus on organisational accountability, create a powerful platform for collective and continuous improvement.

But data alone will not transform the system. We must act on what it tells us and the SC-WRES Improvement Programme provides a robust structure for colleagues to be supported in the action planning and implementation that this necessitates.

Isabelle Trowler CBE, Chief Social Worker for Children and Families



Are you ready to be part of the SC-WRES Improvement Programme?

The SC-WRES Improvement Programme is driving change and:

- ensures that progress is ongoing, structured and responsive to feedback
- uses a foundation in human rights, social justice and anti-racism
- continues to link with partners across the sector including Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), NHS-WRES, CQC, the Chief Social Workers and Social Work England as well as many others to enable an aligned approach.

Skills for Care continues to invest in the SC-WRES Improvement Programme and currently funds participation (funding secured for phases four and five) so it is free for local authorities to join.

Staff from Global Majority backgrounds continue to face disadvantages in recruitment, in the likelihood of entering disciplinary or regulatory processes, and in their day-to-day experiences at work. These are not isolated issues - they reflect structural patterns that we must confront with honesty and urgency.

The SC-WRES Improvement Programme, with its focus on continuous improvement and action planning provides an essential and robust platform to address this.

Sarah McClinton, Chief Social Worker for Adults

What matters most is that this doesn't become a data exercise alone. SC-WRES is driving positive change by helping us listen deeply to our workforce, reflect honestly on inequality, and work together to build stronger circles of support where staff feel safe, valued and able to thrive.

London Borough of Newham

Follow the QR code or the link to [register today](#).



Email equalitiesandrights@skillsforcare.org.uk for further information.