

# Inspiring change through the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard

## A conversation with...

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men, obviously, who work in the sector, but also majority of them are women. And there are a lot of issues with pay and conditions and just respecting the valuable work that women do in this sector. So I think that bringing together International Women's Day really brings a focus on the work that women do, I mean, every day should be International Women's Day, to be honest. But if it's an opportunity and excuse to celebrate what we do, and the theme this year, for International Women's Day is inspire. I think it's just wonderful that we're able to have these types of conversations, hopefully inspire others, and the Social Care Workforce RES it's just so inspirational for me anyway, because I'm able to have these conversations, I'm able to think about how we are supporting people within our own organisation in everything that we do, inspire, bring up support, all of these things are so important, because sometimes you are the only person who another woman will get support from or a woman from a marginalised background, will get support from. If you make it, you can inspire others, you can help bring other people up. And I feel very lucky to be around a lot of women, you know, even on this call, who I know do that actively. And the WRES really does focus on how we can support people and recognise what people are going through whether it's racism in the workplace, whether it's being disproportionately singled out for extra work, but not having enough support, all these things. And it really brings into focus and makes our leaders really think about how they are supporting their workforce in all the wonderful diverse forms that the workforce comes in. And I think it's just it's great that we can marry the Social Care WRES up with International Women's Day in that way.

**Tricia Pereira 07:25**

Thank you. Thanks, Sophie. And now you're right data is important. It really is. But it's the action that follows on from understanding the data that really makes the res and any other activity really impactful, especially in galvanising change. So Liz, can you tell us a little bit about what you've been doing in Hertfordshire, because I know you've been one of the original test sites for the Social Care WRES, and you're still championing the Social Care WRES. So how's it working out for you?

**Liz Fergus 07:57**

Thanks, Trisha. So I suppose I can start by saying, I started my role as the EEDI, equity, equality, diversity and inclusion lead in Herts. County Council Adult Care Services department back in November 2020, at which point, we were putting ourselves forward to be amongst the first phase WRES sites and I was really enthused by the fact that we were stepping forward to do that. I work in a Shire Council. And I think sometimes the perception of the Shire Council is that there isn't a huge amount of ethnic diversity in that council. But across adults and

care services, now 29% of the workforce is from an ethnic diverse, ethnically diverse background. And when I started my role, it was over 25% of the workforce, from an ethnically diverse background. And so I think it's really important that we recognise the intersection of race and gender and all other characteristics that people inhabit in their lives. And, and seek to work to address inequity where we see it, and we do see it in social care across the country, and in my own organisation. And so it was really positive that we've been able to use SC-WRES as the focus point, one for kind of highlighting and establishing that these challenges exist. I think sometimes it's easy to see that they're there, but they're not acknowledged. So I think SC-WRES has enabled us to acknowledge the challenges that we face, and then take some active work to address those challenges. We've got six actions in our action plan and one of the things we've been able to do, and this has benefited the whole council, is introduce a th

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despite all of that, because people know it's the right thing to do. And it works if it's done with with commitment and vision. Councils have been very, very creative in making their money go further, they've got used to having to do that. But you know, there is a need to look at that and doing this in a sustainable way to make this effective, but also really impactful for everybody, whether they are somebody who needs social care, we've got a population that's also extremely diverse across the country, who, you know, they pay, they're paying their taxes, when they expect or may need that support, they should have an experience which makes them feel valued. They feel seen and heard, regardless of who they are, where they live, what language, religion, s



**Tricia Pereira** 16:36

One of the ways that evidence is gathered for the WRES is staff engagement and staff surveys, and the importance of safe spaces where people, all staff members can speak up and

