

## **Brief Notes of LAS Equality and Inclusion Meeting held 5th June 2014**

This committee had not met since early December. In the meantime quite a lot had been happening including knock on developments within LAS but as the only outside member I was probably the only attendee not more up to date.

**Equality and Inclusion Strategy Consultation** - A new Equality and Inclusion Strategy had been written, with a consultation period ending Friday, 13th of June. The 3 of us who attended the LAS event on the 4th at Guy's Hospital (Developing a Strategy for Patient and Public Participation ) heard about this to our surprise. I asked Janice Markey to send me the exact location on the LAS web-site and she did better than this and got her IT colleagues to put this on **the main LAS web page** - so this will prevent difficulties in finding it. Please will all Forum members respond to this if possible?

**BME Engagement Programme** - A pilot project to attract more BME front line staff was run jointly by LAS and CITE (see below) during November 2013 to January 2014. Hopefully copies of the presentation about this pilot are attached. The purpose was to attract more BME staff to front line employment within LAS, enabling them to join LAS training programmes. 10 people were identified, of whom 9 were BME candidates. LAS and CITE staff worked closely together with Ricky Lawrence taking a very active role. Cite staff are enthusiastic about the potential, but due to stresses within LAS and changes in requirements for future staff and their job descriptions at the same period essentially all these candidates were lost. Both CITE and LAS are enthusiastic in extending this programme once internal requirements and job descriptions are clarified. The greater part of the meeting was taken up with this very interesting and promising presentation.

**Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and Health Equality Index** - LAS achieved a national ranking of 19th place in Workplace equality - a substantial increase from the previous year. It achieved a joint 5th Place in the Health Equality Index. (I am not sure what the Health Index is - there wasn't time to ask questions.) High rankings do mean LAS will be an attractive employer to people seeking employment where equality is rated highly - in this case under Stonewall criteria. The Stonewall Criteria are developed each year and are becoming more sophisticated

and requiring more evidence of staff engagement and from what I understood more meaningful criteria.

**LAS Staff Survey** - This is due to be available on 1st July. I understand from various sources this show a number of problem areas and it will be interesting to see how these are being responded to. Peter Hannell, LAS Paramedic and Unison Rep on the committee told me many staff are discontented and the reasons need to be addressed if LAS is to attract and keep experienced staff. I had heard of examples of staff being bullied and Janice informed me that an outside consultant was being brought in to assist with related issues.

**New LAS Monitoring Form** - The new LAS Equalities Monitoring Form will be launched shortly. LAS is going ahead despite the fact that national criteria/requirements have still, after some years, not been agreed fully. National criteria are apparently becoming less strict over time and the delays must seem maddening.

Next Equality and Inclusion Meeting: 15th July 2014

*Kathy West*