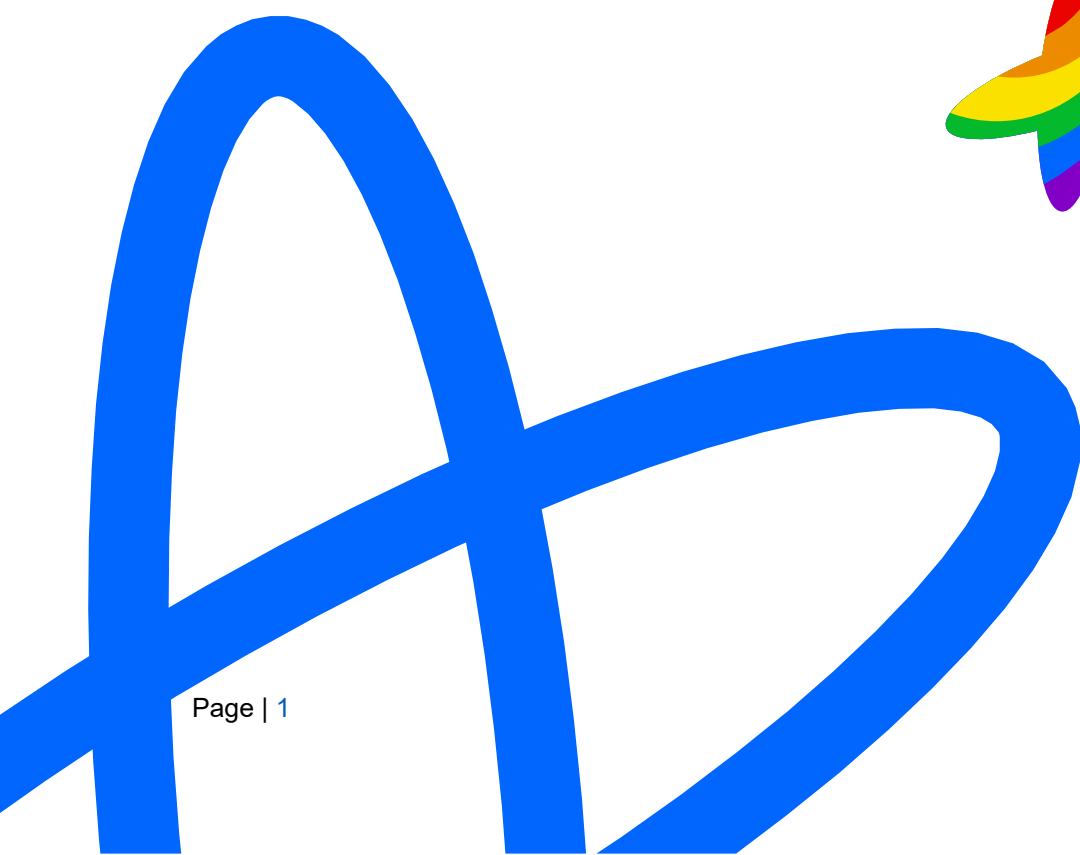




South Tees Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



NHS Workforce Disability Equality Standard 2026



Introduction

The Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) programme was established in 2019. It requires organisations to report against ten indicators of disability equality and supports continuous improvement through robust action planning to tackle the root causes of discrimination.

Inequalities in any form are at odds with our values. Research shows that the fair treatment of our staff is directly linked to better clinical outcomes and better experience of care for patients.

This report represents the eighth publication of the Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) since its introduction. It is encouraging to report a number of positive outcomes within the 2026 findings, particularly in relation to increased disability declaration rates across the Trust.

Improvements have also been observed in several staff survey indicators, including a reduction in the proportion of staff reporting experiences of harassment, bullying or abuse at work from patients, relatives or the public, as well as from managers and colleagues. While these improvements are welcome, further analysis is required to fully understand the underlying factors influencing the results and to identify any emerging trends or areas of concern.

The Trust remains committed to addressing disability-related inequalities and reducing disparities in staff experience, opportunity and career progression across our diverse workforce. The detailed analysis and presentation of WDES data to relevant governance groups and workstreams will continue to be a key mechanism for identifying areas requiring targeted action, enabling the development and implementation of evidence-based interventions to improve outcomes for disabled staff.

Trust Requirements

This report is intended to provide the high-level detail, to confirm the data collection deadline was 31 May 2026, which is where the WDES metrics were uploaded to NHS England via the Data Collection Framework (DCF) portal.

Work will then commence to produce the Trust's annual WDES report, which will be published on the Trust's internet site no later than 31 October 2026.

WDES Indicators 2026

A summary of the results for South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is shown in the table below. This includes comparison of the Trust's results covering a five-year period (2022 to 2026).

The baseline data has been extracted from ESR, Workforce databases and the Trac recruitment system to calculate a response to each of the ten WDES indicators.

South Tees - WDES Indicators 2026			2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
1	Percentage of staff with a disability or long term health condition	Overall	3.5%	4.6%	4.9%	6.3%	6.9%
2	The relative likelihood of Disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting compared to Non-Disabled staff		1.58	1.31	1.30	1.76	1.32
3	The relative likelihood of Disabled staff entering the formal capability process compared to Non-Disabled staff		0	0	0	8.4	15.5
			2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
4a	Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives or the public in the last 12 months	Staff with a disability or LTC Staff without	27.1% 23.2%	28.9% 23.7%	26.3% 20.5%	28.2% 19.6%	27.5% 20.8%
4b	Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from manager in the last 12 months	Staff with a disability or LTC Staff without	14.4% 8.7%	13.9% 7.8%	10.4% 8.6%	13.9% 9.6%	13.5% 6.7%
4c	Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues in last 12 months	Staff with a disability or LTC Staff without	24.5% 15.2%	25.2% 17.1%	23.0% 16.0%	27.7% 16.9%	26.3% 16.8%
4d	Percentage of staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it	Staff with a disability or LTC Staff without	50.4% 42.3%	49.4% 45.5%	49.2% 48.1%	52.6% 42.2%	48.2% 46.2%
5	Percentage of staff who believe that their organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion	Staff with a disability or LTC Staff without	53.5% 58.4%	51.5% 59.0%	53.2% 58.6%	53.1% 58.4%	44.9% 55.3%
6	Percentage of staff who have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties	Staff with a disability or LTC Staff without	29.9% 22.8%	26.8% 19.1%	25.0% 19.7%	27.7% 19.4%	28.5% 18.3%
7	Percentage of staff satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work	Staff with a disability or LTC Staff without	32.7% 40.7%	34.2% 39.8%	33.4% 43.4%	34.1% 42.8%	27.5% 37.6%
8	Percentage of staff with a long lasting health condition or illness saying their employer has made adequate adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work	Staff with a disability or LTC	75.6%	69.6%	72.4%	72.6%	70.5%
9	Staff Engagement Score (0-10)	Staff with a disability or LTC Staff without Overall	6.6 7 6.9	6.5 6.9 6.8	6.9 7 6.9	6.4 6.9 6.7	6.1 6.7 6.5
			2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
10	Disabled/LTC Board Membership		-3.3%	-4.3%	-3.0%	5.0%	4.0%

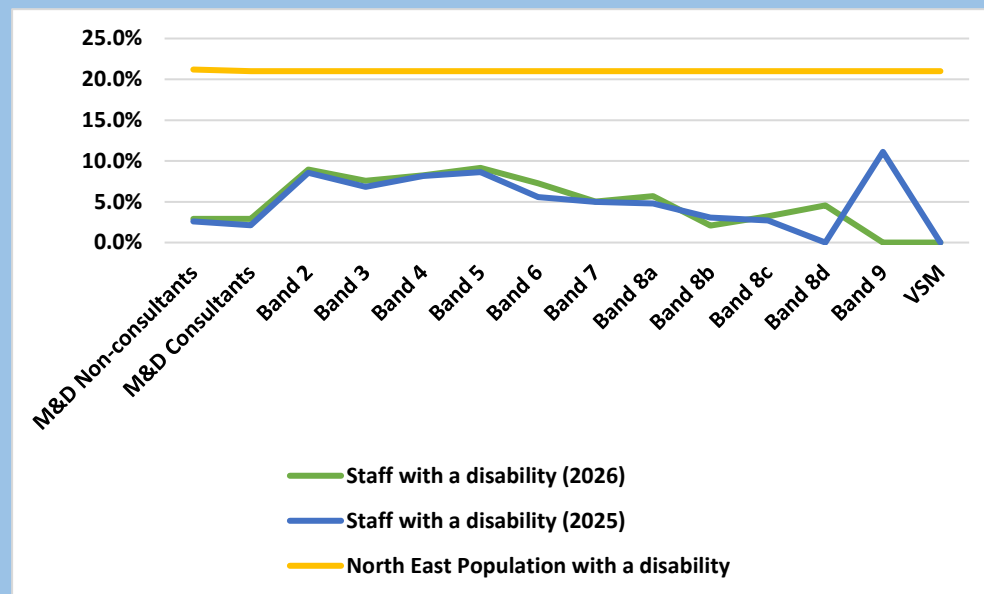
Key Findings for 2026

The key findings in respect of the ten WDES indicators for 2026 are summarised below.

We are currently only able to undertake benchmarking for those areas which relate to the staff survey (indicators 4-9). Full benchmarking information is published by the national WDES team and this is expected for March 2027. The data for the UK Census which took place in 2021 is now available for analysis and reporting and this provides us with a more accurate picture of the UK's disability profile, which can also be broken down by Region and Local Authority Area.

- UK Population 17.8% Disabled and 82.2% Non-Disabled
- North East Population 21.2% Disabled and 78.8% Non-Disabled
- Middlesbrough Population 21.9 % Disabled and 78.1% Non-Disabled
- Redcar and Cleveland Population 21.4% Disabled and 78.6% Non-Disabled
- Hambleton Population 5.4% Disabled and 84.6% Non-Disabled

Indicators 1 and 10 – Percentage of staff with a disability or long term health condition



Representative Workforce across all protected characteristics at all levels.

This information is obtained from the Trust's ESR system as at 31 March 2025. The number of staff who have reported their disability status on ESR has increased by 0.6% - this is reported at 6.9% in 2026. We continue to use staff campaigns, on how to use the online self-declaration service on ESR and also by raising awareness of this during relevant disability and staff network events and the importance of Trust workforce data. The North East's disability data (2021 census) is reported at 21.2% therefore representation within the Trust is significantly lower.

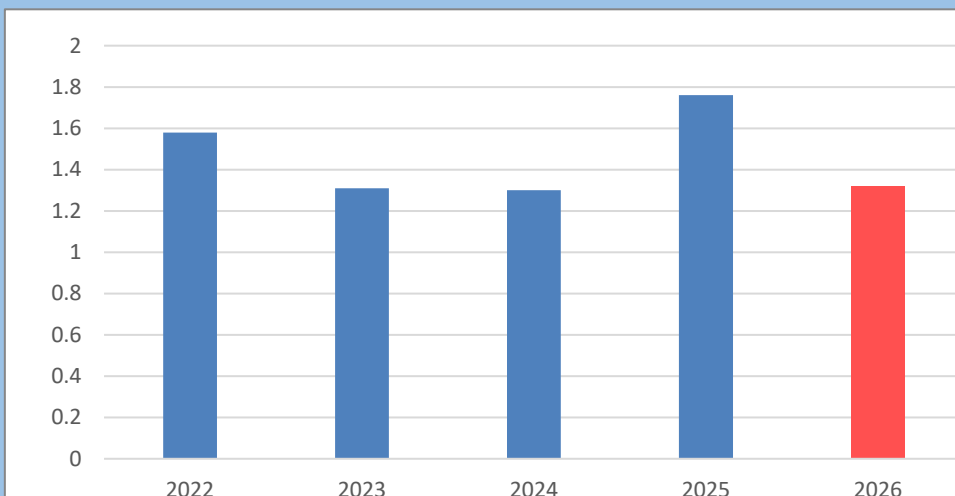
Representation is highest at Bands 2 and 5 and there are no disabled staff employed at Band 9 and VSM. Band 9 has reported a decrease of 11.1% and band 8d has seen a 4.5% increase when compared to 2025.

Representation of Disabled staff at Board and senior management levels.

For reporting purposes, we are only able to report on Board members who are directly employed by South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

There is a total of 9 employees reported on the Board for South Tees with Disability at Board level currently reported at 4.0%, this has seen a 1% decrease (4.0% in 2026 compared to 5% in 2025). Representation is reported slightly below the overall workforce figure of 6.9%

Indicator 2 – The relative likelihood of Disabled staff being appointed from shortlisting compared to Non-Disabled staff



Equity of Experience.

This information is obtained from the Trust's Trac Recruitment System for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 and considers a ratio showing the likelihood of being appointed following shortlisting. A figure of 1 indicates equal experience between disabled and non-disabled applicants.

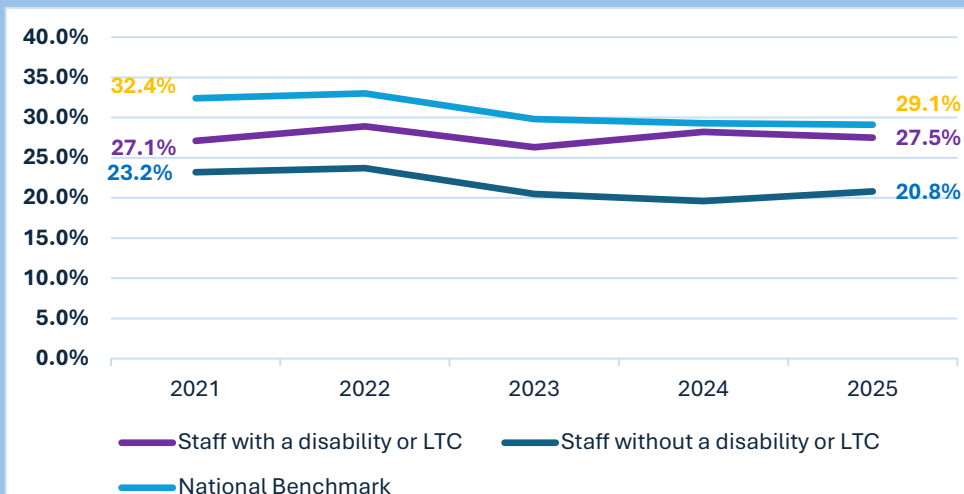
The current figure for 2026 is reported as 1.32 which has seen an improvement since 2025 when it was reported at 1.76, however the figure still indicates shortlisted disabled applicants are less likely to be appointed following shortlisting than non-disabled applicants.

Indicator 3 – The relative likelihood of Disabled staff entering the formal capability process compared to Non-Disabled staff

This information is obtained from the Trust's Workforce databases and considers a ratio showing the likelihood of entering formal capability processes. A figure of 1 indicates equal experience between disabled and non-disabled staff.

There have been 8 formal capability cases in total with 4 involving staff with a disability or long-term condition, therefore the relative likelihood of Disabled staff entering the formal capability process compared to non-Disabled staff is reported at 15.5. This has seen an increase from previous years where this has been reported at 8.4.

Indicator 4a - Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from patients, relatives or the public in last 12 months



Staff Survey Key Findings - B&H Public

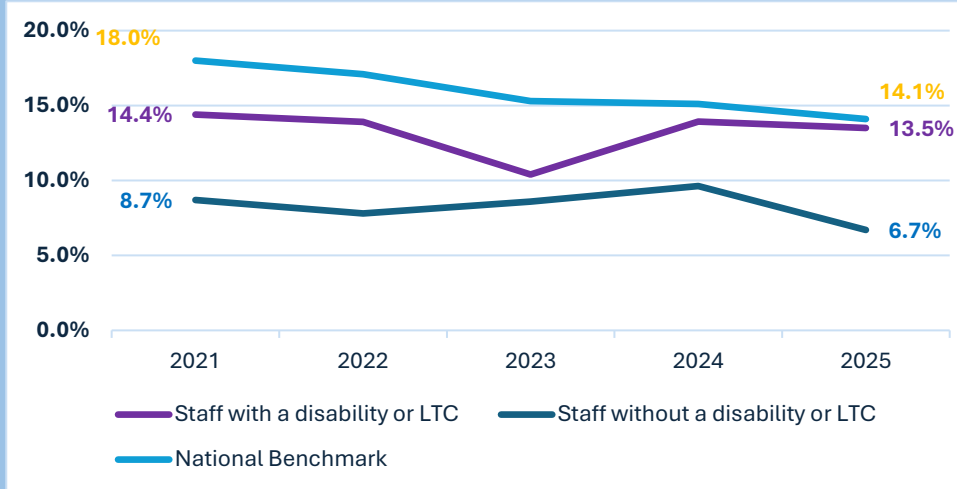
This information is derived from the 2025 Staff Survey.

Staff survey results show a positive decrease in the number of disabled staff who have experienced harassment, bullying and abuse from patients, relatives/public (27.5% compared to 28.2% for 2024). It's also positive to note we report below the national average of 29.1%.

Staff with a disability/LTC continue to be more likely to experience harassment, bullying/abuse from patients than staff who do not have a disability and the gap is reported as 6.7%.

Staff are required to log all incidents of service user violence and harassment via InPhase and the information is reviewed on a regular basis.

Indicator 4b – Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from manager in last 12 months



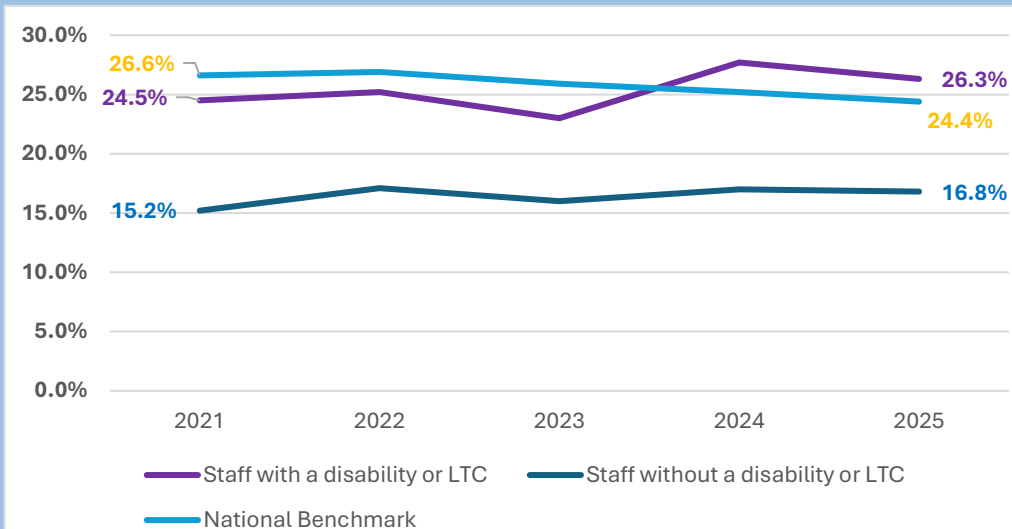
Staff Survey Key Findings - B&H Manager

This information is derived from the 2025 Staff Survey.

Staff survey results show a slight positive decrease in the number of disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying and abuse from a manager (13.5% compared to 13.9% for 2024).

Staff with a disability/LTC continue to be more likely to experience harassment, bullying/abuse from a manager than staff who do not have a disability, the gap has increased for 2025 and this is currently reported as 6.8%. Positive to note we continue to report below the national average of 14.1% for 2024.

Indicator 4c – Percentage of staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from other colleagues in last 12 months



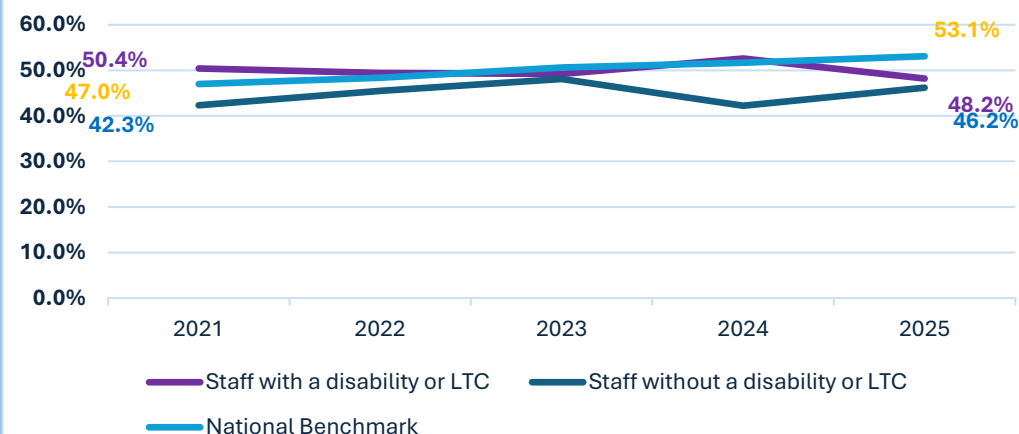
Staff Survey Key Findings - B&H Colleagues

This information is derived from the 2025 Staff Survey.

Staff survey results show a positive decrease in the number of disabled staff experiencing harassment, bullying and abuse from a colleague (26.3% compared to 27.7% in 2024).

Staff with a disability/LTC continue to be more likely to experience harassment, bullying/abuse from a colleague than staff who do not have a disability. The gap has decreased for 2025 and this is reported as 9.5% (compared to 10.3% for 2024).

Indicator 4d – Percentage of staff saying that the last time they experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work, they or a colleague reported it



Staff Survey Key Findings – Reporting

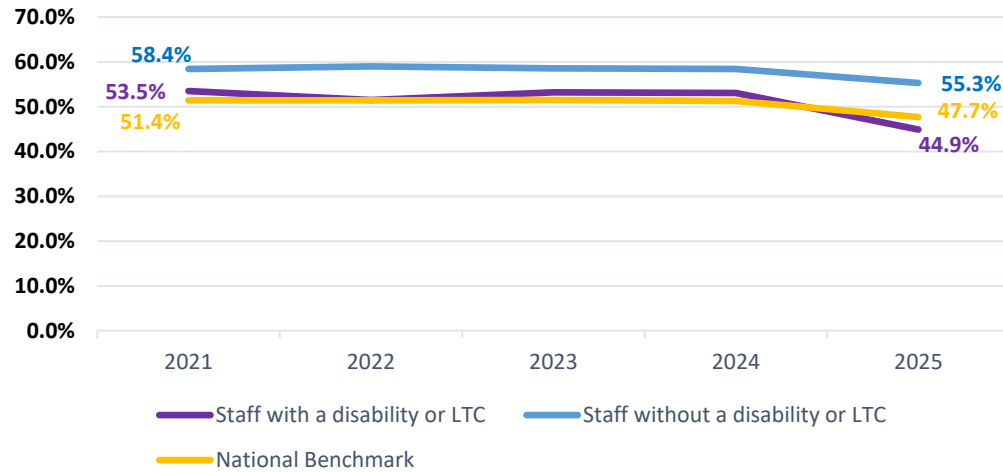
This information is derived from the 2025 Staff Survey.

Staff survey results show a negative decrease in the number of disabled staff who have reported harassment, bullying and abuse (48.2% compared to 52.6% for 2024).

Staff with a disability/LTC are now more likely to report harassment, bullying/abuse than staff who do not have a disability, with a reported gap of 2%.

It is important that our staff feel supported to report concerns regarding bullying and harassment and all cases are logged and monitored by the Workforce Team.

Indicator 5 – Percentage of staff who believe that their organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion



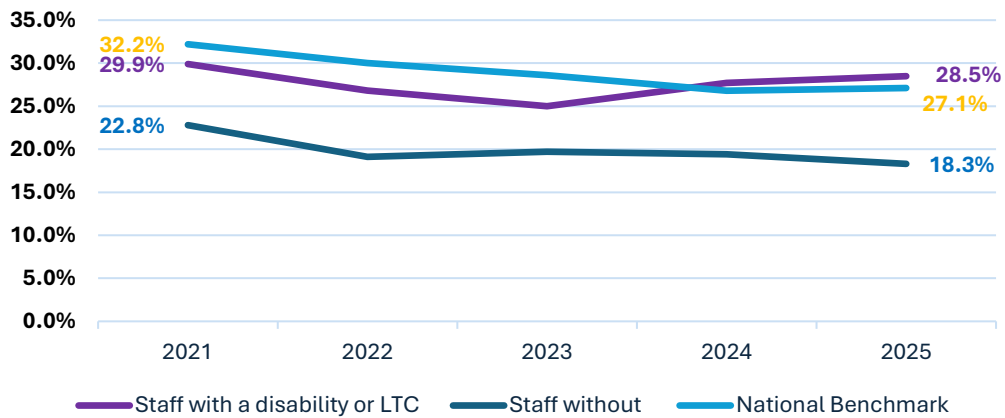
Staff Survey Key Findings - Equal Opportunities

This information is derived from the 2025 Staff Survey.

The results have shown a negative decrease in terms of the number of disabled staff who believe the organisation provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion (44.9% compared to 53.1% in 2024).

Staff with a disability/LTC continue to report lower levels of equal opportunities than staff who do not have a disability. The gap in experience is currently reported as 8.4%.

Indicator 6 – Percentage of staff who have felt pressure from their manager to come to work, despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties



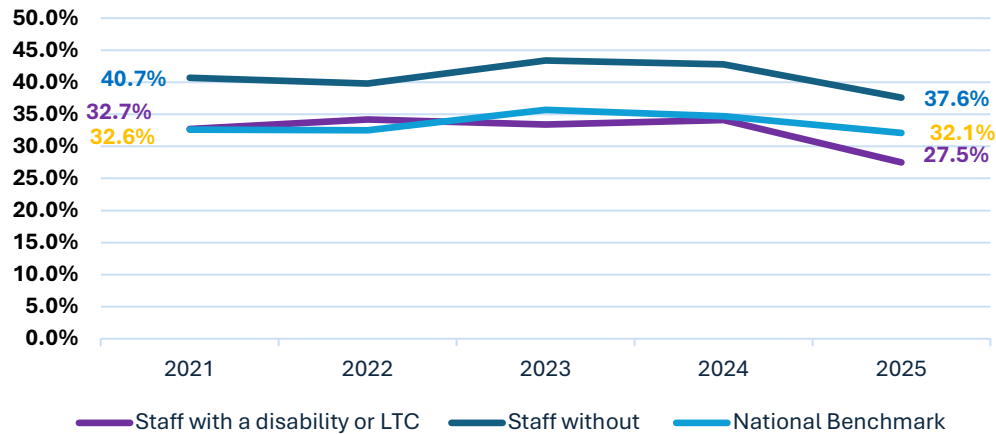
Staff Survey Key Findings - Attendance at work whilst unwell

This information is derived from the 2025 Staff Survey.

The results show a negative increase in the number of disabled staff who have felt pressure from their manager to come to work whilst unwell (28.5% compared to 27.7% for 2024).

Staff with a disability/LTC continue to be more likely to report pressure to attend work whilst unwell than staff who do not have a disability. The gap has increased for 2025 and this is reported as 10.2%, compared to 8.3% for 2024.

Indicator 7 – Percentage of staff satisfied with the extent to which their organisation values their work



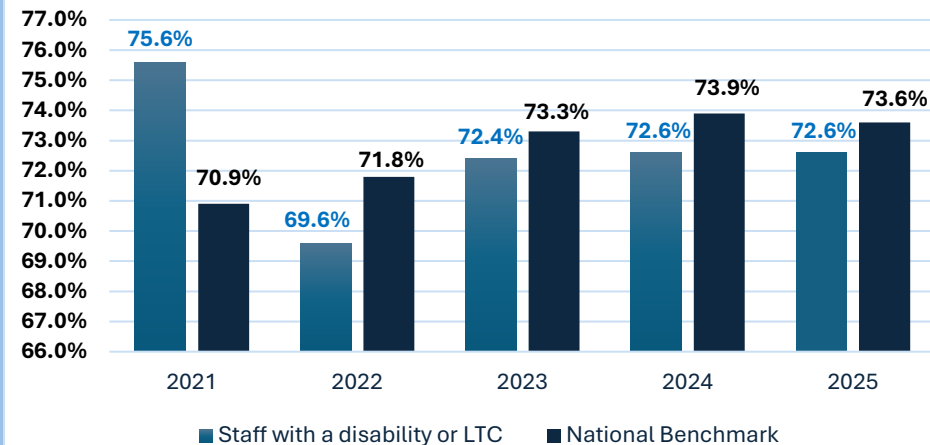
Staff Survey Key Findings - Feeling Valued

This information is derived from the 2025 Staff Survey.

The number of disabled staff who feel satisfied that the organisation values their work has decreased for 2025 at 27.5%, compared to 34.1% for 2024.

Staff with a disability/LTC continue to be less likely to feel valued than staff who do not have a disability and the gap is reported at 9.9% which is an increase of 1.1% from 2024.

Indicator 8 – Percentage of staff with a long lasting health condition or illness saying their employer has made adequate adjustment(s) to enable them to carry out their work



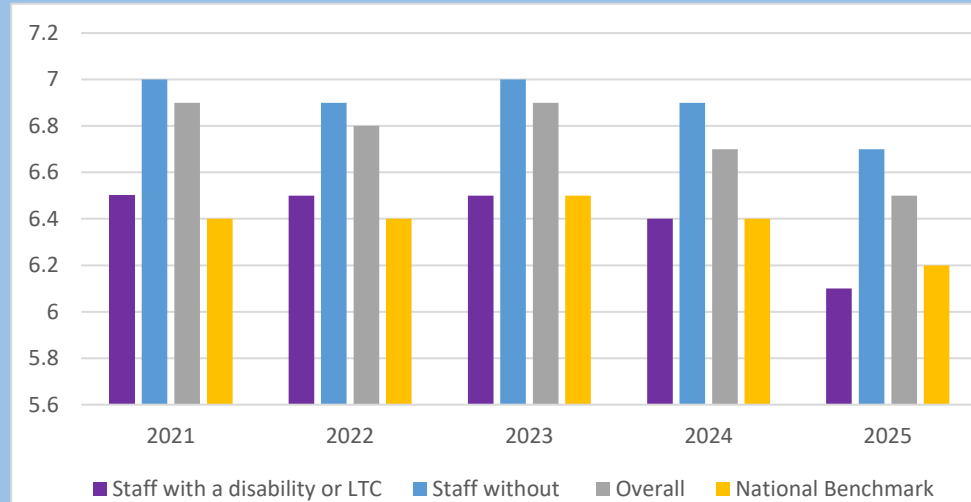
Staff Survey Key Findings - Reasonable Adjustments

This information is derived from the 2025 Staff Survey.

Staff survey results have remained static in terms of the number of disabled staff who have reported that the Trust has made adequate reasonable adjustments to enable them to carry out their work (results have remained at 72.6% for 2025).

We have recently refreshed our training and we will continue to roll this to managers on the application of the policy in practice.

Indicator 9 – Staff engagement score (0-10)



Staff Survey Key Findings - Engagement

This information is derived from the 2025 Staff Survey.

Staff survey results show that the staff engagement score for disabled staff is 6.1. This has shown a decrease of 3% when compared to 6.4 in 2024.

Staff with a disability report lower levels of staff engagement than staff who do not have a disability. Staff with a disability/LTC continue to report lower than the national benchmarking data which indicates that the engagement score for disabled staff is 6.2, which is 0.1 higher than the Trust figure.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Our actions to improve the Trust's Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) metrics are aligned with the Group's People Values, particularly the value of Respect, and support our commitment to the ambitions set out within the NHS People Plan.

We are pleased to report improvements across some of WDES indicators for 2026. These positive outcomes reflect the impact of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) programme of work, alongside increased investment in workforce data analysis and targeted interventions designed to enhance staff experience and reduce inequalities across all protected characteristics.

The Trust will continue to promote and embed the initiatives and good practice already in place, including the delivery of fair and transparent recruitment processes, civility and respect training, unconscious bias training, and the promotion of leadership and development opportunities available to staff across the organisation. The Trust has successfully achieved Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) accreditation and is working towards attaining Disability Confident Leader (Level 3) status. In addition, we are introducing a new Employee Disability Passport as part of the revised appraisal policy. This initiative aims to support disabled employees and those with long-term health conditions by facilitating discussions about workplace adjustments, ensuring appropriate support is in place, and enabling individuals to enter, remain in, and thrive within work.

The Trust is committed to advancing disability equality and fostering an inclusive working environment where all staff are able to succeed. While a range of initiatives and practices have already been implemented to support this objective, we recognise that achieving sustainable improvement will require continued organisational focus and long-term cultural change.

Although changes to the workforce disability profile are likely to be gradual, it is encouraging to note a continued increase in the number of staff declaring a disability or long-term condition. This greater level of disclosure is an important indicator of growing confidence among staff and supports our ability to better understand and address workforce needs. We also acknowledge the importance of further developing the Disability and Long-Term Conditions Staff Network to ensure the voices and experiences of disabled staff are effectively represented and continue to inform organisational priorities and improvement activity.

It should be noted that this report provides a high-level overview of the Trust's overall WDES performance and workforce metrics. The next phase of the reporting process will focus on engagement with staff and key stakeholders to review the findings, gain further insight into the underlying themes, and collaboratively develop a targeted action plan. This action plan will form part of the Trust's WDES Annual Report to be published in October 2026 and will support our ongoing commitment to improving outcomes and experiences for disabled staff.