

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Guidance is available on [Compass](#). Completion of an EqIA should be proportional and relevant to the anticipated impact of the project on equalities. The form can be tailored to your project and should be completed before decisions are made. Key EqIAs should be reviewed by the Business Manager or Service Head, signed off by your department's Equality Action Group (EAG) and sent to the Equality and Diversity team to publish on HertsDirect. For support and advice please contact equalities@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

STEP 1: Responsibility and involvement

Title of proposal/ project/strategy/ procurement/policy	Herts Equipment Service (HES) Review	Head of Service or Business Manager	Sarah Evans
Names of those involved in completing the EqIA:	Fiona Hutton Sarah Evans Oliver Barnes	Lead officer contact details:	Oliver Barnes (01992 556309)
Date completed:		Review date:	TBC

STEP 2: Objectives of proposal and scope of assessment – what do you want to achieve?

<p>Proposal objectives: – what you want to achieve – intended outcomes – purpose and need</p>	<p>The Children and Young People's (CYP) Equipment Service is a well-established service, which has been delivered by the local authority for over ten years. It provides "loan" equipment to CYP in Hertfordshire who have physical and/ or learning disabilities such as beds, standing frames and hoists to meet clinical need.</p> <p>HES is the current provider of Hertfordshire's equipment service providing equipment on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council (Adult Care Services and Children's Services), East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group (ENHCCG) and Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group (HVCCG).</p> <p>They do not provide wheel chairs which are provided through Wheelchair services or adaptations to homes which are provided through local councils.</p> <p>However, there has previously been a lack of clarity around the criteria for how equipment should be provided to CYP in Hertfordshire and there is some perceived unfairness in the system. In addition there are pressures to make efficiency savings across all services including Children Services. It is hoped that the current proposals will provide more clarity and also support better future planning and use of resources.</p> <p>The current proposals are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the process for how more than one set of equipment is being provided. • Review how equipment is allocated going forward
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	<p>including to those service users undergoing transition from children's services to adult services.</p> <p><u>Reviewing the process for more than one set of equipment being provided.</u> Under the current system CYP can be provided with a number of sets of equipment which can include different sets for school and home - and in the case of parental separation, another set for second home.</p> <p>The proposal looks at whether any of this equipment can be transported realistically, and how many sets of equipment is reasonable for the local authority to provide.</p> <p><u>How equipment is allocated going forward including to those undergoing transition from children's services to adult services.</u> Currently there is a lack of clarity around the process of equipment allocation - leading to potential unfairness. For those that have accessed the service in childhood, sometimes allocated equipment no longer meets the clinical need as an adult.</p> <p>This proposal looks at introducing a "ladder" approach for allocation of equipment.</p>
<p>Stakeholders: Who will be affected: the public, partners, staff, service users, local Member etc</p>	<p>Current and future service-users of HES – and their parents and carers HES staff, Occupational Therapists Schools Members</p>

STEP 3: Available data and monitoring information

Relevant equality information	What the data tell us about equalities
<p>For example: Community profiles / service user demographics, data and monitoring information (local and national), similar or previous EqIAs, complaints, audits or inspections, local knowledge and consultations.</p>	
<p>HES issues around 84,000 items of equipment each year.</p> <p>Equipment is usually provided to children up to the age of 18 who are resident or registered with a GP in Hertfordshire who have physical needs. The majority will also have a learning disability.</p> <p>Around 1118 children are receiving support through the Disabled Children's Team in</p>	<p>Any changes to how equipment is allocated in terms of what equipment is provided and how many sets of equipment provided will have a greater impact on those with a disability and in particular those with more complex needs who tend to have more bulky items that are not easily transportable.</p> <p>These children will be the ones likely to be the ones who would be eligible for equipment</p>

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Hertfordshire. This is a very small proportion of children in Hertfordshire (less than 0.001%) and the vast majority of those receiving support are for Autism or Asperger's Syndrome (33%) followed by Learning Disability (15%) and Physical Disabilities (14%) (JNSA, 2015, Children and Young People aged 0-25 with SEN and Disabilities).

9.75% of households in Hertfordshire are lone parent's households and 20% of children live in single-parents households being in Stevenage.

Children from a Gypsy/Roma/Traveller background are four times more likely to be in receipt of support for SEN associated with learning disabilities than the average Hertfordshire pupil. Asian pupils are more likely to receive support at school for severe or, profound and multiple learning difficulties than the average Hertfordshire pupil (JNSA, Learning Disabilities Needs Assessment, 2011).

A report by Mencap "Reaching out" in 2009 found that people from BME communities are almost always under-represented in the client base of both voluntary and statutory service providers. Carers and those who work with them reported difficulties when trying to access services including racism, language barriers and culturally insensitive services.

Both nationally and locally males are more likely to receive support for learning disabilities. In Hertfordshire, 65% of all children with SEN associated with learning disabilities are male, which suggests that males are more likely to require support for learning disabilities than females (JNSA,

services. Although any changes are likely to have a disproportionate effect on those with disability and in particular physical disability this is a small amount of Hertfordshire's population.

It is likely that CYP living in single-parent households will still have contact with their other parent, and may visit and stay at the other parent's home. If the CYP has a disability they may then need to have additional equipment to enable this contact and any constrictions placed on the sets of equipment may then impact whether the child can access overnight stays with the other parent and other relatives. As mothers tend to have primary custody these change will potentially have a greater impact on fathers.

Any communications with parents/carers and service users will be offered in accessible format in order to ensure that service users/parents and carers understand information and consultation content.

The difficulties in accessing the service in particular any language barriers will need to be considered when developing the consultation.

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<p>Learning Disabilities Needs Assessment, 2011).</p> <p>There is a higher prevalence of learning disabilities in children in Watford and Stevenage and lower prevalence in St. Albans and Dacorum (JNSA, Learning Disabilities Needs Assessment, 2011).</p>	<p>The higher prevalence of learning disabilities in Watford and Stevenage is likely to do with a variety of complex reasons one of which is a correlation between social deprivation and learning disabilities. As both Watford and Stevenage have higher rates of social deprivation there is likely to be a higher prevalence of learning disabilities but the reasons for this correlation are both complex and unclear.</p>
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STEP 4: Impact Assessment – Service Users, communities and partners (where relevant)

Protected characteristic	Potential for negative impact	What reasonable mitigations can you propose?
Age	Herts Equipment Service currently provides equipment until the service user is 18, at which point they will be reassessed. This could potentially mean that equipment is no longer suitable or available.	A clear assessment process that has been robustly tested with Occupational Therapists and service users to ensure that needs are met. In addition feedback from the consultation will be considered in developing the final policy.
Disability Including Learning Disability	Those who access HES will have a disability and therefore proposed changes could potentially impact them by not providing additional sets of equipment or no longer providing enhanced equipment.	Service users, carers and interest groups to be fully involved in consultation regarding the changes in order that adverse impacts are considered and mitigated where possible. Communications including those regarding the consultation will be accessible and available in different formats such a large print, braille and easy read.
Race	It is not anticipated that there	Consideration will be given to

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Protected characteristic	Potential for negative impact	What reasonable mitigations can you propose?
	will be any impact on this protected characteristic. However, it has been noted that nationally those from a BME background often feel they have difficulties in accessing services.	how to ensure that those from BME background are fully included in the proposed changes. Communications about the changes will be translated or interpreted as appropriate on request.
Gender reassignment	It is not anticipated that there will be any impact on this protected characteristic.	There will be on-going monitor to ensure there is no negative impact on this characteristic
Pregnancy and maternity	It is not anticipated that there will be any impact on this protected characteristic.	There will be on-going monitor to ensure there is no negative impact on this characteristic
Religion or belief	It is not anticipated that there will be any impact on this protected characteristic.	There will be on-going monitor to ensure there is no negative impact on this characteristic
Sex	There is potential for fathers to be more adversely affected if second sets of equipment are not provided. Statistically, more mothers have primary custody of children than fathers – so the “second set” of equipment is more likely to be at the father’s home.	Consultation process to discuss changes and ensure that needs are meet of the CYP.
Sexual orientation	It is not anticipated that there will be any impact on this protected characteristic.	There will be on-going monitor to ensure there is no negative impact on this characteristic
Marriage & civil partnership	It is not anticipated that there will be any impact on this protected characteristic.	There will be on-going monitor to ensure there is no negative impact on this characteristic
Carers (by association with any of the above)	If additional sets of equipment are not provided to multiple carers (i.e parents where they are separated) then this may have a negative impact in the way in which they can care for their children.	Carers are to be engaged in consultation regarding changes and consideration placed upon these situations for example loan of equipment, how portable equipment is.
Opportunity to advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations (Please refer to the guidance for more information on the public sector duties)		
<p>Currently there appears to opportunity for disparity of equipment between differing service users. By reviewing the service and prescriber guidance the opportunity is there to develop clear set of guidance and ensure fairness across the service.</p>		

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STEP 5: Gaps identified

<p>Gaps identified Do you need to collect more data/information or carry out consultation? (A 'How to engage' consultation guide is on Compass). How will you make sure your consultation is accessible to those affected?</p>	<p>There is a lack of clarity around how equipment is provided to schools which needs to be understood and resolved to move forward. It is intended that a clear set of protocols will be developed.</p> <p>The proposed changes will be consulted upon and feedback considered and any changes reflected where possible.</p>
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STEP 6: Other impacts

Consider if your proposal has the potential (positive and negative) to impact on areas such as health and wellbeing, crime and disorder and community relations. There is more information in the guidance.

STEP 7: Conclusion of your analysis

Select one conclusion of your analysis	Give details
<input type="checkbox"/> No equality impacts identified – No change required to proposal.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Minimal equality impacts identified – Adverse impacts have been identified, but have been objectively justified (provided you do not unlawfully discriminate). – Ensure decision makers consider the cumulative effect of how a number of decisions impact on equality.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potential equality impacts identified – Take 'mitigating action' to remove barriers or better advance equality. – Complete the action plan in the next section.	<p>The proposed changes will have a potential impact on CYP with disabilities who may no longer receive more than one set of equipment which may affect contact with extended family and there is potential that they may only be eligible for standard equipment.</p> <p>However, all needs will still be met and the new procedures will be tested with OT and consulted on to fully ensure that the impacts of the changes are fully understood.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Major equality impacts identified – Stop and remove the policy – The adverse effects are not justified, cannot be mitigated or show unlawful discrimination. – Ensure decision makers understand the equality impact.	

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STEP 8: Action plan

Issue or opportunity identified relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mitigation measures – Further research – Consultation proposal – Monitor and review 	Action proposed	Officer Responsible and target date
The current process of schools allocation of equipment is not fully understood	Process to be reviewed in order to ensure that the current process and impact of any changes are understood	Oliver Barnes
Unclear how many people the changes will affect	Proposals to be developed and consulted upon	Oliver Barnes
Need to ensure that proposed new procedures will meet needs	Proposals to be “tested” and consulted upon	Fiona Hutton
Some people with disabilities may not be able to be fully involved in the consultation due to a difficulties in processing information	Clear communication available and where possible easy read guidance, braille etc made available.	Fiona Hutton

This EqIA has been reviewed and signed off by:

Head of Service or Business Manager:

Date: