

Appendix 1

IF Your Face Fits – Review of CCS Recruitment Processes

Introduction

If Your Face Fits, is a document issued by the NHS East of England, which explores common mistakes made in the recruitment and selection process which could lead to discrimination occurring.

It offers a range of suggested improvements/changes that can be made to the process to make the process fairer and more inclusive.

The changes in practice discussed in the document are based on five key principles which are details below:

- Creating an Inclusive Work Climate
- What Counts & Taking Accountability
- Explaining the Narrative and Exposing the Evidence
- De-biasing Systems and Processes
- Individuals

Current Situation at CCS

The Trust's recruitment and selection process has undergone significant change over the past few years going from a fully outsourced process that was largely paper based to fully electronic systems supported by a team employed directly by CCS.

This change is ongoing, with the team striving to constantly review the service they provide and making changes improve the recruitment experience for both the recruiting manager and the applicants.

Line managers act as the appointing officer when they have a vacancy in their team and call in other relevant colleagues to form the selection panel who shortlist and interview applicants. Where one or more of the shortlisted applicants is from a BAME background, at least one of the panel members must also be from a BAME background. Training is provided to those involved in this process.

It is heartening to see that many of the suggested improvement in the If Your Face Fits document have already been adopted by CCS but that is not to say that there isn't room for us to do even more.

Suggested Improvement to the Recruitment process (and beyond)

Looking at each part of this process separately, below are listed some possible ways that the service could be improved further to support ant discriminatory recruitment practice.

Job Description & Person Specification

To be reviewed ahead of each recruitment campaign to ensure that they are up to date, criteria are still relevant and the documents are free for discriminatory language.

Are the words used in the body of the document out dated or meaningful.

Remove he/she etc from the text

Reduction in number of essential criteria (suggestion is no more than 6 although this would be a big change).

Limit desirable criteria - They are frequently not relevant and what is desirable to one person may not be as desirable for another and can create greater opportunities for discrimination to occur.

Be aware of the population demographics of the locality – what is the percentage of minority groups and how reflective is the current workforce of that.

Shortlisting - Those who shortlist should be panel member

Make the shortlisting panel reflect the demographic split of your area at the outset (European- BAME etc.).

Forward thinking – The above consideration should be at the start of the recruitment process.

A minimum of three people to carry out shortlisting and should always include a culturally diverse panel staff member (as per demographic split of your area).

Should be done independently initially, to prevent panel members being influenced by others.

Allow plenty of time to complete this process thoroughly.

Consider adopting the Rooney rule. In summary this would increase the number of underrepresented groups (e.g. culturally diverse - BAME) who are shortlisted. So long as the candidate meets the essential criteria.

Interview Process

Prepare thoroughly and allow plenty of time to both interview and to make a decision.

Make the panel diverse as a matter of course (see earlier points under shortlisting).

Review/amend questions each time to ensure that they are relevant and use broadly the same set of questions for each candidate to reduce bias.

Add something to the selection process.

Telephone interview screening (non-visual process) in the first instance?

Perhaps asking what they think diversity means, what is equality?

Formulate what constitutes a 'good' answer, before the interview. This makes scoring fact based and also helps make note taking easier.

Don't carry out too many interviews on one day, factor in breaks in the schedule and allow for slippage over the course of the day.

Consider if tests are any longer relevant for the role – this could exclude candidates in some protected groups.

Ask yourself if – Can you ensure tests are fair.

Consider using skills based assessment (asking candidates to do something in relation to the role).

Beware of how people appear on a TEAMS call, can lead to bias when interviewing a candidate – decor/untidy background etc, it does not reflect the person's ability to perform a role.

Ensure the background you use for a Teams meeting reflects CCS, option to have an interview background we all use, which sets out our approach to Diversity and inclusion.

Panel need to be very aware of all their own and any other potential bias that can occur when interviewing (see recommendations below) and have undertaken unconscious bias training.

Decision making process

All panel members have equal decision making rights.

Score first then discuss, to reduce bias and being influenced by other panel members.

Make decisions based on:

- The selection criteria
- Answers to pre agreed questions and
- Allow time to make an informed decision

Induction & Onboarding

Local induction is key.

Is there a local 'BUDDY' system in the team/service?

Information – ensure all relevant group information is shared with new team member.

Set up meetings with groups who they have expressed an interest in (BAME – LGBTQA etc).

Explain the training for the role.

Regular check in during the first six months of employment.

Talent Spotting / Appraisals

Appraisals need to be consistent across the Trust.

Need to ensure that the quality of appraisals is high.

Peer review of appraisals by other managers, to help reduce bias.

Talk about career progression, pathways etc.

Advertise all 'stretch' opportunities and secondments, don't just pick people.

Leaving CCS

Exit interviews to be carried out – by phone, Teams, Face to Face but not by the line manager.

Or – via email and sent back to HR.

Summary / Conclusions

A number of these suggestions are relatively quick to resolve (a number are in place already) but some potentially have quite a high initial resource implication, for example reviewing of job description and person spec and does some consideration need to be given to some additional, perhaps short-term help in the area.

There are two major themes throughout this information. One is allowing sufficient time to enable better recruitment decisions to be made. This is mentioned repeatedly in the recruitment & selection training how if time is invested at the beginning to make the right appointment it will pay dividends later.

The second is around being aware of and dealing with our own biases. Training has been given to all staff in this area but consideration should be given as whether this need to be revisited or whether additional support/guidance in the needs to be provided.