

Report on Progress against Disability Duties Programme of Work - Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA)

March 2008

This report outlines progress made in implementing the programme of work as detailed in a letter from the Equality Commission dated 9 January 07, '*Exemption to the production of a Disability Action Plan*', further to progress reported on 31 July 07.

NIMDTA, along with a range of agencies and special bodies in Health and Social Care, supported and facilitated by the Equality Unit in the CSA, have in place partnership working arrangements to take forward the equality agenda, which includes a collaborative approach to progress the disability duties programme of work.

Responsibility for taking forward the disability programme of work and the point of contact within NIMDTA is:-

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NIMDTA is fully committed to meeting its obligations under the new disability duties and the programme of work as detailed in the Equality Commission correspondence of 9 January 07.

Mapping Exercise

NIMDTA worked with the consortium of agencies on the development of a mapping template to identify work carried out to promote positive attitudes and to encourage participation of disabled people in public life in areas relating to mainstreaming, employment, communication, training, accessibility and consultation. The completed template (attached) is reflective of

measures in place and work undertaken up to 31 March 08 and therefore forms the basis of this progress report.

Completion of the mapping exercise assisted in establishing measures and priorities that might inform the development of our Disability Action Plan, subject to ministerial confirmation that the organisation will continue to exist post RPA, as detailed in Section 4.0 of the template.

Screening

Attention is drawn to progress in mainstreaming, in particular screening. As detailed in the mapping template, NIMDTA was represented by the Equality Unit at the CSA on a HSC-wide group tasked with the development of a region-wide standardised screening template, guidance and associated training sessions. Building questions relating to the disability duties into the screening template has been a priority of the group. The new template will be in use from 01 April 08, and arrangements have been put in place to ensure the duties have been taken into consideration in interim screening exercises. Training sessions, including Equality Awareness, Disability Awareness and Screening have been updated to incorporate the new duties.

Consultation

The HSC Agencies and Special Bodies' collaborative approach to consulting on screening outcomes with a composite list of consultees, including disability representative groups, has proven to be extremely effective, maximising resources for all. NIMDTA also seeks the views of targeted voluntary sector organisations earlier in the screening process as part of data collection to inform decision-making.

Discussions have commenced to initiate involvement in HSC-wide implementation of common action points between disability action plans of HSC Trusts and Agencies. Such work would likewise involve Boards and those Agencies exempted from the production of disability action plans in acknowledgment of their ongoing need to comply with the new duties.

