BMA corporate EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) strategy 2016-2021

Introduction

The BMA undertakes a wide variety of equality, diversity and inclusion activities each year. An overarching corporate strategy allows us, for the first time, to connect the range of work undertaken across the organisation, and in doing so, maximise the benefit of each activity and identify further opportunities to achieve our aspirations to become an exemplar organisation committed to EDI best practice.

Our aim is to foster a culture where individual differences and diversity are welcomed. We are committed to promoting equal rights and opportunities, pro-actively tackling discrimination or disadvantage in all forms and creating an open and inclusive culture for our members, employees and stakeholders.

We want all of our work to be aligned to our BMA mission and vision, and all our decisions and actions to be grounded in our values (these are presented in Appendix 1). The human rights principles of fairness, respect, equality, dignity and autonomy will be promoted and be part of our everyday behaviours. Using a human rights based approach which is integrated into policy-making, as well as the day to day running of the association, ensures that standards are met for everyone.

The document sets out our vision, strategic goals and the steps we will take to realise this vision. Progress towards the strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Definitions

We define ‘equality’ as fair and individual treatment for all – an environment where everyone can participate and has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential.

We define ‘diversity’ as recognising that we are all different, and celebrating and valuing these differences. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences, and by respecting this, everyone can feel valued for their contributions.

We define ‘inclusion’ as proactively developing approaches to include everyone from all groups, challenging discrimination and exclusion, and eliminating barriers.
Why does equality, diversity and inclusion matter to us?

We believe that EDI is integral to our work as a trade union, a professional body and an employer for several reasons:

– It strengthens our ability to stand up for doctors, both individually and collectively, on a wide variety of employment issues and influence on key ethical, scientific and public health matters, by helping to maintain the trust and confidence of all our partners and stakeholders.

– We want to demonstrate that we understand and respond to the diverse needs of doctors and patients and tailor our services accordingly.

– Our membership profile needs to reflect the make-up of the medical profession. Our committee structures must be representative of the membership and medical workforce.

– Having an inclusive and diverse workforce which reflects the rich diversity of the UK population, and the communities in which we operate, is key to achieving our mission and vision. There is also strong evidence that organisations which embrace inclusion and diversity perform better and achieve more.

– We want to attract talent, retain productive and committed staff, and be part of creating a positive culture change that spreads throughout the association.

– There are important legislative measures affecting equalities and human rights issues. We want to be recognised as an association that aspires to high standards and good practice in all that we do.

Why do we need a corporate strategy for equality, diversity and inclusion?

Our current work on EDI is largely reactionary we have never had a strategic, cross-organisational approach to EDI. As a multicultural association with members and staff from all diversity strands it is vital that we have a vision, strategy and actions that consider and promote EDI in all our areas of work. Having a clear and shared vision and strategy will enable us to bring numerous EDI threads together and develop a focused set of actions to position us as a centre of excellence with the ability to effectively call for and influence change.
What have we achieved so far?

There has been a significant focus and action on EDI issues and representation within our membership over the last few years. Key achievements include:

- Implementation of our BI (business intelligence) portal – this allows us to collect membership data on six out of the nine protected characteristics: age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and religion or belief. The system allows us to extract data and develop reports directly from the member profiles on the membership database, greatly improving the quantity and quality of the data.

- Women and leadership project – established in early 2013 to identify barriers to participation on BMA committees for female doctors, and to develop policies to address these barriers.

- Corporate EDI learning and development programmes – these are a part of our commitment to supporting our elected members in their medico-political careers:
  - BMA leadership programme – this aims to help identify future leaders of the BMA, and help support their development in a medico-political environment.
  - BMA committee mentoring programme – this is a centralised scheme aimed at helping newer and inexperienced committee members to become more confident in their BMA roles. Through pairing them with experienced committee members the programme aims to support the development of members within a medico-political environment.
  - BMA committee visitors’ scheme – this scheme allows members to apply to sit as a non-voting committee member with the opportunity to attend meetings and take part in committee discussions.
  - Effective leadership: valuing difference programme — this is an integral part of embedding the BMA mission, vision and values into our work as an association. It is a free, one day training for committee members which aims to improve leadership and team performance through understanding the importance diversity, and our own unconscious biases and valuing difference.

- Family friendly fund – £100,000 allocated to revise the child and dependent care guidelines to be more inclusive and flexible. This came into effect in December 2013 and now covers 5-14 year olds and 14-18 year old dependants/adult dependants as well as children of pre-school age, to allow committee members to fully participate in BMA activities.

- Enhanced participation on committees:
  - Provision of video/teleconferencing facilities to enable members who cannot travel to join meetings.
  - Consideration of the timings and dates of meetings to ensure as many committee members can attend meetings as possible.

- Guide for our elected members— an induction pack is given to every committee member at the start of each committee session. This contains both general information about the BMA as well as personalised information about the committee or region that any member is from.
Our vision

Our vision is to be an exemplar association, demonstrating excellence in equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do, and influencing others through the high standards that we set.

In all areas of our work we will be:

- Responsive
- Accessible and inclusive
- Fair

Our strategic goals

We have three overarching strategic goals which we aim to deliver through the strategy:

- Leading
- Inclusive
- Representative

Leading

To demonstrate leadership on EDI issues and secure the commitment of everyone in the BMA and across our partner organisations, so that advancing equality of opportunity, eliminating discrimination and harassment, and fostering strong relationships underpins all of our work, both collectively and as individuals.

Inclusive

To value EDI in the BMA membership and workforce through our policies and procedure. We will welcome, respect, listen and use the different perspectives and ideas that everyone brings to BMA policies, programmes and services both internally and externally, and improve the engagement and empowerment of underrepresented groups.

Representative

To ensure that our membership and workforce are reflective of the medical workforce and the communities in which we operate. We will continue to improve the collection and analysis of EDI data and evidence so that we can acknowledge the needs of, and impacts on our members, employees and stakeholders.
What will we do to achieve our goals?

Our vision and strategic goals will be used as a framework to shape the development of EDI work programmes for all directorates and national offices across the association over the next five years.

Centrally there are a number of actions and work streams that are already underway or will be put into place to facilitate this process. These include:

- **Internal organisation** — creation of two distinct teams to take forward our EDI work at the BMA:
  - **Corporate EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion) team** — our corporate EDI team is accountable for the BMA’s corporate commitment to EDI, and for promoting internal commitment to a culture that actively values EDI. It develops, coordinates and implements our corporate EDI strategy. This team works closely with and supports all other parts of the association in developing individual work plans and actions with respect to EDI.
  - **Policy EIC (equality, inclusion and culture) team** — our policy EIC team is accountable for the formulation and delivery of BMA external policy on equality and inclusion issues, and for all policy specific equality and inclusion matters. The policy EIC team engages with key external stakeholders on policy related EIC matters, and develops briefings and guidance for members who are looking to implement E&I policies into their practices and/or influence policy development in their locality.

- **Creation of a BMA EDI advisory group**
  This advisory group provides expert guidance on all matters relating to EDI across the association. All members of the group are invited to join on the basis of their expertise in EDI, and staff are represented from each BMA directorate and nation. The advisory group offers in-depth knowledge of and experience in a range of EDI issues and is able to act as peer reviewers, approvers and knowledge sharers. The group works closely with all other BMA directorates and the nations to underpin and shape the association’s work on EDI for both members, staff and the medical workforce. The BMA representative body chair is the chair of this group.

Next steps

- A baseline assessment of our activities will be undertaken to review where we currently are on EDI issues and a gap analysis produced.

- We will use this to inform the development of a detailed programme of work, working with all parts of the association, outlining actions, timelines and key performance indicators.

- The BMA EDI advisory group, with the support of the corporate EDI team and the EIC team, will oversee progress towards our strategy.

Further information

For further information about our EDI work please visit our [website](http://www.bma.org.uk) or contact Yasemin Dil, corporate EDI manager on [ydl@bma.org.uk](mailto:ydl@bma.org.uk).
Appendix 1:

BMA mission, vision and values

Our mission
We look after doctors so they can look after you.

Our vision
Our vision is a profession of valued doctors delivering the highest quality health services where...

- All doctors have strong representation and expert guidance, whenever and wherever they need it.
- All doctors have their individual needs responded to, through career-long support and professional development.
- All doctors are championed by the BMA and their voices are sought, heard and acted upon.
- All doctors can connect with each other as a professional community.
- All doctors can influence the advancement of health and the profession.

Our values

Expert
We are an indispensable source of credible information, guidance and support throughout doctors’ professional lives.

Committed
We are committed to all doctors and place them at the heart of every decision we make.

Reliable
We are doctors’ first port of call because we are trusted and dependable.

Challenging
We are unafraid to challenge effectively on behalf of all doctors.

Leading
We are an influential leader in supporting the profession and improving the health of our nation.