

Pension, Disability and Carers Service Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes

Annual Progress Report 2009-10

September 2010

**Pension, Disability
and Carers Service**

Department for Work and Pensions

Contents

- Foreword from Chief Executive Terry Moran 3**
- Introduction 4
- Pension, Disability and Carers Service diversity and equality business priorities for 2009-10 4
- Overview of progress against business priorities from April 2009 and March 2010.... 5
 - 1. Improving accessibility for customers 5
 - 2. Continue to embed diversity and equality into the business 6
 - 3. Promote active, visible leadership of every aspect of diversity and equality 8
 - 4. Publish race, disability and gender equality schemes for the agency 9
 - 5. Make progress towards the workforce becoming more representative of society..... 10
 - 6. Continuing to improve the reasonable adjustment process 10
 - 7. Other aspects of diversity 11
 - 8. Conclusion 12
- Annex – Race, Disability and Gender Action Plan..... 13

Foreword from Chief Executive Terry Moran



I am pleased to introduce our 2009/10 annual progress report of the Pension, Disability and Carers Service Equality Scheme. The [original report \(PDF\)](#) was published in 2008. This report outlines our progress so far and demonstrates how Pension, Disability and Carers Service (PDCS) is meeting its legislative requirements.

Since the Agency was formed in April 2008, we have worked hard to embed diversity into our business policies and functions. We have listened to both our customers and our staff. This report demonstrates PDCS's commitment to being an inclusive organisation which both reflects and values the people we serve.

I am particularly pleased that:

- We continue to improve the accessibility of our services, particularly for the most vulnerable customers;
- We continue to provide opportunities for young adults with learning disabilities to gain supported work experience to enable them to be better placed to enter gainful employment; and
- The *Just Tell Us* campaign has resulted in an increase in staff declaring their personal details to support the aims of having reliable data about the make-up of the workforce.

I am proud of the progress we have made to date and equally recognise the future will be challenging. I look forward to working with colleagues and partners during the coming year to build on the progress so far.

Terry Moran

Introduction

Equality schemes are written documents which describe what an organisation is doing to promote equality for both their customers and staff. The action plan takes into consideration customers' views which allows Pension, Disability and Carers Service to identify the areas to focus on. Equality schemes are reviewed every three years and reports of progress are published annually.

This progress report covers the period from April 2009 to March 2010. This year, following consultation with customer representatives, Pension, Disability and Carers Service has streamlined action plans, added new actions and included recommendations from the equality impact assessment [back catalogue exercise \(PDF\)](#).

Case studies, within this report, illustrate progress made. The updates on Pension, Disability and Carers Service action plans are detailed in the Annex to this report.

Pension, Disability and Carers Service diversity and equality business priorities for 2009-10

The [2009-10 Business Plan \(PDF\)](#) listed the diversity and equality priorities which are linked to the actions detailed in the equality schemes. These priorities are:

1. improve accessibility for customers
2. continue to embed diversity and equality into the business
3. promote active, visible leadership of every aspect of diversity and equality
4. publish race, disability and gender equality schemes for the agency
5. make progress towards the workforce becoming more representative of society; and
6. continue to improve the reasonable adjustment process.

Overview of progress against business priorities from April 2009 and March 2010

1. Improving accessibility for customers

Pension, Disability and Carers Service aspires to deliver a first class service to meet customers' needs. During the past year, in consultation with partners and stakeholders, Pension, Disability and Carers Service has made improvements which make its services more accessible to all customers. The following case studies demonstrate examples of involvement and improvements made.

Case Study 1: Improving access for deaf and hard of hearing customers

TextBox is the way forward

Colin Blakemore works for Pension, Disability and Carers Service in Warbreck House on the DLA/AA Helpline. He is part of the Telephone Accessibility Group (TAG) – a cross-Departmental group of staff set up to address issues around telephone accessibility.

The group was interested in the experiences of deaf and hard of hearing customers, and wanted to improve the Department's existing text-phone service. To find a solution, TAG approached the Departmental Change Programme – TextBox was the answer.

Colin volunteered to test the new system and has been involved with TextBox from the outset. Colin's comments on TextBox:

"The best thing about it is the ease of use for us. On the old text phones, you could see two lines of text on a little screen, but TextBox is completely different. It is computer-based and you use it from your desk, with a normal keyboard. You can do useful things like cut and paste messages and other standard tasks".

"One of the things we've discovered since we started using it is that TextBox talks to all text phones. We didn't know this at the time, but the Department's old text phones couldn't connect to all the different types of text phones our customers use – but since we've had TextBox we've had a much higher connection rate – with TextBox we can talk to everyone. It's much better. It means we can treat deaf and hard of hearing customers the same as other customers. We can save calls, get management information for them, and for the first time we are able to forecast the number of calls from deaf customer and plan the right staff cover to answer them."

Case study 2: Raising awareness for carers from ethnic minority groups

Awareness Sessions for Ethnic Minority Groups

Oliver Mawdsley, Outreach Manager from the Carer's Allowance Unit (CAU), visited the Vietnamese Carer's group in Deptford.

Oliver, based in Preston, arranged to visit organisations and charities across the country to ensure carers, in all communities, are aware of their rights and allowances and to promote take-up. This was timed to coincide with Carer's Rights Day. The visit to the Vietnamese Carers group in Deptford Community Centre saw Oliver give a presentation to 50 carers about Carer's Allowance and Carer's Credit. An interpreter was present as half the carers did not speak English.

Oliver said, "After the presentation I spoke to individual carers who were not aware, prior to my talk, that they may be entitled to anything. I found this part of my role very satisfying to know that carers are taking up their entitlements after I have spoken to them."

2. Continue to embed diversity and equality into the business

Involvement and consultation

Pension, Disability and Carers Service recognises the important role partners and stakeholders play in helping to join up its services with other agencies. This ensures that diversity and equality is at the heart of our business. Their contributions provide the insight and expert knowledge that guide how Pension, Disability and Carers Service move forward to help improve services for customers. Following involvement and consultation with partners the first Partnership and External Relations Strategy has been launched. The [strategy \(PDF\)](#) describes Pension, Disability and Carers Service's objectives, priorities and delivery plan, explaining how the vision of *Working together to make lives better* will be put into practice.

Case Study 3: Working with partners to improve our services

Working with Partners

In support of Pension, Disability and Carers Service's objective to improve the service provided to ethnic minority customers, the organisation *Include Me Too* is now a member of the Pension, Disability and Carers Service Advisory Forum which is the primary consultation forum.

Include Me Too represent a broad range of ethnic minorities and will provide Pension, Disability and Carers Service with valuable insight into the needs of this customer group. They are also represented on the Working Group for Higher Rate Mobility Component for Certain Visually Impaired People. This was introduced in February 2010 to provide an opportunity to work in partnership with organisations who have experience and expertise in supporting customers with visual impairments.

Comments from partners

Carer's Allowance Unit works hard to maintain good relations with community organisations and other bodies that support carers. Perhaps the most important of these links is with Carers UK, the 'voice of carers'. Emily Holzhausen, Carers UK's Director of Policy and Public Affairs, appreciates the good results that the collaboration between the two organisations achieves:

"We have a close, long-term relationship with the Carer's Allowance Unit, working successfully together through our shared experiences of supporting carers. This strong relationship has meant that we are able to refer cases to each other, share practice and develop information quickly to respond to benefits changes. This helps us build stronger information and advice services that best fit carers' needs."

Equality impact assessments

Since April 2009, Pension, Disability and Carers Service has raised the profile of the importance of carrying out an equality impact assessment when relevant. Fifteen assessments have been published internally during the past year and Pension, Disability and Carers Service acknowledges that there is still more work to do across the business to ensure that the equality impact assessment process is fully embedded.

Recommendations from the equality impact assessment back catalogue exercise

During the Department's equality impact assessment [back catalogue exercise \(PDF\)](#), Pension, Disability and Carers Service identified that there are particular areas of customer insight that need to be monitored and evaluated and improvements made on how information is collected and used.

Pension, Disability and Carers Service research shows that ethnic minority customers tend to be less satisfied with the service and to gain more insight the following steps have been taken:

- The Mystery Shopping programme covers the provision of Language Calls as one of the channels of customer experience being measured. The robustness of this programme will be improved. The new programme, from April 2010, will have an increased number of Language Call checks (15 currently increasing to 20 per business unit per quarter) to provide greater depth of data and so more information on ways to improve the delivery of customer service.
- Extra questions will be included within new 'Mystery Shopping' contract requirements in order to secure a further measure in the standard of translation service delivered to customers.

3. Promote active, visible leadership of every aspect of diversity and equality

During 2009-10, diversity champions were appointed for each strand at Senior Civil Service level. These champions are considering how they can support Pension, Disability and Carers Service business priorities and make a difference to customers and staff. For example Sarah Scullion the Pension, Disability and Carers Service Human Resources Director is also the Disability Champion. She was concerned the staff survey revealed that staff who identified themselves as disabled, recorded lower levels of engagement and as a result initiated a series of focus groups for volunteer disabled members of staff. These workshops enabled disabled staff to identify barriers and begin the process of resolving these, both for themselves and where they needed organisational support. The output from those workshops that needed organisational interventions has been referred to the People Strategy Group, who will progress them in the coming year.

Community 5000

Community 5000 gives staff the opportunity to volunteer to work with a voluntary or community organisation which is linked to Pension, Disability and Carers Service customers

The following case studies illustrate good news stories from Community 5000 which gives staff a greater insight into the challenges and barriers faced by some of the most vulnerable customers.

From September 2008 to the end of February 2010, 2,088 Disability and Carers service staff have participated in Community 5000. Examples of the local voluntary and community organisations involved include:

- Age Concern
- Manchester Carers Centre
- Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice
- Jewish Care; and
- MIND.

Case Study 4: Insight into barriers for disabled people

Walsall Deaf People's Centre

Nyki Bishop and Pam Walters from Walsall Pension Centre were invited to Walsall Deaf People's Centre. This was to participate in the launch of Walsall Disability Forum as a voice for disabled people.

Nyki and Pam took the opportunity to raise awareness of the various channels of communication and contact that Pension, Disability and Carers Service can offer customers. In particular, Ken Whittingham of Walsall Deaf People's Centre and Andy Moulton of Walsall Disability Forum were unaware of the services that Local Service can provide.

Nyki says of her experience *"By working together to make lives better, I think we can and should continue to improve our service to disabled people. The people that Walsall Disability Forum represent may be seen as a minority within society but they have the biggest sense of community spirit"*.

Munty Hussain and Sukho Kaur from Walsall Pension Centre also found their community 5000 experience at Walsall Deaf People's Centre invaluable in gaining self confidence and communication skills. It helped them to understand the real problems faced by disabled customers away from a customer service work-focused environment.

Munty commented *"The experience did make me reconsider my approach especially in terms of communication. It also provided a platform to talk about the services that we have to offer"*.

4. Publish race, disability and gender equality schemes for the agency

- [PDCS Race, disability and gender equality schemes for the period 2008-11 \(PDF\)](#).
- [Annual progress report for 2008-09 \(PDF\)](#).

5. Make progress towards the workforce becoming more representative of society

Pension, Disability and Carers Service's *Just tell us* campaign was launched in December 2009 to encourage staff to declare their disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation status. It is supported by internal and external stakeholders including Trade Union Side, Pension, Disability and Carers Service Board and Stonewall. This information will mean that Pension, Disability and Carers Service will have the information that can support the aim to have a diverse work force at all levels. It is too early to say how successful the campaign has been as local initiatives are still being undertaken by diversity coordinators. However there has been a positive response to the campaign from staff and a subsequent review shows a positive view of Diversity and Equality as a business matter.

Pension, Disability and Carers Service is also supporting socially excluded adults into work and the following case study illustrates the commitment.

Case Study 5: Providing opportunities for people with learning disabilities

Project Search in Newcastle

Pension, Disability and Carers Service will be working in partnership with Remploy which is one of the country's leading providers of employment services and employment to people with disabilities and complex barriers to work and a local educational establishment. Together 12 interns will be identified who will commence this activity in January 2011.

This project aims to support these 12 interns who have learning disabilities within the working environment with a view to getting them ready for paid employment. The aim is for the Department to learn from this pilot exercise and to continue to promote opportunities for people with learning difficulties to be supported into the working environment.

6. Continuing to improve the reasonable adjustment process

Pension, Disability and Carers Service ensures that reasonable adjustments are managed effectively by monitoring the number of reasonable adjustments received by the business each month. Incidents of unacceptable delays to receiving adjustments or staff having to take special leave while an adjustment is put in place are highlighted to business partners who can influence the process. The close management of reasonable adjustments ensures that the majority of staff's

experience is positive and the length of time staff have to wait for adjustments is minimum.

Over the past twelve months Pension, Disability and Carers Service has worked closely with the Department to influence the development of a Reasonable Adjustment Specialist Team. This team has been set up to provide advice, organise and manage the delivery of reasonable adjustments for Departmental staff.

This active management of reasonable adjustments illustrates Pension, Disability and Carers Service commitment to providing an accessible service, reduces the number of staff days lost and ensures that the needs of the diverse workforce are met.

7. Other aspects of diversity

Pension, Disability and Carers Service embraces all strands of diversity and the following progress reports on Age, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation and Transgender demonstrates our commitment.

Age

Case Study 6: Working in partnership to raise awareness of Pension Credit for vulnerable customers

Pension Credit Take Up

A joint event between Pension, Disability and Carers Service and support organisations, aiming to encourage vulnerable older people to take up Pension Credit, was hailed as a great success.

The event, held in Sheffield in December, brought together front-line staff from a range of older people's organisations in Sheffield – including Support 55, Shelter, Age Concern and representatives from the ethnic minority communities – and their service users. The event showed how easy it is to apply for Pension Credit and raised awareness of sources of help available locally for those that need it.

The Pension, Disability and Carers Service Partnership team has formed a close relationship with Support 55 in Sheffield; where take-up is lower than average. Support 55 is a new part of the South Yorkshire Housing Association that serves a customer base of adults over the age of 55, many of whom live in extra care schemes or other types of supported housing.

Head of Pension, Disability and Carers Service Partnerships, Gary McDonald said: *“Working with a specialist organisation such as Support 55 gives us access to vulnerable elderly customers and helps to ensure that they are getting all their benefits and entitlements, as well as working to improve their independence and wellbeing in later life.”*

Religion or belief

All business areas either have a dedicated room for prayer, meditation, contemplation or quiet time which staff can use or, if there is no dedicated room, then arrangements are made to ensure that staff have access to a suitable area.

Managers are encouraged to facilitate requests from staff for annual leave during religious festivals e.g. to factor into business planning for Christmas, Ramadan and other significant times of year.

Sexual orientation

Case Study 7: Raising awareness

Pension, Disability and Carers Service actively supports the Departmental Staff Network Group for Sexual Orientation by:

- Testing the new learning and development product for sexual orientation;
- Supporting International Day against Homophobia; and
- Contributing to the Departmental 2010 diversity event.

Transgender

The Chief Executive for Pension, Disability and Carers Service is the Gender/Transgender Champion for DWP and in the recent 2009 Trans Equality Index benchmarking exercise; he was commended as being at *“the top level”*. This demonstrates the organisation’s commitment to promoting equality for transgender people.

8. Conclusion

Pension, Disability and Carers Service is committed to providing an accessible service for all customers and work towards a diverse work force at all levels. Pension, Disability and Carers Service thanks customers, stakeholders and staff for working together to make this possible.

The report is accessible through the Department for Work and Pensions website at dwp.gov.uk in English and Welsh. If you have any comments on this report or would like a paper copy of this document or to receive it in an alternative format, please contact Pension, Disability and Carers Service at the address, telephone number or email below:

Diversity and Equality Team, Room 101C, Government Buildings, Norcross, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancashire, FY5 3TA. Email: pdcs.hrdiversityandequalityteam@dwp.gsi.gov.uk. Telephone: 01253 330637.

Annex – Race, Disability and Gender Action Plan

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
1. To comply with the requirements of the equality legislation.	1.1 Monitor policies and use customer and management information to improve customer service and employment practices.	Ongoing.	Equality of opportunity established for all customers and staff.	<p>All strands</p> <p>Monthly Diversity data of staff is provided to inform work force management reports, and to monitor performance against key performance indicators.</p> <p>People Strategy Work Strand Leaders are exploring opportunities within their areas to improve diversity and equality through existing culture, behaviour, leadership and management initiatives.</p>
	<p>New action</p> <p>1.2 To encourage staff to disclose details of their ethnicity, disability, gender and sexual orientation in order that this information can be used for monitoring purposes.</p>	2009-2011.	Sufficient information is held to identify if there are areas of inequality.	<p>All strands</p> <p>Pension, Disability and Carers Service's <i>Just tell us</i> campaign was launched in December 2009 to encourage staff to declare their disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation status. It is supported by internal and external stakeholders including Trade Union Side, Pension, Disability and Carers Service Board and Stonewall.</p> <p>Disability</p> <p>Pension, Disability and Carers Service targets for 2010 are in place to show performance towards the Departmental targets for 2011 in grades where disabled people are under-</p>

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
				<p>represented. Pension, Disability and Carers Service continues to exceed the Department's disability declaration rates in all grades.</p> <p>Ethnicity</p> <p>Pension, Disability and Carers Service targets for 2010 are in place to show performance towards the Departmental targets for 2011 in grades where ethnic minority staff are under-represented. Pension, Disability and Carers Service continues to work towards meeting these targets by March 2011.</p> <p>Gender</p> <p>Pension, Disability and Carers Service targets for 2010 are in place to show performance towards the Departmental targets for 2011 in grades where women are under-represented. Pension, Disability and Carers Service exceeds the Department's gender targets in all grades.</p>
2. To make services accessible and to communicate effectively with all	2.1 Remove barriers and ensure access to interpreters, textphone and visits for customers with varied and complex	Ongoing.	Improve the experience for our customers and representatives.	<p>All strands</p> <p>Local Service provides face to face contact for vulnerable customers of Pension, Disability and Carers Service through home visits and Information Points in community locations. Local teams raise older peoples' awareness of what is available to them, increase the take-up of entitlements, and join up a wide range of services by working in partnership</p>

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
customers.	needs.			<p>with local authorities and voluntary organisations; increasingly through integrated teams.</p> <p>Disability</p> <p>TextBox is a modern replacement for old stand-alone text phones. It uses “chat-room” style technology to help staff communicate with customers with speech and hearing difficulties.</p> <p>The new version of TextBox has now successfully been deployed to all 120 staff currently trained to use the system. It features a better screen layout, the facility to automatically relay standard text and more accurate call recording.</p> <p>Race</p> <p>Over 18,000 callers to Pension, Disability and Carers Service made use of the Department’s interpreting service, provided by the contractor, ‘ thebigword ’.</p> <p>Gender</p> <p>See 2.6 – Women are being notified about impact of changes being introduced.</p>
	2.2 Work closely with the Department’s interpreting	Ongoing.	A better awareness for staff leading to an improved	<p>Race</p> <p>On-site training has been provided to several sites to improve use of the interpreting service, giving customers an enhanced experience. The programme and delivery of</p>

Pension, Disability and Carers Service
 Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes – Annual Progress Report 2009-10

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
	services to provide training for staff.		and more accessible service for customers.	training will continue to be facilitated across further sites.
	2.3 Continue to provide products in alternative formats.	Ongoing.	Customers can access and receive information in their preferred format.	All strands Customers can receive communication/information in an alternative format according to their requirements. Large print continues to be the most requested format.

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
	2.4 Increase customer access to and awareness of online services.	Ongoing.	Increased choice of number of channels for customers to access services.	<p>Race</p> <p>Pension, Disability and Carers Service is working with partners "Black Card" in Sheffield on a pilot called "IT for the Generations". This teaches IT skills to older black and ethnic minority people in Sheffield so they can maximise their benefit entitlements. Selected young people are given benefit awareness training and operate as IT trainers for elders within their community.</p> <p>All strands</p> <p>The online Benefits Adviser Service is available via the Directgov website. The Benefits Adviser Service provides customers with advice on which benefits, pensions and credits they may be entitled to, directs them to further benefit information or online claim services if they wish to make a claim, and uses links to access other relevant information already available on the Internet such as Jobsearch and State Pension forecasts.</p> <p>The Benefits Adviser:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is easy to use • can be used wherever and whenever a customer has access to the internet

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is in addition to the Department's existing contact channels; offers customers more choice on how to access the Department's information. <p>Pension, Disability and Carers Service has recently enhanced the service to provide customers with an estimate of the amount they may be entitled to, and enables customers to input 'what if' scenarios to see how this could affect their benefit, for example if they would be better off in work.</p> <p>Pension, Disability and Carers Service has made some enhancements to the service to increase the number of benefits, pensions and credits a customer can receive entitlement advice on, from 13 to 27.</p> <p>The Benefits Adviser is also available in Welsh for customers whose preferred language is Welsh.</p>
	2.5 Involve customers and partners in helping to identify ways to improve accessibility to services.	Ongoing.	Improved experience for customers and representatives.	<p>All strands</p> <p>In accordance with the commitments made to members of the Pension, Disability and Carers Service Advisory Forum in April 2009, a review of the forum was instigated in February 2010 in order to identify opportunities for improvement. The outcomes and recommendations resulting from this review are expected to be reported and discussed with Pension, Disability and Carers Service</p>

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
				<p>Advisory Forum members.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place with the Department's Customer Insight team to use Pension, Disability and Carers Service Outreach activity as a source for gaining opinion from customers. This relates to providing a questionnaire asking if customers visiting our stand at an event if they are aware of the Customer Charter and the complaints process with any suggestions how to make this better.</p>
	<p>2.6 Consult and involve customers and partners about changes being introduced.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>Greater public confidence in services and improved partnership working.</p>	<p>All strands</p> <p>The Pension, Disability and Carers Service Advisory Forum covers a broad range of customers and does not provide a specific focus on any one group. Where it is appropriate to do so, consideration is given to setting up sub groups of the Advisory Forum in order to allow for a specific focus on an initiative, group or impairment.</p> <p>In November 2009, a Local Government Association (LGA) Sub Group was formed to provide an opportunity to discuss and consult more widely on service delivery issues and change initiatives which have a specific impact on Local Authorities.</p> <p>Disability</p> <p>Additionally, in February 2010, a working group for higher rate mobility component for certain visually impaired people</p>

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
				<p>was introduced. This provides an opportunity to work in partnership with organisations who have experience and expertise in supporting customers with visual impairments.</p> <p>Gender</p> <p>The first women affected by the equalisation of state pension age reached their state pension age on 6 May 2010. To ensure that customers are aware of how the changes affect them, letters have been issued since April 2009.</p>
	<p>2.7 Monitor satisfaction levels resulting from customer surveys, complaints, research, including mystery shopping and identify areas to improve services.</p> <p>Recommendation reported in the retrospective equality impact assessment (PDF).</p>	Ongoing.	To have sufficient information to be able to identify any potential areas of inequality in service delivery.	<p>Race</p> <p>The Mystery Shopping programme covers the provision of Language Calls as one of the channels of customer experience being measured. Measures are in place to improve performance here and the new programme from April 2010 will have an increased number of Language Call checks (15 currently increasing to 20 per business unit per quarter) to provide greater depth of data and so more information on ways to improve the delivery of customer service.</p> <p>Agreement secured that extra questions will be included within new 'Mystery Shopping' contract requirements in order to secure a further measure in the standard of translation service delivered to customers.</p>

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
				<p>Disability</p> <p>The new Pension, Disability and Carers Service Quarterly Customer Satisfaction Monitor (QSM) introduced in April 2009 provides an ongoing examination of both levels of satisfaction and expectation as well as identifying areas for improvement. Disabled customers form half of the profile of customer data.</p> <p>The supplier has been asked to provide a detailed qualitative set of interviews each quarter. One of these has concentrated on customers whose satisfaction levels were low but did not go on to make a complaint.</p> <p>Gender</p> <p>All customer research has a proportionate level of male and female participants according to the business area being examined. There is no specific examination of “gender” as a piece of research.</p>
	<p>2.8 Improve IT to enable customer and staff data to be gathered.</p> <p>Recommendation reported in the retrospective</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>Information is held to monitor services and meet customers’ needs for their preferred format of</p>	<p>Customers</p> <p>There have been no IT enhancements during 2009-10 to enable customer ethnicity and disability Management Information data to be intelligently gathered and used to identify areas for improvement/inequality.</p> <p>Staff</p>

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
	equality impact assessment (PDF) .		communication.	<i>Just Tell Us</i> campaign was launched in December 2009 to encourage staff to declare their details on the Resource Management IT system. There is scope for this Management Information data to be used to inform areas of inequality/improvement.
	2.9 Ensure the most effective use of local service and outreach.	Ongoing.	To ensure access to services for customers who have diverse needs.	<p>Race and Disability</p> <p>December saw the annual Carers Rights Day organised by Carers UK with the 2009 theme being 'Caring for your income and pension'. The Carer's Allowance Unit's outreach manager represented the Unit at a number of events around the country.</p> <p>These events included Vietnamese Carers in Deptford and Southwark Carers. Many of the carers came from diverse cultures and, for many; English was not their first language. The outreach manager, with the help of an interpreter raised awareness of Carer's Allowance. Many of those who attended did not know that they would be entitled to this allowance.</p> <p>Race</p> <p>Local Service staff continue to use their own language skills to assist access to benefits. A member of staff from Leicester helped a disabled couple whose first language was Gujarati to claim extra benefit which allowed them to</p>

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
				<p>make needed adaptations to their bathroom.</p> <p>All strands</p> <p>Pension, Disability and Carers Service has a dedicated team that provides a focal point for national outreach activity. This ensures that the Agency is professionally represented at events where older people, disabled people and their representatives and carers are present to raise awareness about benefits and services.</p> <p>In 2009 -2010 the team attended over 40 conferences and exhibitions around the country. The Hearing Loop was used at many of these events making the service more accessible to some of customers. It proved particularly useful at the National Deaf Children's Society Regional Fun Day held in September 2009 in Newcastle.</p>
<p>3. To raise staff awareness of diversity and equality and to encourage an inclusive culture.</p>	<p>3.1 Provide diversity training for staff.</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>An inclusive organisation where staff and managers respect others.</p>	<p>All strands</p> <p>A diversity skills workshop and consultation exercise has been delivered to all HR Business Partners. They agreed specific diversity and equality actions to deliver for the business.</p> <p>A 'reverse mentoring' pilot is being developed for junior staff from minority backgrounds to mentor senior managers.</p> <p>Diversity coordinators have taken an active part in the induction of new staff to ensure the inclusion of diversity</p>

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
				<p>training.</p> <p>Diversity and equality learning modules for recruitment panelists have been recommended via HR Business Partners.</p> <p>Ethnicity</p> <p>Consideration is being given to ethnicity representation in the higher grades through developing and coaching staff in the feeder grades. 63 Pension, Disability and Carers Service staff applied for REACH in 2009/10.</p>
	3.2 Encourage each business unit to appoint a diversity coordinator.	Ongoing.	Each business unit has a diversity coordinator who promotes diversity and challenges inappropriate behaviour.	All business areas have a diversity coordinator who champions all aspects of diversity. The coordinators have supported Pension, Disability and Carers Service throughout the year in promoting diversity events such as the live broadcasting of an awareness session aimed at front line staff in February 2010. Approximately 500 staff from Pension, Disability and Carers Service participated in this event with positive feedback.
	3.3 Continue to participate in Community 5000, with particular emphasis being placed on getting	Ongoing.	Staff will gain a greater insight to the diverse needs of our customers.	<p>All strands</p> <p>From September 2008 to February 2010, 2088 PDCS members of staff have participated in this initiative. Minority groups include Jewish Care, MIND, Age Concern, MS Society, Self Unlimited and St George's Crypt.</p>

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
	involved with minority groups.			
	3.4 Provide support for managers to help them to understand the diverse needs of staff and customers.	Ongoing.	Improved awareness for managers to support staff to achieve their full potential.	All Strands HR Business Partners are working with business unit managers to apply the diversity insight and local labour market information to attract diverse candidates from under-represented groups.
	3.5 Analyse results of staff surveys, grievances and complaints of harassment.	Ongoing.	To have sufficient information to be able to identify inequalities and how we can improve.	Employment data is included in the Departmental annual progress report and is therefore not covered in this report.
4. To ensure that our policies and functions have no adverse	4.1 Provide equality impact assessment training to relevant staff.	Ongoing.	Improved awareness of the legal requirements and the importance of	Following awareness sessions provided to staff across the organisation and encouraging our diversity coordinators to challenge the importance of carrying out an equality impact assessment, there is an increased knowledge of this process.

Pension, Disability and Carers Service
Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes – Annual Progress Report 2009-10

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
impact on diversity.			assessing any adverse impact on our functions and policies, including changes.	
	4.2 Ensure that all policies and future changes are subject to an equality impact assessment.	Ongoing.	To ensure that customer and staff impacts are considered and consulted against.	Equality Impact Assessments are carried out and published internally and externally, as appropriate.
5. To ensure that all aspects of diversity are embedded into the Organisation.	5.1 Ensure all areas of the business incorporate diversity into their planning processes.	Ongoing.	To ensure the organisation embeds diversity.	Pension, Disability and Carers Service business plan sets out the priorities for diversity and equality and these priorities are carried forward into the various parts of the agency and progress is reported annually.
	5.2 Review the recruitment process to ensure an inclusive approach is taken from the	Ongoing.	To recruit from the widest possible talent pool.	All strands Pension, Disability and Carers Service Resource Strategy includes how diversity will be applied across the areas of strategic resource, including workforce planning, recruitment, progression, talent and succession.

**Pension, Disability and Carers Service
Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes – Annual Progress Report 2009-10**

Objective	Activity	Timescale	Intended outcomes	Progress
	outset.			<p>The strategy provides a template for directorates and business units to develop their own strategy to describe how they will get the right people in the right place at the right time.</p> <p>Through HR Business Partners, Pension, Disability and Carers Service is ensuring that unit managers use their unit's diversity insight and local labour market information to influence recruitment outcomes and improve Agency diversity rates.</p>