

Equity Partnership Group: Meet our members

The Equity Partnership Group brings together expert partners and leaders from the community and our organisation to create positive change. Our members have different backgrounds and experiences, and we work to spot problems, share good ways of doing things, and support projects that help everyone have the same chances.

We meet four times a year to make sure everyone feels respected and heard, as part of our vision to be a great place to give care and a great place to get care.

Each of our members adds something special to our group and is committed to making a difference across a diverse range of specialisms.

Dr Alice Mpofu-Coles

I am a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Reading, working on community research projects, and sit on the Race Equality and the University of Sanctuary strategy team. My research uses a participatory action research approach to improve community engagement and create, facilitate and highlight diverse spaces where seldom-heard communities can influence policies and decision-making.

I have received numerous local and international awards for my community work, including advocating for refugees, education, and volunteering. I was recently named one of the Leading Women to Watch™ in 2025, alongside women from many countries, by a US-based organisation. I am the current first black female Mayor of Reading, and a local councillor. As a local, national and international speaker, I shine a light on inequalities. My work has seen me engage with universities, NHS bodies, charities, public bodies, community groups, and local authorities.



Andrea Brookes

Born in Northamptonshire, I have worked in IT for most of my life. After being made redundant from Vodafone, I set up my own consultancy business, which I have run for the past 18 years. I am Vice-Chair of Newbury Pride and represent the LGBTQIA+ community on several panels. I advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights and provide support to people within the community who may have all sorts of worries and concerns.

I hold safeguarding and suicide prevention certificates and an enhanced DBS check for Newbury Pride. I am also a member of the local Hate Crime Action Team and the CPS scrutiny panel, where I represent the LGBTQIA+ community. My main area of concern is supporting the trans community, although I represent the whole community.



Ceara Webster

I am a Diversity and Inclusion Adviser with experience of delivering inclusive initiatives across the Environmental and Higher Education sectors. I began my career developing co-design approaches in Scotland to address inequities in accessing nature, particularly between scientists and organisations representing racialised minorities, young people, and disabled people.

I now support the strategic implementation of equity initiatives across a range of protected characteristics in Higher Education to make sure inclusion is embedded institutionally. I am also pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Glasgow, exploring inequitable access to green and blue spaces and the racialised impacts this has on wellbeing.

My passion lies in exploring how equitable praxis fosters a sense of belonging for marginalised communities, which I see as fundamental to nurturing wellbeing.



Dipak Mistry

I am passionate about embedding equity across Berkshire Healthcare and ensuring that inclusion is a lived reality for patients, staff, and communities. Joining the Equity Partnership Group allows me to draw on over 19 years of NHS and public sector leadership experience as a Senior HR Professional and Diversity Specialist to challenge systemic inequities and drive meaningful change.

I have led workforce transformation programmes, developed inclusive HR policies, and coached leaders to create compassionate and equitable cultures. My expertise spans governance, scrutiny, and evidence-based approaches, supported by lived experience of inequity and a deep commitment to fairness.

Having advised the NHS, local authorities, Police, Fire & Rescue, and Family Courts, I bring a system-wide perspective to advancing equity. Through the EPG, I aim to ensure that underserved voices shape decisions and help Berkshire Healthcare progress from aspiration to sustainable equity in every area of care and employment.



Jamila Thompson

I bring lived experience and a strong commitment to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion across health and care services. My work focuses on racial equity, mental health, maternal health, and children and young people's health.

I hold a BSc in Sociology, MA in Culture, Diaspora, and Ethnicity, an MSc in Social Research, and am currently completing a PhD in Sociology. I combine my academic background with hands-on experience as a teacher, youth advocate, and community practitioner.

I have worked with grassroots organisations and charities such as BLAM UK and Race on the Agenda, supporting young people and families to navigate challenges and access essential services. I have also worked in Education Research with institutions such as King's College London.

In my role with the EPG, I will apply an intersectional perspective to identify inequalities, drive change, and help shape healthcare services that are fair, accessible, and truly inclusive.

Liz Mayers

I am Co-founder and CEO of accrEDited™ from The EDI Mark C.I.C (formerly EDI Accreditation Ltd). We provide independent, data-driven analysis and accreditation for organisations committed to improving equality, diversity and inclusion for their people.

With more than 20 years' experience in recruitment and executive search, I supported organisations to create diverse and inclusive leadership hiring and development strategies. After many years championing EDI best practice and inclusive talent approaches, I moved in 2020 to focus fully on helping organisations to benchmark and improve EDI across all areas of their strategy.

As a Berkshire resident, I was pleased to be invited to join the Anti-racism CommUNITY Forum for Berkshire Healthcare two years ago. I have loved seeing the impact of its work and look forward to helping to create even greater impact for the diverse communities of Berkshire through my role with the EPG.



Louis Headley



I joined the Equity Partnership Group because I am committed to improving fairness, accessibility, and meaningful involvement across health and wellbeing services. With my professional background is in Engagement and Development, with experience across both the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Starting as an apprentice in CAMHS, I worked my way up to leadership and focused on participation and involvement. This included contributing to service transformation projects, supporting non-clinical pathways for young people, and creating co-productive workstreams. During this time, I also served as a staff governor representing colleagues' views and concerns.

In my current role, I focus on innovation, service delivery and how non-clinical services can support people to thrive throughout their recovery and wellbeing journeys, alongside the clinical care they receive. Through the EPG, I hope to amplify these values, help shape more equitable systems, and tackle systemic inequity to improve outcomes for all.

Makini Jones



I bring over 15 years of nursing and project management experience, alongside lived experience as a parent carer to a child with special educational needs. My passion lies in ensuring equitable care for all, especially people who experience poorer outcomes due to racial inequality or disability.

In my current role, I focus on advancing equity for both patients and the workforce, recognising the powerful connection between how staff are supported and how care is delivered. I'm committed to driving cultural change where diversity is genuinely celebrated, not simply tolerated, and where inclusion is embedded throughout our systems.

Joining the Equity Partnership Group is an exciting opportunity to collaborate with others who share this vision and to contribute to meaningful, sustainable change that improves experiences and outcomes for everyone.

Cllr Dr Nicholas Robertson

I am profoundly deaf and have worn hearing aids since I was a few weeks old. My lived experience of disability has shaped my determination to improve services for disabled people.

I communicate through lip reading and oral speech, and I understand the additional challenges and stress that come with having a disability.

I am an elected councillor at both Parish and Borough level, serving on the Disability Advisory Access Panel and the Governance and Audit Committee. These roles have given me extensive experience in scrutiny, audit, and public service, ensuring processes are transparent, compliant, and deliver positive outcomes for the community.

As a member of the Equity Partnership Group, I aim to share insights from my own experience and from others, helping to strengthen understanding and support inclusive decision-making.





Sarita Rakhra

I firmly believe that equality should apply to everyone, regardless of their culture, religion, sexual orientation, colour or disability. As an Equity Partnership member, I will work to make sure that everyone is treated fairly, regardless of their starting point. I want to influence change and support the development of tailored service to achieve fair outcomes.

As Head of Section 117 Aftercare and Lead for Learning Disabilities and Autism, I made sure that there was recognition of the barriers underserved communities face, whether cultural, economic, disability-related or systemic.

Within the EOG, I will champion policies that actively reduce these gaps by prioritising inclusive engagement, data-driven decision-making, and culturally competent services. I will advocate for fair allocation of resources, amplify the voices of marginalised groups, and ensure that strategic planning reflects the diverse needs of our population. Through this approach, I aim to drive meaningful, measurable change in access to healthcare for all.

Read more about our equality, diversity
and inclusion commitments:
www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/edi