



# NIHR Maudsley Biomedical Research Centre (BRC)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion  
Strategy, 2023-2028



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# About us

**The NIHR Maudsley Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) is part of the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) and hosted by South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with King's College London.**

**We bring together scientists, clinicians, allied health professionals, service users and carers from across South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and King's College London.**

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We were established in 2007.

Our Service User Advisory Group guides our research priorities and activities, and we are managed and governed by an Executive Board, Management Committee and external independent Scientific Advisory Board.

The NIHR funds, enables and delivers world-leading health and social care research that improves people's health and wellbeing and promotes economic growth. It manages research and development within the UK's National Health Service (NHS) – we are part of the NIHR infrastructure and one of 20 NIHR Biomedical Research Centres (BRCs) in England.

BRCs are collaborations between universities and NHS organisations. They bring together academics and clinicians to translate lab-based discoveries into potential new treatments, diagnostics and technologies.

The NIHR has awarded £816 million over five years to 20 BRCs across England.



# About us

**Our leadership group consists of clinicians and academics working in mental health, neurology, novel therapeutics and informatics.**

We are based across the Denmark Hill campus of King's College London, with additional units at King's Guy's Campus and at South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

We are also part of King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre.

**Our nine research themes are:**

- Child Mental Health and Neurological Disorders
- Digital Therapies
- Eating Disorders and Obesity
- Experimental Medicine and Therapeutics
- Neuroimaging
- Pain and Addictions
- Psychosis and Mood Disorders
- Informatics
- Trials, Prediction and Genomics





# Background

**This strategy outlines our continued vision, goals, and objectives for reducing inequality and embedding the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in our NIHR Maudsley Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) for the 2023-2027 NIHR funding period. It draws on existing EDI directives and best practices from across King's Health Partners organisations and the NIHR.**

This strategy was developed from staff consultations and feedback in the two previous NIHR BRC funding periods and is closely integrated with the overarching strategic priorities for EDI in our host partner organisations, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, King's College London, and the NIHR King's Clinical Research Facility at King's College Hospital.

*We want our research participants, staff, and students to better reflect the population we serve and to ensure our research protocols are developed with the needs of diverse populations in mind.*

Our senior leadership plays a key role in implementing this strategy; and is committed to fostering a culture where all staff and students actively contribute to drive this change.

This strategy will be revised and updated periodically to reflect our progress and evolving relationships with key stakeholders including staff, students and patients engaged in our research.

Our strategy for EDI is closely interlinked with our commitment to increasing patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) with our research.





# Vision

**We will align EDI efforts with our partner organisations to create a genuinely welcoming and inclusive research environment that reflects and celebrates the diversity of our research community - where all individuals feel recognised, valued and supported.**

We will promote equity and reduce discrimination and systemic barriers to research participation, training, and career progression.

By fostering inclusivity, we will create a sense of belonging and ensure that every member of our community can fully contribute their unique perspectives and talents to advancing the delivery of innovative research outputs and impacts for patient benefit.

Through different initiatives, we will cultivate creativity, innovation and excellence, enabling all our stakeholders to thrive and achieve their highest potential.

Our research community refers to two main groups:

- the people we recruit for our research studies, our **research participants** and those that are **represented in our research routine data**;
- and the people who conduct and contribute to the research in different career stages - **our research and professional services staff, students and PPIE contributors.**





# Overarching Goals

**Increase diversity and representation:** of underrepresented groups to ensure protected characteristics (age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race and ethnicity, disability and religion or belief) and people from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds or facing barriers to access health or social care, are properly represented among our research participants, staff and students.

**Foster inclusivity:** with a research culture that accepts and affirms individual differences at all levels of organisational hierarchy and empowers all in the BRC community to realise their full potential.

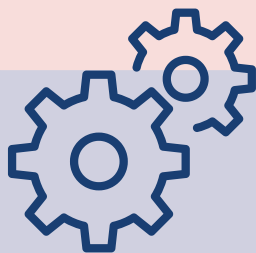
**Mitigate bias:** create a fair and impartial research environment by reducing bias and discrimination in our systems and processes through training, transparent and appropriate governance and objective decision-making, including in the recruitment, promotion, and recognition of staff, and in the recruitment and recognition of research participants and PPIE collaborators.

**Provide support and resources:** widen participation and opportunities to engage with underrepresented groups through identifying and addressing barriers to research participation; providing professional development opportunities, mentoring and networking events; foster early career researchers support and development; and share our scientific outputs with transparency, accessibility and availability in different formats.

**Monitor progress:** establish transparent monitoring mechanisms across all areas of our research portfolio and regularly use both qualitative and quantitative data to identify areas for improvement and adjust our EDI strategy accordingly.

# Successful EDI outcomes will include:

A deep integration of EDI in our systems, culture and processes



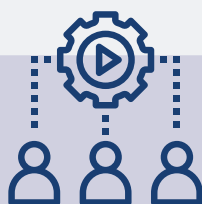
A significant broadening in the scope of, access to, involvement and participation in health and social care research



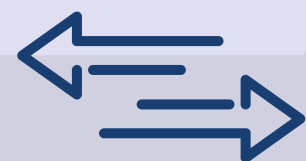
A more diverse research workforce and greater diversity in our PPIE contributors



Each member of the BRC community actively playing a visible role in implementing this EDI strategy



Greater collaboration internally and externally to cultivate best practices





# What we have already done

## Increase diversity and representation

**Targeted efforts to improve the diversity of research participants:** including in our Consent for Contact (C4C) processes.

**Assembled internationally leading healthcare data resources** that provide uniquely detailed information on whole clinical populations, improving representation in research and wider knowledge generation.

## Research focus on EDI

**Race and Ethnicity Advisory Group:** this group established in 2021 is composed of 70 members of many different ethnic backgrounds and minoritised communities and provides advice on research studies and supports our researchers.

## Support professional development:

**Committees' composition and leadership:** including early career representatives, and members from diverse backgrounds. To provide greater opportunities for diversity in our decision-making processes, we have made open competitions for theme leadership roles. As a result, over the past two rounds, the leadership of the BRC has moved from almost exclusively male to evenly balanced between men and women.

**EDI survey of NIHR Maudsley BRC Academy members:** conducted in March 2022 to identify gaps to ensure equality of opportunity for all when planning future recruitment and training.



# What we have already done

## Collaborate with other partners

**BRC Youth Awards:** launched in 2013. Recognising that careers in research start well before a PhD, these awards aim to provide opportunities for young people (aged 15-18) from schools in the local area taking science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects, being offered a chance to have a placement and mentoring, encouraging them to go on to study these subjects at university. Besides a placement, they include ongoing mentoring for a year and a £50 book voucher.

**Collaborative workshops:** for example with the BiPP network in 2020 on “Anti-racism in Scientific research” to discuss and address race-related bias in research, including the low recruitment and retainment of Black PhD students and the low number of Black Professors.

## Communication and dissemination

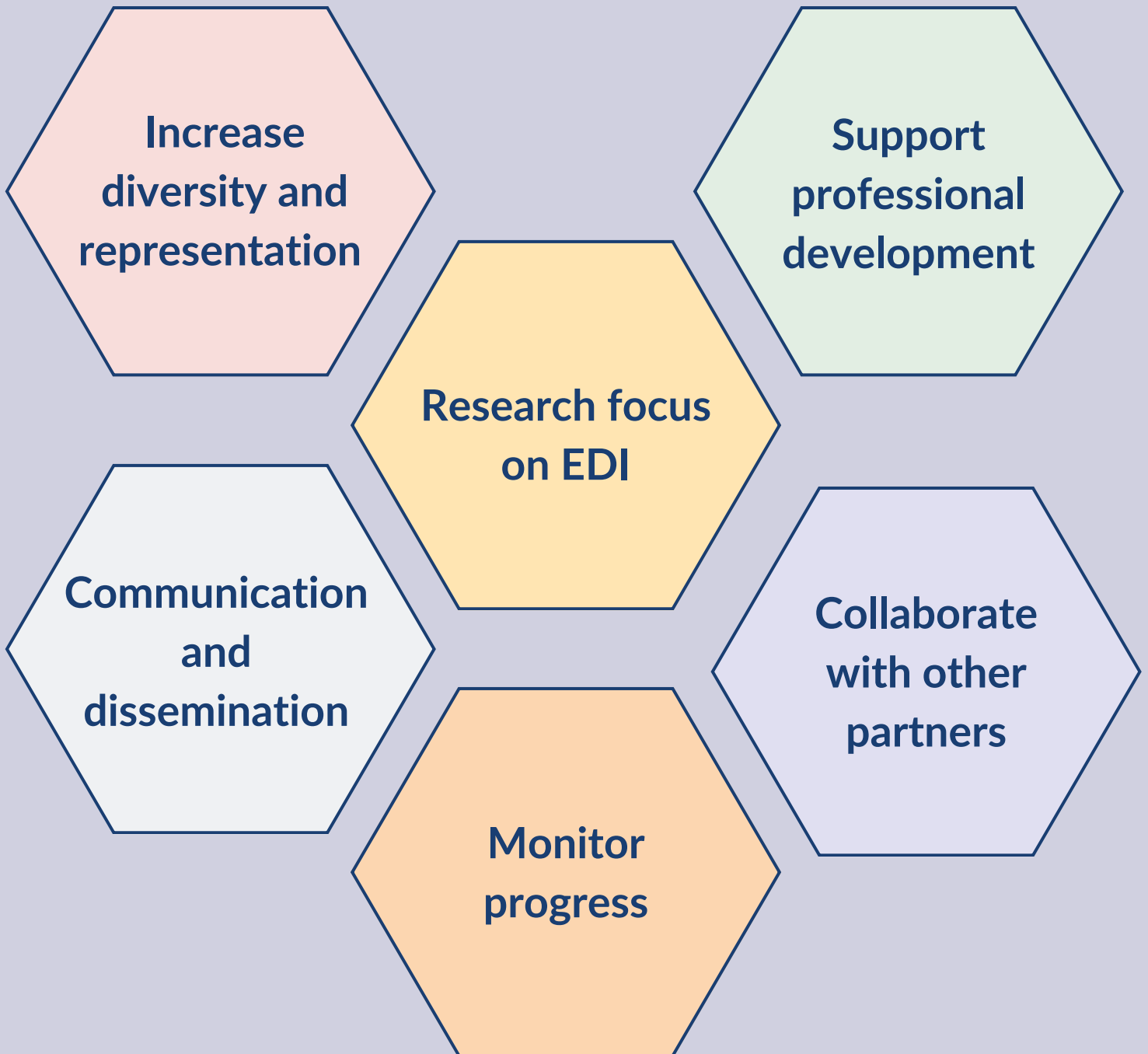
**Established a BRC EDI champion role** in 2012 to lead EDI activities and a included EDI as a standing agenda item in every BRC Board meeting to feedback on progress

**Maudsley BRC EDI online web page** promoting the EDI initiatives from across the BRC and partner organisations.

*"I've gained so much knowledge about mental health, and I know I'm going to take this with me in my future career."  
BRC Youth Awards participant*



# Objectives



## Short term (1-2 years)

### Increase diversity and representation:

<b>Action</b>	Collaborate with the joint R&D office to assess and enhance the documentation of diversity of recruited <b>research participants</b> and PPIE contributors in NIHR Maudsley BRC studies.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee, BRC Board, BRC Theme and Deputy Theme Leads and Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Leads.
<b>Action</b>	Ensure all major BRC <b>posts and PhD students</b> recruitment calls include EDI monitoring and aggregate data, including on the protected characteristics and socioeconomic status.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee, BRC Board and Academic Career Development Team.



## Research focus on EDI

<b>Action</b>	Promote access to <b>advice on EDI</b> to Maudsley BRC research projects
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC EDI Champion, BRC Theme and Deputy Theme Leads, Academic Career Development Team and BRC Principal Investigators.
<b>Action</b>	All BRC themes and core programmes to have an <b>EDI lead</b> researcher, who will be responsible for championing local EDI initiatives. The EDI lead researchers will feed back to the <b>EDI Champion</b> so that progress can be reported at the <b>BRC Board</b> recognising their work.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC EDI Champion, Theme and Deputy Theme Leads.
<b>Action</b>	Establish an <b>EDI PhD student representative</b> role (i.e., one PhD student) championing local EDI initiatives. The <b>EDI PhD student representative</b> will feed back to the EDI Champion so that progress can be reported at the BRC Board.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC EDI Champion and Academic Career Development Team



## Research focus on EDI (continued)

<b>Action</b>	Incorporate EDI into our <b>PhD studentships</b> , and actively encourage people from minoritised groups to apply, including using targeted marketing to attract applicants from under-represented groups
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Theme and Deputy Theme Leads, Academic Career Development Team, Communications team and BRC Principal Investigators.
<b>Action</b>	Promote each PhD studentship to have at least one <b>early career supervisor</b> supported by a more senior colleague, to foster inclusion and professional development of early career researchers within the BRC.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Theme and Deputy Theme Leads, Academic Career Development Team and BRC Principal Investigators.

## Support professional development

<b>Action</b>	<b>Widen access</b> to research experiences and opportunities, including for young people from schools and those from under-represented ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee and Board

<b>Action</b>	Promote access to <b>mentorship programs</b> for underrepresented minority researchers.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee and Board

## Collaborate with other partners

<b>Action</b>	Build upon existing collaborations and establish new <b>strategic partnerships</b> with organisations that advocate for EDI to foster synergistic efforts and enhance our collective impact.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee and Board

## Communication and dissemination

<b>Action</b>	Share in an open and transparent way the opportunities to participate in leadership and in advisory groups, to ensure that such opportunities are available to all and to track success and challenges of those involved in such initiatives.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee and Board
<b>Action</b>	Launch an <b>awareness campaign</b> highlighting <b>BRC researchers</b> from diverse backgrounds. This will promote established EDI role models by highlighting their achievements and promoting senior role models for increased visibility.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC EDI Champion, Operations Team, Communications Team, Theme and Deputy Theme Leads

# Medium term (3-4 years)

## Increase diversity and representation

<b>Action</b>	To monitor and evaluate the diversity of recruitment of research participants and PPIE contributors across BRC-related research studies, collecting diversity data and integrating it into research protocols.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee, BRC Board Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Leads, and BRC Principal Investigators

<b>Action</b>	Promote the use of the <a href="#">Equalities Impact Assessments</a> in BRC research studies.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Theme and Deputy Theme Leads.



## Research focus on EDI

<b>Action</b>	Develop innovative <b>training</b> resources to guide researchers to routinely collect data on the protected characteristics.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee and Board.
<b>Action</b>	Create <b>awards</b> and celebration events for research that addresses issues related to EDI.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC EDI Champion, Operations Team, Communications Team, Theme and Deputy Theme Leads.



## Support professional development

<b>Action</b>	Conduct <b>training workshops</b> or focus groups, for researchers to identify and address barriers to research participation, and identify biases present in research towards protected characteristics and from disadvantaged socioeconomic groups.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC EDI Champion, Operations Team, Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Leads.
<b>Action</b>	Implement innovative <b>training</b> resources to identify and challenge <b>biases</b> present towards those with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged socioeconomic groups.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee and Board.
<b>Action</b>	Support <b>inclusive leadership</b> within all themes and core programmes
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee and Board.

## Collaborate with other partners

<b>Action</b>	Maximise opportunities with other <b>partners</b> within <u>King's Health Partners</u> , other local partners and beyond (for example, government, industry and NGOs) to promote EDI through knowledge sharing and resources, including joint advocacy and awareness campaigns.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee and Board, Communications Team.

## Communication and dissemination

<b>Action</b>	Launch an <b>awareness campaign</b> highlighting in particular <b>PhD students and fellows</b> from diverse backgrounds who have completed an NIHR Maudsley BRC Academic career development programme and possess different protected characteristics. This will promote future EDI role models by highlighting achievements and increasing visibility.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC EDI Champion, Operations Team, Theme and Deputy Theme Leads, Academic Career Development Team and Communications Team.

# Long term

## Monitor progress

<b>Action</b>	Evaluate the effectiveness of the above short- and medium-term objectives in creating a more diverse and inclusive academic career development environment.
<b>Responsibility</b>	BRC Management Committee and Board.



# References

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2027 | NIHR

Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>)

Best Research for Best Health: The Next Chapter



For more information:

Visit our [Equality and Diversity page](#)  
or email [maudsley.brc@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:maudsley.brc@kcl.ac.uk)

[www.maudsleybrc.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.maudsleybrc.nihr.ac.uk)