

Resource Pack 16 - Equality Impact Assessment

What is Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

Public Sector bodies have a legal duty to undertake equality impact assessment as a requirement of race, gender and disability equality legislation. EqIAs provide a systematic way of ensuring that legal obligations are met and are a practical means of examining new and existing policies and practices to determine what impact they may have on equality for those affected by the outcomes.

The need for collection of evidence to support decisions and for consultation mean that the most effective and efficient EqIA is conducted as an integral part of policy development, with the EqIA commenced at the outset.

The Toolkit (see link below) considers the effects that decisions, policies or services have on people on the basis of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, Welsh language and human rights. Assessing impact across a broad range of equality dimensions (not just those required by law), helps organisations to embed equality and human rights and assist them in the delivery of their services.

In the long term, it is hoped that equality and human rights considerations will be incorporated into other multi-functional impact assessment tools. Organisations may decide to do this locally, but must ensure that they meet all the requirements of the relevant legislation. In the meantime, EqIA is in its infancy and is a developing process.

There is no single right way to carry out EqIA, but there is a balance to be struck between assessments that are overly complex and those that are too superficial. Initially the process may seem cumbersome and individuals undertaking EqIA may lack confidence in their skills and knowledge. However, over time (as with health and safety risk assessments), undertaking EqIA will become more routine and a body of knowledge, shared good practice and evidence to inform the process will be developed.

Building elements of EqIA into the responsibilities of mainstream functions will assist organisations to mainstream equality and human rights. For example:

- Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) leads should be fully involved in EqIA and take responsibility for parts of the process that require engagement, involvement and consultation
- Information Management and Technology (IM&T) Departments should develop mechanisms to support data collection and analysis to include equality dimensions
- Planning and Performance Departments should be responsible for the integration and alignment of all equality action plans with other operational and strategic plans
- Clinical Governance leads and risk managers will have key roles to play in the EqIA process. Finance and service managers should use EqIA to ensure decisions about funding allocations and efficiencies are made in accordance with the requirements of the public sector equality duties.

A Toolkit for carrying out Equality Impact Assessment
Equality Impact Assessment in Wales Practice Hub
Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales)