

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy

2024-2026





South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians on whose land we stand, and the lands our facilities are located on; the lands of the Dharawal, Gadigal, Wangal, Gweagal and Bidjigal peoples.

We would like to pay our respects to the Elders past, present and those of the future.

Artist: Brenden Broadbent

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Message from the Chief Executive



I am proud to be presenting South Eastern Sydney Local Health District's inaugural Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy.

Our Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy 2024-2026 provides direction and actions to support our teams to thrive, a key strategic priority within South Eastern Sydney Local Health District's Strategic Plan – Exceptional Care, Healthier Lives 2022-2025.

The Strategy is motivated by actions where everyone's diverse talents, experiences and skills can drive innovation and collaboration to deliver the best possible outcome for our patients and communities. Our aim is to create a greater sense of belonging at work for everyone, so that we can all bring our best and true selves to work.

The Strategy includes a set of actions specific to each of the diversity groupings prominent within our workforce, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; cultural and linguistic diversity;

disability and neurodiversity; carers, gender and LGBTIQ+ employees.

Developing the actions within this strategy required a comprehensive understanding of our existing diverse workforce along with current best practices in the evolving landscape of diversity and inclusion.

By fostering the involvement of our employees across the District through focus groups and one-on-one interviews, this is a strategy for our people developed by our people.

We all share a responsibility to make those around us feel welcome, valued and accepted. I encourage staff to play an active role in contributing to the initiatives outlined in the strategy to ensure we are an organisation that celebrates the diversity of our people and draws upon the strengths of our unique workforce.

Tobi Wilson
Chief Executive

Our Vision



Our vision is to create and sustain a workforce that reflects the community we serve, where our people feel valued and connected to each other and the work they do

How will we achieve this?



We have identified practical actions that apply across all diverse groups at each stage of the employee lifecycle. Some additional actions apply to specific diverse workgroups.

Our DIB Strategy is underpinned by NSW Health's CORE values:

C

Collaboration

Refers to people working willingly and actively together to achieve goals and improve levels of service to NSW Health. It means seeking the input of others, both from within the Ministry and from external partners, while always considering the impact on our teams. We also seek out new ways of collaborating.

O

Openness

Is a state of mind, enabling colleagues to share ideas and communicate clearly. We strive to be approachable, actively listen and encourage others to contribute and speak up. We offer and receive constructive feedback. This ensures others feel their contribution is valued, even when there are disagreements.

R

Respect

Is a reminder to treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves. It is important to be mindful of each other's capabilities, regardless of role or grade. We care about the different perspectives and backgrounds in our workplace and are thoughtful of our impact on others.

E

Empowerment

Enables a sense of purpose in our work. It is achieved through taking responsibility for our performance and behaviour. We celebrate our achievements. We also reflect upon what may not have met all expectations and learn from that experience. In doing so, we create a positive environment in which people are encouraged to grow, develop and succeed.

What is Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging?

Diversity

refers to the characteristics that make people unique. A diverse workplace is one where all people are welcome regardless of their role, age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, physical abilities or life experiences. Diversity also encompasses diversity of experience, thoughts and perspectives. By having a diversity of viewpoints our organisation is better positioned to understand the diverse community we serve. Diversity also facilitates more effective problem solving, high levels of creativity and greater innovation.



Inclusion

is about creating an environment where people feel welcome, respected and valued. An inclusive organisation is one where all people have equitable access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute for their and the organisation's benefit. Inclusion in a workplace is achieved when a diversity of people (e.g. ages, cultural backgrounds, genders, perspectives) feel that they are:

RESPECTED for who they are and able to be themselves;

CONNECTED to their colleagues and feel they belong;

CONTRIBUTING their perspectives and talents to the workplace; and

PROGRESSING in their career at work
(i.e. have equal access to opportunities and resources)

Belonging

is when people feel safe, valued, respected and engaged. When people feel that they belong in the workplace they can be truly themselves without fear of judgment. Workplaces that foster a sense of belonging for everyone are those that embrace uniqueness, thereby enabling each individual employee to be their authentic self. When people can be themselves they are more likely to be at ease and able.

“ Diversity is a fact.
Equity is a choice.
Inclusion is an action.
Belonging is an outcome ”

Arthur Chan

Our Diverse Workforce Profile



20,045

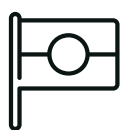
Total headcount of all workers
(as at 13 December 2023)



72%



28%



1.2%

of staff identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
(as at September 2023)



4.7%

of 2023 People Matter Employee Survey respondents have a disability



8%

of employees who responded to the 2023 People Matter Survey are LGBTIQ+

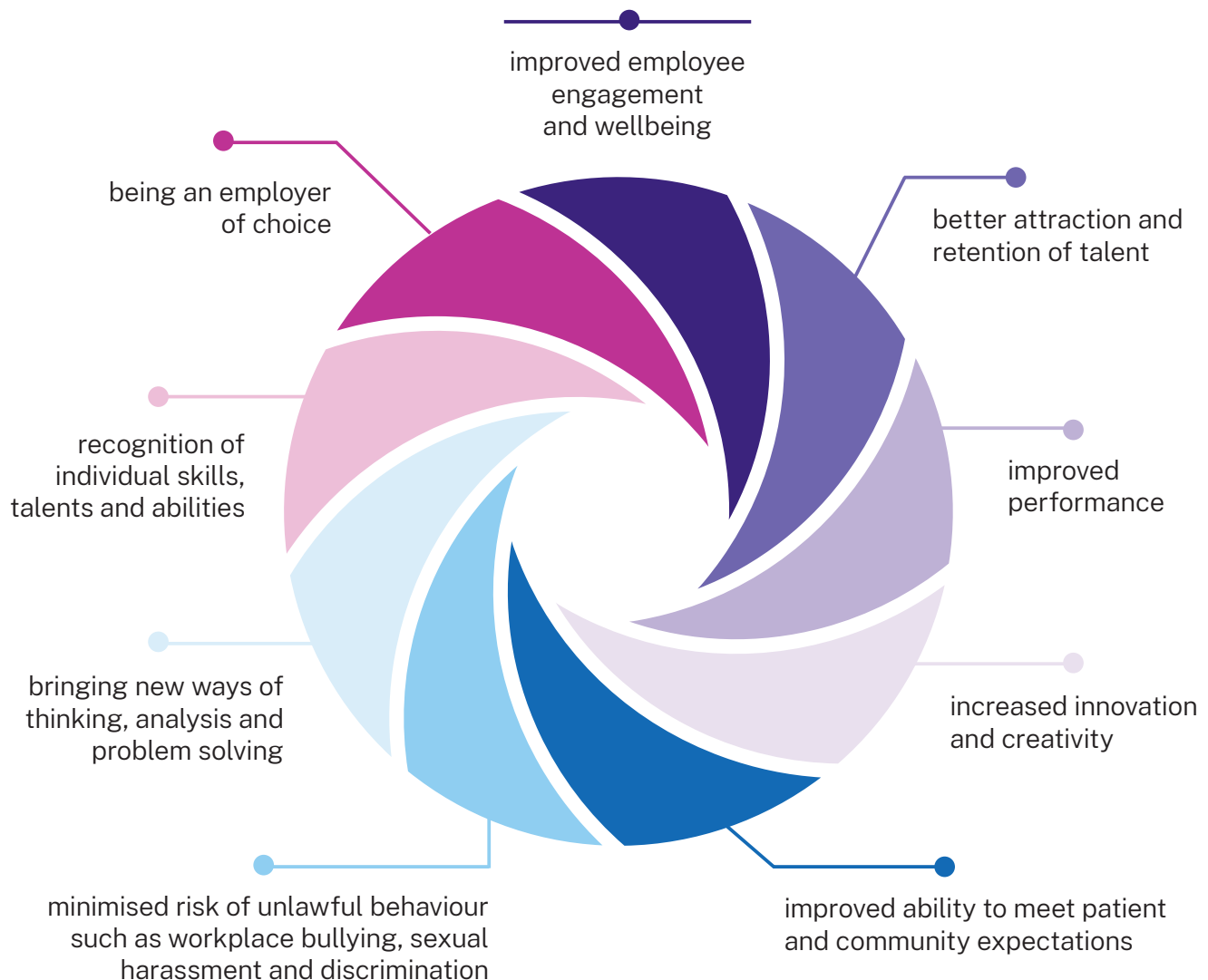


27%

of employees who responded to the 2023 People Matter Survey speak a language other than English at home

Why is Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging important?

By valuing workplace diversity, inclusion and belonging, we see benefits such as:



“ Inclusion does not just benefit under-represented groups, it benefits everyone ”

Alignment with the Future Health Strategic Framework and our District priorities

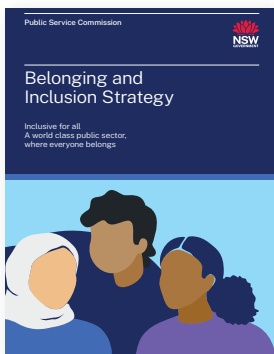
The SESLHD Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy aligns with the:



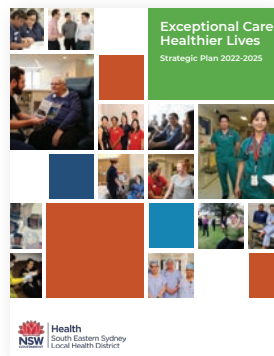
NSW Health Future Health Strategic Framework



NSW Health Diversity Inclusion Belonging Guide



NSW Public Service Commission Belonging and Inclusion Strategy



SESLHD 2022-25 Exceptional Care, Healthier Lives



SESLHD Burudi Muru Yagu Aboriginal Health Plan 2024-2026



SESLHD LGBTQ+ Health Action Plan 2023-2027

The 5 stages of the employee lifecycle at SESLHD



Attract

SESLHD aims to be an Employer of Choice to all by recognising and valuing the skills and strengths each person brings to the organisation.

Recruit

SESLHD is committed to recruiting a talented and diverse workforce. We work to ensure that candidates are identified and selected through a merit-based, fair and equitable process; making reasonable adjustments to support candidates wherever needed.

Develop

SESLHD will provide capability development to enable managers and employees to play their role in building a diverse, inclusive and safe working environment.

Retain

SESLHD aims to provide a working environment in which all staff have a sense of belonging, are engaged, proud of, and want to work for.

Progress

SESLHD will encourage all staff to seek development opportunities and support career progression through the identification of talent.

We focus on supporting the following diverse workgroups



Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our workplaces and will continue to support the growth of this workforce. Providing culturally safe work environments and representation gives people a strong sense of belonging and connection to their identity and culture.



People with Disability

People with disability are a very diverse group. Disability includes long-term physical, mental health, intellectual, neurological or sensory differences that may impact participation at work on an equal basis with others. We aim to provide a working culture where everyone will thrive under the same rights, access and opportunities to employment.



People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds

We value the diverse range of knowledge, skills and experiences of our multicultural workforce, enabling us to deliver appropriate services that meet the needs of our community.



LGBTIQ+ community

We work to create environments where our employees can proudly bring their true selves to work so they are comfortable to perform and engage to the best of their ability.



Carers

We recognise the fluid nature of caring responsibilities and we seek to support our employees as these needs change.



Gender equity in the workforce

We aim to create environments where people of all genders are equal in their rights and opportunities in all employment pathways, enabling them to lead balanced lives and participate fully.

Intersectionality and listening to the voices of people with lived experience

While SESLHD supports multiple initiatives to support specific communities and identities, we understand intersectionality is the cornerstone of diversity. We all have many layers to identity and all those intersections need to be respected, catered to and celebrated equally in our workplaces.

For example, someone can be an Aboriginal person, a carer and LGBTIQ+. This diverse mix will likely shape someone's unique perspectives, which influence their experiences of work and life.

We will continue to expand our understanding of diversity and embrace the aspects of intersectionality that define our workforce and the communities that we serve. The voices of those with lived experience will continue to inform our approach.

1. Summary of focus areas for all diverse groups



Action	Target Date		
	2024	2025	2026
Showcasing diversity, inclusion and belonging in our employer branding including recruitment materials, job advertisements, website, social media and promotional materials.	■		
Engaging with employment and community organisations, universities and training providers and participating in career fairs and events to foster the engagement of diverse candidates.	■	■	■
Updating position descriptions, recruitment policies and procedures to ensure they are inclusive and respectful of all diverse workforce groups.	■	■	■
Promoting the programs and initiatives of employee networks across the District, including celebrating events and milestones of significance.	■	■	■
Connecting employee network groups and creating intranet resources for these groups to share experiences and resources.		■	■
Designing and implementing processes to ensure the voice of lived experience is considered in policies and decision making at the leadership level.	■	■	■
Developing and utilising a range of internal communication channels to ensure inclusion of diverse groups and to enable accessibility of information.	■	■	■
Supporting capability development of leaders to create diverse, inclusive and psychologically safe workplaces for all employees.	■	■	■
Providing education and resources to increase employees' understanding and respect for the challenges faced by diverse workforce groups.	■	■	■
Continuing to deliver the Addressing Racism Strategy and bystander intervention training and incorporating Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging into Corporate Orientation.	■	■	■
Utilising the talent management and succession planning process to identify priority roles/ levels/ disciplines that would benefit from greater diversity and building strategies to achieve balance.		■	■
Establishing mentoring and sponsorship programs to support and further the career development of diverse groups into senior roles.		■	■
Implementing a process to review and monitor progress against DIB strategy action items.	■	■	■

2. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people



Action	Target Date		
	2024	2025	2026
Developing and implementing an Aboriginal Traineeship Program and engaging with local schools to promote Aboriginal traineeship and cadetship positions.	■	■	■
Developing a targeted Indigenous Employee Value Proposition.		■	
Developing and promoting education and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees that provide employee support and foster career development.		■	■
Rolling out Yarning circles for all Aboriginal employees across the District in a phased approach.	■	■	■
Identifying and promoting the development pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to move into leadership and specialist roles.	■	■	■
Providing formal cultural supervision to Aboriginal employees across the District.	■	■	■
Increasing completion rates of mandatory Respecting the Difference training.	■	■	■
Identifying opportunities for secondments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to broaden experience and skill sets.	■	■	■
Establishing mentorship programs and career development initiatives specifically designed to support the professional growth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	■	■	■
Recognising and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events, including but not limited to NAIDOC Week and Sorry Day.	■	■	■
Supporting the implementation of the Burudi Muru Yagu Aboriginal Health Plan 2024-2026.	■	■	

3. People with Disability



Action	Target Date		
	2024	2025	2026
Building partnerships with and promoting the use of disability employment service providers and networks to attract job seekers with disability and develop pathways for employment.		■	■
Collaborating with individuals and conducting assessments to identify reasonable adjustments (e.g., workplace modifications, assistive technologies, ergonomic adjustments) pre-employment and throughout the employee lifecycle.	■	■	■
Educating managers on disability, what reasonable adjustments are available, and how to enable individuals with disability to perform at their best.		■	■
Regularly reviewing accommodations to ensure they meet the evolving needs of employees with disability.	■	■	■
Developing managers' skills and confidence to hold conversations around disability, identify needs of employees, and create an environment where employees feel safe to discuss their disability.		■	■

4. People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds



Action	Target Date		
	2024	2025	2026
Building managers' capacity to work with employees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and how to effectively lead culturally diverse teams.		■	■
Providing staff training around the appropriate use of community languages in the workplace (e.g. communicating with patients in-language).		■	■
Continuing to recognise and participate in cultural events of significance such as Harmony Week along with spiritual and multifaith days, for example, Diwali and Ramadan.	■	■	■
Providing managers with guidance on negotiating with employees on how to appropriately observe cultural traditions in the workplace.	■	■	■
Providing culturally appropriate support for employees during crises and significant events including conflict overseas.		■	■

5. LGBTIQ+ community



Action	Target Date		
	2024	2025	2026
Making visual representations available to all staff to reflect their identity and/or express support for the LGBTIQ+ community. This includes lanyards, pins, stickers for name badges/ ID cards, and the ability to communicate preferred name and/or pronouns.	■	■	■
Celebrating key dates and LGBTIQ+ events, such as Pride Month, National Coming Out Day, Wear It Purple Day and Transgender Day of Visibility.	■	■	■
Supporting the implementation of the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy 2022-2027 and the SESLHD LGBTIQ+ Action Plan 2023-2027.	■	■	■
Developing and communicating guidelines to support gender diverse employees through transition in the workplace.	■	■	■

6. Carers



Action	Target Date		
	2024	2025	2026
Building managers' capacity to identify and accommodate carers in the workforce and how to recognise the changing nature of caring responsibilities over time.	■	■	■
Showcasing examples of good practice in supporting working carers across the health system (e.g., accommodating flexible work practices in rostering).		■	■
Providing resources, and guidance to managers to support employees returning to work from carer's leave.		■	■
Collaborating with individuals as and when the demands on them as carers shift and working with them to accommodate changes in circumstances.		■	■
Offering targeted training opportunities and wellbeing strategies to carers including self-care, stress management, and work-life integration.	■	■	■
Gaining certification as an accredited Carers + Employers organisation.		■	■
Supporting the implementation of the NSW Health Key Directions 2023-27.	■	■	■

7. Gender equity in the workforce



Action	Target Date		
	2024	2025	2026
Increasing the visibility of women, men and gender diverse people in non-traditional roles to break stereotypes and encourage broader participation in what may be considered traditional male or female roles.	■	■	■
Promoting flexible work practices to employees of all genders and showcasing examples of good practice across the health system.	■	■	■
Empowering employees to leverage entitlements (e.g. parental leave, leave without pay) to allow employees to meet the demands of both work and personal commitments.	■	■	■
Recognising the unique health needs of women and providing educational programs and support, including the design and implementation of a menopause at work support program.	■	■	■



Diversity

is being invited
to the party

Inclusion

is being asked
to dance

Belonging

is dancing like
no one's watching

Acknowledgements

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District would like to acknowledge the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District DIAP Implementation Committee, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District Carer Strategy Implementation Committee, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District's Aboriginal Health and Workforce Unit and thank those employees, who, during the consultation process, provided their extensive input and knowledge. These valuable contributions have helped shape our Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy 2024-2026.

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