Impact Assessment Guidance

as at 1 December 2020

NHS
Dumfries
& Galloway

WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY
Health and Social Care

Dumfries
& Galloway
COUNCIL

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SECTION 1 - SETTING THE SCENE

Introduction to Impact Assessments

The Impact Assessment Toolkit is designed to help you think about the different aspects of equality and diversity, human rights, health, economic, social and environmental factors for our local services. It is a legal document that will come under public scrutiny and therefore should be completed fully, with evidence. Used properly it will improve the quality of services we deliver, ensuring we get things right first time.

Please note this guidance document covers all Council, NHS and Health and Social Care Services and will be referred to as 'our services' throughout this guidance.

If you need any support with the Impact Assessment process, please contact -

Equality and Diversity Lead, NHS Dumfries and Galloway at dumf-uhb.odl@nhs.net	Equality and Diversity Officer, Dumfries and Galloway Council at impactassessmentscreenings@dumgal.gov.uk

What is an Impact Assessment?

An **Impact Assessment** is a formal, evidence-based procedure that assesses the equality and diversity, human rights, health, economic, social and environmental effects of public policy.

An Impact Assessment is an important process to improve policies, plans and strategies and ensure that they do not inadvertently exclude or discriminate groups within the population. Organisations must also be thinking of ways in which to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between different groups.

It is common sense to assess the likely impact of our proposals to understand the different needs within our population. Completing an Impact Assessment is not an exact science and again, a common sense approach should be taken.

In Dumfries and Galloway, Community Planning partners have agreed and developed a singular approach to Impact Assessment which, through the assessment process, includes consideration of equality and diversity, human rights, health, economic, social and environmental factors.

What should be Impact Assessed?

The key question is to ask whether the service, policy or strategy impacts on people in any way. Most of our plans, services, policies and strategies will have an effect on people, both our workforce and our service users. It is our policy that all service development (including service changes) new or revised policies, plans or strategies should be impact assessed and this is backed by legislation.

On the very rare occasion that a policy or service change does not and will not have any direct or indirect effect on people externally or internally, then an Impact Assessment may not be required.

Please note that for the purpose of this guidance document the above listed 'service development (including service changes) new or revised policies, plans or strategies' will be grouped together and simply referred to as policy.

SECTION 2 - COMPLETING THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT

Preparation

1. Consider the need to carry out an Impact Assessment (IA). The purpose of the toolkit is to evidence that policies have been considered in terms of equality and diversity, human rights, health, economic, social and environmental factors. **The toolkit should start to be completed by the policy lead at the beginning of the policy development process to ensure that the issues raised within the Impact Assessment toolkit are being considered from the outset.** An Impact Assessment should be seen as an ongoing, 'live' process that is mainstreamed into all policy development, and not a 'standalone' exercise. The Impact Assessment will be finalised by a group of stakeholders as detailed within the Group Review section. A copy of the toolkit can be found *here*.

2. Identify a lead person. The lead person **must have undertaken Impact Assessment training** on the use of the toolkit and should have a good knowledge of the policy being assessed. The lead person will take the group through the process, compile the results and ensure they are passed out for action. Although it is preferable to have several trained people involved, people who have not undertaken training on the toolkit can participate in the group. The lead person will normally be the contact for the assessment.

3. An Impact Assessment process must have taken place before final approval of a policy. It should take place at a time where there is sufficient detail to work out likely impacts, but where there is still flexibility for changes to be made.

4. Use the toolkit to identify who might be affected by the policy (refer to pages 6-20 of the toolkit).

    In considering whether the policy works towards **eliminating discrimination** you should consider whether there is evidence to indicate that the policy:

    - May result in less favourable treatment for particular groups
    - May give rise to indirect discrimination
    - May give rise to unlawful harassment or victimisation
    - May lead to discrimination arising from disability
    - Builds in reasonable adjustments where these may be needed

In determining how your policy contributes to **advancing equality of opportunity**, you should consider whether it would help you to

- Remove or minimise disadvantage
- Meet the needs of different groups
- Encourage increased participation of underrepresented groups
- Take account of disabled people's impairments

In determining how your policy will **foster good relations**, you should consider whether it will help you to:

- Tackle prejudice
- Promote understanding

5. Comments supporting the choice of impact should be noted in the comments column. If necessary, the group may record that there is a need for more evidence before a decision can be made.

6. One positive impact and one negative impact does not equal one no impacts, i.e. these do not 'cancel each other out'. Both positive and negative impacts should be recorded as the negative impacts must be removed or mitigated later in the process.

7. Gather evidence. The lead person/team will need to gather evidence to inform the Impact Assessment process. However, it is good practice to have considered and used evidence to develop your policy, so this should already have been considered and started before the impact assessment. It is important to know who will be affected by your policy or service changes and how.

   You may want to consider the following:

   - Exploring sources of evidence to see if there is local data that gives a breakdown by the protected characteristics, *e.g. Strategic Needs Assessment, Health and Social Care Partnership Website.*
   - Look to see if there is any national data or guidance available *e.g. SIGN guidelines, national policies, local or national evidence from protected characteristic groups*
   - The Scottish Government Evidence Finder
   - Identify any positive action which you have in place
   - Explore any good practice initiatives, results of public consultations or engagement initiatives
   - Discussion with equality groups and organisations

   The Impact Assessment Toolkit requires the lead to detail what evidence has been considered, and which groups/bodies have been consulted.

Group Review

8. The toolkit should be completed by no fewer than two people. The best approach is to bring together a small group of people from those who have been involved in the development of the proposal or have some knowledge of the proposal. The most successful Impact Assessments have several stakeholders involved in the process. Service users, community representatives etc. should be invited to participate in the process where appropriate. It is also good practice to involve representation from Equality and Diversity Groups.   If you would like contact details for our local Equality and Diversity Groups please contact your Equality and Diversity Officer. Contact details can be found on page 3.

   Although it is preferable to have several trained people involved, people who have not undertaken training on the toolkit, but have an understanding of the policy being assessed, can participate in the group. **An Impact Assessment must not be completed by one person working alone.**

9. Ensure sufficient time is allocated to allow the group to work through the toolkit. Setting aside around two hours initially is advised.

10. **At least a week in advance of the impact assessment session, distribute relevant papers**. These should include a copy of the toolkit, the policy / plan / budget issue being assessed and any background information including evidence for or against the policy (such as information on a specific area or community, evidence of similar proposals, press reports). Hold the Impact Assessment session in an accessible venue and ask those attending if there will be any accessibility issues or additional support required (interpreters etc).

11. The lead person will take the group through the process, and the work already undertaken to date. The lead has responsibility to compile the results and ensure they are passed on for action. The lead person will have overall responsibility for ensuring that an Impact Assessment is carried out and ensuring that the paperwork is completed and sent to the appropriate Equality and Diversity Officer, contact details can be found on page 3.

12. Not everyone on the group will have a working knowledge of the issues to be considered under each of the themes. Some notes and questions to consider are provided against each of the themes to help discussion but these are not exhaustive and the group may have other issues to add.   The toolkit provides links to useful resources which may provide evidence and additional information to support you completing the toolkit. Advice can also be sought from officers who have expertise in the subject matter.

13. The group should review and agree the impacts identified so far by the lead person and will have the opportunity to add to or amend the content. Any key recommendations arising from the Impact Assessment should be recorded in the toolkit form. The lead person is responsible for communicating these actions to the relevant service.

14. The process should identity first where there is any impact. If positive or no impact, sign off and proceed. Where negative impact is identified three things can happen;

a. The impact is unjustifiable – so the document must be revised and rewritten to remove the negative impact

b. The impact can be justified without consultation (i.e. legislation such as Health and Safety) so the justification is noted and recorded, and the document is signed off

c. The impact may or may not be justifiable – so any proposed justification for the risk is noted and the document is then consulted upon accordingly at the level that is appropriate. For instance, an employment document may require only internal consultation whereas a service delivery policy may require partner and external consultation.

15. **It is crucial to remember that equality does not mean treating everybody in the same way. If you think that there will be no equality impact because your policy applies to 'everyone' then you must reconsider. People have differing experiences, needs and requirements, and will not all be affected in the same way. The Impact Assessment process is designed to help you understand those potential impacts due to differing needs.**

16. The lead person is responsible for collating the results onto the summary table *(page 21 of the toolkit).* Any negative impacts that have been identified should be summarised on page 22 along with mitigating actions.

17. Under the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) if the impact or possible impact is significant, there is a duty under the Environmental Assessment Scotland Act 2005 to notify the SEA authorities. Please see page 14 of this guidance for further information on the SEA.

18. FOR COUNCIL STAFF ONLY – the summary sheet on page 25 should be completed, this is what will be published by the Equality and Diversity Officer on the website for a period of 6 months, from the date of the Impact Assessment.
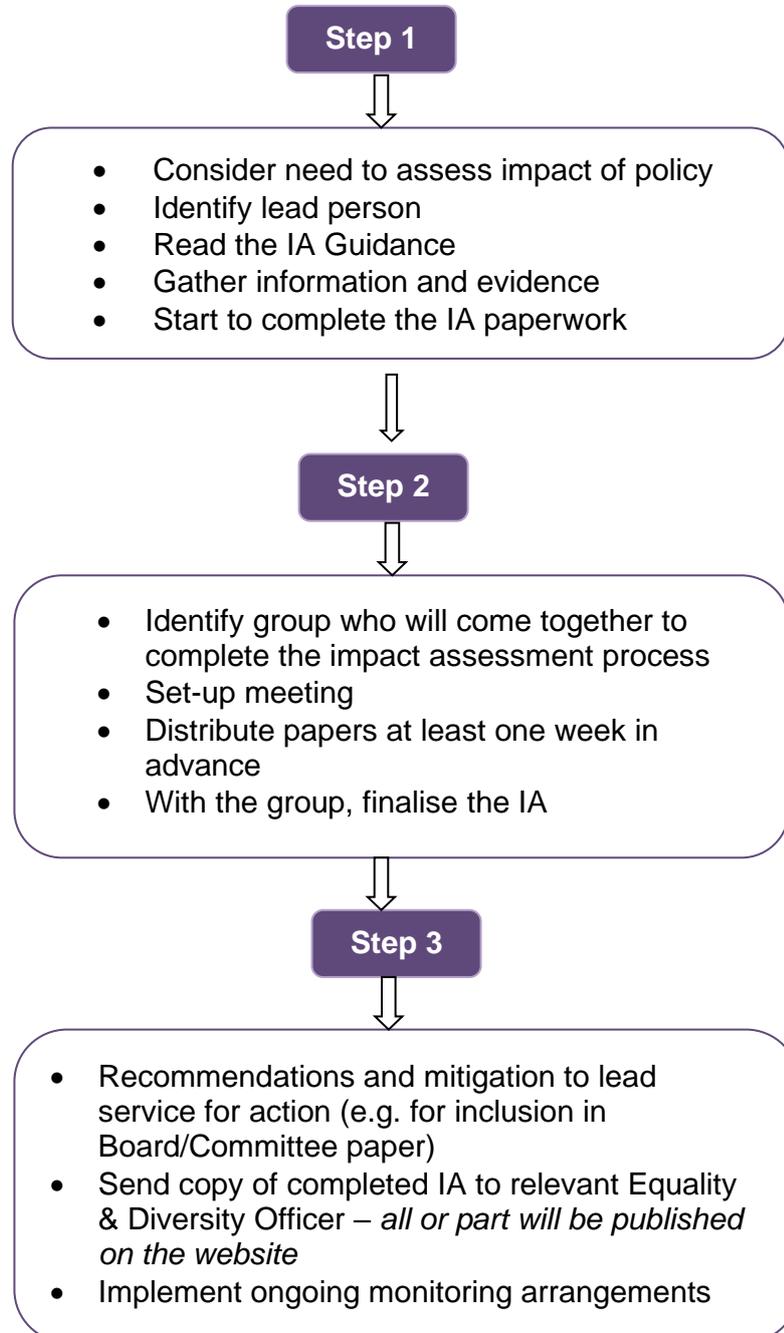
Finalising the toolkit

19. All members of the group should receive a copy of the finalised Impact Assessment toolkit. An electronic copy should also be sent to the relevant Equality and Diversity Officer for publication, contact details can be found on page 3.

20. **Please note that records retention is the responsibility of the lead person for the Impact Assessment.**

Monitoring

21. The real impact of the policy will only become fully evident once it is being used in practice. Consequently, it is essential to monitor for adverse impact. You will need to decide:

- The arrangements for monitoring the policy when operational
- The assessment criteria to be used for monitoring the effects of the proposal

Once implemented, all policies should be monitored for their impact and revised if any issues arise that were unknown during development.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT FLOW CHART

Step 1

- Consider need to assess impact of policy
- Identify lead person
- Read the IA Guidance
- Gather information and evidence
- Start to complete the IA paperwork

Step 2

- Identify group who will come together to complete the impact assessment process
- Set-up meeting
- Distribute papers at least one week in advance
- With the group, finalise the IA

Step 3

- Recommendations and mitigation to lead service for action (e.g. for inclusion in Board/Committee paper)
- Send copy of completed IA to relevant Equality & Diversity Officer – *all or part will be published on the website*
- Implement ongoing monitoring arrangements

SECTION 3 – KEY LEGISLATION

Key legislation : The Equality Act 2010

Equality legislation is designed to protect people from discrimination and covers areas such as employment, education, access to goods and services and the service that public organisations deliver.

Over the last four decades this discrimination legislation has helped to make Britain a more equal society. However, the legislation is complex and, despite progress in many areas, some persistent inequalities remain.

The Equality Act 2010 which came into force on 1 October 2010 replaced existing equality legislation. Its intention is to simplify and strengthen the previous legislation, provide a modern single legal framework with clear, streamlined law that will be more effective at tackling disadvantage and discrimination.

Within this Toolkit Guidance the Equality Act is categorised under the following 4 areas:

- Protected Characteristics
- The key forms of discrimination
- General Duties of the Equality Act 2010
- Specific Duties of the Equality Act 2010

Protected Characteristics (PCs)

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from unlawful discrimination and harassment to groups and individuals because of the following "Protected Characteristics" (PCs):

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Gender reassignment *
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

It is important to remember that we **all** fall into at least one of these groups!

***Note** Gender identity can be complex and there are many different transgender identities that need to be considered e.g. transsexual women, transsexual men, intersex people, androgyne and polygender and cross-dressing people.

The key forms of discrimination in the Equality Act 2010

- **Direct discrimination:** Someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic (PC).
- **Associative discrimination:** Direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a PC.
- **Discrimination by perception:** Direct discrimination against someone because it is thought they possess a particular PC.
- **Indirect discrimination:** Can occur when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular PC.
- **Harassment:** Employees can now complain of behaviour they find humiliating, intimidating, degrading, hostile or offensive even if it is not directed at them.
- **Harassment by a third party:** Employers are potentially liable if a staff member is harassed by someone who doesn't work for them.
- **Victimisation:** Someone is treated badly because they have made/supported a complaint or grievance under the Act.

The Duties

The Equalities Act has two main duties called the General Duty and the Specific Duty.

What the **General Duty** Says:

We have a Duty to have **due regard** to the need to:

- **Eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation or any other prohibited conduct
- **Advance** equality of opportunity by having due regard to:
  – removing or minimising disadvantage
  – meeting the needs of particular groups that are different from the needs of others
  – encouraging participation in public life
- **Foster** good relations – tackle prejudice, promote understanding.

When does **the Duty apply**?

The General Duty contained in the Act applies to Dumfries and Galloway Council:

- When we are carrying out our public functions
  – as service providers
  – as policy makers
  – as employers
- Also to services and functions which are contracted out
- Also private and voluntary sector organisations which carry out public functions

Specific Duty

As well as the General Duty there are a number of Specific Duties one of which is **Impact Assessment**.

Impact Assessment (IA)

Impact Assessments are one of the Specific Duties in the Act which requires public services to assess the impact of applying a policy against the "needs" of the General Duty.

What are you **required to do**?

- Assess what the impact of applying proposed policies, including changes or revisions to existing policies, will have on the Protected Characteristics.
- Consider relevant evidence relating to Protected Characteristics.
- Take account of the results of the assessment.
- Publish the IA within a reasonable time period.
- Make arrangements to review and where necessary revise existing policies.

We need to do this not only because the law tells us to, but because it makes good business sense to get things right first time and to ensure that anything we do does not adversely affect one group of people because of who they are or what they believe.

Your Impact Assessment should

- Focus on outcomes in order to improve the lives of people who experience discrimination and disadvantage
- Must be informed by the General Duty
- Must be evidence based and informed by the **involvement** of relevant stakeholders, e.g. community groups and service users.

Key legislation: Human Rights Act 1998

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world.

The Human Rights Act 1998 (also known as the Act or the HRA) came into force in the United Kingdom in October 2000.

All public bodies (such as courts, police, local governments, hospitals, publicly funded schools, and others) and other bodies carrying out public functions must comply with the Convention rights.

The Act sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that individuals in the UK have access to. They include:

- [Right to life](#)
- [Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment](#)
- [Freedom from slavery and forced labour](#)
- [Right to liberty and security](#)
- [Right to a fair trial](#)
- [No punishment without law](#)
- [Respect for you private and family life, home and correspondence](#)
- [Freedom of thought, belief and religion](#)
- [Freedom of expression](#)
- [Freedom of assembly and association](#)

- [Right to marry and start a family](#)
- [Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms](#)
- [Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property](#)
- [Right to Education](#)
- [Right to participate in free elections](#)
- [Abolition of the death penalty](#)

The Human Rights Act means that all public authorities have an obligation to ensure that people's rights are respected in all that they do.

The Human Rights Act is not just about preventing public authorities from taking certain actions. It also requires us to take proactive steps to prevent breaches of human rights from happening in the first place, no matter who or what is causing the harm.

Health Inequalities

The Scottish Health Impact Assessment Network is co-ordinated by Health Scotland and seeks to include all those working or planning to work on Health Impact Assessments (HIAS) in Scotland. The web site provides information on the Network, information about HIA and links to other HIA sites.www.healthscotland.com/resources/networks/shian.aspx

Health inequalities are the unfair and avoidable differences in people's health across social groups and between different population groups. They are most commonly associated with socio-economic inequalities but can also result from discrimination.

Health inequalities are **unfair** because they do not occur randomly or by chance, but are socially determined by circumstances largely beyond an individual's control. These circumstances disadvantage people and limit their chance to live a longer, healthier life.

While overall health has improved in the past 50 years, deep-seated inequalities remain. Deprivation is the key determinant, although age, gender and ethnicity are also factors.

Many interventions are rightly aimed at improving whole population health but can inadvertently widen health inequalities amongst marginalised groups, as this segment of the population experience different barriers to engagement with services. Where planning and practice systematically consider equality and inequality from the start, service provision decisions including diagnosis, treatment and onward referral whether to secondary healthcare, preventative services, social care or community-based support can identify and rectify the barriers faced by some people more than others. For example, low literacy, fear, poverty, social isolation, language and communication differences have all been identified in research as presenting barriers to taking up and benefiting from service provision.

The *Inequalities Action Framework for Dumfries and Galloway (2016)* offers a system for assessing proposed policies, plans, services and interventions in relation to addressing inequalities in health outcomes.

For more information on health inequalities see:

http://www.healthscotland.com/equalities/health-inequalities/index.aspx

Fairer Scotland Duty

The Fairer Scotland Duty (formerly known as the socio-economic duty) came into effect in April 2018. The Duty places a legal responsibility on public bodies in Scotland to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions.

'Socio-economic disadvantage' means living on below average incomes, with little accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services. Socio-economic disadvantage can be experienced in both geographical places and within communities/groups of interest, leading to further negatives outcomes such as social exclusion.

Tackling socio-economic disadvantage and narrowing gaps in outcomes is core to how public bodies should operate. The aim of the Duty is to encourage better decision making and ultimately better outcomes for those who are socially or economically disadvantaged in order to help narrow equality gaps.

Public bodies must produce a written assessment to show how the Duty has been achieved covering all strategic decisions. We have taken the decision to mainstream this into the existing Impact Assessment toolkit. Any consideration of the Fairer Scotland Duty should be considered and documented there.

For further guidance on the Fairer Scotland Duty please see here.

Key legislation: Climate Change Scotland Act 2009

The Climate Change Scotland Act 2009 and associated guidance says that we must cut our Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by 80% of 1990 levels by 2050. By 2020 both the Council and NHS must have made cuts equating to 42% of our 1990 emissions.

Details of the Council's proposed actions to tackle climate change are included within the Carbon Management Plan (CMP2). Key policies are included on page 54 and the management summary pages 5-9.

Other drivers include the Council's commitments through being a signatory to both the European Covenant of Mayors committing to a 20% reduction of carbon emissions across the region and to the Scottish Climate Change Declaration and reports annually on progress in this respect.

Council policy reflects the duty of the Council to act sustainably to secure these targets.

In June 2019 Dumfries and Galloway Council agreed a Climate Emergency Declaration and a 12-point plan of commitments.

Key legislation : The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The original requirement for assessment has come from Directive 2001/42/EC, which is known as the Environmental Assessment Directive. This was brought into practice and expanded in Scotland by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The assessment is carried out by the authority responsible for the production of the plan, programme or strategy.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a systematic and effective process for ensuring that environmental issues are taken into account at every stage in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and review of plans, programmes and strategies. It is an assessment of the likely effects that a public plan will have on the environment if implemented. It is important that the SEA is considered from the beginning of the plan preparation process, when there is sufficient time for it to influence the plan's content and maximise its potential environmental benefits.

A meaningful SEA can challenge those responsible for preparing plans to identify and explore alternative approaches and different options and highlighting the best options for the environment. It can help to avoid or minimise any negative environmental impacts and enhance positive ones. It is important to note that 'environmentally friendly' plans can trigger the need for an SEA, just the same as those that are likely to have adverse effects. In the decision about whether an assessment is required the important question is if the plan would be likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The process by which this is done is not based on whether its effects will be good or bad.

The key strengths of SEA are that it:

- Requires plan makers to think through options and compare the likely effects on the environment.
- Ensures that the environment is considered early and openly.
- Facilitates greater consideration of how different plans interact and influence each other and the environment.
- Allows policy makers to draw on the environmental expertise offered by statutory consultees.

An SEA should focus on assessing the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan and concentrate primarily on the elements that are likely to result in significant environmental effects, either directly or indirectly. The level of detail will vary depending on the specific policy/plan under consideration but the 'bigger picture' should be the starting point.

The 2005 Act identifies Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Historic Scotland as statutory Consultation Authorities. Their role is to offer their environmental expertise at key stages in the SEA process, to help enhance the assessment and improve the overall reporting processes. If you have a specific technical question relating to an SEA you can informally contact the Consultation Authorities for advice. In addition, it may also be helpful to contact the SEA Gateway – SEA_Gateway@gov.scot . This part of the Scottish Government was set up with the specific intention of assisting with the administration of SEAs.

Useful Information Sources and Websites

2011 Census
https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results and Dumfries & Galloway Area – Fact Sheet

The Census provides a comprehensive snapshot on the number and characteristics of people living in Dumfries and Galloway. It also provides information on housing, employment, transport, religion, academic qualifications, health and informal care.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (www.equalityhumanrights.com/scotland)

The Equality and Human Rights Commission Scotland champions equality and human rights for all, working to eliminate discrimination, reduce inequality, protect human rights and to build good relations, ensuring that everyone has a fair chance to participate in society. The web site contains a wide range of information on each of the equality strands including definitions, advice and guidance, research, project and policy work and consultations.

Scottish Human Rights Commission (www.scottishhumanrights.com/)

The Scottish Human Rights Commission promotes and protects the human rights of everyone in Scotland. We are working to increase awareness, recognition and respect for human rights, and make them more relevant and easier to apply in everyday life. The Commission is dedicated to helping everyone understand their rights and the shared responsibilities we all have to each other and to our community. The Commission is independent of the UK and Scottish Parliaments and Governments.

ScotPHO Profiles
http://scotpho.org.uk/web/FILES/Profiles/2010/Scottish%20Local%20Authority%20Report.pdf

The ScotPHO Community Health and Wellbeing profiles contain 61 indicators relating to health and its determinants and are available for several different geographies Scotland, NHS Board, Community Health Partnerships and Intermediate Zones.

A database of statistics, economics and research that provides a breakdown by age, gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, transgender and religion/belief from a range of organisations to support work on equality.

Equality Evidence Finder
http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/DataGrid

The Equality Evidence Framework has been developed to help public authorities and others gather and use equality evidence. The Evidence Finder allows you to find evidence by characteristics, policy area and by both.

Appendix 1 – Prompts for completing an Impact Assessment

This section is for reference only. It provides some further explanation and prompts around what to consider when completing the impact assessment toolkit. This is not an exhaustive list but is designed to stimulate discussion and provide pointers when considering the ways in which a proposal impacts on different groups. Discussion and commentary should be noted within the toolkit.

Equality Issues: All groups - Points to consider

- People within each protected characteristic group are not all the same – people may be disadvantaged in more than one way. Consider differences within groups that may make some people more vulnerable.

- Have you considered local and national statistics and evidence available on the demographic breakdown of which protected characteristic groups are more likely to be affected by any changes? This may include surveys or feedback from complaints.

- Consider how to collect demographic information on each of the groups for profiling of access to/outcomes of services and initiatives in the future.

- Have you **engaged with the people affected** by any changes to services using national standards for community engagement? Have you considered information from local consultation events with local communities and groups?

- Have you ensured that **language and images** in any communications are inclusive and appropriate for different communities?

- Have you considered making core public communications and information being shared available in **alternative formats**; for example, Easy Read, British Sign Language and languages other than English.

- Is there an opportunity for people to share what their needs are in relation to their protected characteristic?

- Consider potential for opportunities to address discrimination (direct, indirect and victimisation), harassment and personal harm against any group.

- Consider the potential to better understand and address assumptions, prejudice and stereotyping of different population groups.

- Consider the potential to better promote good relations between different groups, build social cohesion and encourage participation in public life for all groups.

Age: Points to consider

- Is there information available from local and national research on the needs of different age groups of the population?

- Are there any discriminatory practices in terms of any age groups which may/or may not be justified? e.g. is the service designed with a specific age group in mind?

- Do you ensure that sufficient time is allocated for consultations with people, particularly with, for example, increased use of technology?

- Is information given in an appropriate format to the age of the service user?

Disability: Points to consider

Have you considered reasonable steps that can be taken to accommodate the needs of disabled people such as:

- Physical access?
- Format of information, both in how we ask for and give information?
- Personal assistance?
- Language Interpreter?
- Induction loop system?
- Independent living equipment?
- Employment opportunities?
- Specific employment opportunities?

- Have you considered steps to make reasonable adjustments to service delivery and employment practices to ensure "accessible to all"?

- Have you looked at what constitutes as a disability under the Equality Act 2010? This includes physical conditions, mental health, and sensory impairment.

- Do you currently monitor whether or not service users have a mental health condition, physical or learning disability, or sensory impairment so that you know how well your service is being used by people with a disability?

- Has anyone considered the accessibility of any technology being used?

Gender Reassignment: Points to consider

- Have you used non gender-specific language that is inclusive of Trans people?

- Are any of your services only available to a single sex? How have the needs of Trans people been considered within these?

Marriage and Civil Partnership: Points to consider

- Have you considered that those in civil partnerships should be given the same rights and benefits as those who are married?

Pregnancy and Maternity: Points to consider

- Are staff aware that it is illegal to refuse to employ a woman because she is pregnant, on maternity leave, because of an illness related to her pregnancy, or to dismiss her when she reveals that she is pregnant?

- Are you aware that the new law makes it clear that it's against the law for people to get less favourable treatment because they are breastfeeding when receiving services?

Race and Ethnicity: Points to consider

- Have you decided what core information must be made available in languages other than English, if applicable?

- For written communication, have you ensured where appropriate limited use of jargon or colloquialisms?

- Do you routinely record the language that a person speaks so that you can send letters in the correct language or call them instead if they can't read?

- Are you aware that some communities identify through geographical location, others through culture, language, ethnic background, religion or belief or politically defined constructs?

Religion, Faith and Cultural: Points to consider

- Is there inclusive prayer/reflective spaces available for those from all religions and beliefs for staff and service users if applicable?

- Have you considered necessary dietary requirements?

- Have you considered the gender of staff when caring for females?

- Does the service allow for requests from staff to have time off for religious festivals and functions?

- Does this service ensure respect for dress codes?

Sex/Gender (Male/Female): Points to consider

- Is the information you have disaggregated by sex? Can you evidence who is more likely to be affected by any service change?

- If your service is for men and women, do you routinely monitor the uptake of the service with gender breakdown and take appropriate action? For example:

- If you find that men are not accessing your services then you may consider improving the way these services are provided and how to target men.

- Similarly you may consider adopting sensitive approaches to target women from different backgrounds as the services may not be appropriate for some women from particular minority communities.

- What examples do you have of best practice in relation to particular work with men/women e.g. employment issues, recruitment and selection to address gender imbalance across functions and/or grades?

Sexual Orientation: Points to consider

- Does your service recognise and respect individual's sexual orientation?

- Do any recording forms also recognise same sex partners / use terminology such as partner / civil partner?

- Have you ensured sensitivity over language used in printed materials, inclusive language and use of images?