

SC-WRES Improvement Programme: highlighting the challenges and driving action



Background:

Nyoka Fothergill, Head of Service Delivery (Community Social Work) at Leeds City Council, embarked on the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard (SC-WRES) Improvement Programme across adult and children's social care services. Recognising the importance of leadership support, Nyoka was fortunate to have senior leaders committed to the agenda of race equality within the organisation. Despite the diverse workforce, it was evident that representation was lacking, particularly in leadership positions.



Action:

To address these challenges, the local authority took a proactive approach, involving staff networks, corporate human resources (HR) colleagues, and an independent consultant. Nyoka and her team recognised the importance of engaging with those directly affected by race inequality, leading to listening circles and one-to-one sessions to gather feedback from staff members. An independent consultant was brought in to review HR policies and identify cultural and behavioural barriers hindering progress, specifically focusing on recruitment and selection. This collaborative approach, in addition to the data gathered from the nine SC-WRES indicators, resulted in the formulation of an action plan jointly developed with corporate colleagues to ensure equity across the entire local authority, not just within social care.



