

NIHR Barts

**Biomedical Research Centre and
Clinical Research Facility**

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy

2022-2027

V2.0

Executive Summary

This is the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) strategy for the NIHR Barts Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) and NIHR Clinical Research Facility (CRF).

The NIHR Barts BRC is a delivery partnership of Barts Health NHS Trust, Queen Mary University of London, St George's University Hospitals NHS Trust, and St George's University of London. The NIHR Barts CRF is a delivery partnership of Barts Health NHS Trust and Queen Mary University of London. The BRC and CRF are part of the NIHR hosted by Barts Health NHS Trust.

We set out a vision, overarching goals, and a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) action plan. Our plan has short, medium, and long-term outcomes. They enhance EDI within Barts NIHR Infrastructure facilities. We aim to foster a more inclusive and diverse research culture. We aim to value and build on the contributions of all individuals and groups, whatever their background, identity, or circumstance.

The strategy aligns fully with NIHR's 'Best Research for Best Health: The Next Chapter'¹ and 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy 2022-2027'².

¹ <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/about-us/best-research-for-best-health-the-next-chapter.pdf>

² <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/about-us/NIHR-equality-diversity-inclusion-strategy.pdf>

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Vision

Our vision is to create a holistic research environment in which:

- all aspects of our staff and patients' well-being are respected and nurtured.
- we take positive action to make sure inclusive practice is embedded as standard across all areas of our work.
- we value and celebrate our diversity.
- we foster a culture of inclusion which is welcoming, accessible, supportive of everyone, regardless of background, identity, or circumstance.

This will promote inclusion, innovation, excellence, and demonstrable impact in biomedical and clinical research. It will contribute to the health and wealth of the nation and beyond.

Commitment to EDI

Barts Health NHS Trust hosts both the NIHR Barts BRC and CRF. Queen Mary University of London, St George's University of London and St George's University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust are our delivery partners.

When reflecting on various models of EDI maturity across a range of clinical, academic, and industry environments, it becomes evident that the Barts BRC and CRF are innovators in the field of EDI, e.g., we have dedicated staff teams and established EDI programmes creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for patients, staff, students and our local communities. Queen Mary University of London's Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry holds the prestigious Athena Swan Silver award for its demonstrable efforts in promoting gender equality. The faculty has also introduced several innovative programmes, including Aurora, BMEntor, and Springboard, aimed at further enhancing the professional development and growth of its staff members. The Barts Health Diversity and Inclusion Positive Action Charter sets out its ambitions for creating a more inclusive environment for care and work and has rolled out an extensive work programme to achieve and celebrate success, including an annual Inclusion awards ceremony. All delivery partners also have extensive equal opportunities, friendly working policies, and well-developed LGBTQIA+ networks. Details can be found by clicking on the links below.

Within the BRC and CRF, our staff and management teams participate in established EDI programmes and actively seek opportunities to make improvements in the way we work.

The Barts BRC and CRF are committed to continuing the integration of EDI principles and practices across all aspects of our undertakings without exception i.e.,

- the biomedical and clinical research
- those who undertake it.

- those who may also be involved in delivery such as patients and public, and
- those who will ultimately benefit from it.

Our commitment incorporates equality of opportunity, elimination of discrimination and the promotion of good relations between all people. This is regardless of age, disability, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender reassignment, gender identity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status.

Further information on delivery partner commitments and approaches to EDI are available through the following links:

Barts Health NHS Trust: [EDI homepage and links to further information](#)

Queen Mary University of London: [EDI homepage and links to further information](#)

St George's University of London: [EDI homepage and links to further information](#)

St George's University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: [EDI homepage and links to further information](#)

Both BRC and CRF have comprehensive governance structures. They report to delivery partnership organisation Chief Executives. Board-level engagement ensures that EDI is a golden thread throughout Barts NIHR infrastructure. It promotes alignment with local EDI strategies, policies, and procedures and those of external organisations such as funders, regulatory bodies, and associated research organisations/facilities. EDI is basic to all aspects of BRC and CRF governance groups. In all that we do, the BRC and CRF Directors ensure senior biomedical and clinical research leads are accountable for promoting and embedding EDI (see Annex 1 and 2).

Our BRC and CRF EDI strategy aligns with NIHR's 'Best Research for Best Health: The Next Chapter' and 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy 2022-2027'. So, we contribute to the wider NIHR family aims and objectives for EDI.

EDI Strategy Goals & Implementation

In identifying our joint EDI strategy goals, we have considered the overarching objectives of host and delivery partner organisations and the NIHR EDI strategy to ensure they are aligned, achievable and most likely to yield evidence-based change.

Our NIHR Barts BRC and CRF EDI strategy encompasses four goals:

- *Goal 1:* To foster a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion that values and leverages the contributions of all individuals and groups.
- *Goal 2:* To address structural and systemic barriers to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- *Goal 3:* To attract, retain, and develop a diverse and talented workforce.
- *Goal 4:* To promote EDI in all aspects of BRC and CRF undertakings including research design, methodology, analysis, and dissemination.

Implementation of the EDI strategy for the BRC and CRF requires a collaborative effort from all stakeholders across the research enterprise – this includes researchers, delivery partner leaders, funding agencies, policymakers, and the patients and public they serve. This will lead to a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive research landscape promoting scientific excellence and improved health outcomes for all.

A SMART Action Plan that outlines specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound actions required to achieve the overarching goals of the EDI strategy has been developed with the abovementioned stakeholders - it will be a living document throughout the period of NIHR Barts BRC and CRF funding (see Annex 3).

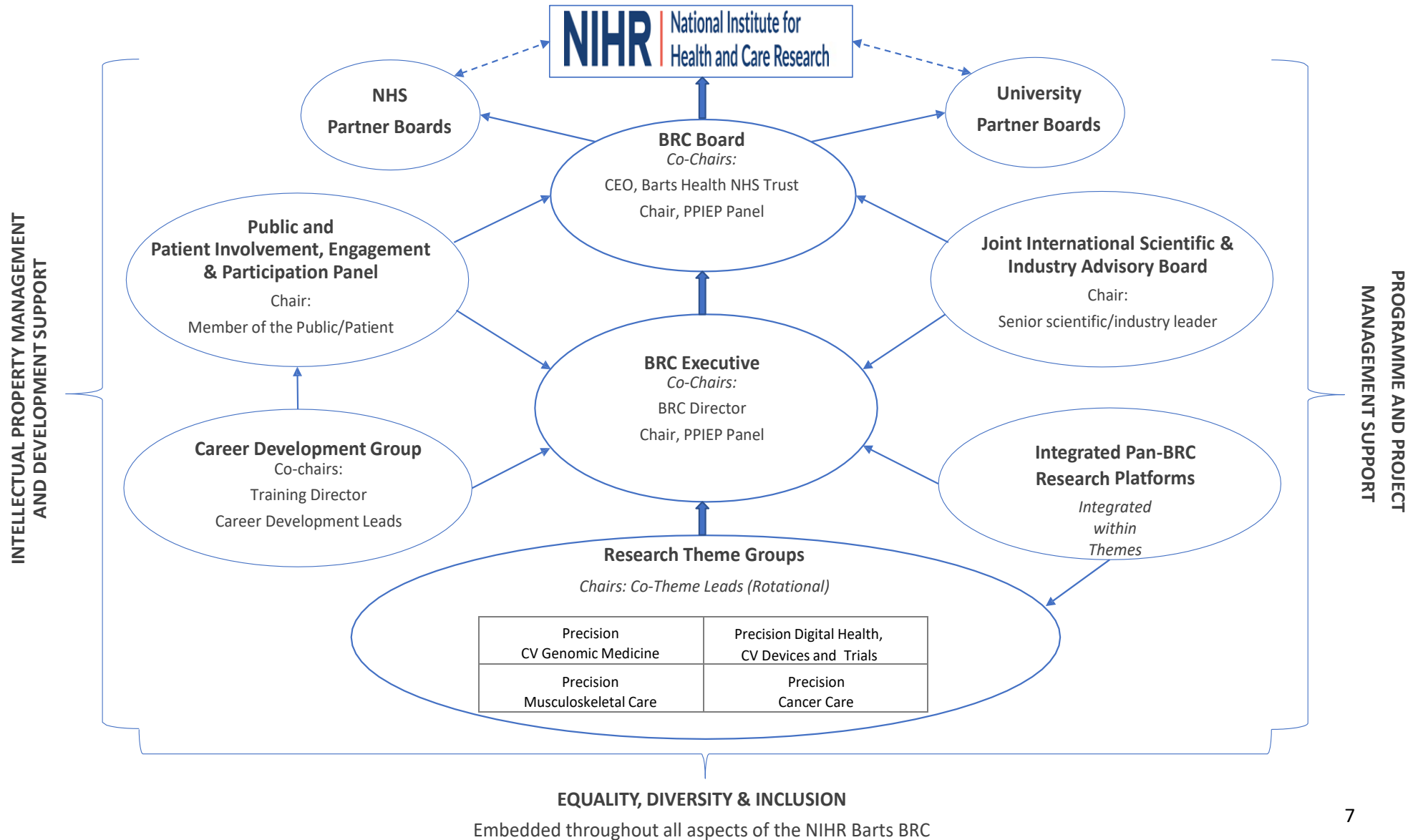
Conclusion

The EDI strategy for the BRC and CRF sets out a vision for a research landscape that is equitable, diverse, and inclusive. It provides a roadmap for this vision through a set of SMART goals and action plans. The strategy recognizes that EDI is a must to make sure that research is responsive to the needs and priorities of all individuals and communities, and for advancing scientific knowledge and innovation.

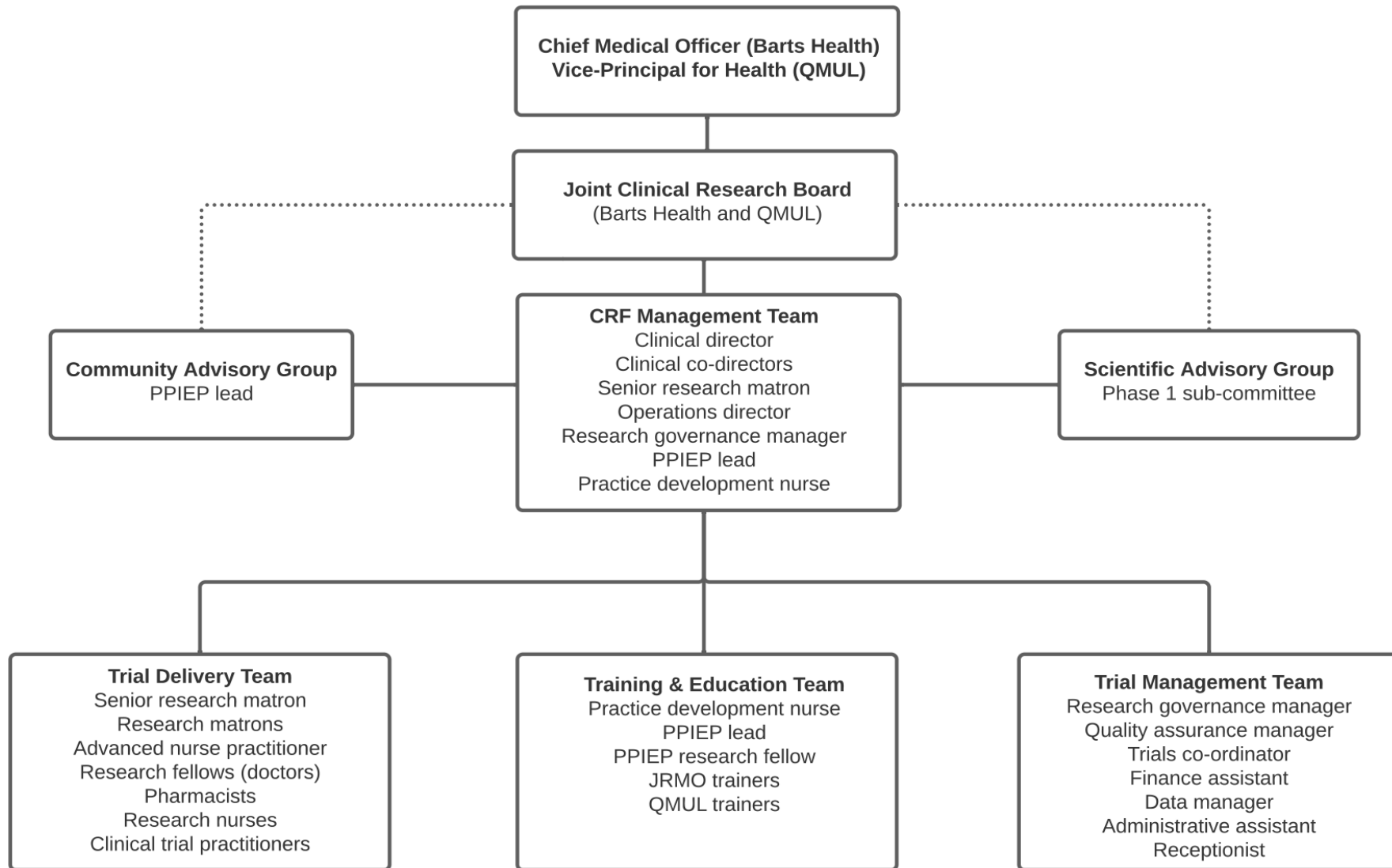
To achieve the goals of our EDI strategy, it is important that we engage with stakeholders and partners across the research ecosystem. We include researchers, delivery partners, funders, policymakers, and communities. We will keep up this commitment to accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement.

By implementing this EDI strategy, the BRC and CRF can become leaders in promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in research. We can contribute to developing impactful and innovative solutions to the complex health challenges facing the UK and the world.

Annex 1: NIHR Barts BRC: Governance Structure



Annex 2: NIHR Barts CRF: Governance Structure



Annex 3: EDI Strategy - SMART Action Plan

Objectives relating solely to the BRC and CRF are indicated as follows:

Goal	Actions	Deliverable	Output/Outcome	Timescale	Owner
1: To foster a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion that values and leverages the contributions of all individuals and groups.	1.1 Develop and communicate a clear and concise statement on EDI values and principles for BRC/CRF research.	Delivery partner stakeholders aware of the vision, aims and objectives of BRC/CRF EDI approach.	Publish a joint CRF & BRC Strategy on CRF & BRC Delivery Partner Websites	Short-term (1-2 years) Nov 2023	BRC/CRF Executive
	1.2 Establish EDI representatives within BRC governance groups to provide feedback, guidance, and support for implementing the EDI strategy.	EDI strategy is aligned across the delivery partnership	BRC EDI Representatives identified. BRC EDI feedback evidenced in Steering Group Minutes	Short-term (1-2 years) Nov 2023	BRC EDI coordinator Supported by Delivery partnerships EDI teams
	1.3 Identify two staff champions and one champion from the Community Advisory Group to support communication and engagement on EDI-related matters.	EDI strategy and action plan are shared across and understood by different staff / public groups.	Two CRF staff champions identified. CRF EDI feedback evidenced in Steering Group Minutes	Short-term (1-2 years) Jan 2024	CRF EDI coordinator Supported by CRF PPIE/ Comms lead
	1.4 Ensure that EDI training and well-being resources offered by delivery partner organisations are known and accessible to relevant stakeholders across the BRC/CRF.	EDI is embedded amongst stakeholders with the latest thinking and approaches incorporated. This will be undertaken by delivery partnerships with a record of who has undertaken this training.	Initiatives are discussed in appraisals. EDI embedded within Delivery Partner core training.	Short-term (1-2 years) Mar 2024	BRC/CRF Management

	1.5 Endeavour to align existing EDI audit and reporting to monitor and evaluate progress towards the goals of the BRC/CRF EDI strategy.	Ability to monitor and develop EDI approaches/delivery by utilising the use of the protected characteristics put forward by the NIHR A steering group is to be created to investigate how to track and report this information provided by research participants, stakeholders, and researchers	Steering group is to be created. Reviewing existing EDI audits from delivery partners	Short-term (1-2 years) Nov 2024	BRC/CRF EDI co-ordinators
	1.6 Ensure EDI is reflected in annual appraisals and personal development planning within the BRC/CRF	Importance of EDI embedded across delivery partner organisations at an individual level. This will be considered during one-to-one meetings and at yearly appraisals.	Where appropriate, staff will be encouraged to undertake training in underlying EDI principles	Medium-term (3-4 years) Mar 2026	BRC/CRF Management
2: To address structural and systemic barriers to equality, diversity, and inclusion.	2.1 Endeavour to align available practices for collecting and analysing data on the representation, experiences, and outcomes of diverse groups in BRC/ CRF research.	Delivery partner organisations will seek protocol harmonisation to achieve this. Practices to be developed with a view to put this in place that would be confirmed by available supporting data.	Obtaining data from: Staff groups Patient/Public	Medium-term (3-4 years) Jun 2026	BRC/CRF Management supported by EDI coordinators and delivery partner EDI teams.
	2.2 Develop and implement targeted interventions that aim to improve the representation, experiences, or outcomes of underrepresented groups.	Delivery partner organisations will seek systems harmonisation to achieve this. Practices to be developed with a view to put this in place that would be confirmed by available supporting data.	Recruitment policies and procedures Development and retention policies and procedures Recruitment in community settings identified as underrepresented.	Medium-term (3-4 years) Nov 2026	BRC/CRF Management supported by EDI coordinators and delivery partner EDI teams.
	2.3 Actively promote the availability of appropriate resources, opportunities, and	Delivery partner organisations will seek systems harmonisation to achieve this.	Promotion within: Delivery partner websites	Long-term (5 years+) Nov 2027	BRC/CRF EDI coordinators

	support to individuals and groups in BRC/CRF research.	Practices to be developed with a view to put this in place that would be confirmed by available supporting data.	Recruitment documentation During appraisals/one-to-ones		
3: To attract, retain, and develop a diverse and talented workforce	3.1 BRC / CRF staff recruitment and retention strategies that promote and encourage EDI align with those of delivery partnership organisations.	The aims and objectives of the BRC/CRF are made clear with a comprehensive understanding of how EDI will enable their successful delivery. Objectives and goals will be aligned to wider BRC/CRF delivery partner initiatives and innovations.	Strategies and Policies made available online. Inclusion of delivery partner EDI policies and procedures included with recruitment materials (pre and post-recruitment)	Short-term (1-2 years) Mar 2024	Delivery partnership HR teams
	3.2 Provide tailored career development and mentoring opportunities that support the advancement and success of all BRC/CRF research staff.	The approach will be aligned to delivery partner organisation strategies and initiatives.	Barts Precision Medicine Academy strategy to be developed that embeds EDI within its operating principles (links to recruitment, retention, and training initiatives associated within the Delivery Partnership).	Short-term (1-2 years) Nov 2024	Delivery partnership HR/training academy teams and BRC/CRF Management teams
	3.3 Create a welcoming and supportive workplace culture that values and leverages the contributions of all individuals and groups.	Adopt and expand upon industry-recognised Charter Marks and similar awards that recognise excellence in these areas.	Ensure welcome packs for all new starters contains detail of well-being and other support available within employing delivery	Short-term (1-2 years) Mar 2024	All

			<p>partner organisations.</p> <p>Ensure EDI focussed forums are established/operational that ensure staff voices are heard and inform future strategy.</p> <p>Ensure feedback from staff surveys is shared and action plans are developed in response to improve staff experience.</p>		
	<p>3.4 Ensure that barriers to representation and retention of underrepresented groups in BRC/CRF research workforce are identified and are actively addressed to promote equality of access and opportunity to all.</p>	<p>Monitoring data and associated initiatives in place that support this in line with Queen Mary University London Strategy 2030 and Barts Health NHS Trust 'WeBelong' strategy.</p>	<p>Reporting monitored from delivery partnerships</p>	<p>Medium-term (3-4 years) Nov 2025</p>	<p>BRC/CRF Leadership</p>
	<p>3.5 Work towards a workforce in BRC/CRF research that reflects the diversity of the UK population and promotes EDI in all aspects of research.</p>	<p>Delivery partner organisations will seek systems harmonisation to achieve this.</p> <p>Practices to be developed with a view to put this in place that would be confirmed by available supporting data.</p>	<p>BRC will increase the number of fellowship applications from individuals from under-represented groups.</p>	<p>Long-term (5 years+) Nov 2027</p>	<p>BRC/CRF Leadership teams</p>

			CRF will actively support to staff from under-represented groups wishing to apply for UKCRF Network regional or national roles.		
	3.6 Create a research culture in BRC/CRF research that values and leverages the unique perspectives, experiences, and contributions of all individuals and groups.	<p>Delivery partner organisations will seek systems harmonisation to achieve this.</p> <p>Practices to be developed with a view to put this in place that would be confirmed by available supporting data.</p>	<p>Feedback received in surveys:</p> <p>Staff Surveys</p> <p>Patient/Public Surveys</p>	Long-term (5 years+) Nov 2027	All
	3.7 Foster a sense of belonging and community among all BRC/CRF research individuals, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstance.	<p>Delivery partner organisations will endeavour to implement initiatives to achieve this.</p> <p>Practices to be developed with a view to put this in place that would be confirmed by available supporting data.</p>	The BRC will hold events in various accessible settings, bringing together research teams, patients, and the public to showcase NIHR Barts infrastructure work and successes. We will utilise several existing networks to ensure we reach under-represented groups. We will use these occasions to actively interact with attendees to increase our learning and understanding of barriers to	Long-term (5 years+) Mar 2027	BRC Leadership

			<p>engagement in early phase clinical trials and biomedical research, such as an Annual Barts & Queen Mary Science Festival, 'Let's Talk...' community events etc.</p> <p>CRF will share staff and participant case studies, to be used in a variety of settings to support the engagement of different groups in research.</p>		CRF Leadership
4: To promote EDI in all aspects of BRC and CRF undertakings including research design, methodology, recruitment, analysis, and dissemination.	4.1. Ensure existing and future delivery partner best practice guidelines for promoting EDI (local and national) are reflected in all aspects of BRC/CRF research delivery.	Emanates from Goal 1 innovations and initiatives - evident via organisational development and adoption.	NIHR INCLUDE and Race Equality Framework Principles embedded within organisational policies and procedures	Short-term (1-2 years) Mar 2024	BRC EDI lead Supported by CRF EDI lead and Leadership teams
	4.2 Provide access to training and focused support for researchers and stakeholders that promote EDI principles and practices in research.	Senior Leadership and delegated mentors et al are identified and active in this area – EDI is evident at all levels of BRC/CRF governance. Training will be monitored in one-to-ones/annual appraisals with relevant stakeholder events being signposted as appropriate.	Promotion via facilities such as BRC/CRF websites, Delivery Partner organisational networks etc.	Short-term (1-2 years) Nov 2024	BRC/CRF Leadership teams supported by delivery partner operational

			Training and development activities to signpost the availability of/ information regarding EDI related initiatives.		support teams e.g., HR, training etc.
	4.3 Establish new (and strengthen existing) partnerships and collaborations with diverse communities and stakeholders to ensure that research is responsive to their needs and priorities.	Existing delivery partnership links and those that may develop from the same are evident.	<p>NIHR Research Ready Community Champions - community-based research champions who facilitate access to underserved groups across NEL.</p> <p>Ensure wherever practicable that NIHR PRES (experience survey) is offered to all eligible participants and sharing feedback with partners/ stakeholders/ community groups.</p> <p>QM Centre for Public Engagement Festival of Communities offers great showcasing/ engagement opportunities.</p>	Short-term (1-2 years) Nov 2024	BRC/CRF Leadership and Management

			BRC events with Industry research sponsors that bring together researchers, patients, and the public to inform and reflect on past and future research studies.		
4.4 Promote EDI in the research design, methodology, analysis, and dissemination of all BRC/CRF research.	The inclusion of EDI principles in the development and delivery of BRC/CRF research will be driven by the inclusion of patients/public and delivery partnership teams from concept through to implementation.	Senior Leadership and delegated mentors, et al are identified and active in this area – EDI is evident at all stages and levels of BRC/CRF research across all delivery partners. Research teams to engage with study sponsors/funders to promote EDI principles within the expected outputs and outcomes and wider deliverables of research studies.	Medium-term (3-4 years) Mar 2025	Research delivery teams	
4.5 Promote the ethical and responsible use of data and technology in BRC/CRF research.	All delivery partner organisations shall endeavour to be aligned to be able to provide data to confirm this is in place. Information Governance support will be sought, and a plan in place process ensuring confidentiality.	A peer review process is in place that undertakes the clinical, academic, and ethical aspects of EDI in relation to proposed studies and/or the	Medium-term (3-4 years) Mar 2025	Research delivery teams	

			<p>use/dissemination of data/devices.</p> <p>Appropriate Information Governance policies and procedures in place e.g., Data Privacy Impact Assessments (DPIA), data sharing/materials transfer agreements etc.</p>		
	<p>4.6 Ensure that all BRC/CRF research is conducted in an equitable, diverse, and inclusive manner that values and leverages the contributions of all individuals and groups and that fosters a research culture that actively promotes and supports EDI in all aspects of research.</p>	<p>The Barts BRC/CRF will be acknowledged as leaders in the field of EDI in respect to research delivery and is a go-to delivery partners of existing and/or aspiring research organisations of any maturity level.</p>	<p>This will be evidenced via the policies, systems, procedures, and data emanating from the wider SMART objectives identified within this plan.</p>	<p>Long-term (5 years+) Nov 2027</p>	<p>Research delivery teams</p>

Annexe 4: Commonly used abbreviations

Abbr.	Full title
AHSN	Academic Health Science Network
BH	Barts Health NHS Trust
BRC	Biomedical Research Centre
CCF	(NIHR) Central Commissioning Facility
CRF	Clinical Research Facility
CRO	Clinical Research Organisation
DHSC	Department of Health and Social Care
EDI	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
JRMO	Joint Research Management Office
NCCPE	National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement
NIHR	National Institute of Health and Social Care Research
PPIE/P	Patient and Public Involvement, Engagement and Participation
QMUL	Queen Mary University of London
SGUL	St George's University of London
SGNHS	St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (objectives)