

NHS North East London anti-racist strategy

January 2025

North East London: our anti-racist vision

North east London is a diverse and aspirant population, with most of the population (53%) made up of people from the global majority (all ethnic groups except while British and other white groups). This diversity is also represented within our staff as 55% of staff across healthcare organisations come from the global majority.

Tackling health inequalities is a priority for the north east London Integrated Care System (ICS) and was identified as a key cross-cutting theme in our first Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) Strategy.

Racism continues to be a significant issue that deeply impacts the health and well-being of our diverse communities. The inequalities experienced by individuals who face racism is unacceptable and must be addressed by the ICP.

Our mission

To ensure that north east London ICS is an actively anti-racist, equitable and positive place to live and work in.

Our vision

Working together with and for our communities and our staff, we will identify and address areas across north east London which may contribute to the continued systemic racism and health inequalities that adversely affects our residents. We will work in partnership to deliver this strategy with targeted action and work towards embedding this approach across all we do as health and social care.

This strategy is a collective framework for a systemwide approach intended to address racial inequalities within our services and our partner organisations. We will use the framework to augment anti-racism work already happening across the ICP and by adopting a set of collective system outcomes it will help coordinate the way that we are trying to address racism and its impact across north east London.

This strategy will not replace any single-agency initiative but aims to build upon the ongoing work within north east London, and across [London](#), to help guide local action. It will also look to build on the announcement of the proposed introduction of an Equality (Race and Disability) Bill within the Kings Speech in February 2024.

Definition

The NHS defines anti-racism as taking intentional actions to address and eliminate racism, recognising that simply being non-racist is insufficient. Anti-racism within the NHS involves acknowledging the existence of racism and its impact on both patients and staff, particularly those from racially minoritised communities.

Key aspects of NHS anti-racism initiatives include:

- 1. Tackling Structural Racism:** Implementing frameworks to identify and challenge systemic discrimination
- 2. Inclusive Leadership:** Promoting diversity and training leaders to foster inclusivity and address inequalities effectively
- 3. Understanding Lived Experiences:** Actively listening to and learning from the experiences of those affected by racism
- 4. Action and Accountability:** Taking measurable steps to reduce disparities in outcomes and regularly reviewing progress toward becoming anti-racist organisations

The impacts of racism

Through this strategy we have acknowledged the need to tackle all forms of discrimination and inequalities and addressing systemic racism is a critical priority for the organisations of the North East London Health and Care Partnership.

To be **anti-racist** is to actively work to change racist structures and systems (Kendi 2019)

We must proactively address these inequalities, or we risk even deeper disparities and worse outcomes. We know that improvements in outcomes for those with the greatest inequalities will lead to better outcomes for our global majority and ethnically diverse communities, reduced pressures for the system and therefore better services for the wider population.

In order to address persistent racialised health inequalities, it is imperative to embed anti-racist ways of working within our work as an ICS, to create equity for both our workforce and our local people. Anti-racist work should become an integral service improvement tool aimed at reducing racial inequalities and this will move us towards equity in access, experience and outcomes.

This is evident within the health access, experience and outcomes of our residents, the progression of staff within our NHS organisations and the intersectionality between race, deprivation and outcomes within north east London.

Being anti-racist is about more than not being racist; changing our approach requires us to fundamentally understand that racism creates and multiplies inequalities, and then embed anti-racist working so that we can proactively tackle the systemic and cultural issues.

We have accepted the uncomfortable truth about the existence of racism in our organisations, and our services, and we critically reflect on the ways of working which have engrained systemic racism that perpetuate racial inequalities within our population. We accept that:

- **Racism exists**
- **Racism is a structural and systemic problem**
- **Racism impacts individuals' life outcomes**

We also need to acknowledge that no one group, regardless of racial ethnicity, can claim to be completely anti-racist and accept that we need to be honest and transparent of the fact that we all have work to address the effects of racism within our system and population to become anti-racist.

Our partnership approach

We are a broad [partnership](#), brought together by a single purpose: to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and equity for the people of north east London.

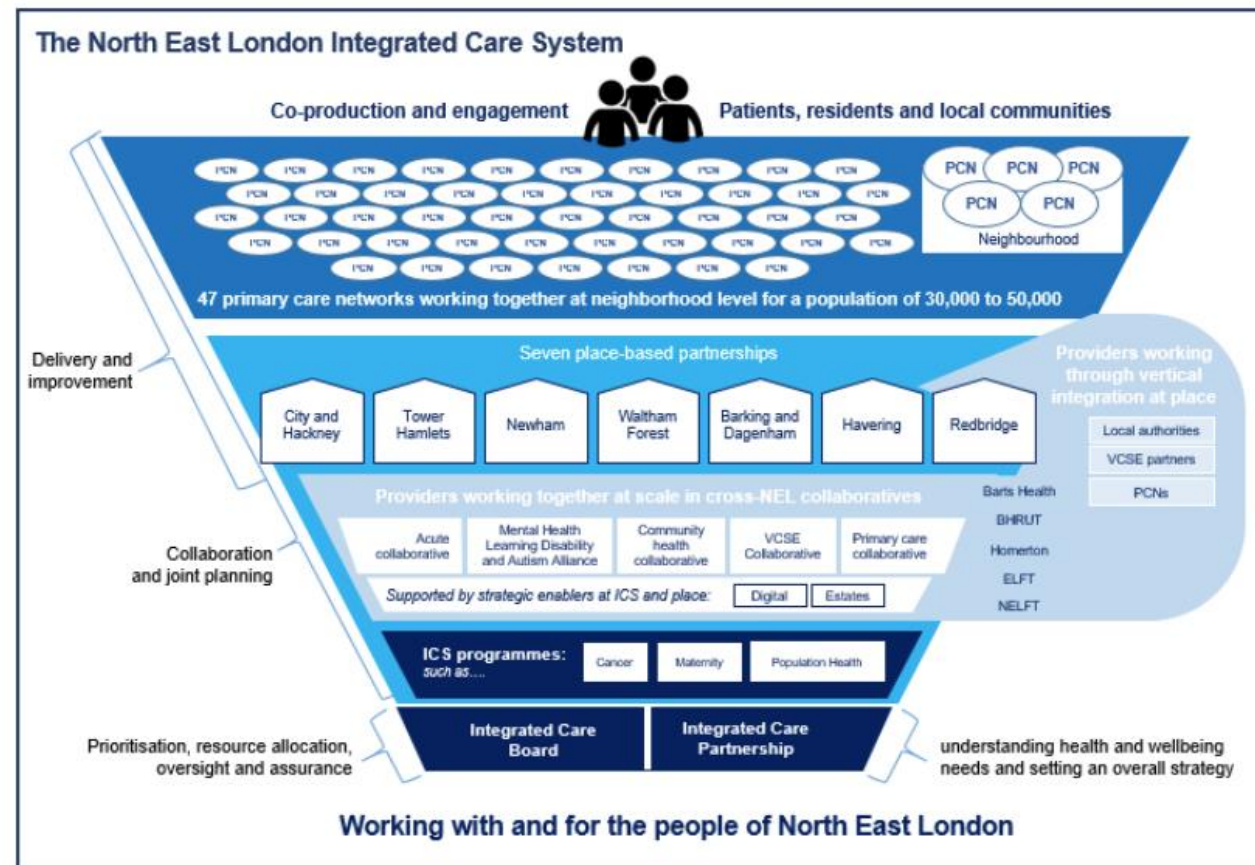
We are all part of the system and we all have an impact on the people of north east London. Tackling racism leads to better quality of services, improved outcomes, addresses inequalities and provides value for money.

We have taken a collective approach to development of this strategy and forming of the content. We believe that we are more likely to be successful if we adopt a collective approach to addressing systemic causes and effects of racism on our staff and communities.

Where relevant anti-racism benchmarks, data, and resources exist our system will commit to use them alongside this strategy.

By drawing upon the evidence, we know outcomes in areas such as Maternity and long term conditions is worse for the global majority. All system partners have a role to lead in the progression of being anti racist, with the ICB as convenor to oversee and assure how we deliver on this commitment.

This strategy contributes and builds upon the work towards an anti-racist approach across London as outlined within the [London People's Board anti-racist statement](#). It aims to provide coordination and leadership for the efforts to tackle racism across north east London.



The ICS is the combined Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership. Working through their ICB and ICP, ICSs have four key aims:

- improving outcomes in population health and health care
- enhancing productivity and value for money
- tackling inequalities in outcomes, experience and access
- helping the NHS to support broader social and economic development.

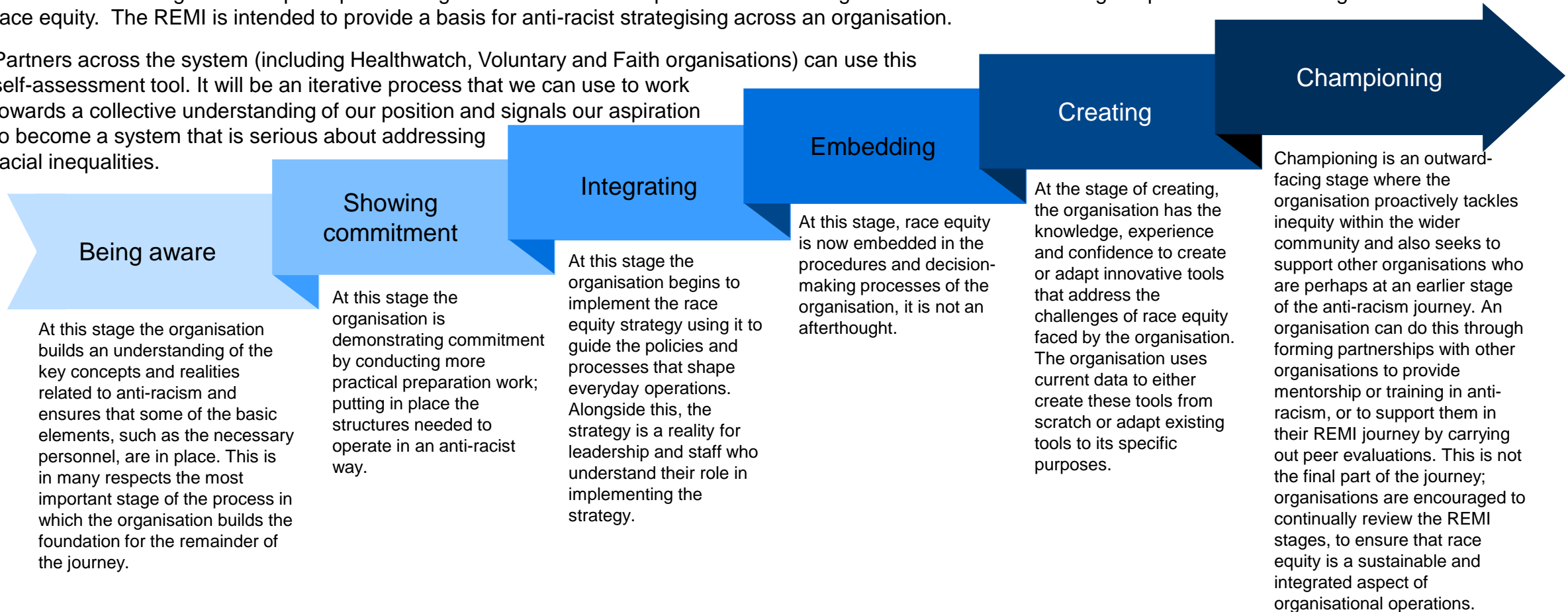
These aims cannot be achieved without tackling structural Racism

Being anti racist means taking action

In order to drive impactful change and to address systemic racism across our services and across the system, we will utilise the Race Equity Maturity Index (REMI) that has been developed by the London Anti-Racism Collaboration for Health (LARCH)*. The REMI is a pioneering self-assessment tool intended to be used by healthcare organisations who are motivated to operate in an anti-racist way and are willing to track and measure their path to achieving race equity by defining 6 benchmarked standards for organisations trying to tackle racial inequalities.

The REMI draws together multiple aspects of organisational anti-racist practice and aids organisations in understanding the problem of assessing their overall level of race equity. The REMI is intended to provide a basis for anti-racist strategising across an organisation.

Partners across the system (including Healthwatch, Voluntary and Faith organisations) can use this self-assessment tool. It will be an iterative process that we can use to work towards a collective understanding of our position and signals our aspiration to become a system that is serious about addressing racial inequalities.



Our anti racist framework

Leadership and workforce

All staff understand the responsibility to be anti-racist and all system leaders hold themselves to account for delivering anti-racism.

We will do this by:

- Developing anti-racist training for all partners across the system that enables the challenging of racism without hostility
- Enabling inclusive recruitment, progression and succession planning practices
- Ensure we are representative of our community at all levels within our organisations

We will know we are progressing by:

An increase in global majority representation at Director and Senior level positions across our organisations.

Resources and enablers

Our system and organisations will ensure anti-racism is embedded in all we do.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring our strategic commissioning strategy prioritises anti-racist action
- Supporting our collaboratives and places to do the same through our health inequality fund and Health Equity Academy
- Improving and adopting robust equality impact assessments and recording the resulting action
- Employing staff who have specific expertise in tackling racial and ethnic inequalities
- Working with partners who share our commitment
- By prioritising the collecting data and insight to inform plans and understand progress

We will know we are progressing by:

Identifying our measurable anti-racism outcomes for action at all levels of our system and allocating sufficient resource to anti-racism initiatives.

Engagement and Feedback

Our anti-racist work will be informed by and be for the benefit of our communities.

We will do this by:

- Ensure that our residents with lived experience of racism meaningfully participate in commissioning, contract delivery, improvement and evaluation decisions
- Improving the mechanism we use as a system for global majority participation and leadership through our refreshed 'working with people and participation strategy
- Using data and insight to identify and purposely working with global majority or ethnically diverse communities who are not engaging with us

We will know we are progressing by:

Establishing a baseline for race and ethnicity engagement with our communities and improve engagement through a learning action network approach; aligned to the Working with People & Communities Strategy.

Accountability and metrics

Anti-racist actions are informed by the evidence

We will do this by:

- Being equally open about where this has not gone well so that we can learn together
- Correlate race and ethnicity data with NEL resident success measures
- Earning the trust of our staff and our communities by openly feeding back on how their input has informed our decisions, priorities, policies and strategies through a 'you said, TOGETHER, we did' approach.

Celebrating and evidencing success

Ensure we are held accountable, remain focused on anti-racism, recognise our progress, and ensure we learn and continually improve.

We will do this by:

- Work with partners and global majority communities to conduct an annual anti-racist self-assessment of our system
- Share best practice across our partners which have helped to reduce inequalities, improve access experience and outcomes, and improve value
- Be honest about our progress and where we need to focus our efforts

We will know we are progressing by:

Adopting best practice and delivering on our strategy to reduce inequalities.

Our journey towards anti-racism

We commit to delivering reductions in inequalities, especially where these are driven by structural racism and bias and building the trust of our communities that we will collectively deliver the change we desire.

Understanding which parts of our system are structured to advantage some communities and disadvantage others will enable us to put in place actions and a culture that mitigates the drivers of these inequalities.

By listening, learning and responding to the lived experiences within our ethnically diverse communities we can address the issues which are felt most acutely by our population and staff.

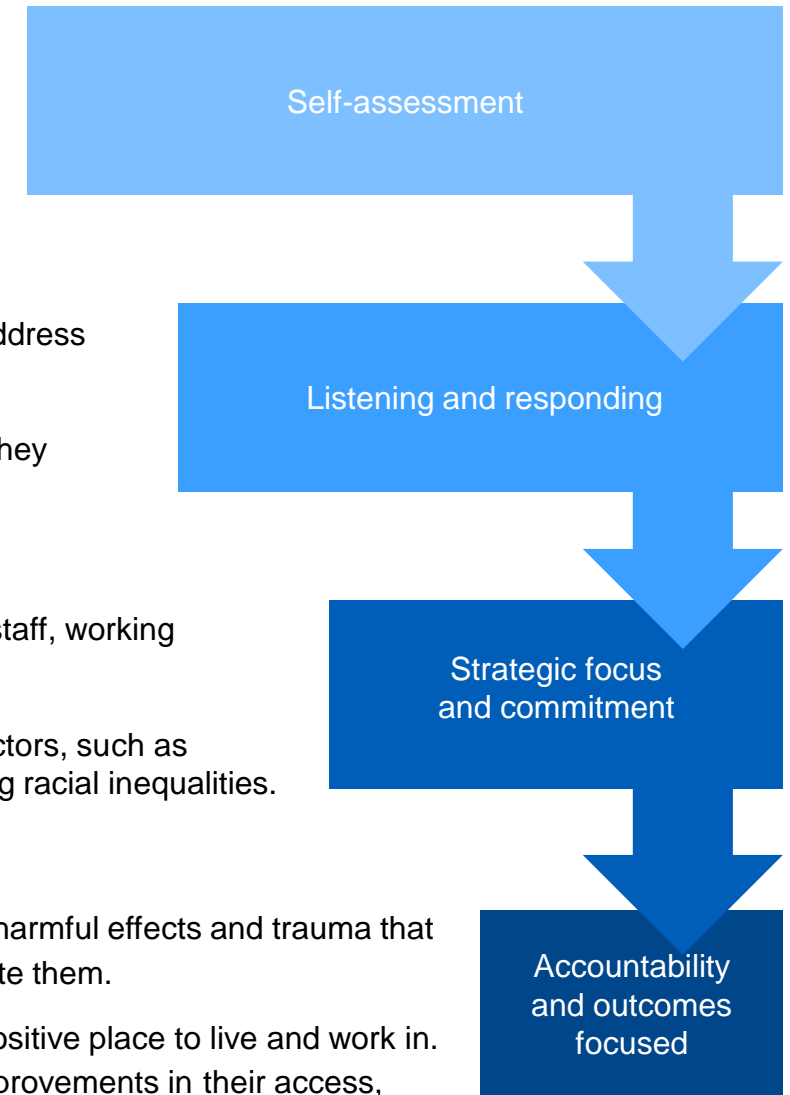
We must be open and consistent with how we communicate these changes to our communities and staff so that they can hold us as a system to account to the aims of our anti-racism strategy.

As a system we work together to address both the causes and effects of inequalities within our communities and staff, working collectively to target those interventions at the areas where we have the highest degree of inequalities.

Initiatives need to be delivered as part of wider anti-racist approach, recognising the intersectionality with other factors, such as deprivation or immigration status etc, with all we do being seen through an anti-racist lens with the goal of reducing racial inequalities.

Racism saps the power of the whole community and has a cost to the whole population. We must recognise the harmful effects and trauma that our communities and staff experience because of racism within our organisations and services and work to mitigate them.

We need to deliver on our mission to ensure that north east London ICS is an actively anti-racist, equitable and positive place to live and work in. We need to gain the trust of our staff and communities and ensure they have the confidence that we will make improvements in their access, experience and outcomes and that we will hold each other to account to deliver change.



Summary and next steps

Addressing the systemic causes and presentations of racism across our system, throughout our workforce, working practices and through the inequalities in outcomes, is a strategic imperative and needs clear commitment from organisations across north east London.

It is the intention of this strategy to support the system and its partners to assess their current state and provide an outcomes framework to align activities across the system against key areas of focus that will drive the biggest changes for our staff and our diverse communities.

This strategy provides a collective framework to support the move towards becoming an anti-racist system. Adopting a system wide approach looks to encompass and support the work that is already being done within health and care organisations and across our ICP. We acknowledge that before this strategy existed individual organisations had anti-racism policies and strategies in place and had piloted national initiatives such as Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF).

Our system goal is to build on our work to date and move the whole system towards addressing racial inequities and championing equity.

We want to be a system in which our staff and communities are not disadvantaged because of their race, and consider north east London ICS to be an anti-racist system that is an equitable and positive place to live and work in.

As a system we commit to the pillars in this strategy, and we will hold ourselves accountable for delivering the outcomes set out in the framework.

We will do this by:

- Asking each partner organisation to complete an annual REMI self-assessment to identify which areas require further work and adjust their organisational approach to becoming anti-racist
- Ensure our staff and communities are engaged to help shape and drive the changes we make
- Share learning and best practice on addressing racism and reducing inequalities at an annual NEL anti-racism summit, the first to be held in the autumn 2025
- Take an annual system report to the integrated care board and the integrated care partnership outlining progress to date, describing our successes and the areas where further progress is needed

