The processes that NHS Tayside has in place are that as a public body under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, amended 2005, we have a duty to ensure that we are addressing disability equality in a proactive and positive way. The disability equality duty referred to as the general and specific duty imposed on all public bodies including the NHS to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA
- Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to meet disabled people’s needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

Key aspects of the specific duty include - to produce a 3 year disability equality scheme which will be reviewed annually. As part of our specific duties we will involve and consult with disabled people in developing and improving our services.

Other key drivers for NHS Tayside and progress with disability equality:

- Equally Well Recommendations: 52: 53: and 54
- NHS QIS visiting NHS Tayside on the self assessment of healthcare services for people with learning disabilities. This identified standards that were met and standards where further work is required.
- NHS Tayside Fatal Accident Inquiry and recommendation that came out from the inquiry

The Improvement and Quality Committee is responsible for governance in relation to equality and diversity in NHS Tayside. Development and monitoring of the three current Equality Schemes for Race, Disability and Gender and work in respect of the other three strands, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation and Age are reported to the Improvement and Quality Committee. This work forms part of the Improvement and Quality Committee Work Plans with Annual Reports approved by this Committee. There is an executive lead at the Board for equality and diversity and learning disabilities.

NHS Tayside takes note of the recommendations from national reports and uses the existing structures and processes to prioritise actions for implementation to improve the health and wellbeing of disabled people.

The following are some examples of progress and processes involved in improving the quality of services for disabled people.

**Training and Development**

- NHS Tayside now has 110 Equality and Diversity Champions who have a knowledge and understanding of up to date legislation and training on all of the equality strands. They are skilled and confident in challenging inappropriate behaviours and reinforcing positive attitudes to equality and diversity. Their role is also to raise awareness of equality and diversity.
- Within children’s services there is multidisciplinary training. Hanen training delivered by Speech and Language Therapists to other health staff/parents/carers/education and anyone else involved with children with learning disabilities.
- There is training activity to help support the implementation of NHS Tayside’s Carer Strategy and through NHS Tayside’s Carer Strategy Training Group there is a very active involvement of users/carers in delivering training.
- The role of the Consultant Nurse for Learning Disabilities is also to raise awareness for all carers, clinical staff, advocates and service users to ensure that staff have the appropriate level skills and knowledge for them to care for any person who comes into their care with a learning disability.
- Health care staff have been trained on deaf awareness and how to access information regarding interpretation services available for deaf patients across NHS Tayside.

**Information access**

- Information about health services is available in a range of formats, with appropriate support, e.g. Braille and BSL.
- All leaflets conform to plain English guidance. Content of leaflets provided by departments and quality controlled by designated person within nursing and patient services department.
- Communication alert stickers for all patients with communication needs on patient’s casenotes.
Care planning

- Fast-track system for children with complex needs who have frequent admissions.
- For people with learning disabilities specific health needs are identified in records, care plans and personal life plans (PLP) which are developed in conjunction with Barnardos where applicable.
- Through multidisciplinary assessment and clinical review – problems are identified with a clear action plan developed and reviewed.
- If accessing multiple services will have multidisciplinary care plan.
- Single shared assessments are in place for patients with learning disabilities.
- Particular good practice in relation to this area of work with children is ASPIRE (A Shared Personal Information Record) for pre-school children with very complex disabilities in Dundee.
- Care plans show evidence of access to a range of community health services, based on individual needs.
- Carers or family involved in care plans by assisting in completing the All About Me document and encouraging them to ensure that it is brought in with the patient when being admitted to hospital.
- Admission documentation and nursing documentation take into account additional needs of disabled people and is recorded.
- To ensure that additional and complex needs are considered in discharge planning, there is a Joint Tayside Discharge Planning Protocol.
- Consultation takes place with individual’s family and paid carers relating to additional needs of a person and they attend case conferences.

Physical access

The Operations Directorate have an on-going focus on where disability equality issues require to be addressed in conjunction with issues around access to facilities, particularly for disability groups. The following is a summary of a range of actions that have been carried out and currently are in the process of being planned to introduce:

- A disabled and changing places facility/toilet is now available on level 7 at Ninewells Hospital.
- Estates department have had a general allocation included within the maintenance budget to ensure issues around disability discrimination and access can be carried out.
- Significant work has been carried out with the car park contractor at Ninewells (Vinci Park UK Ltd) and this included:
  a) An increase in the number of disabled parking bays.
  b) The introduction of free parking permits for certain patients and relatives on a compassionate basis (circa 2,000 per month).
  c) The introduction of a free of charge scooter mobility service at Ninewells, which won a National Award for Innovation.
  d) Introduction of a free of charge courtesy bus service between the outlying car parks and the main hospital entrances.
- Site Management at Perth Royal Infirmary and Ninewells Hospital have carried out discussions with Patient Volunteer Ambulance Car Drivers Association to agree improved access and parking for the users of the service. These improved measures have now been introduced to very good effect.
- Parking and drop off points at Ninewells, Perth Royal Infirmary and Stracathro for disabled people are excellent, well used and managed.
- NHS Tayside Wheelchair Users Group has been set up to improve services to wheelchair users.

Transport

NHS Tayside owns 20 minibuses 16 of which are coach built accessible minibuses. All minibus seats are fitted with inertia reel diagonal and lap seat belts and in the accessible buses the seats are removable to allow for flexibility of use where more space is required for wheelchairs or for clients who may require more room for access or safety reasons. The accessible buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts and equipment to use with the wheelchairs as follows: Standard wheelchair clamps, 4-point webbing restraints and fixed base restraints such as Rearlock. Each wheelchair carried also has a double inertia reel restraint for the client. All restraints from UNWIN SAFETY SYSTEMS. Two minibuses purchased for the Armitstead Child Development Centre have been fitted with ISOFIX seats which have special fixing points for attaching child seats. Child seats were also purchased for departments such as the Child and Adolescent Unit at 15 Dudhope Terrace, Dundee to use in their crown cars.
Specifications for the minibuses are drawn up after meetings between the Transport Manager and the clinical group who are using the vehicle. The clinical group bring the knowledge from the drivers and users of the vehicles.

The above are NHS Tayside vehicles for taking clients on outings, to appointments or from home to Day Hospitals – not for general public accessing services.

Communication
- Multilingual speech and language therapists used for children’s therapy sessions rather than using interpreters.
- Access to records and complaints available in Makaton and symbol. Leaflets can now be adapted on demand. Communication needs identified and met for children and adults.
- Individuals with learning disabilities bring with them PAMIS Passports/All About Me documents which highlight specific communication difficulties. Contact details of the Learning Disability Speech & Language Therapy Department personnel are available within the Caring for People with a Learning Disability Resource Pack.
- Child’s needs identified and aids provided as required, through speech and language therapy assessments.
- Posters in all general hospitals informing staff of Nurse Consultant Liaison Service.
- Communication aids that are available are: All About Me Document, DisDat Document (on intranet), PAMIS passports, Let’s Be Patient DVD, within all secondary care wards a hospital communication book has been issued and made available for all staff, Pictorial menus
- Lets Be Patient DVDs are available at Ninewells, Perth Royal Infirmary and Stracathro Hospitals.
- Fair For All Disability has made available Tip Cards on how to communicate with disabled people. These have been made available to use by all frontline staff who are in emergency care, acute admitting, outpatient clinics, and receptionist areas where there is first point of contact for disabled patients.
- Induction loop systems are available in meeting rooms and reception areas.

Steps For The Future
Development of Single Equality Scheme - A community engagement event is planned for February/March 2010 in line with the development of the Single Equality Scheme. We will engage and involve disabled people and their carers to ensure that the work we plan to take forward over the next 3 years are actions they have helped us to identify and prioritise. To enable us to do this we will develop an Action Plan for disability which we will consult on and amend as required.

NHS Tayside Health Equity Strategy – We will ensure that the work that is done to develop the Single Equality Scheme complements and links into our Health Equality Strategy, to tackle socio economic deprivation and poverty in Tayside.

Involvement and Engagement - We will continue to involve, engage and consult with disabled people as part of our PFPI agenda. We will also continue to work with our 3 Physical Access Groups that are in place across the 3 Community Health Partnerships who work closely with the local community planning partners. We will also engage and involve other disability groups or forums as and when required.

Wheelchair Users Project – We will implement the Improvement Plan to improve wheelchair users and seat services for disabled people.

NHS QIS Action Plan for Learning Disabilities - We will develop an action plan in January 2010 to take forward the quality indicators that were not met as part of the QIS visit. We will also work closely with The Nurse Consultant for learning disabilities to ensure that our care planning is meeting the needs of patients with learning disabilities on admission and discharge.

Equality Impact Assessment - We will ensure that we have robust process and frameworks in place to ensure that all our policies, service improvements and functions are equality impact assessed.

Reasonable Adjustments – We will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for people with disability who are using our services or employed by us to ensure equality and quality of service.

Santosh Chima
Equality & Diversity Manager