



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy - Action Plan

Statement of Intent – September 2023

Theme: Pain

All researchers in the Theme have well established patient advisory groups, patient partners and links with charities ensuring patients are at the heart of all proposed work. It is acknowledged that pain has no barriers so diverse representation is a key consideration.

Leadership

The Theme is committed to inclusive leadership, and fully engaged with supporting and developing the MSD Inclusive Leadership Program. We aim to have the majority of research and theme leaders complete the program by the mid-point of the BRC. We will also undertake a Research Culture 360 Evaluation, which obtains anonymous feedback from all theme team members, and covers 4 core value-domains of leadership, community, individuality, and character.

Team science

We will embrace EDI as we build teams to undertake the research, tracking not just recruitment (we are already committed to inclusive hiring practices) but how we support individuals at every level across the whole theme throughout the course of the BRC. We have designed and piloted a new tool for measuring inclusivity, using network analysis of researcher interactions, and aim to be able to formally demonstrate that we have no significant difference in measured inclusivity throughout the duration of the BRC, in terms of those protected characteristics where the data allows.

The science we do.

A key focus of our research is to ask whether people from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds are more prone to chronic pain. This is integral to some of our projects (e.g., UK Biobank data analysis), and we aim to definitively test this hypothesis by the mid-point of the BRC. We are also fully committed to creating inclusive lab spaces and have initiated a 'Inclusive Labs project' focused on our behavioural and VR experimental facilities, together with people with lived experience, and will share our guidance when a publishable version is complete.

Policy engagement and PPI activities.

We aim to fully understand how people with lived experience of pain from disadvantaged groups may be discriminated against by the delivery of healthcare and scope of research in the field of chronic pain. Our theme will undertake targeted PPI activities in certain groups (e.g., autism and associated neurodiverse conditions, and the elderly). Our goal is to have identify specific policy actions related to each of these focus areas by the end of the BRC.

Public engagement activities



We intend to showcase the importance of understanding diversity in the science and healthcare delivery of chronic pain. We aim to undertake a specific PE activity that focuses on how people from disadvantaged backgrounds are disproportionately affected in terms of disability. We aim to have the outcome of this publicly exhibited by the end of the BRC.