



# Cobalt

Medical Charity

Diagnosis • Research • Education

Registered Charity No: 1090790

## Statement of Purpose Cobalt Health



August 2024

## Introduction

Cobalt Health (Cobalt) is a medical charity providing advanced diagnostic imaging services, utilising the latest technology. The Charity also provides other services including, research and education working in partnership with the NHS.

This Statement of Purpose provides a range of information, which is intended, for a wide audience including:

- Staff
- Partnering organisations
- Patients and other users of Cobalt services
- Local Authorities and Healthcare Trusts
- Colleagues within other organisations providing similar services
- General public

This Statement of Purpose aims to meet requirements in-line with all relevant legislation, namely the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and the Care Quality Commission (Registration) Regulations 2009 by outlining how we will fulfil our range of duties and responsibilities in meeting the needs of the communities we serve.

The Statement of Purpose will be reviewed and updated by the Registered Manager as required to ensure accuracy is reasonably maintained.

## Our Principles

Cobalt is collectively and personally committed to:

- The best interests of the whole and caring for the individual.
- Utilising resources intelligently to deliver excellent outcomes and attract further investment.
- Being inspired by innovation and committed to maintaining and improving core activities.
- Purposeful partnerships.
- The delivery of high-quality safe services.
- Promoting health and empowering people.
- Excellence in business planning, process implementation and marketing of services.
- Being consistently fit for purpose.

Cobalt is committed to working in partnership with patients and their referrers, to shape the services we provide. We share knowledge with other professionals and organisations to improve the services offered.

- We will make a positive contribution to all we do by having a positive attitude, ensuring all we do adds value to the users experience and to achieve positive outcome.
- We will value and develop each other, supporting professional development, maintaining, and improving standards recognising individual and collective skills, knowledge, and achievements.
- We will do the right thing to the right patient at the right time with the right service and care.
- We will have a holistic approach to assessment, treating all with respect and valuing individual opinions.
- We will have an ethical approach, treating all as we would wish to be treated.

## Contact Details

Cobalt Health

Linton House Clinic

Thirlestaine Road

Cheltenham

Gloucestershire GL53 7AS

Email: [enquiries@cobalthhealth.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cobalthhealth.co.uk)

Telephone: 01242 535900

### Registered Manager:

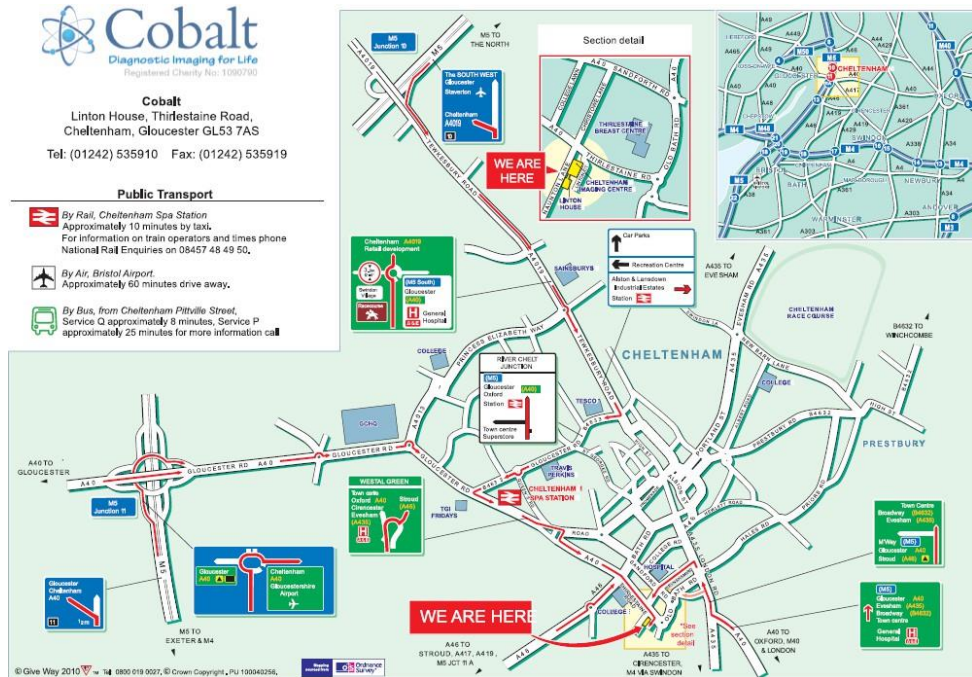
Mrs Karen Hackling-Searle, Director of Clinical Operations, Email: [Karen.Hackling-Searle@cobalthhealth.co.uk](mailto:Karen.Hackling-Searle@cobalthhealth.co.uk)

Mrs Hackling-Searle has over 30 years clinical experience and has held a senior management position within the Charity for the last 16 years.

### Chief Executive:

Mr. Malcolm MacKeith, Chief Executive Officer, Email [Malcolm.MacKeith@cobalthhealth.co.uk](mailto:Malcolm.MacKeith@cobalthhealth.co.uk)

Mr. MacKeith has held senior management positions in various sectors over the last 30 years and has been the Charities Finance Director and Company secretary for the last 8 years. As the Chief Executive of Cobalt, he is responsible for the overall management and strategic development of the Charity working closely with the Board of Trustees.



## Cobalt Health

Cobalt is a registered medical charity (registration number 1090790). The primary objective of the Charity is to assist in the prevention, detection, diagnosis and treatment of cancer and other disease. The way in which this objective is to be achieved depends on current needs and on health policy generally. When the Charity was founded in 1964, the main emphasis was on raising funds for the provision of a cobalt unit in Cheltenham. From then until the early 1990s it continued to raise substantial funds for the purchase of equipment and for the provision of facilities for the centre that is now the Oncology Centre at Cheltenham General Hospital - a centre that serves the three counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and Worcestershire.

In 1992, Cobalt started to provide diagnostic imaging services to the local community by purchasing a mobile Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) unit. Over the next few years, the Charity developed this service providing an additional seven mobile MRI units.

The Charity opened the Cobalt Imaging Centre in Cheltenham in 2006; this state-of-the-art facility that provides the latest in imaging technology including MRI, Positron Emission Tomography (PET/CT) and Computerised Tomography (CT). The Centre is purpose designed to provide high quality patient facilities.

## Magnetic Resonance Imaging



Cobalt currently operates nine whole body MRI scanners operated by experienced state registered MRI radiographers. The radiographers are supported by a team of experienced consultant radiologists all holding substantive consultant posts within the NHS.

Facilities include ultra-high field MRI (3.0 Tesla) and five mobile MRI scanners, including a 3.0 Tesla mobile MRI.

Cobalt also operates a satellite facility at the Institute of Translational Medicine, Queen Elizabeth Hospital Campus, Birmingham, in partnership with the University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust providing ultra-high field MRI services for both clinical and research examinations.

## Positron Emission Tomography & Computerised Tomography (PET/CT)

Cobalt provides a PET/CT service with experienced state registered PET/CT radiographers, supported by dedicated PET/CT trained radiologists led by Professor Iain Lyburn who also holds the ARSAC (Administration of Radioactive Substances Advisory Committee) Licence for the service.

Two experienced consultant radiologists double report all PET/CT scans.

The PET/CT service supports NHS patients in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Cobalt installed a new Siemen Biograph Vision digital PET/CT scanner in November 2022. The Charity also introduced a mobile PET/CT service in 2022.

## Computerised Tomography (CT)

Cobalt operates thirteen whole body CT scanners including ten mobile CT scanners supporting NHS hospitals across the UK. Cobalt is also the leading provider of mobile ultra-low dose CT to support the NHS England lung cancer screening services across England.

## Other Imaging Facilities

Cobalt provides x-ray and ultrasound facilities at the Cobalt Imaging Centre, in Cheltenham.



## Rapid Access Clinics

Cobalt runs several 'rapid access' clinics. Several specialist consultant orthopaedic surgeons, psychiatrists and a neurologist provide these outpatient clinics. After initial consultations, patients are referred for imaging investigations and return with the imaging report to the clinic usually within days of their initial clinic appointment. The clinic services also include non-invasive treatments such as cortisone injections, musculoskeletal (MSK) aspirations and the injection of contrast media into MSK joints during MR Arthroscopy.

## Staffing

Cobalt employs clinical staff (radiographers) all of whom hold either hold a Diploma from College of Radiographers, or BSc Hons in Diagnostic Radiography. Cobalt also employs administration staff and clinical support staff. Cobalt has over one hundred employees. Doctors are not employed by Cobalt but work for Cobalt either on a self-employed basis or via an agreement with the NHS. Staff training and education is a priority within Cobalt for all staff, the Charity also provide several clinical training events.

**Table 1** on page 9 shows senior staff employed in each role within Cobalt imaging and the relevant qualifications.

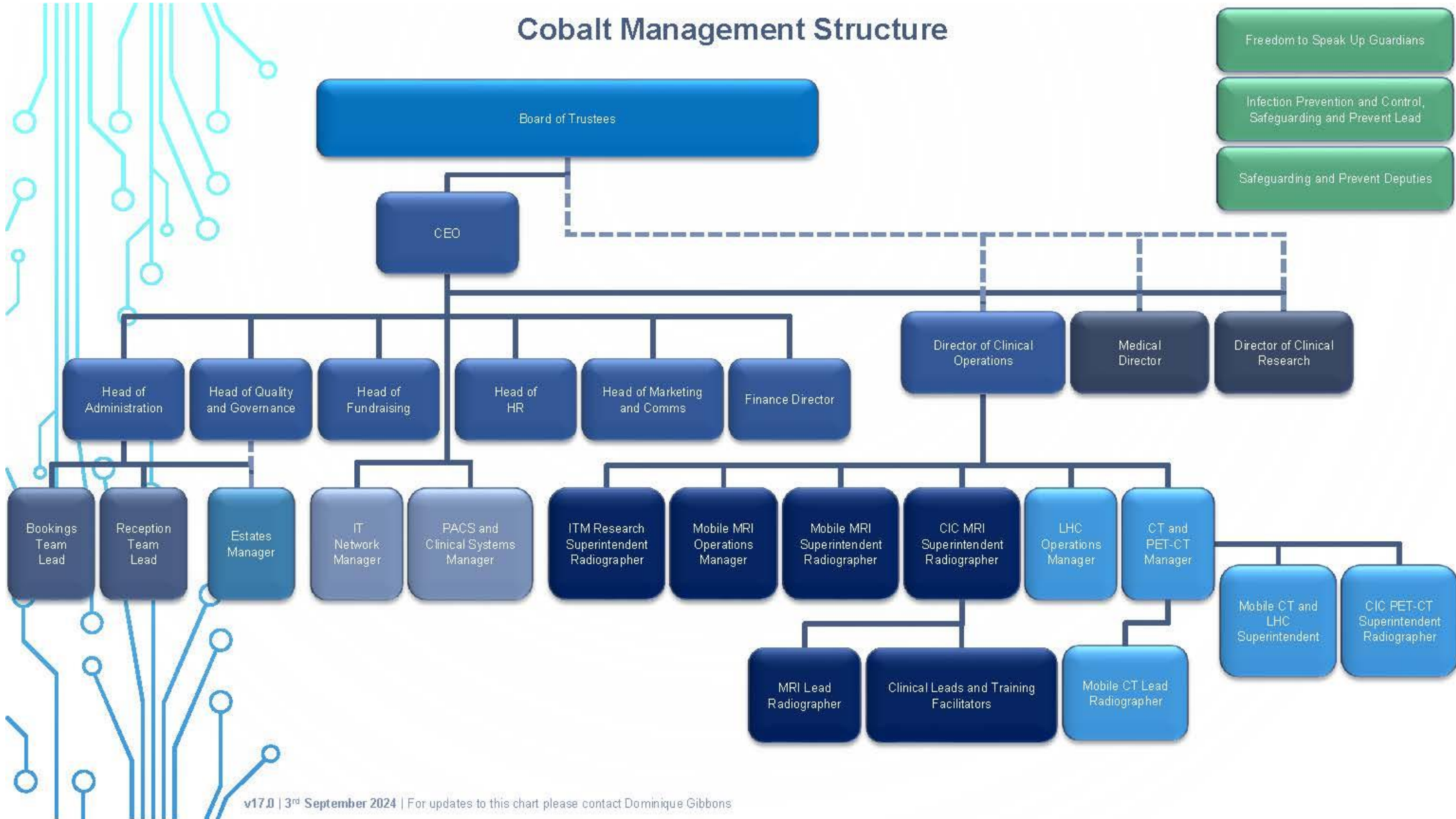
**Figure 1.** on page 10 shows the organisational structure.



**Table 1 Senior Staffing - Relevant qualifications**

Role	Relevant qualification(s)
Chief Executive Officer	FCA – Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants England and Wales BA Combined Honours – Economics & Geography DChA Diploma in Charity Accounting
Finance Director	ACA Associate of Institute of Chartered Accountants England and Wales BA Hons – Business Economics
Head of Governance & Quality	Diploma College of Radiographers Post Grad Diploma Nuclear Medicine MA Management Studies Prince2 Practitioner in Project Management
Head of Human Resources	BA Hons English Literature, Modern History & Politics CIPD Level 7
Director of Clinical Operations	Diploma College of Radiographers Certificate in First Line Management
Head of Business Administration	Cert in Counselling Skills CIPD Associate Member
Head of Communications	Diploma Chartered Institute of Marketing CIM Diploma in Professional Marketing Level 6
Head of Fundraising	International Advanced Diploma in Fundraising, MBA

Figure 1. Cobalt Health Organisational Structure.



## Services Provided

Cobalt provides comprehensive diagnostic imaging services, which includes the following:

### Magnetic Resonance Imaging

- 3.0 Tesla MRI
- 1.5 Tesla MRI
- Mobile MRI

### Positron Emission Tomography

- Digital PET/CT
- Mobile PET/CT

### Computerised Tomography

- Mobile CT (64 – 128 slice)

### Other Imaging

- General X-Ray (Digital Radiography)
- Ultrasound

Cobalt also provides the following consultant clinics

- Shoulder & Elbow
- Foot & Ankle
- Spine
- Hip
- Memory Clinic
- Neurology

## Quality Management

Cobalt Imaging Centre is certificated against the ISO 9001:2015 standard. The Centre is has also accredited to the Quality Standard for Imaging (QSI) standard which has been developed by The Royal College of Radiologists and the College of Radiographers to set out the criteria that defines a quality imaging service.

The QSI provides a framework for the NHS and private sector to provide consistently high-quality services delivered by competent staff working in safe environments. The Standard was first published in 2009 and Cobalt was the first imaging service to be accredited to the standard. We have maintained annual accreditation since this date. We also hold certification against the ISO 14001 Environmental standard, highlighting our commitment to continually improving our environmental performance and hold Cyber Essentials Plus certification, demonstrating our commitment to data protection and security.

## Quality Statement

The Charity invests in 'leading edge' scanner technology to give fast and effective results, improving efficiency, driving down the cost of examinations to users and delivering minimal waiting and flexible appointment times.

We are committed to provide services that meet the requirements of all our referrers. Our staff are rigorously trained and committed to using a quality approach in all aspects of our operations. This forms a framework for our quality objectives for improvement.

Underpinning our Quality systems is our commitment to employing the most highly skilled professionals. Our processes, practices and procedures are evidence based and meet, or exceed, healthcare standards; and our continued investment in the latest technology. Patient safety and quality of clinical care is at the heart of everything we do.

We maintain a quality management system that complies with ISO 9001:2015, Quality Systems specification, demonstrating our commitment to consistently provide an excellent patient centric service that also meets all statutory and regulatory requirements.



## Improvement of Quality

Cobalt management is committed to the continuous improvement of our Quality Management System. A cycle of continual improvement is employed which includes;

- Information provided by monitoring or processes
- Customer feedback / complaints
- Internal audit
- Analysis of this data
- Management review
- Corrective/preventive action

## Concerns, Comments and Complaints

All suggestions, criticism and complaints are a valuable aid to maintaining and developing a consistently high standard of service. Complaints can, and often do, result in service improvements, and provide the opportunity for identifying the issues that concern service users.

Patient experience data collected through a range of methods allows the Charity to continually monitor service user experiences and to re-evaluate priorities through a process of continuous quality improvement.

Cobalt encourages patients and referring doctors to complete feedback questionnaires. Referring doctors are also surveyed on a quarterly basis for us to assess the service we provide to them and their patients. The key results from patient and referring doctor's feedback are published on our website.

All patient feedback is reviewed by Malcolm MacKeith the Chief Executive and discussed within monthly senior management meetings.

## Complaints

We endeavour to provide the highest quality service but understand we may not always get everything right. We want to improve the way we deliver our services, so that users feel very satisfied with the care and attention given. If we are informed where things did not work so well, it will help us learn lessons and do things differently. In addition, letting us know where things have worked well, will let us show all staff good ways of working, as another way of learning.

Complaints can be made verbally or in writing, complaints or service feedback can also be anonymous, but it greatly helps us if we understand the area of service and staff involved in the care, we can then investigate what went wrong.

### **We will:**

- Acknowledge the complaint within 1-3 days
- Investigate the issues raised in the complaint
- Aim to provide a full explanation and response to the complainant within twenty (20) working days
- Reach agreement with the complainant if more time is needed
- Do everything possible to resolve the complaint
- Learn from the complaint and make changes where appropriate

*Complaints should be sent to:*

Mr. Malcolm MacKeith

Chief Executive

Cobalt Health

Linton House Clinic

Thirlestaine Road

Cheltenham

Gloucestershire GL53 7AS

Email:

[malcolm.mackeith@cobalthhealth.co.uk](mailto:malcolm.mackeith@cobalthhealth.co.uk)

Telephone 01242 53590

## (Complaints Continued)

### NHS Patients

Patients referred to Cobalt by the NHS, can also complain using the NHS complaints process. Patients should contact the hospital or healthcare provider who referred them to Cobalt.

Patients referred to Cobalt by the NHS can also ask the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) to look into their complaint by completing the NHS complaints procedure, which can be found at [www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Complaints-and-feedback/pages/nhs-complaints.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Complaints-and-feedback/pages/nhs-complaints.aspx). Patients should contact the PHSO for any required assistance in completing this procedure on their helpline: 0345 015 4033

### Private (Self-funded or Insured) Patients

Cobalt will seek to rectify and remedy any concerns or complaints that it receives from patients. If dissatisfied with the response to the complaint, privately funded patients will be offered stage two of the complaints process, which is an internal independent review of the complaints handling process by a named senior officer of the organisation, whom has not been involved with the original complaint. If dissatisfied with the response from stage two, private patients can request independent external adjudication from the **Independent Healthcare Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS)** within 6 months of receiving Cobalt's local resolution decision. ISCAS can be contacted on 020 7536 6091 or write to them at:

ISCAS, 70 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1EU

## Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission is not able to investigate individual complaints but would like to hear about patient's experiences.

You can contact the Care Quality Commission by phone: 03000 616161 or email [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)

Alternatively, by post: Care Quality Commission

Citygate  
Gallowgate  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4PA.

## Respecting Privacy and Dignity of Patients

Cobalt Recognises that:

- Respect for individuals should be at the heart of all our services.
- Many of our users are at their most vulnerable and often fearful.
- Relationships can be unequal i.e., “patients” vs. “professionals”
- Users of our services may have to expose intimate and personal parts of themselves (physical bodies, emotional needs and personal details) to strangers.

Cobalt is therefore committed to:

- Quality care – ensuring that the highest standards, clinically safe and effective care is at the heart of all we do.
- Personalised care – ensuring that each patient or user of our service, experience care tailored to his or her individual health & social care needs & diversity.
- Dignified care – ensuring that care in any setting in which it is provided does not undermine a patient’s dignity & individuality.
- Confidentially and trust.

Cobalt accepts that Dignity:

- Is everyone’s innate right to self and social: respect, ethical treatment and esteem.
- Is fundamental to the care and services offered to our patients.
- Is something all people require, should experience and most people know when they have been treated with dignity.
- Includes many things but the following are key: openness, confidentiality, autonomy, privacy, personal hygiene, nutrition.
- Needs effective arrangements (e.g., policies, training etc.) based on promoting and providing respect; equality, diversity and human rights; safeguarding of vulnerable persons.
- Can be evidenced in practical ways. This includes polite & courteous staff.
- It can be measured in practical ways. For example, by Dignity Checklist / Audits and Equality Impact Assessments.

The dignity checklist reminds our staff of ways that dignity can be promoted in their practice while audits measure how well this is done.