

Appendix 2

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title		
Equality Analysis title: Rotherham Community Equipment Service		
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 23 July 2026		
Directorate: Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	Service area: Strategic Commissioning	
Lead Manager: Steph Watt, Head of Service Urgent and Community Care, RMBC/SYICB	Contact number: Email: steph.watt@nhs.net	
Is this a:		
☐ Strategy / Policy	☒ Service / Function	☐ Other
If other, please specify		

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Jumaimah Iqbal	Rotherham Council	Principal Occupational Therapist Access and Prevention Adult Care and Integration, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Jayne Metcalfe	Rotherham Council	Head of Access and Prevention, Adult Care and Integration, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Adele Taft	South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board	Contract and Commissioning Officer, Community Equipment Service

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, other groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

The provision of a community equipment service is a statutory requirement under the Care Act (2014) and the NHS Act (2006). Rotherham Community Equipment Service is an all-age service which is responsible for the provision, delivery, collection, decontamination, maintenance and recycling of equipment services. The service is currently jointly commissioned by the Council and South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (SY ICB), with SY ICB as the lead commissioner, and Medequip as the service provider.

The equipment service is a borough wide service with referrals through health and social care practitioners and assessment by authorised clinical occupational therapists. Assessment and allocation of equipment is according to individual need and context.

The current contract is due to end in March 2027. A costed options appraisal has been completed with the preferred option being a jointly commissioned service across Rotherham, Doncaster and Sheffield Councils and SY ICB, with Sheffield City Council as the lead commissioner (subject to internal approval by Sheffield City Council). This option benefits Rotherham citizens, and people with protected characteristics using the service, as it provides greater access to equipment through harmonising the equipment catalogue across the 3 footprints and sharing specialist equipment. This option offers best value for money through economies of scale and more efficient and streamlined operational processes.

The current and future equipment contract is awarded using the NHS Standard Contract and therefore the provider must be compliant with the Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and local authority commissioning and procurement requirements. These obligations require providers to undertake Equality Impact Assessments for service

changes and ensure equitable access for all protected groups. Specifically, providers must ensure equitable access to equipment regardless of disability, age, race, sex, etc; provide reasonable adjustments (e.g., communication formats, delivery arrangements); avoid policies or practices that create indirect discrimination (e.g., digital-only access); prevent harassment or victimisation of service users or staff; consider impacts on protected groups when making service changes; engage with service users from diverse backgrounds to understand needs and ensure staff are trained to recognise and mitigate equality impacts.

In the proposed model, harmonisation of the equipment catalogue and processes across the 3 Place footprints will reduce local variation and facilitate cross border decision making, reducing delays etc. A full impact assessment of the proposed changes has been completed and approved by SY ICB as lead commissioner of the current contract to inform the Council assessment.

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

The Council has been working with the provider and respective teams to understand the potential impact on residents and particularly individuals and groups with protected characteristics.

A costed options appraisal, independently validated, has been informed by the following:

- i. **Feedback from people using the service and their unpaid carers.** This has been predominantly positive including people valuing prompt delivery, friendly and professional assessment and delivery service and timely responses, a minority commented on delays in return and collection of equipment. In addition, Medequip collect feedback from people using the service which, along with complaints are reviewed at the monthly contract performance meetings. Information has been used to inform the procurement options appraisal exercise and impact assessments. Where complaints are received, these are investigated thoroughly and details including any learning/ changes to procedures etc are shared with the commissioner at the contract performance meetings with actions agreed and monitored. Blatchford, the current wheelchair provider, have a Rotherham Wheelchair User Group with over forty members. Blatchford also use a service user outcome measures tool called BLOOM and the results are shared with the commissioners. People accessing the service and their carers will be involved in the tender evaluation, mobilisation and implementation of the new service.
- ii. **Modelling:** Using public health data and with independent benchmarking against services of similar size/demographic taking account of factors such as population, age and profile
- iii. **Development Groups** Cross cutting Rotherham, Sheffield and Doncaster operational planning, financial and oversight groups have worked together to identify good practice and shape recommendations for the future model, which meets the needs of citizens whilst offering best value for money.

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

No, but data collection is an on-going process. What is collected, how and when will be reviewed by the cross-sector mobilisation group. This position will be kept under review throughout the contract lifecycle to ensure all appropriate information continues to inform the service design and delivery process.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

This will form part of the standard contract management process.

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	An Engagement Group was established, led by SYICB engagement leads. A service user survey has been undertaken, which was shared with the following groups for their feedback and people using the service, families and carers: • Rotherham Parent Carer Forum • Age UK Rotherham • Active Independence • Rotherham Carers Forum • Crossroads Rotherham • Sheffield Carers Centre • Age UK Sheffield • SCCCC • Disability Sheffield • MS Society Sheffield • Sheffield Dementia Action Alliance • Sheffield ME & Fibromyalgia Group • Doncaster commissioners People using the service commented on prompt delivery of equipment during periods of crisis or urgent need. Delivery staff were described as compassionate, professional, friendly and respectful, with assessments and clinical support by therapists praised for being personalised and collaborative. Carers and families felt supported, including during end-of-life care, reducing stress and maintaining dignity. Many reported that the service enabled increased independence, mobility and quality of life, helping people to carry out daily activities more safely. The service was seen as enabling people to remain safely at home, reducing the need for hospital admission or residential care. However, some people reported delays and difficulties in returning equipment, with some people unable to return reusable items. A minority reported communication and delivery issues or that assessments did not fully meet individual needs.
Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	Staff engagement has taken place as part of the options appraisal and planning process. Rotherham Operational (User) Groups take place for both adult and children's health and social care staff and joint operational, finance and oversight groups have been established for planning and approval purposes with membership from Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield

	Councils and SY ICB. This has informed development of the costed options appraisal, service specification and standardisation of the equipment catalogue. Feedback evidenced the value and impact of the equipment service on individuals and families including protected characteristics and groups particularly in relation to independent living and quality of life for individuals and carers as well as value for money, reducing the need for more costly aides and adaptations, packages of care and residential care. An option appraisal is being carried out regarding the future commissioning model. Policies and pathways are being agreed to ensure that these are fit for purpose and meet the needs of those using the service and their unpaid carers. A Rotherham Equipment Prescriber Event was held in September 2025 and a joint Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield event in April 2026. The future model will provide more opportunities for cross cutting consultation, development and training.
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4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

Community Equipment Services are needs-based, meaning people only receive equipment when a professional assessment shows it is needed for safety, independence, rehabilitation, or carer support. In practice, this ensures resources are targeted to those who face functional limitations or risks, with equipment prescribed by clinicians such as occupational therapists, physiotherapists, nurses or social workers. Because the service focuses on removing barriers to daily living, it can significantly benefit people with protected characteristics by providing reasonable adjustments, reducing inequalities in access, and supporting independence.

Where needs cannot be reasonably met through the standard catalogue, they may be referred to a small multi-disciplinary group Specials Panel. The panel considers clinical justification, risks, alternatives, and funding implications, ensuring decisions are consistent, fair and based on assessed need. Specials panels can have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics because they provide a flexible route to secure equipment for individuals whose needs are more complex or atypical, supporting reasonable adjustments, and ensuring equitable access to essential equipment.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

No. Nothing has been identified to date. Work will continue with people using the service, families and unpaid carers during the tender and mobilisation process and this will form part of the contract monitoring process.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

Groups who may particularly benefit from community equipment services are:

- Disabled people – providing accessibility, communication, delivery arrangements. Children and young people with disabilities, together with their families and carers, particularly benefit from the service as it provides equipment and adaptations which support independence, safety, participation in everyday activities and changing needs as the person grows and matures.
- Older people – facilitating mobility, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment.
- Ethnic minority groups – supporting language needs and cultural considerations.
- People with long-term conditions – providing continuity of service and timely provision.
- People with low digital access – ensuring non-digital routes remain available.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

The service will have a positive or neutral impact on community relations as it is required to be needs-based, transparent and applied consistently, ensuring that support is allocated fairly and according to assessed functional need rather than personal circumstance. By reducing barriers to independence and safety, particularly for disabled people, older adults, carers and others with protected characteristics, it helps address inequalities and demonstrates that public services are responsive to diverse needs. The proposed joint service will further support equality of access by providing a wider and more consistent range of community equipment across the South Yorkshire footprint, which may particularly benefit people experiencing socio-economic deprivation who rely on publicly funded equipment to maintain independence and wellbeing. The harmonisation of equipment provision and cross-boundary working may also improve access for residents who are geographically isolated or who require specialist equipment that may previously have been less readily available within a single locality. A clear and consistent approach to decision making prevents perceptions that one group is being prioritised over another, supporting trust, fairness and cohesion across the community.

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Title of analysis: Rotherham Community Equipment Service
Directorate and service area: Adult Care, Housing and Public Health. Service Area: Strategic Commissioning
Lead Manager: Steph Watt, Head of Service Urgent and Community Care, Rotherham Council and SY ICB
Summary of findings:
The evidence for the proposal is robust and shows no potential for discrimination. Opportunities to promote equality have been taken into account and factored into the design and delivery of the service.

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Actively involving service users and carers in the evaluation, mobilisation and ongoing operation of the contract, ensuring their lived experience shapes decision-making.	Cross section	October 2026 (following approval)
Equality factors will be built into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), with regular reporting and monitoring forming part of routine performance discussions to maintain accountability.	All	April 2027 (or start date of new contract)
Build into the future contract the requirement for providers to complete Equality Impact Assessments for any service changes, ensuring staff receive ongoing training in inclusive practice, and monitoring access and outcomes data to identify and address any disparities across protected characteristic groups.	All	April 2027 (or start date of new contract)

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Scott Matthewman	Service Director, Strategic Commissioning. ACH&PH	29 July 2026
Kirsty Littlewood	Service Director, Adult Care and Integration, ACH&PH	29 July 2026
Ian Spicer	Executive Director, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	31 July 2026
Councillor Baker Rogers	Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Health	31 July 2026

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date Equality Analysis completed	24 July 2026
Report title and date	Rotherham Equipment Service 14 September 2026
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	28/07/2026