Hello, welcome to my third, um, blog post in this series where I share, uh, news about our progress with equity, diversity and inclusion, or EDI. Here at SignHealth, I'm hoping to establish a, uh, space where we can sit together in the mud and share what it's like to do this really difficult work together.

So as well as focusing on our work at SignHealth, I also try to take part in what's going on across the rest of the charity sector. I'm lucky to be a member of the civil society group, the, uh, CSG, which is uh, a relatively new group of charities that work together to improve the sector.

Most of the charities that are involved in the civil society group are kind of infrastructure charities, umbrella charities, um, or membership organisations. Um, for several years I have been co chairing a, ah, working group focused on, um, trying to make progress in the charity sector with antiracism. And last year we completed really big project with support from the organisation called New Ways, uh, on what antiracism looks like in the sector, uh, particularly among infrastructure organisations, and, uh, what actions we can all take to improve things.

The report is called from good intentions to impact supercharging race equity in the charity sector. Uh, and m. I'm really, really proud of this work and the progress that, uh, is being made by lots of people. My co chair for this working group, uh, is Woosh Raza. He is director of people, culture and inclusion at the, uh, National Council of Voluntary Organisations, NCVO.

Uh, uh, it's an infrastructure organisation, but it supports the whole charity sector. Woosh and I, we have started to broaden out the focus of our working group to more actively consider other protected characteristics and, uh, the intersections, as well as actively trying to continue our work on antiracism. We met with members of the working group a, uh, few weeks ago, start to talk about that and we're going to be aligning our work to some of the well known awareness days, weeks or months across the year, ah, focusing the conversations that we have throughout the year, for example, on, uh, LGBTQ plus inclusion during pride month in the summer.

I think it's often quite a difficult part of a conversation with EDI. Do you focus on one protected characteristic or do you try to do everything at the same time? Or just focus on something that feels like it links to what your organisation does or focuses on? I don't think there's like a right or a wrong answer, but I am learning how important it is to remember that we're talking about people, not just like a list of categories.

Some of us have one or more protected characteristics as identified in the Equality act, but few of us are just one thing. Um, we had a really helpful training session for members of the civil society group last year on trans people's rights and understanding the law better. It was organised by one of the CSG member organisations.

They're called, uh, consortium, and the, uh, training was delivered by trans people. The training went down really, really well with CSG members and it was a really good reminder that, uh, people are interested in learning more, they really are, particularly from people who are experts and who have lived experience themselves.

This training was a one off and I worried a bit about whether it would kind of make sense with the other work that we were doing. But in the end, it didn't matter at all. People just appreciated the opportunity to come together and to learn. At SignHealth, we, um, are working hard to achieve health equity for deaf people, but we know we can't do that on our own.

We also know that deaf people aren't just deaf. We are also people from the global majority, members of the LGBTQ plus, um, community. People of faith, no faith, old, young and many, many more. So last year, we launched our new deaf together, uh, campaign because we want to try to, uh, help all of us work together more on deaf equity in all of the different aspects of our lives, not just health care.

We know that good health is about, uh, every aspect. Education, employment, housing, many other things. We want to try to find a way for us all to work together more closely so that, uh, we can see the, uh, combined impact of what we're doing together and achieve equity. If you are interested in finding out more, you can, um, put your name down, sign up to be part of the campaign.

Um, come and join us. We need your help, please. We don't expect the, uh, campaign to be successful quickly, so we are taking our time to sit in the mud, um, with this campaign too. Try to listen to people's reactions to the campaign and really think about what to do next.

As ever, uh, if you have any comments or questions or feedback about what I've talked about here, please please just get in touch. Thank you.