

For many in Great Britain—especially those in marginalised communities such as LGBTQ+ people over 50 years old—trust in public services like healthcare and social care is an ongoing concern. Discrimination remains a barrier to fair treatment, contributing to late presentation of health issues and worse outcomes. Amid these challenges, agencies like the **Equality and Human Rights Commission** play a vital role in protecting rights, promoting fairness, and tackling inequality.

In this article, we'll explore the **Equality and Human Rights Commission role** as the *equality regulator UK*, how it intersects with important themes such as trust, discrimination in healthcare, isolation, and the concept of chosen family and legal standing. We'll also mention organisations like *Opening Doors*, the *NHS*, and *Gay London Life Events Diary* that contribute to improving wellbeing for LGBTQ+ older adults. Don't forget to share this post easily on WhatsApp or Pinterest via the handy share buttons!

Understanding the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is a statutory body established by the UK Parliament under the *Equality Act 2006*. Its primary mission is to promote and enforce the laws that protect human rights and equality in Great Britain.

EHRC is the **equality regulator UK**. Its responsibilities stretch across England, Scotland, and Wales. While Northern Ireland has a separate organisation—the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland—the EHRC's remit covers the wider island of Great Britain.

The Legal Framework: Human Rights and Equality Law

The EHRC enforces several critical pieces of legislation, including:



- The **Equality Act 2010**: This consolidates earlier legislation protecting people from discrimination based on characteristics such as age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.
- The **Human Rights Act 1998**: This law incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law, safeguarding freedoms such as the right to life, freedom from torture, respect for private and family life,

freedom of expression, and protection from discrimination.

The commission investigates breaches of these laws, offers guidance to public and private sectors, and advocates for changes to reduce inequality and uphold fundamental rights.

EHRC's Role in Healthcare: Building Trust and Tackling Discrimination

One of the most sensitive and vital sectors where the EHRC's work comes into focus is healthcare—especially the NHS (National Health Service). For many LGBTQ+ older adults, **inflammatory arthritis early diagnosis** unequal treatment or fear of discrimination leads to late presentation, which can worsen health outcomes.

Why Does Trust Matter in Healthcare?

Trust in healthcare professionals and services is crucial. Without trust, individuals may delay booking appointments or fully disclosing their health issues and histories. This holds particularly true for LGBTQ+ elders, many of whom experienced social stigma and exclusion during their formative years.

According to several community organisations, including Opening Doors—which provides LGBTQ+ over 50s services in London—many older LGBTQ+ people still feel hesitant to access health and social care services. Discriminatory experiences, or the anticipation of them, contribute to isolation and poorer health outcomes.

EHRC's Actions to Reduce Discrimination in the NHS

EHRC actively monitors NHS compliance with equality and human rights obligations. Its role includes:

1. Publishing reports and legal guidance on equality in healthcare settings.
2. Working with NHS trusts to improve staff training around unconscious bias and diverse identities.
3. Investigating systemic inequalities and advocating for policy reforms.
4. Supporting organisations like Opening Doors to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ health needs.

Initiatives tackling discrimination help ensure that delayed presentations and treatment disparities among LGBTQ+ older adults decrease over time.

Isolation and Living Alone: Overcoming Challenges Through Community and Chosen Family

Isolation affects an alarming proportion of people aged 50 and above, particularly within the LGBTQ+ community. Many face living alone if estranged from biological family or if they lack children. Building support networks beyond blood relations—the concept of *chosen family*—is central to wellbeing.



Chosen Family: Legal Standing and Rights

Chosen family refers to close social connections formed by mutual support, rather than biological or legal ties. Unfortunately, the law doesn't always recognise chosen families, potentially affecting rights around hospital visits, inheritance, and decision-making if someone becomes incapacitated.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission advocates for improved legal recognition and protections for all family formations. This includes emphasizing the importance of advance directives, wills, and lasting power of attorney (LPA) to ensure chosen family members can exercise support and care roles.

Community Resources Supporting Wellbeing: Opening Doors and Gay London Life Events Diary

Aside from the legal and regulatory framework, community organisations play a frontline role in tackling isolation and discrimination.

- **Opening Doors** provides essential social, health, and advocacy services tailored to LGBTQ+ people over 50 across London. Their programmes address loneliness, mental health, and support navigating the NHS and social care.
- **Gay London Life Events Diary**

Utilising such resources is crucial, but the EHRC's advocacy and oversight ensure systemic support continues to expand and improve.

How Can You Share This Knowledge?

If this post has been helpful, why not share it with your networks? Use the WhatsApp share or Pinterest share buttons below to help spread awareness of human rights and equality law.

Summary Checklist: What Does the EHRC Do for You?

EHRC Role How It Benefits You Monitor and enforce compliance with equality and human rights laws Protection against discrimination in healthcare, employment, housing, and services Advocate for equality law reforms Improved legal rights for marginalised groups Promote awareness and provide guidance for organisations Better services sensitive to diverse needs, including LGBTQ+ elders Campaign for recognition of chosen families Legal standing for support networks beyond blood relations Collaborate with community groups like Opening Doors Stronger grassroots connections and tailored services

Remember, understanding the **Equality and Human Rights Commission role** empowers you to claim your rights and supports a fairer, more inclusive Great Britain for everyone.