Use of pre-employment questionnaires across industrial sectors
Dr Tiny Morebodi-Masupe, 2011

ABSTRACT

Study aim and objectives: The aim of this study was to identify and describe immediate changes to pre-employment health screening (PEHS) processes resulting from the implementation of section 60 of the Equality Act 2010. The main objective was to assess whether employers had made any immediate changes to their recruitment processes to accommodate this legislation.

Method: A quantitative descriptive study was conducted using an online based survey of active OPRA reporting occupational health physicians.

Results: Most participants (81%) were accredited occupational health specialists. Ten different industry sectors were represented in the survey. Nearly all participants (96%) were involved in PEHS and 84% reported awareness of recent published research on PEHS. A significant number (81%) of the participants were aware of section 60 of the Equality Act 2010, while 6% were unaware and 13% declined to comment. Specific advice in anticipation of section 60 was requested by employers from 36.1% of participants, with 15.8% of employers requesting advice 0-6 months before the Act came into force, 7.9% at 7-12 months before and no advice requested 12 months before the Act. The overall estimated level of impact of the changes to PEHS processes required to accommodate provisions of section 60 of The Equality Act was perceived as insignificant by employers, with 53% indicating that minimal degree of changes were required. Over half of participants (51%) felt that employers had made preparations to accommodate section 60 of the Equality Act 2010.

Conclusion: The study concluded that overall, employers with access to occupational health advice have made only small initial efforts to prepare for section 60 of the Equality Act 2010. Occupational health physicians (OHP) have not significantly changed overall advice to employers regarding PEHS because of the legislation. Understanding of requirements of section 60 among OHPs surveyed remains inadequate.