

## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

### **1. PURPOSE**

Bath and North East Somerset Carers' Centre (the Carers' Centre) is committed to providing genuine equality of opportunity for all, and to ensure that no individual is discriminated against in the planning and delivery of any of our activities or through our employment practice.

The purpose of the Equal Opportunities and Managing Diversity Policy is to provide a clear statement of the Carers' Centre commitment to providing equality of opportunity. We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, and are committed to meeting them in full. We believe that a culture that embraces equality and values diversity will help us to ensure that everyone feels involved and included in our plans, programmes and activities.

Additionally it is intended to provide guidance and training to all staff, volunteers and trustees of the relevance of this to all areas of our work and employment practice. As appropriate, other policies also contain statements of the commitment to equality of opportunity.

A separate policy is provided for dealing with allegations of harassment or bullying.

### **2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT**

We aim to create an environment which respects and welcomes everyone, and in which no form of bullying, harassment, disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour is tolerated by anyone towards anyone. This particularly applies in relation to the 'protected characteristics' named in the Equality Act 2010: Age, disability, gender reassignment, income, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, (see below for explanations). This also applies to those carrying out caring responsibilities.

The Carers' Centre will actively seek to eliminate all forms of discrimination, direct or indirect, which restricts or hinders the promotion of equal opportunities, the provision of equal treatment and the valuing of diversity.

This statement applies to all areas of the Carers' Centre work and activities.

### **3. PRINCIPLES**

The Carers' Centre is committed to implementing policies designed to promote equality of opportunity in all areas of its activity and to rejecting unlawful and unfair discrimination of any kind.

The Carers' Centre will work to ensure fairness and consistency in the treatment of all stakeholders, including job applicants, employees, volunteers, trustees and carers.

The Carers' Centre will listen to the different and varying views of our stakeholders; and seek to understand their perspectives.

The Carers' Centre will use accessible venues for events and meetings; using plain English, and offering accessible communications and publicity materials as far as it is within our means to do so.

The Carers' Centre works to ensure that suppliers, contractors and any other individual or organisation working on its behalf are aware of and agree to comply with our equality and diversity policy while that work is underway.

The Carers' Centre will ensure that the special needs of all stakeholders, including of job applicants, employees, volunteers, trustees and carers are considered constructively, creatively, and in line with the spirit of the Equalities Act.

The Carers' Centre will ensure that any equal opportunities or diversity initiatives are developed in consultation with all stakeholders, including employees, volunteers, trustees and carers.

All staff, volunteers and trustees will be provided with appropriate guidance, advice and training to ensure that they are aware of the equal opportunities implications and issues within our work and best practice in managing diversity.

All employees, volunteers and trustees have shared and equal responsibility for ensuring that their day-to-day working practices and relationships with colleagues reflect the organisation's commitment to non-discrimination.

Any instances of discriminatory behaviour will be dealt with swiftly and firmly through the appropriate policy or procedure (e.g. supervision, grievance, disciplinary or harassment and bullying).

### **Principles with specific relation to employment**

The Carers' Centre is committed to ensuring that its workforce reflects the diversity of the communities within which it works.

The Carers' Centre will ensure that individual employees do not receive less favorable treatment on the basis of the hours they work nor the location in which they work.

The Carers' Centre will regularly review the design and operation of employment policies in order to ensure non-discrimination and best practice in relation to equality of opportunity, equal treatment and valuing diversity.

The Carers' Centre will undertake monitoring activities and will keep records in order to identify any areas of potential discrimination with the intention of taking the appropriate corrective action.

The Carers' Centre will consider and implement appropriate initiatives to increase equality of opportunity whilst taking account of the constraints of employment legislation, for example providing development and training opportunities for under-represented groups.

Particular responsibility for ensuring best practice in employment lies with all Staff and Trustees professionally involved in recruitment, application of employment policies and provision of training.

## **4. DEFINITION OF DISCRIMINATION**

### **4.1 Direct Discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another on the grounds of their age, race, gender, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, caring responsibilities, economic status or political affiliation.

### **4.2 Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination can occur when selection criteria, policies or rules and practices that apply to everyone have the effect of disadvantaging some people because of their age, race, gender, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, caring responsibilities, economic status or political affiliation.

## 5. PROCESS

Any stakeholder who considers that they have been discriminated against should raise the issue through the relevant Grievance or Complaints Procedure.

In order to ensure continual progress in implementing this equal opportunities and managing diversity policy, the Carers' Centre will:

Stay abreast of developments in thinking and best practice in the fields of equal opportunities and managing diversity and ensure that these are fed into the organisation's practice.

- Undertake regular equal opportunities monitoring in our employment practices and across our activities
- Ensure that all areas of work take account of equal opportunities and diversity issues and the development and promotion of the Carers' Centre as an equal opportunities organisation.
- The Personnel, Policies & Procedures Sub Committee will ensure that the Carers' Centre meets its equalities agenda in all aspects of its operational work. It will review the equal opportunities monitoring data and share the findings with Trustees and all staff and volunteers.