

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

The purpose of a policy on equality, diversity and inclusion is to make sure that the service is fully committed to these principles and values and to communicate this commitment to all stakeholders. The policy should always be referred to wherever differences of view based on lack of understanding or prejudice about diversity, equality and inclusion are evident. The commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion should be included in the care service's statement of purpose and information produced for the people who use its services. It should be instrumental in many aspects of the care service's practice including in its capacity to provide a responsive service to meet diverse needs and corresponding staff recruitment and selection.

Aims

1. To ensure that no person applying for a service will be refused on discriminatory grounds, eg because of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc when they meet all other admission criteria.
2. To ensure that inferior or substandard services are not provided because of a person's ethnicity, sexual orientation or any grounds on which discrimination can occur.
3. To work out with each service user what they want and need and how they will be provided with the required service. This will be influenced by the individual's gender, culture, personal choices and other characteristics and it should not be assumed everyone wants the same thing.
4. To encourage service users and staff to relate to one another on the basis of equality and respect for individual differences.
5. To develop an attitude of self-awareness among the staff and service users to ensure any form of discriminatory behaviour, such as offensive or abusive language, does not occur and to communicate that it is unacceptable in whatever form it might take and from whichever person.
6. To ensure that service users and staff are continuously aware of the procedures for dealing with complaints and allegations of discriminatory or oppressive language or behaviour.
7. To ensure that all complaints and allegations are addressed properly and in nondiscriminatory ways.
8. The Company follows an equal opportunities policy and wishes to recruit and employ those people who are best suited for the vacancies for which they have applied, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, age or perceived age, religion, ethnic origin, race, disability or union membership (or lack of it). All applications (and their ultimate selection or rejection) are reviewed against equality and diversity criteria.
9. All employees and applicants are asked to complete a separate sex and ethnic origin form, which will be used for monitoring purposes. The information contained on the form is not disclosed to the people responsible for interviewing and selecting applicants, but is kept separately.
10. The reasons for and against inviting applicants for interview are recorded and this information will be used to check that equality principles are being followed.

Legal Compliance

The service is committed to achieving compliance with the following Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 that reflect equality, diversity and inclusion values and principles.

- Regulation 9: Person-centred Care — requires service providers to ensure that the care and treatment of service users must be appropriate, must meet their needs, and must reflect their preferences.
- Regulation 10: Dignity and Respect — requires that service users must be treated with dignity and respect at all times, including respect for personal preferences, lifestyle choices, diversity and culture.
- Regulation 14: Meeting Nutritional and Hydration Needs — requires service providers (where involved in the provision of food and drink) to ensure that the nutritional and hydration needs of service users are met, including the meeting of any reasonable requirements of a service user for food and hydration arising from the service user's preferences or their religious or cultural background.
- Regulation 15: Premises and Equipment — requires that service users can easily access a care service's premises and use its equipment safely and effectively, and where they cannot because of their disabilities, reasonable adjustments are made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation and guidance.

This service understands that inspectors are also prompted in the Key Lines of Enquiry published by the CQC to ask how people are protected from bullying, harassment, avoidable harm and abuse that may breach their human rights.

The service understands that providers must fully comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Policy Statement

This policy applies to all job applicants, employees of Contour Care Ltd and to anyone receiving a service from this care service, including service users who are children and their families.

Equality, diversity and inclusion means that every service user — adult or child — has their individual needs comprehensively addressed. They will be treated equally and without discrimination. This is regardless of the individual's ethnic background, language, culture, faith, gender, age, sexual orientation or any other aspect that could result in their being discriminated against purely because they have such characteristics.

The service aims to celebrate differences (because of ethnic background, etc) between individuals. It avoids treating people unequally. It recognises that treating people unequally can result in their losing their dignity, respect, self-esteem and self-worth and ability to make choices.

The service does not assume that equality, diversity and inclusion principles and policies apply only to the service's staff. Service users must also respect the ethnicity, culture, religion, gender and any disabilities of staff and not discriminate against them on any of these grounds when expressing their views and preferences.

The service makes clear that it finds unacceptable any form of racist and similar discriminatory behaviour from any source.

The service also builds these policies into its external contractual relationships.

Expressions of Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

This care service expresses its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion by:

- a. respecting service users' ethnic, cultural and religious practices
- b. reassuring its service users that their diverse backgrounds enhance the quality of experience of the service
- c. accepting service users as individuals, not as cases or stereotypes
- d. involving service users to express their individuality and to follow their preferred lifestyle, also helping them to celebrate events, anniversaries or festivals which are important to them as individuals
- e. showing positive leadership and having management and human resources practices that actively demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity principles
- f. developing an ethos throughout the care service that reflects these values and principles
- g. expecting all staff to work to equality and diversity principles and policies and to behave at all times in non-discriminatory ways
- h. providing training, supervision and support to enable staff to do this
- i. having a code of conduct that makes any form of discriminatory behaviour unacceptable; this is applicable to both staff and service users and is rigorously observed and monitored accordingly
- j. carrying out regular assessments of the impact of our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion on policies, service users and service provision generally.

Training

All staff are trained to follow the care service's policies on equality and diversity and issued a copy of this policy. The training is regularly refreshed and updated.

Signed: Ian Booy (MD)

Date: 31/07/24

Policy review date: 30/07/25