

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY



All reference to personnel includes both paid employees and volunteers.

Anglia Care Trust is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and the Service Users we support and each member of personnel feels respected and able to give of their best.

To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and our practice and not to discriminate on grounds of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and will at all times adhere to the Equality Act 2010.

All members of personnel, Service Users and stakeholders will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or support from our services will be on the basis of suitability. All personnel will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilized to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Anglia Care Trust urges personnel, trustees and Service Users to be aware of the less obvious types of discrimination which result from general assumptions and pre-conceptions about the capabilities, interests and characteristics of individuals.

Our commitment:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued
- All personnel are entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- All Service Users are entitled to support which promotes dignity and respect
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness
- Breaches of our Equality and Diversity Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings
- This policy is fully supported by our Board of Trustees
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

Definitions

Equal Opportunities ensures that policies, procedures and practice within the organisation do not discriminate against its personnel and stakeholders. It is about

treating people fairly and equally regardless of whom they are; their background or their lifestyle.

Diversity ensures that all people are valued as individuals and are able to maximise their potential and contribution to the organisation and to the community. It recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and a different approach, which can make the way we work and learn more fun, more creative, more efficient and more innovative.

Direct Discrimination, as defined in law, occurs when an individual is dealt with less favourably than other people on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, sex, actual or perceived religion or belief or sexual orientation. However in terms of this policy the definition is taken to be wider and includes, for example, colour, nationality, marital status or caring responsibility, mental health, political, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice puts people of a particular group at a disadvantage and is not justified in relation to the job, for example a rule about clothing that disproportionately disadvantages a racial group cannot be justified.

Victimisation means that if a person has made or is making an accusation of discrimination in good faith, it is unlawful to discriminate against them for having done so, or because they intend to do so or it is suspected that they intend to do so. People must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals. Harassment means unwanted conduct based on race, sex or age etc. which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Harassment can be sexual, racial, directed against people with disabilities or indeed related to any characteristic exhibited by the individual. (See the Anglia Care Trust's Indirect Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy for guidance where harassment has occurred).

Positive Action refers to measures taken to assist personnel, or learners who have been under-represented in specific areas, to reach a level of workplace knowledge and competencies that is comparable with 'representative' employees. These measures could take the form of additional training or providing the job application form in other languages to encourage applicants from these communities. 'Positive discrimination' at the point of selection for work is not permissible.

Policy Implementation: Expectations

Anglia Care Trust recognises that passive policies do not provide equality and encourage diversity in employment/training/services. We will seek to promote equality and diversity within the following framework of responsibilities.

Responsibility for implementing and developing the policy rests with the Trustees. The overall co-ordinating responsibility for equal opportunities and management of diversity is delegated to the Director of Business Support. However, we believe that

all who work with or for the organisation have an individual responsibility: to accept the policy and ensure a personal involvement in its application; to co-operate actively to ensure that the environment we desire is a reality. Therefore Anglia Care Trust requires individuals:

- to implement measures introduced by the organisation to ensure equality of opportunity, diversity and non discrimination.
- not to harass, abuse or intimidate any other member of personnel or Service User or to participate on any grounds
- to inform management if they suspect discrimination is taking place.

We require our Line Managers:

- to ensure that proper records of employment decisions are maintained and regular reviews of employment practices are carried out.
- to ensure that grievances are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner and in line with the Anglia Care Trust's Grievance Policy and Procedure
- to ensure that individuals within their area are aware of their legal responsibilities, and the organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy
- to promote actively the benefits of personnel and participant diversity, in employment, services and training
- to ensure that all staff apply this policy in the work that they do on a daily basis.

Anglia Care Trust will appoint and support an Equality and Diversity Adviser who will:

- support Line Managers, offer advice and make recommendations in relation to Equal Opportunities and Diversity and implementing relevant policies and procedures
- ensure that the highest standards of practice with regards to Equality and Diversity are observed in the delivery of the organisation's services and to undertake training and development opportunities to ensure that competence is maintained
- collate and discuss relevant organisational information and make recommendations to the Director of Business Support
- seek the views and opinions of personnel, customers and clients on the operation of the policy in his/ her locality/ area of responsibility, in particular to meet the diverse needs of the users
- facilitate training and discussion on Equal Opportunities and Diversity issues as appropriate
- offer advice and guidance to members of personnel and organisations on Anglia Care Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures.

The person with overall responsibility for Equality and Diversity will:

- ensure that Managers and Equality and Diversity Advisers are supported in their roles in regard to the Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures

- ensure Trustees and Managers are appraised regularly on the state of equality and diversity within the organisation
- ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy and associated documents are reviewed on an annual basis
- review and approve policies, procedures and practices that impact on equal opportunities and diversity practice
- co-ordinate the delivery of an equality and diversity strategy and action plan.

Policy Implementation: Recruitment and Promotion

- Anglia Care Trust strives to ensure that our trustees and personnel reflect the wider community
- Clear and accurate information on vacant posts should be available through advertisement, job descriptions, person specifications and interview. Vacancies should be advertised sufficiently widely to reach the widest possible range of candidates, either internal and/or external
- All recruitment material should not imply any preferred group, unless a genuine occupational qualification exists limiting a post to a particular group
- Applicants will be informed, through all recruitment material of the organisation's commitment to Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Person specifications may include 'essential' and 'desirable' requirements that are necessary and justifiable. Care, and advice where necessary, is needed to ensure these are not discriminatory
- Personnel should be encouraged to discuss their development and training needs through a process of regular support and annual appraisals
- Job titles that are discriminatory must be avoided.

Policy Implementation: Interviews and Selection

- In line with the intentions of this policy, efforts must be made to select a recruitment panel which is inclusive in terms of gender, disability and ethnicity
- The shortlisting panel will select candidates on the basis of an objective assessment of their match with the requirements as described in the job description and person specification; this will not take into account the gender, name, race, religion or belief, possible disability or age of the candidate. We will also offer flexible working patterns to take account of family circumstances
- The interview panel must take extreme care not to ask discriminatory questions which do not comply with Anglia Care Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy Statements, e.g. questions relating to race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital or civil partnership status or caring responsibility, sexual orientation, age, physical, sensory or learning disability, mental health, political or religious beliefs, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, union activities.

Policy Implementation: Training

- In line with the intentions of this policy, Anglia Care Trust will not discriminate in the provision of training courses/ opportunities wherever possible

- Appropriate training will be provided to enable trustees and personnel to perform their jobs effectively. The training offered will take into account the needs of all people
- Briefing on this policy will form part of the Induction Procedure for trustees and personnel.

Monitoring

Anglia Care Trust regards the collection/analysis of data as vital in informing change and improving performance. Where appropriate, statistics on the organisation's services will be collected and analysed in relation to equality and diversity matters. We will review employee turnover and seek information on reasons for leaving. Local and national data or statistics will be used to benchmark our performance.

The Trustees will review annually equality of opportunity relating to Anglia Care Trust's services. Recruitment and selection procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Director of Business Support who will report to the Human Resource Committee. All aspects of personnel policies and procedures shall be kept under review to ensure that they do not operate against the Equal and Diversity Policy.

Where it appears that there may have been or there is a breach of the policy, the Director of Business Support will investigate the circumstances and action will be taken to counter any proven breach of policy.

If it is found that the policy is excluding or discouraging the development of Trustees and personnel or restricting service users, the Director of Business Support should take positive action to re-adjust the policy.

Date of next review – October 2019