

## Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Policy

Our vision is to be a successful, caring and welcoming place for patients to receive dental care and advice. We want to create a supportive and inclusive environment where all staff can reach their full potential and care is provided in partnership with patients, without prejudice and discrimination. We are committed to a culture where respect and understanding is fostered, and the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances will be positively valued.

This policy also seeks to ensure that no member of staff is victimized or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment in the workplace. All members of staff have the right:

To work in an environment free from discrimination, harassment and bullying

- To have equal access to training, career development and promotion opportunities
- To seek re-dress without fear of victimization, when they perceive they have been discriminated against, harassed or bullied in the workplace.

While specific responsibility for eliminating unlawful discrimination and providing equality of opportunity rests with Louise Hand, all staff will treat others with dignity and respect.

This policy will help us to achieve this vision;

**Equality** is about creating a fair society where everyone can participate and can fulfil their potential. It is backed up by legislation designed to address unfair discrimination on the grounds of gender, trans-gender, partnership status, caring status, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

**Diversity** is about the recognition and valuing of difference in its broadest sense. It is about creating a culture and practices that recognise, respect, value and harmless difference for the benefit of the organisation, its employees and patients and other service users

**Human Rights** is about fairness, respect, equality, dignity and autonomy in how people are treated and in the services that are provided.

**Discrimination** is any form of unfavourable treatment. We recognise that any discrimination is harmful and is, in many cases illegal. Through this policy, through training and by example, we wish to demonstrate that we do not tolerate discrimination by anyone working at this practice.

**Sex discrimination** is any form of treatment which is unfavourable and which is gender or marital related. Discrimination according to sex is illegal under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. The Act applies equally to both men and women. Sex discrimination is when one person is treated less favourably on the grounds of a person's sex that a person of the other sex would be treated under similar circumstances and can be direct or indirect.

**Sexual harassment** is a form of sexual discrimination. It can be defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature of other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of those who work in the practice. This can include unwelcome physical or verbal conduct.

**Race discrimination** is any form of treatment which is unfavourable and which is related to colour, race or nationality. Discrimination according to race is illegal under the terms of the Race Relations Act 1976 and can be direct or indirect.

**Racial harassment** is a form of racial discrimination and might involve racist jokes or insults etc.

**Religious discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourably because of their religious beliefs. The Equality Act 2010 enables employees and patients who feel that they have been discriminated against on the ground of religious belief or political opinion to act against an employer.

**Disability discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourable because of a disability. Occasionally a disability can limit a person's capability of some forms of employment. Discrimination occurs when the treatment of the individual is unfavourable considering the disability.

**Age discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of age. The Equality Act 2010 requires employers to foster a workplace culture in which discrimination and harassment, on the grounds of age, are unacceptable. Employers are also required to lay down procedures to enable employees to work past the age of 65 if they so wish.

**Harassment** is a form of discrimination where a person is made to feel uncomfortable because of race, disability, age or religion. It may involve actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact, which is found offensive, objectionable or intimidating by the recipient.

**Victimisation** is when the employer treats an employee less favourably than other employees are treated because they have brought or threatens to bring proceedings or give evidence or information against an employer with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

**The right to have equal pay** provides equality in terms of an employee's contract where they are employed to perform work which is rated equivalent to that performed by a member of the opposite sex. This is founded on the provisions of The Equality Act 2010.

## Legal responsibilities

The rights of our patients and our staff with regards to discrimination are protected by anti-discrimination legislation including:

#### The Equality Act 2010

- Part-time Workers (prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000  
Employment Rights Act 1996
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, 2003 and 2005
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- European Directives and Codes of Practice

By adopting this policy, we accept our responsibility to ensure that discrimination does not take place and that everyone is treated fairly and equally.

We are committed to tackling health inequalities and will:

- Seek to provide services that meet the requirements of individuals and communities fairly, equitably and in a non-discriminatory way
- Seek to embed the principles of fairness, respect, equality, dignity and autonomy in all that we do
- Consider the needs to communities when we are planning and delivering our services
- Consult, engage, involve and work in partnership with communities and individuals
- Be accessible and flexible when providing our services taking the differing needs to individuals and communities into account
- Equality impact assess our policies, programs and processes and take action to address adverse impact where this is identified and where possible
- Monitor and evaluate our services to ensure that they are meeting the needs of our patients, of carers and of family members

If you feel that you are the subject of discrimination or harassment, let the perpetrator know how you feel verbally or in writing asking him or her to stop the behaviour. Keep a record of the incidents, raise the issue with Louise Hand and if the matter is not resolved, submit a written complaint. All allegations are taken seriously.