

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Equal Opportunities Statement

- Hambleton & Richmondshire Carers Centre is committed to promoting equal access to our services.
- We are committed to fair treatment for all our staff, volunteers, service users and anyone coming into contact with us.
- We respect everyone's experience and seek to ensure that inclusion is at the heart of all our work.

2. Principles

H&R CC fully accepts its obligations under The Equality Act 2010 and all related codes of practice.

We acknowledge that not all areas of unacceptable discrimination and inequality are covered by legislation.

We will not tolerate discrimination on any grounds and are therefore committed to equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, caring or parenting responsibilities, income, culture or lifestyle, physical or mental illness or disability. We also recognise the particular disadvantages faced by rural isolation.

We recognise and acknowledge that there are many differences which can affect people's rights and needs and we aim to create an environment in which individual differences are recognised and valued.

We believe in enabling and empowering people to improve their quality of life. We aim to challenge oppression and inequality.

To achieve our aims in our equality and diversity policy statement in **delivering services** (including volunteering opportunities), we will do the following;

- Continually improve services to make sure they are accessible and provided fairly to all that request them.
- Make sure that all the people we work with are treated with dignity and respect and that we recognise and value people's differences.
- Make sure that complaints procedures are easy to use and that we respond to complaints efficiently and promptly.

To achieve our aims in our equality and diversity policy statement in **employment** we will do the following;

- Make sure that our recruitment, selection, training and promotion processes enable us to appoint the best people for the job, and to develop and maintain the highest standards of skills and expertise.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are helped and encouraged to develop their full potential.
- Ensure that all our business is conducted in a way that promotes equal opportunities for everyone
- Take positive action to develop a workforce that reflects the community in which it operates.
- Create and maintain a workplace where all staff and volunteers are treated with dignity and respect and where the need to achieve a balance between work/volunteering and personal responsibilities is recognised.
- Develop effective procedures for reporting incidents of discrimination or harassment, from colleagues or service users that make sure complaints are dealt with fairly and promptly.

To help us put the policy into practice we will do the following:

- Develop and train our staff and volunteers to help them understand equality and diversity issues and to implement their understanding in their work.
- Develop monitoring systems to inform further development in putting policy into practice.
- Ensure that all Board meetings and sub-committee meetings are conducted in the spirit of this policy.

This policy applies to all our activities.

The Board of Trustees and Managers within H&R CC are responsible for taking active steps to put this policy into practice and for making sure that staff and volunteers act in line with it. However all staff and volunteers have a role in putting the policy into practice and supporting it and must:

- Act in line with the policy and its related procedures
- Promote equal opportunities
- Treat colleagues and service users with dignity and respect
- Not unlawfully or unfairly discriminate
- Not harass or victimise others
- Challenge discrimination or inappropriate behaviour
- Report suspected discriminatory behaviour and actions.

H&R CC is committed to monitoring and reviewing this policy and to addressing issues identified.

3. Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 supersedes previous legislation, regulations and guidelines relating to equality and applies to individuals who are covered by one of the 'protected characteristics', which are;

- age

- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- sex
- sexual orientation

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'

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 'protected characteristic'.

Discrimination by association and perception

Discrimination by association occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they are "linked to" or "associated with" a person who is covered by one of the 'protected characteristics'.

Discrimination by perception occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they are perceived to be a person who is covered by one of the 'protected characteristics'

Original policy approved and adopted: 30th June 2004

This policy was reviewed and re-written in line with current legislation June 2013.

Approved by Board: July 2013

Review date: July 2014