

Equality & Diversity Policy

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Audience	Millbrook Healthcare Group Employee		
Approved by	Policy Review Group	Date Approved	July 2023
Policy Author	Head of Human Resources		
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Forms / Further Information	N/A		

The Group recognises that we operate in diverse environments, cultures and communities across the UK and that our workforce reflects the communities we serve. Our aim is to recognise and value this diverse population and to maintain an inclusive culture where individuals are not discriminated against because of any of the protected characteristics listed below. Above anything else we will comply with our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

These provisions comply with the relevant UK legislation and apply to everyone employed by Millbrook Healthcare Group as well as consultants, contractors, casual and agency staff, and apply in both employment and service delivery. The policy is also applicable in the interactions our employees have with external candidates, former employees, visitors, clients, prescribers, customers, service users, carers, families, commissioners and suppliers.

This does not form part of your contract and may be amended from time to time.

Protected Characteristics

It is unlawful to discriminate against any individual because of their:

- Age
- Disability
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment

In addition to these protected characteristics, individuals will not be discriminated against as a result of membership status of a Trade Union or taking part in Trade Union activities.

Types of discrimination

Discrimination can take many forms. The following types of discrimination are unlawful:

- Direct – you are discriminated against because you have a protected characteristic
- Associative – you are discriminated against because you are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic e.g. a friend, colleague or family member
- Perceptive – you are discriminated against because of a protected characteristic you are thought to have, even if the perception is incorrect
- Indirect – you are adversely affected by a condition, rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone with a protected characteristic, and it is not justified
- Harassment (including third party) – you are subjected to unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating your dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for you. This is dealt with further under our Dignity at work policy and procedure
- Victimisation – you are treated badly because you complained or supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment, or you are suspected of doing so

Responsibilities

We all have a responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment in which people are treated fairly and are not discriminated against.

We will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that managers and employees undertake appropriate training on Equality & Diversity
- Collecting and monitoring information about our workforce to analyse our employee demographics through data provided on a voluntary basis in the recruitment process
- Tracking employee engagement and trends through our biennial employee survey
- Ensuring our procedures and practices comply with this policy. This applies to all aspects of employment including but not limited to recruitment and selection, training and development, promotions and transfers, condition of service, pay and benefits, facilities, health and safety, conduct and performance, and termination of employment, including redundancy
- Considering and making reasonable adjustments and taking steps to accommodate your requirements relating to a protected characteristic. Our aim is to maintain an environment where the same opportunities are available to all
- Creating an environment where differences are respected, and each person is valued as an individual

Your line manager and Human Resources is responsible for:

- Creating the environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all employees are recognised and valued

- Treating individuals fairly and consistently and taking reasonable steps to protect individuals from any form of discrimination

You are responsible for:

- Familiarising yourself and complying with this policy
- Treating your colleagues and external candidates, former employees, visitors, clients, prescribers, customers, users, carers, families, commissioners and suppliers and anyone else you come into contact with as part of your role with dignity and respect
- Making your line manager, any other manager or HR aware of any discrimination in the workplace
- Overall responsibility of this Policy rests with the CEO

Considerations

The Group takes its responsibility seriously and reviews its performance against set benchmarks. This is to ensure we are adequately and fairly represented. This includes

- Recruitment Policy, procedures and practice
- Employee monitoring and record keeping of protected characteristics of our workforce
- Employee surveys and questions around employees' opinions relating to equality and diversity
- Equality and Diversity awareness and training including evaluation review and monitoring our training
- Review of our service delivery and customer awareness programmes
- Monitoring and reviewing complaints
- Service User feedback requests
- Risk assessments
- Conducting site visits

Workplace Champions

It's not about treating all people in the same way. It's about recognising and respecting differences enough to adapt practice and procedure to suit all.

We have established a Workplace Champions network made up of a cross section of colleagues in different roles across the company. They work with the Chief Executive Officer on building a more inclusive and diverse culture at Millbrook Healthcare Group. Principally the aim of our Workplace Champions is to identify good practice, and existing barriers and how to remove them. They will look across the organisation, and will work to remove barriers for our colleagues and our service users.



Improvements

The policy, procedures and practice are subject to regular review. We take positive and development feedback seriously and the policy is subject to ongoing review based on feedback from our colleagues and service users.

As a result action and an implementation plans are drawn up and are subject to on-going review.

Breaches of this Policy

We do not tolerate discrimination in any form.

Breach of this policy may be considered a disciplinary matter and could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against, you should raise the matter informally with your line manager in the first instance. If this fails to resolve matters, you are encouraged to raise the matter through the Grievance procedure.

If you are concerned about a serious malpractice or wrongdoing, such as dangerous or criminal activity which affects others, you may wish to consider raising the concern through our Freedom to Speak Up-Raising Concerns and Whistleblowing Policy.