

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 1.1 It is the policy of the Trust to provide equal opportunity in all employment matters regardless of gender reassignment sexuality, marital or family status, disability, age, race, colour, gender, nationality, ethnic origin, creed or religion, faith or belief.
- 1.2 The Trust will take all reasonable steps to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against any existing or prospective employee.
- 1.3 All of the Trust's Directors, employees and volunteers must comply with the provisions of this policy and every manager in the Trust must ensure that the policy is implemented in their area of control.
- 1.4 The Trust is firmly committed to providing an environment where employees can work with dignity and respect, free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- 1.5 The Trust will communicate the policy to all of its employees and prospective employees and will provide appropriate training to managers and employees to ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities under the policy.
- 1.6 The Trust requires all employees to accept their individual and collective responsibilities in this area and to carry out their duties in accordance with this policy.

2. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

- 2.1 The Trust recognises the importance of ensuring that the equal opportunities statement is enacted in the workplace through its employment policies and practices. All of the Trust's employment policies and practices will reflect the Trust's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity in employment.
- 2.2 Recruitment, Selection and Promotion
 - 2.2.1 All vacancies will normally be advertised both internally and externally.
 - 2.2.2 All advertisements will be aimed at as wide a group as possible.
 - 2.2.3 Every applicant for employment will be considered equally on the basis of their suitability for the position for which they have applied and their ability to fulfil the requirements of the job.
 - 2.2.4 All employees will be eligible to seek promotion, and selection for advancement will be based solely on the individual's merits, abilities, experience and possession of appropriate and required qualifications.
 - 2.2.5 The Trust operates a policy whereby the Chair of the Recruitment and Selection Panel should have attended the Recruitment and Selection Workshop.
 - 2.2.6 In the event of an applicant being unsuccessful due to unfair treatment or discrimination, the applicant concerned is encouraged to write to the Director of Human and Corporate Resources, who will investigate the concerns raised.
- 2.3 Training and Development

- 2.3.1 The Trust policy is that all staff should have a Performance Development Review, which results in a Performance Development Plan.
- 2.3.2 Individual staff training and development needs will be assessed through this process and training opportunities and resources will be made in accordance with this, ensuring needs are linked into Trust and Directorate objectives.
- 2.4 Conditions of Employment and Employee Facilities
 - 2.4.1 All of the Trust's terms and conditions of service, Human Resources policies and procedures and employee facilities will be kept under review to ensure that they comply with the provisions of the Equal Opportunities Policy. When appropriate the Trust will liaise with either the local Disablement Resettlement Officer or some other suitable agency on such modifications.
- 2.5 Discrimination and Harassment
 - 2.5.1 The Trust requires all employees and service users to respect the rights and dignity of others. The Trust fully embraces the Zero Tolerance approach towards violence, verbal abuse, harassment and discrimination and will not tolerate breaches.
 - 2.5.2 The Trust works in close partnership with Suffolk Constabulary on these matters where appropriate.
 - 2.5.3 Training is provided to employees on discrimination and harassment and the effect this may have in the workplace.
- 2.6 Employment and Disability
 - 2.6.1 The Trust holds the Disability Award Symbol. The Trust guarantees to shortlist for interview applicants with a disability (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) who meet the minimum criteria of the person specification.
 - 2.6.2 The Trust has a Disability Forum and Disability Advisers throughout the Trust to provide guidance and assistance.
 - 2.6.3 The Trust will consider reasonable modifications to equipment or working practices to enable existing or prospective disabled employees to work within the Trust (as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 2003).
 - 2.6.4 The Trust actively works in partnership with organisations such as Job Centre Plus, to facilitate and implement reasonable adjustments to the work place and roles, where appropriate.
- 2.7 Work Life Balance
 - 2.7.1 The Trust recognises that employees need to have a balance between their work and their home life and personal commitments.
 - 2.7.2 The Trust has a Healthy Workplace Group which considers ways in which the Trust can further improve the working life of employees.

- 2.7.3 There are several policies and procedures in place to assist employees in this area, including policies on special leave, adoption leave, paternity leave, parental leave, flexible working, job share etc.

3. CONTRACTORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

- 3.1 The Trust will advise external organisations as appropriate of this policy and require them to have operational policies, which do not conflict with the principles or procedures outlined in this document.
- 3.2 This applies also to the Employment of Locum/Temporary personnel working on Trust premises, all persons providing voluntary services to the Trust and those with honorary contracts or work experience/observation placements.

4. COMPLIANCE AND COMPLAINTS

- 4.1 All Directors and employees of the Trust must comply with the provisions of the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 4.2 Employees who feel they have been treated unfairly under the scope of this policy should discuss their concerns promptly with their line manager. If the matter is not resolved to their satisfaction they may follow the Trust's grievance procedure.
- 4.3 Prospective employees who feel they have been unfairly treated under the scope of this policy should write to the Director of Human and Corporate Resources promptly to raise their concerns.

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 5.1 The Director of Human and Corporate Resources will be responsible for monitoring the overall effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy and will keep the Policy under regular review in consultation with the recognised Trade Unions.