



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Statement of intent

Epic Partners:

ACCEPTS that in society, for many reasons, certain groups or individuals are denied equality.

WELCOMES the statutory requirements laid down in the Equality Act 2010. Our organisation aims to comply with this Act and with other documents that support equality of opportunity for all.

RECOGNISES that it has moral and social responsibilities that go beyond the provisions of the above-mentioned Act and Regulations and that it should support and contribute to the wider process of change through all aspects of its work and practices to eliminate discrimination and promote equality and diversity.

IS COMMITTED TO taking positive steps to ensure that:

- ✓all people are treated with dignity and respect.
- ✓equality of opportunity and diversity is valued and promoted.
- ✓services are accessible, appropriate and delivered fairly to all.
- ✓the mix of its employees, volunteers and management committees reflects, as far as possible, the broad mix of the population of its local community.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Trustees and service users.

Commitment

Epic Partners is committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion through its policies, practice and procedures. This applies to professional dealings with service users, staff and volunteers, as well as Trustees and third parties. All service providers who work with us will be expected to adhere to this policy as a minimum standard.

We treat everyone equally and with the same courtesy and respect, regardless of:

- gender (including marital status, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity and paternity)
- sexual orientation (including civil partnership status)
- ethnicity or racial group
- religion or belief
- age
- caring responsibility; or
- disability

Promotion and Acceptance of EPIC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

All staff and volunteers will be made aware of this policy as part of the induction process. Other groups, such as Trustees and partner organisations, will be informed of this policy and have access to it via the website and the Epic

Shared Drives. Everyone is expected to support the objectives of this policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Regulation and Legislation

We will comply with all current and any future anti-discrimination legislation and associated codes of practice. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we do not unlawfully discriminate under:

- (a) the Equality Act 2010
- (b) the Civil Partnership Act 2004
- (c) the Employment Rights Act 1996
- (d) the Human Rights Act 1998
- (e) the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- (f) the Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- (g) the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- (h) the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief Act) Regulations 2003
- (i) the Work and Families Act 2006
- (j) the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- (k) any other relevant legislation in force from time to time relating to discrimination in employment and the provision of goods, facilities or services.

We are also aware of two Nottingham City Council documents: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2020 – 2023 and Nottingham City Hate Crime Strategy. We aim to ensure our policy and practice are in line with these documents.

Service Provision, Meeting Service Users' Needs and Raising Awareness

Service Provision

All services will be provided in accordance with our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We reserve the right to refuse to work with individuals or organisations we consider to be discriminating or oppressive.

We promote equality, diversity and inclusion in our work with other agencies or individuals.

We review and monitor the quality of our services through conversations with stakeholders, satisfaction surveys and feedback from staff and volunteers. Changes in practice are made in response to the outcomes of this monitoring.

Service users and service users' needs

Epic Partners aims to ensure that the services we provide meet service users' needs and are accessible to all. We take into account the needs of service users who have a disability and those who are unable to communicate effectively in spoken English. We consider which groups are predominant within our service user base and ensure our service meets their needs.

Raising Awareness (Communication)

Epic Partners has a range of policies and procedures for ensuring that our services are accessible to a diverse range of service users. The Senior Management Team is responsible for this strategy. Staff, volunteers and Trustees will be informed of this strategy as appropriate to ensure that it is effectively implemented.

Recruitment, selection and professional development

We treat all employees and job applicants equally and fairly and do not unlawfully discriminate against them. This applies equally to voluntary positions and anyone undertaking work experience with us.

We believe that Epic Partners has an obligation to the community that it serves to make sure that employment opportunities available at EPIC are advertised equally to all sections of the community.

Equality, diversity and inclusion awareness training is available to all staff and is offered as part of the induction process. Confirmation that relevant training has been undertaken will be kept in individual training records.

Dealings with third parties

Epic Partners does not unlawfully discriminate in dealings with third parties. This applies to dealings with other similar service providers and general procurement. We will not knowingly purchase goods and services from agencies whose activities are contrary to the principles outlined in this policy.

Working with other organisations

Epic Partners seeks to promote the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion when conducting business on the organisation's behalf and in all its dealings with partner organisations.

Implementation and Monitoring

Ultimate responsibility for implementing this policy rests with the individual members of the organisation. All employees and Trustees are expected to pay due regard to the provisions of this policy and are responsible for ensuring compliance with it when undertaking their jobs or representing the organisation.

Complaints of discrimination

All complaints of discrimination will be investigated and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

We will also monitor the number and outcome of complaints of discrimination made by staff, service users, director/trustees and other third parties.

Breach of Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Any breach of this policy by a member of the organisation will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action taken. In the case of staff, disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, will be taken. In the case of volunteers and Trustees, the individual may be asked to leave the organisation.

Monitoring

EPIC will monitor and record equal opportunities information about staff, volunteers and Trustees, based on age, gender, ethnicity, and disability.

EPIC will also monitor its services and service users to identify trends and inform the development of our services to meet the needs of service users.

Equal opportunities data will be stored confidentially. Equal opportunities information will be used exclusively for the purposes of monitoring and will have no bearing on opportunities or benefits.

The organisation will provide equal opportunities information to funders as required in relation to personnel and service users under the terms of any service level agreements, funding agreements or contracts.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or more frequently in the event of changes to legislation, to ensure it meets the standards set out in this policy.

Appendix 1:

What Constitutes Discrimination?

Discrimination can take one or more of the different forms set out below.

Direct Discrimination is treating one person less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances or segregating them from others solely because they are, for example, a lesbian, a gay man or because they have a disability or illness. Refusing to employ someone who has the required skills because they are deaf or because they are pregnant would constitute such discrimination.

Indirect Discrimination occurs where there is a requirement or condition which appears to apply equally to everyone but which, in practice has an adverse impact on a particular group and cannot be objectively justified. For example, an unnecessary physical or age requirement can discriminate against women or people with disabilities. The setting of language tests, where language skills or fluency are not essential for a job, is another example.

Harassment occurs when unwanted conduct related to any of the grounds referred to above takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment may involve physical acts or verbal and non-verbal communications and gestures.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably or is discriminated against because she/he has pursued, or intends to pursue, their rights in respect of alleged discrimination.

Oppression occurs when one group of people are in a dominant position over another within a given social framework, such as, men over women, white people over black people. The type of behaviour to be challenged is behaviour displayed by a dominant group against a member of an oppressed group, which uses and reinforces the existing power relationship. This may be by action or by opinions held.

Direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation is unacceptable regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate, harass, victimise or not.