

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Policy Statement

At Live Life Care Ltd we embrace diversity because we believe that what makes us different makes us stronger.

We are committed to equality of opportunity in all aspects of our work. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination (either direct or indirect) and will challenge all acts of discrimination, prejudice, harassment and victimisation which occur within the workplace or within the communities in which we work.

Equality and Diversity is core to our business and we will ensure that this is reflected in all our policies, practices and services. We will actively promote to the organisations and individuals we work with the rights they have not to face discrimination on any grounds.

A commitment to this policy is required from all staff and others with whom we may work from time to time e.g. contractors, consultants, suppliers. We also expect the same commitment from our clients and will promote this policy in all our dealings with them.

2. Legal Obligations and Regulatory Requirements

Live Life Care Ltd recognises its legal obligations in relation to Equality and Diversity. The main pieces of UK equalities legislation are listed here:

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

Equal Pay Act 1970

Gender Recognition Act 2004

Human Rights Act 1998

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Race Relations Act 1976

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (updated 1986)

There are also certain requirements / standards in respect of Equality and Diversity set by organisations such as CQC and the Audit Commission which we are expected to meet.

We believe though that our responsibility for equality is wider than those areas currently covered by legislation and we strive to be an organisation which not only meets but exceeds the standards set by other bodies in this area. We are committed to achieving equality for all by removing direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, being a lesbian or a gay man, age, religious beliefs, HIV status, or disability plus any other ground which cannot be shown to be justified. We are also committed to tackling social exclusion in its widest sense.

3. Our Commitment as a Service Provider

To build and deliver services, facilities and resources that are accessible, relevant and of use to every individual in the communities in which we work.

To better understand who our service users are so that we are able to provide appropriate services which are accessible to all people within the communities which we serve.

To be mindful that people are different and that when and how we help and advise our service users will be different.

To provide clear, meaningful information about Live Life Care services in ways that are accessible and meet the diverse needs of our communities.

To work with partners in consulting with all sections of the community on service needs and provision.

To actively consult with different individuals and communities to ensure that services which are provided are responsive and reflect the diversity of need.

To ensure that our services meet Best Value principles and Quality Assurance measures.

4. Our Commitment as an Employer

To foster working environments where all people are able to give their best and are free from discrimination, intimidation, harassment or bullying. Any member of staff displaying such behaviours will be subject to disciplinary action.

To provide an environment where staff feel welcome and safe and where their dignity is maintained and respected at all times.

To have a workforce reflecting the communities which we work in with people from the different groups represented at all levels in the staffing structure.

To ensure that staff understand how valuing diversity can improve our ability to deliver better quality services and so reduce inequality.

To provide fair access to learning and development opportunities, encouraging and supporting staff in fulfilling their potential.

To develop an effective communication strategy that actively involves and communicates our policies with all members of staff.

To provide all employees, with the training and development they need to enable them to achieve the organisations goals in line with Equality and Diversity.

To provide support to any members of staff who may experience any form of discrimination whilst at work and take appropriate action against perpetrators of harassment, victimisation or discrimination.

To regularly review our policies to ensure they are fair and reflect best practice.

5. Equality and Diversity Competencies

Employee Competencies

For this policy to be implemented effectively, employees need to be competent in three main areas:

Acknowledge the impact that discrimination and harassment can have on people due to their perceived or actual sexual orientation, gender, race, age or religion.

Be aware of the Equality and Diversity dimension in the services that they are providing.

Be able to challenge discrimination, harassment, prejudice and inappropriate behaviour.

Management Competencies

Professional expertise

Has good working knowledge of current Equality and Diversity legislation.

Has an awareness and motivation of the particular issues employees may be facing due to their age, race, gender, disability, sexuality, life experience and education.

Understanding

Pays attention to understanding individual needs of employees / service users.

Team orientation

Creates good team spirit within the unit and gains commitment through consultation on issues related to achieving objectives.

Appreciates different perspectives, opinions and views with an ability to proactively incorporate new ideas into service delivery.

Resilience (managing self)

Controls own emotions, avoiding over involvement and emotional outbursts.

Remains calm in the face of criticism and interpersonal conflict.

Does not have unrealistic expectations.

Sensitivity / empathy to others

Is sensitive to and interested in others motives and perspectives. Avoids stereotyped judgements.

A willingness to put effort in to achieve a good understanding of others not only to what they say and do, but why they say it and what lies underneath their words and actions.

Developing staff

Spends time with individual members of staff to give positive feedback and to build confidence in their abilities.

Cultivates opportunities through different kinds of people. Encourages staff to review activities and to learn from their experiences.

Self Awareness

Recognises own strengths, limitations and emotions and their effect on self and others.

Self Regulation

Maintains standards of honesty and integrity and takes responsibility for personal performance.

Motivation

Strives to improve or meet a standard/excellence and is ready to act on opportunities.

6. Responsibilities for Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity within Live Life Care Ltd

All members of staff have a responsibility for mainstreaming Equality and Diversity if we are to be successful in embedding it into our everyday work.

Managers

Set and agree targets for delivery of local action plans communicating the importance and adherence of Equality and Diversity.

Promote equality of opportunity for staff members.

Ensure that all staff reach their full potential.

Use measures to address inequality.

Actively consult with different individuals and communities to ensure that the services which are provided are responsive and reflect the diversity of need.

Monitor and review services in line with equality standards.

Implement, monitor and review Equality and Diversity action plans

Ensure that staff are fully trained to perform their roles and that staff are released to attend mandatory programmes of training on Equality and Diversity.

Staff

Ensure that the aims and objectives of the policy statement are achieved.

Encourage Equality and Diversity within Live Life Care Ltd and ensure that their actions do not contribute to unfair or discriminatory treatment of others.

Support colleagues who may be experiencing unfair or discriminatory treatment through bringing this to the attention of the perpetrator and/or by encouraging the recipient to take action through informal and formal procedures.

7. Communicating the Policy

All employees will receive a copy of the Equality and Diversity policy, in an appropriate format, and we will fully consult our employees when developing the strategy.

Managers are responsible for keeping all employees well informed of what is happening in the business regarding Equality and Diversity.

Employees are expected to keep themselves informed of what is happening in the business and locally in the areas in which they work and are responsible for making any issues of concern or interest known to their management teams.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently should the need arise e.g. new legislation.