

Equality & Diversity

Policy statement

This practice recognises and conforms to the principles of Equality Act 2010 by creating an environment where all our patients and staff are treated with dignity and respect. This policy sets down our approach to equality, discrimination, diversity and human rights as it applies to all our patients and staff.

Responsibilities

The person with responsibility for considering and taking action if any instances breach this policy is Hilary A. Richards. Anyone found to have committed a serious act of improper or unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation will be disciplined in line with Coppertop Surgery Ltd disciplinary procedure.

Hilary A. Richards is also responsible for arranging training of all staff in equality and diversity and ensuring that all staff understand their responsibility to create a fair and un-discriminatory place of work for their colleagues and patients to visit.

Legal responsibilities

The rights of our patients and our staff with regards to discrimination are protected by anti-discrimination legislation including:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Part-time workers (Prevention of less favourable treatment) regulations 2000
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Types of discrimination and harassment

Discrimination is any form of unfavourable treatment. We recognise that any discrimination is harmful and is, in many cases, illegal.

Sex discrimination is any form of treatment which is unfavourable and which is gender or marital related. Discrimination according to sex is illegal under the terms of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The Act applies equally to both men and women. Sex discrimination is when one person is treated less favourably on the grounds of his or her sex than a person of the other sex would be treated under similar circumstances and can be direct or indirect.

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination. It can be defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of those who work in or who attend the practice. This can include unwelcome physical or verbal conduct.

Race discrimination is any form of treatment which is unfavourable and which is related to colour, race or nationality. Discrimination according to race is illegal under the terms of the Race Relations Act 1976 and can be direct or indirect.

Racial harassment is a form of racial discrimination and might involve racist jokes or insults etc.

Religious discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably because of his or her religious beliefs. The Fair Employment Act 1989 enables employees who feel that they have been discriminated against on the grounds of religious belief or political opinion to take action against an employer.

Disability discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably because of disability. Occasionally a disability can limit a person's capability for some forms of employment. Discrimination occurs when the treatment of the individual is unfavourable taking into account the disability.

Age discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of age. The Employment and Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 requires employers to foster a workplace culture in which discrimination and harassment, on the grounds of age, are unacceptable. Employers are also required to lay down procedures to enable employees to work past the age of 65 if they so wish.

Harassment is a form of discrimination where a person is made to feel uncomfortable because of their sex, race, disability, age or religion. It may involve action, behaviour, comments or physical contact which is found offensive, objectionable or intimidating by the recipient.

Victimisation is when the employer treats an employee less favourably than other employees are treated because he or she has brought or threatens to bring proceedings, or give evidence or information against an employer with reference to the Sex Discrimination, Race Relation or Equal pay Acts.

The right to have equal pay provides equality in terms of an employee's contract where he or she is employed to perform work which is rated equivalent to that performed by a member of the opposite sex.

Through this policy, through training and by example, we wish to demonstrate that we do not tolerate any form of discrimination by anyone working at this practice against patients or other members of staff. Specifically, we aim to prevent discrimination by:

Patients:

- We recognise all our patients as individuals with diverse needs
- We will aim to accommodate the needs of our patients relating to any disability wherever possible
- We will respect the rights and dignity of all our patients
- We invite comments regarding improvements to the provision of our services in relation to patients with disabilities

Staff

- When applying for a role with this practice, our decisions will be based on skills, qualifications and experience and on who is most suitable for the job
- Meet any needs potential staff may have at interview and during employment wherever possible

- Ensure that all staff have equal opportunity to take part in ongoing training and development

If you feel that you are the subject of discrimination or harassment, or become aware that a/another member of staff, a patient or other person in the practice may be violating the principles contained in this policy, in the first instance you should let the perpetrator know how you feel verbally or in writing asking him or her to stop the behaviour. Keep a record of the incident/s, raise the issue with Hilary A. Richards, and Russell Milne if the matter is not resolved, submit a written complaint. This complaint will be investigated within 2 weeks, and an external HR specialist may be contracted by the practice to aid investigation. Coppertop surgery Ltd will take every step possible to ensure that a good working environment is maintained for both the accused and the perpetrator until investigations are complete.

Coppertop Surgery Ltd will also take appropriate action against any third parties who are found to have committed an act of improper or unlawful harassment against its employees.

All allegations are taken seriously

Please see the Practice Manager Hilary A. Richards for more information