



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Carers Together is a registered charity set up in 1993 to involve all carers across the geographical historical county of Hampshire and to cover all generic care groups. It is classed as a Small Business under ACAS regulations

The Trustees recognise that certain groups may suffer discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of age, colour, class, criminal record, disability ethnic or national origins, education, HIV or other medical status, employment status, political or religious beliefs, or responsibility for dependants.

Carers Together opposes discrimination in all its forms and is committed to continuously working towards making equal opportunities an integral part of all the work it carries out. It acknowledges and accepts all existing legislations regarding equal opportunities that currently exist and strives to meet all the requirements contained in the legislation.

Discrimination may be direct or indirect: -

Direct Discrimination

Treating a person or group less favourably than others are or would be treated in the same circumstances. Segregating a person from others on racial or other grounds constitutes less favourable treatment e.g. by rejecting all job applicants who are not British, or by refusing to consider Bangladeshis for a job, or by rejecting someone on the grounds of age or disability.

Indirect Discrimination

Applying an apparently non-discriminatory requirement, condition, criterion or practice, which, although applied equally to all groups, is actually harder for people from a particular group or sex to comply with and which cannot be justified on strictly business terms e.g. it could be indirect discrimination to ask for a higher standard of English when the job does not require this.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as 'unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.' Harassment on the grounds of national or ethnic origins is a specific offence under the Race Relations Act, while harassment on grounds of colour, nationality, disability or age may amount to direct discrimination.

There are several pieces of legislation that combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities and diversity. These are:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995



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Principles, Policies and Procedures

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Employment Act 2002
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- Religion or Belief Regulations 2003
- Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003
- Age Discrimination Regulations 2006.

Guidance on the legislation can be obtained from the relevant Commission and further general guidance on good practice in the workplace from Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service).



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES - ACTION PLAN

This plan aims to ensure that Carers Together creates equal opportunities for all potential and actual members of the organisation, its trustees, staff, volunteers, users of its services and other organisations with which it works.

Its success will depend on everyone in the organisation having a full understanding of equal opportunities, and discrimination, and co-operating in the plan's implementation. Promoting equal opportunities and avoiding discrimination will form a core constituent of any recruitment, induction, supervision and training programme

Carers

Carers Together will offer its services and support to any carer on the basis of individual need and availability of support and resources. It acknowledges the many different groups, associations and individuals in Hampshire who are carers and will take steps to ensure that this diversity is reflected in the following: -

The Management Committee

Carers Together will take positive action to ensure that the members of the trustees reflect the composition of these areas and are representative, as far as possible, of the wide range of groups, associations and individuals throughout these areas.

Staff

- All vacant posts are advertised as appropriate to encourage a wide range of applicants.
- Any employment decision made about an individual are based solely on an assessment of the capability and suitability of that individual and not on any generalised concepts about the characteristics or categories of groups or persons.
- All staff are employed on the same conditions for the same type of job and have the same access to training opportunities.

Volunteers

- Carers Together believes that everyone has the right to volunteer and that volunteering should be accessible to all.
- Any decision made about placing a volunteer is made solely on an assessment of the capability/suitability of that individual, and not on any generalised concepts about the characteristics/categories of groups or persons.

All personnel working with the organisation are expected to adhere to the policy and plan and to help with its implementation. They are expected to implement the plan throughout their work with the organisation



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Carers Together will encourage organisations, groups and individuals that it works with to be committed to equal opportunities and copies of the plan will be available to them. The Trustees will review this plan, at least annually and whenever new legislation is enacted and will address any problems or concerns that arise at any time.