North Devon Mental Health Service Users Forum
Clarity
104a Boutport Street
Barnstaple
EX31 1SY
Charity Number 1055224

Clarity Mental Health Services

Clarity	P6 Equal opportunities – Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policy
V1	01 2021
V2	01 2022
V3	01 2023
V4	01 2024
V5	01 2025
V6	06.2025
V7	04.2026

Clarity acknowledges that not all sections of this policy will be relevant due to the nature of the work conducted. We will endeavour to uphold the values and principles set out within this document, and where appropriate, and when circumstances arise, amend our policy to include and reflect changes as required.

Approved By:

Name	Role	
Clare Fowler	Charity Manager	30.04.2026

Equal opportunities – (EDI) policy

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This policy can be read in conjunction with the following:

P1 - Anti-Harassment	P12 - Safeguarding
	P15 - Whistleblowing
P5 - Disciplinary	T9 – Risk Management
P7 - Grievance	Risk Register
P8 - Health & Safety	T10 Serious Incident

1.Purpose and scope

Clarity actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusion and promotes creating an inclusive culture for everyone involved in our charity—staff, volunteers, trustees, beneficiaries, and the wider community. We recognise the strength that comes from a diverse and inclusive environment and actively oppose all forms of discrimination.

It is our aim to create and maintain a harmonious working environment throughout the charity by the application of policies and practices which ensure that individuals receive treatment, which is fair, equitable and consistent with their relevant aptitudes, potential, skills and abilities. We recognise the problems that sexual, racial and other forms of harassment, including bullying, may cause at work, and are committed to ensuring that such unacceptable behaviour does not take place.

This policy sets out our commitment to preventing discrimination and promoting EDI in all areas of our work, including

- Governance and leadership
- Employment and volunteering
- Counselling practice and service delivery
- Training, supervision and professional development
- Engagement with partners and the wider community

This policy applies to:

- Staff, volunteers, trustees, trainees and contractors
- Clients and beneficiaries
- Recruitment, selection, induction and training
- Counselling, supervision and all service delivery
- Governance, decision-making and leadership
- Behaviour within the workplace, online, and in connection with Clarity's activities

This policy is informed by:

- The **Equality Act 2010**, which prohibits discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of protected characteristics
- The **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**, including duties to protect the wellbeing of staff and volunteers
- The **BACP Ethical Framework**, including commitments to justice, beneficence, non-maleficence and respect for diversity
- NCVO good-practice guidance on equality, diversity and inclusion in charities

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- Board of Trustees: has ultimate responsibility for the monitoring and reporting of any complaints.
- Charity Manager: Will be responsible for implementing and monitoring procedures to enable accurate and timely reporting.
- Staff and Volunteers: All staff and volunteers must adhere to this policy and report any concerns regarding practices.

All individuals are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy
- Treating others with dignity and respect
- Challenging and reporting discrimination or exclusion
- Contributing to an inclusive organisational culture

3. Clarity's responsibilities

Clarity has a duty to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of Staff at work under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. A failure to take steps to prevent direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation of Staff, whether by colleagues or third parties, may also amount to a breach of this duty.

As part of our commitments we will:

- Provide equal opportunities to all, regardless of background or identity
- Create an inclusive and welcoming environment
- Embed EDI principles in recruitment, training, and decision-making
- Address and challenge discrimination, harassment, or victimisation
- Monitor our practices to ensure fair and equitable treatment

Clarity aims to create a team with a diverse range of skills and attitudes and strives to maintain a working environment, terms and conditions of employment, along with personnel and management practices which ensure that no individual receives less favourable treatment, or discrimination, on the grounds of:

- race (including nationality, colour, ethnic origin)
- sex.

- religion or belief.
- age.
- marital or civil partnership.
- gender (including gender reassignment).
- sexual orientation.
- physical or mental disabilities.
- pregnancy or maternity.
- part-time status.

The charity will ensure that individuals are recruited, remunerated, promoted and trained based on objective criteria, and it will take into consideration relevant aptitudes, potential, skills and abilities.

No applicants will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job, or which constitute direct or indirect discrimination.

No employment decision will be taken based on irrelevant or discriminatory criteria.

The charity is committed to making reasonable adjustments in the workplace to assist all Staff who require them. Where business needs allow, working patterns will be reviewed and flexible working will be offered to Staff.

No Staff will be discriminated against, subjected to any detriment or victimised because they have made a complaint or allegation of any form of discrimination, harassment/victimisation or because they have given evidence in relation to any such complaint. This policy applies to pre-employment, employment and post-employment, including recruitment, promotion, training and termination of employment.

The charity does not tolerate actions such as sexist comments, innuendo, jokes of an offensive nature, unwanted physical contact (eg brushing against a colleague's body) or inappropriate touching of Staff or service users. Such actions will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Complaints will be thoroughly investigated and dealt with via the Grievance Procedure.

Staff found to have treated people unfavourably on the basis of a protected characteristic will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, under the disciplinary policy and procedure.

Any concerns regarding discrimination or exclusion will be taken seriously. We encourage open dialogue and offer clear channels for complaints, handled in line with our Grievance or Complaints Policy.

3. Staff Responsibilities.

You are expected to:

- act in accordance with the 'equality, diversity and inclusion' policy at all times, and without exception.
- accept personal responsibility for implementing and adhering to the 'equality, diversity and inclusion' policy, and to promoting harmony and dignity at work.
- raise any concerns about inequality at work with the Charity Manager. If that is not possible or fails to resolve the matter, then follow the Grievance Procedure.

Any deliberate act which breaches this policy, or a failure by Staff to adhere to the policy, will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

4. Equality in Employment, Volunteering and Governance

Clarity is committed to fair and equitable practices in recruitment, volunteering, remuneration, promotion, training and governance. Decisions will be based on objective and role-related criteria, including relevant skills, experience, aptitude and potential.
No individual will be disadvantaged by unnecessary or unjustifiable requirements. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made to support disabled staff, volunteers, trainees, trustees and applicants.
Flexible working and inclusive practices will be considered where feasible and appropriate to organisational needs.

5. Inclusive Counselling Practice and Service Delivery

As a counselling charity, Clarity recognises the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion in therapeutic, supervisory and training relationships. We acknowledge the power imbalance that can exist within these relationships and the additional impact of discrimination on clients and trainees.
Clarity is committed to:

- Delivering services that are inclusive, accessible and culturally sensitive
- Promoting reflective practice and cultural competence
- Challenging discrimination within counselling practice
- Ensuring that clients are treated with dignity, fairness and respect

Concerns relating to discrimination within service delivery may be addressed through management processes, clinical governance arrangements, supervision, safeguarding procedures and/or the complaints process, as appropriate.

6. Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying

Clarity does not tolerate harassment, sexual harassment, victimisation or bullying. Such behaviour may constitute unlawful discrimination and will be addressed in accordance with:

- P1 – Anti-Harassment, Anti-Sexual Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy
- P7 – Grievance Policy
- P5 – Disciplinary Policy

No individual will be treated unfavourably or subjected to detriment for raising concerns in good faith or supporting another person to do so.

7. Concerns about discrimination at work

The Grievance Procedure should be used if Staff believe that they have been discriminated against or harassed.

Staff will not suffer a detriment, or be victimised in any way, for making such a complaint which they reasonably believe to be in good faith. Complaints of this nature will be dealt with seriously, in confidence and as soon as possible.

Any concerns relating to discrimination, exclusion or unfair treatment are taken seriously. Depending on the nature of the concern, individuals may raise issues through:

- Line management or the Charity Manager
- The Grievance Policy
- The Complaints Policy (P2)
- The Whistleblowing Policy (P15)
- Safeguarding procedures, where appropriate

Concerns will be handled sensitively, confidentially and without fear of victimisation.

8. Breaches of the EDI policy

Staff who do not adhere to the 'equality, diversity and inclusion' policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal.

Disciplinary action will be taken against Staff who are found to have deliberately committed an act of unlawful discrimination.

Allegations of discrimination which are not made in good faith will also be considered a disciplinary matter. Confidential records of ongoing matters dealt with in accordance with this policy will be kept.

9. Action and Outcomes

Where breaches of this policy are identified, Clarity will take action that is proportionate to the individual's role and status. Actions may include guidance, training, increased supervision, changes to duties, suspension, termination of role or referral to an external body, as appropriate.

10. Monitoring, Learning and Improvement

Clarity will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and review EDI-related information, including complaints, grievances and learning from incidents. This learning will inform future training, supervision, service development and policy review.

11. Reviews

Clarity will regularly monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy. Clarity will update the policy as and when it is required.

Version: 7
Date approved: 30.04.2026
Next review date: April 2027
Policy owner: Charity Manager (on behalf of the Board of Trustees)

References

Equality Act 2010 (accessed 30.04.2026)

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (accessed 30.04.2026)

Explaining equality, diversity and inclusion | NCVO (accessed 30.04.2026)

Equality at work | Acas (accessed 30.04.2026)

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