



## EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

HARCSAC is committed to equality of opportunity for all staff, clients, potential clients, and others directly or indirectly affected by the work of the organization.

HARCSAC is actively opposed to any form of discrimination or discriminatory practice on the grounds of race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, mental or physical disability, sexuality, age, or membership of any other marginalised groups.

HARCSAC was formed as a single sex service to provide a support to women over the age of 18 who reside within the county of Hertfordshire. Separate documents exist to detail our policies on male callers and transgender issues. (These can be found in the policy book.)

HARCSAC aims to represent all less advantaged groups and to target less advantaged groups through its service provision.

To enable HARCSAC to aim towards achieving these targets, we are committed to developing and supporting measures to ensure that direct and indirect discrimination is challenged in the workplace/in the service provision, and with others who may be affected by the work of HARCSAC.

### ***These measures will include:***

- confidential equalities monitoring
- working to eliminate all types of discrimination and to promote equality, through employment practices, volunteer membership, and through service delivery, setting out its commitment to provide an equitable service to all potential clients in the community.
- Commitment to equality of opportunity for individuals accessing the service who are marginalised through disability, whether physical, mental, or medical, or marginalised in any other way, by application of anti-discriminatory practice.

### **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

We believe and assert that all women have the right to be treated with equal dignity, respect, consideration and without prejudice and to be given equal access to the service without regard to race, colour, nationality, culture, languages, religious beliefs, creed, ethnicity.

We will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour by any person representing or using the service. We will take all external and internal complaints seriously and we will ensure that our procedures allow open, constructive and healthy challenge both from within as well as from outside the organisation.



## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aim of this statement is to set out how we shall eliminate barriers and ensure equal treatment to all regardless of race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion, mental or physical disability, sexuality, age, marital status, or membership of any other marginalised groups. This statement shall apply to our employment practices and to our service delivery.

## **LEGISLATION**

We shall consider and adhere to the following legislative requirements as outlined below and take into account changing legislative requirements.

All volunteers/staff have a responsibility to comply with the principles of this policy.

All Trustees have a responsibility to deal with any complaints of alleged harassment or discrimination in accordance with the disciplinary/grievance procedure.

We will ensure that all persons representing HARCSAC are made aware of and understand this policy and their related responsibilities and that they are trained so that they are able to meet those responsibilities effectively.

## **SERVICE DELIVERY**

We believe that equality of opportunity is about giving the same opportunities to all our clients and potential clients and to achieve this, we must be sensitive to their diverse needs.

HARCSAC commits itself to:-

- Ensuring that our assessment and allocation procedures ensure fair access to the service regardless of race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion, mental or physical disability, sexuality, age, marital status, or membership of any other marginalized minorities and those groups that are deemed harder to reach.
- Distributing our eligibility criteria and application processes to relevant agencies to facilitate successful referral pathways.
- Delivering our services to our clients in a fair and equitable way, according to their needs, regardless of race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion, mental or physical disability, sexuality, age, marital status, or membership of any other marginalized minorities and those groups that are deemed harder to reach.

- Ensuring that all applicants to our services are made aware of our EOP and our commitment towards anti-discrimination.
- Ensuring that where there are language/communication needs, we will endeavour to support these as far as possible by researching the availability of language translation services, and BSL (British Sign Language) interpreters for deaf-blind women seeking our services.
- Recognising the need for specialist services.
- Providing information about the location and details of specific cultural, religious and other support agencies, such as those for discriminated groups, shall be given to all clients where appropriate.
- Ensuring that clients can freely express themselves and their cultural and religious beliefs and customs.
- Ensuring that our policies and practices relating to services and clients and consulting them in respect of their participation in services are as inclusive as possible.
- By means of our suggestion box and feedback forms, we aim to involve all clients in the periodic review of our policies and procedures related to fair access, diversity and inclusion analysis, monitoring and review.

To be able to ensure the relevance and efficacy of this policy, we shall collect equalities data for:-

- potential and existing clients
- job applicants and existing staff
- grievances and disciplinaries
- complaints

**HARCSAC shall:-**

- Analyse all equalities monitoring data recorded for staff and clients
- Ensure that all equalities monitoring data is be treated as confidential