

Equal opportunities policy

Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) is an Equal Opportunities service in terms of both service provision and recruitment.

This policy is about promoting positive attitudes towards equality and diversity and to ensure that everyone working at CRCC or receiving a service from CRCC is treated with dignity and respect in line with legislation under the Equality Act 2010, bringing together myriad Acts and Regulations, which formed the basis of anti-discrimination law in the UK prior to the Equality Act 2010 and legislates against:

1. Direct discrimination (someone is treated less favourably than another person due to having a protected characteristic or is perceived to have a protected characteristic)
2. Associative discrimination (direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic or perceived to have a protected characteristic).

Protective characteristics are defined as:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marital status or Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity

As such CRCC will not discriminate directly or associatively on the grounds of any protected characteristic.

CRCC will also ensure that it does not discriminate indirectly i.e. have a procedure or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages those with a particular protective characteristic.

CRCC's phone and email support services are open to all who self-define as women, including (if they wish) those with complex gender identities which include 'woman', and those who experience oppression as women. Face-to-face services are limited to those who currently identify as women, with the exception of the Ch/ISVA service which is available for anyone to access. CRCC affirms that self-definition is at the sole discretion of the individual in question. The provision of such a single sex service is lawful under the Gender Equality Duty (2007), in that because women make up the majority of sexual violence 'victims', it is appropriate that services are available for women only. In addition, because of the nature of the work carried out, CRCC is run for women by women and therefore reserves the right to only recruit women. This is also legal under Schedule 9, Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010.

CRCC is committed to ensuring equality of access both to the service and to opportunity and will make appropriate provision for all service users, volunteers and workers with special requirements insofar as facilities and resources will allow. This includes giving all employees and volunteers' equal opportunity and access to training to enable them to progress both within and outside the organisation.

CRCC is committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and will bring it to the attention of all volunteers and workers, who should familiarise themselves with it.

Any volunteer, worker or service user who wishes to make a complaint about equality should refer to the Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Statement of Equality and Diversity

Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) recognises that many people in our society experience discrimination or lack of opportunity for a variety of characteristics identified as protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 defined as age, disability, gender re-assignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status or Civil Partnership and pregnancy or maternity.

CRCC aims to provide a service which actively promotes equality of opportunity and freedom from direct and associative discrimination and we make every effort to relate to all people in a respectful and equal manner in the belief that all individuals should be treated on the basis of individual merit and without prejudice.

All volunteers, employees and committee members must uphold and support this Statement of Equality and Diversity and the associated Equal Opportunities Policy.

Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any equality policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.

Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with this policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.

We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.

All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible.

Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

We will not disqualify any applicant because she is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe

and effective performance of the job.

Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

Training and Promotion

Senior staff will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.

All promotion will be in line with this policy.

Monitoring

We will maintain and review the employment records of all employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy.

Monitoring may involve:

The collection and classification of information regarding the race in terms of ethnic/national origin and sex of all applicants and current employees;

The examination by ethnic/national origin and sex of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants; and

Recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions.