

# **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

Version 5

March 2025



## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Title	Equity, diversity & inclusion policy Previously known as equal opportunities policy
Version	5
Author	Frankie Hill, Director of Equity and Quality/DCEO
Date first published	Version 1: September 2014
Previous review dates	Version 2: November 2016, Version 3: January 2020, Version 4: August 2022
Next review date	January 2027
Review schedule	This policy will be reviewed every two years, or in line with organisational or legislative changes
Responsibility	Board of trustees
Responsibility for development, review and implementation	Executive leadership team led by equity, EDI joint accountable officers and EDI working group
Target audience	All staff, volunteers, service members, students on placement, visitors, funding bodies, job and volunteer applicants and the board of trustees
Accessibility	Staff and volunteers: People HR Service members and others: BDC Mind website If you would like this policy in another format, such as large print or audio, please call us on 01274 730815 or email us at <a href="mailto:admin@mindinbradford.org.uk">admin@mindinbradford.org.uk</a> or speak to a member of staff
Associated policies	Service member involvement policy, service member agreement, complaints policy, management of violence and aggression policy, safeguarding adults policy, safeguarding children policy, trustee recruitment policy, volunteer policy and staff handbook (recruitment and selection, equal opportunities and positive working, workplace wellbeing)

## 1. Purpose and background

Bradford District and Craven Mind's (BDC Mind) purpose is to make the best possible difference to the mental health and wellbeing of the greatest number of people. We are committed to doing that fairly and equitably, addressing equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are essential to us fulfilling our purpose.

EDI is everyone's business and we are all responsible for living its values. This includes paid staff, volunteers, service members (people who use our services), visitors and the board of trustees. Discrimination in any form is unacceptable, whether this be direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional. We will assertively address discrimination in any form (please see appendix 1 for definitions on the types of discrimination).

This policy was reviewed with the support of the board of trustees, the EDI Working Group and staff members. This ensured a broad and diverse range of people had the opportunity to contribute.

## 2. Scope

The policy applies to all people involved with BDC Mind. This includes staff members, service members, volunteers, trustees, contractors, agency workers, apprentices and students on placement.

It is our responsibility to recognise that mental health is intersectional, meaning it does not exist in isolation from our unique identities. Mental health is impacted by multiple, interconnected characteristics and the unique life experiences, advantages and disadvantages that accompany them.

## 3. Responsibilities

This policy is owned by the board of trustees who are accountable for its implementation across the organisation. The board delegates this accountability to the CEO, and our executive leadership team (ELT) who are responsible for this policy's implementation, monitoring and review.

The board of trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring the EDI policy is fit for purpose and up to date
- Having an EDI trustee sponsor

ELT are responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with the policy
- Delivery of annualised action plan
- Challenging decisions which adversely affect anyone's wellbeing
- Managing allegations of discrimination against someone involved in the organisation

The EDI joint accountable officers, people and culture manager and director of equity and quality/DCEO are responsible for:

- Keeping up to date with relevant EDI legislation
- Development of annualised action plan agreed by ELT
- Providing assurance to the CEO and board regarding compliance to the Policy and implementing the agreed annualised action plan
- Ensuring the board are informed and updated to EDI concerns through regular board reporting and via the board sponsor

The director of equity and quality/DCEO is responsible for:

- Promoting and ensuring that all services are accessible for the diverse communities they support

The people and culture manager is responsible for:

- Driving the development of our workforce planning, policies and engagement initiatives in line with the EDI policy and agreed action plan

The EDI working group is responsible for:

- Shaping and supporting the implementation of the annualised action plan

All operational managers, line managers and heads of are responsible for:

- Making sure everyone in the organisation including service members and

volunteers are aware of their EDI responsibilities and know how to respond to concerns

- Ensuring any training undertaken by staff is discussed in supervision so that staff understanding of EDI is clearly established and further support identified if required
- Raising awareness of the policy which will be hosted on People HR for staff and volunteers and on our website for service members and other stakeholders

All staff members and volunteers are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of this policy and how to access it
- Immediately alerting a senior member of staff if they have any challenges finding or understanding the content of this policy
- Knowing what to do if they suspect potential breaches of the policy
- Undertaking any mandatory/essential EDI training as required by BDC Mind whether this be face-to-face or e-learning

## 4. Commitments

Inequality and discrimination can significantly affect people's mental health and their ability to access mental health support. We will actively challenge oppression, direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Our strategic objectives of this policy are to ensure:

- Our communications will reflect the diversity of our communities and be present across all communities
- We see increasing engagement with grassroots organisations who support people from different backgrounds and communities
- Our premises reflect the diversity of our communities and we are explicit in our message of safety to people
- All people report that they feel heard and included
- All people report that they know how to and feel safe to report discrimination
- People report that they are recognising change
- EDI remains front and centre across our practices and approaches
- We implement policies and processes that are both fair and transparent

- BDC Mind reflects the diversity of the communities we serve
- Create a supportive and non-judgemental culture of curiosity, learning and humility
- Use our position to insist on change and champion the voices of individuals and groups who are underserved
- Actively identify and challenge discrimination, harassment and victimisation of service members, staff, volunteers and people in our local communities

### **Equality Act (2010)**

We are committed to our duties under the Equality Act (2010), which deems it unlawful to discriminate against people on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

### **Protected characteristics**

Under the Equality Act (2010) it is illegal to discriminate against someone because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marital/civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We recognise that people experience discrimination, marginalisation and inequity for reasons not addressed by legislation, therefore this policy applies to a range of characteristics and identity markers based on socioeconomic status and deprivation, vulnerabilities and the geographical areas in which they live.

### **Characteristics not covered by law**

#### **Socioeconomic status and deprivation**

This refers to people with less access to financial, educational, social, and health resources. For example, people who are unemployed, on a low income, have low job security, live in poor housing and/or have a low educational achievement.

#### **Vulnerable groups**

For example, refugees and asylum seekers, the travelling community, sex workers, homeless people, people with health problems (physical health, mental health and ability), offenders and ex-offenders, children in care and care leavers, people struggling with alcohol or substance misuse, people who do not speak English as a first language, carers and young carers, and people who are part of the LGBTIQ+ community but whose identity is not covered by the Equality Act (2010).

### **Geography**

This refers to people who experience inequality as a result of the place in which they live, for example, limited access to resources in remote rural areas and poor air quality, concentrated poverty and limited access to green spaces in inner city and urban areas.

### **Additional support needs**

People may have requirements individual to them, that with support will enable them to reach their potential. Examples include but are not limited to long-term health conditions, menopause, chronic pain, or neurodiversity. BDC Mind recognise people as individuals with unique needs.

## **5. Service delivery**

### **Communications and Engagement**

BDC Mind continually review the information we create and provide for service members. This is to ensure that the information is representative of the community. This information includes but is not limited to;

- Posters and leaflets in different languages
- Information on our website
- Videos on our website in different languages
- Our service member agreement document

We invite service members to share any reasonable adjustments they may need to access any of our services and will endeavour to meet those needs. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure our activities are carried out in premises which are accessible, welcoming and safe for the people we seek to serve.

### **Service planning**

We strive to take the diverse needs of the community into account when planning service delivery, using a co-production approach wherever possible.

### **Subcontracting**

In addition to our direct service delivery, we subcontract a wide range of organisations to deliver mental health services across the district and have made it a contractual requirement that all subcontracted providers have and adhere to an appropriate EDI policy.

## **6. Workforce**

BDC Mind are committed to supporting the workforce to promote diversity and support diverse people in the workplace. We will do this by ensuring:

- Supportive and adaptive recruitment practices are in place
- Our EDI training is up-to-date and relevant
- We provide additional training for staff to access such as culturally sensitive practice or training on micro-aggressions
- We actively support and encourage our staff Engage and Belong groups
- We use local and national benchmarks to measure ourselves and strive to be better
- The policy is available for all our people

We fully accept our obligation not to discriminate. We respect the beliefs of all job and volunteer applicants, employees, volunteers and students on placement and will always try to accommodate these by:

- Creating time and if possible a place for prayers during the working day and at the workplace
- Considering dietary requirements in catering for people and when providing facilities for them to eat and store food
- Supporting staff to take their holidays for religious festivals and other religious observance depending on service delivery and where practicable (where possible giving them priority over other members of staff not of that religion)
- Offering to arrange job interviews or other important work meetings at times when they do not clash with important religious festivals

- Not imposing a dress code which people of a particular religion cannot comply with

Any accommodations made are subject to the availability of staff and other resources.

## 7. Policy monitoring and review

### Monitoring and review

ELT and ODT are responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy. Our EDI working group will report into ELT who will ensure the action plan is reviewed and updated quarterly as part of our organisational processes. ELT is also responsible for reviewing this policy every two years, or in line with organisational or legislative changes.

## 8. Policy breaches

We regard direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, abuse, victimisation or bullying of staff, volunteers, service members or others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as gross misconduct.

Condoning such behaviour will be treated as a disciplinary offence. Our disciplinary and grievance procedure, found in our staff and volunteer handbooks, will be used to manage complaints about discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying involving staff, volunteers or students on placement (See our Staff Handbook and Volunteer Handbook for more information).

Service members are also expected to respect our EDI policy and in case of breach, we follow the guidelines set out in our Service Member Partnership Agreement.

As well as disciplining perpetrator(s), we will give appropriate support to people who complain of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, abuse or bullying of themselves or others. To protect and uphold individual rights under this policy, any service member who feels they or someone else has been subject to discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying are encouraged to report the matter to us, anonymously if necessary. Anyone who witnesses discrimination from a person associated with BDC Mind is fully encouraged to report it.

All complaints will go through the procedures outlined in our complaints policy. You can raise a concern by:

- Completing an online complaint form
- Verbally reporting to a line manager or person you feel confident with
- Speaking to us in-person, over the phone, through email or via Microsoft teams
- Directly speaking with the Director of Equity and Quality/DCEO

We recognise that reporting discrimination can be difficult, and that people may feel reluctant to do this. Anyone who reports discrimination will be fully supported to share their experiences safely, working with individuals to ensure that their wellbeing is actively supported.

We recognise that some service members may, because of their past or present distress or illness, say or do things which would otherwise be unacceptable and incompatible with this policy. We will do all we can to challenge such behaviour, and in cases where intervention is possible, an approach will be adopted which aims to alter attitudes and behaviour while maintaining support for the distressed service member. A record will be kept of such situations, as appropriate to the circumstances. This does not exempt service members from having sanctions imposed on them should an incident of discrimination be upheld.

## 9. Ambitions and actions

This policy will be supported by an EDI action plan informed by feedback from staff, volunteers and service members. This will be reviewed annually and will be reported on a quarterly basis within the organisation's internal reporting processes. The EDI working group will own and drive this action plan.

## 10. Appendix 1

### Definitions

**Direct discrimination** - treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their race, gender, sexuality etc.

**Diversity** - the fact of many different types of things or people being included in something; a range of different things or people Respecting and celebrating diversity acknowledges that one person cannot be the sole spokesperson for a particular group and that individual differences matter, that everyone is unique and nobody is a stereotype.

**Equity** - The term “equity” refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality: Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances.

**Harassment** – Unwanted behaviour towards someone that they find offensive, upsetting or annoying. It can be written or spoken, via email or on social media, through images, physical gestures, facial expressions or “banter”.

**Inclusion** - Makes sure everyone, including marginalised groups and individuals, feel included and able to take part and be involved, regardless of additional support or different approaches they may need, the idea that everyone should be able to use the same facilities, take part in the same activities, and enjoy the same experiences, including people who have a disability or any other disadvantage.

**Indirect discrimination** - Indirect discrimination is when policies, procedures and practices which apply to everyone exclude and/or disadvantage certain people because of a protected characteristic or other identity marker.

**Intersectionality** – Recognises that everyone has a unique combination of characteristics, such as age, disability, race, religion and so on, that overlap and interconnect to create a unique way in which our individual lives are shaped and experienced. It helps us understand how multiple forms of inequity compound to create unique challenges and experiences of discrimination, stigma and disadvantage.

**Marginalised** - Marginalised groups and individuals are excluded from key elements of mainstream society, such as education, employment, culture, health care, social life, politics and the economy. People are marginalised due to one or more parts of their identity, which could include protected characteristics, socioeconomic status, vulnerabilities and the geographical area in which they live.

**Positive action** - Measures targeted at enabling members of protected and vulnerable groups to overcome or minimise disadvantage, exclusion and inequity. Positive action is required to meet the unique and different needs of people from vulnerable and protected groups.

**Victimisation** – Treating someone less favourably because they have done something that is protected under the Equality Act (2010), such as making a complaint of discrimination, helping someone else make a complaint, giving evidence in a claim, or alleging a breach of the Equality Act.

Please see links below to more information and examples to help define the key terms used in this policy.

### **Direct Discrimination, Indirect Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation**

- Video: Types of discrimination, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIluTVfqhko>
- Factsheet: Discrimination in everyday life, <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/legal-rights/discrimination-in-everyday-life/examples-of-discrimination-in-everyday-life/>

### **Diversity and Equity**

- Video: What is Diversity? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtzqA82F2KI>
- Video: Equity Vs Equality, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0N22PMdF1U>
- Video: Equity and Equality, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCS7Rus4\\_-Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCS7Rus4_-Y)
- Video: Let's talk about equity and equality, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isVHRDeGis>

### **Inclusion**

- Video: What Is Inclusion? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ea4TdXGp8f0>

### **Intersectionality**

- Video: Intersectionality and health explained, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwqnC1fy\\_zc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwqnC1fy_zc)
- Video: What is intersectionality? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1islM0ytkE>

### **Marginalised**

- Article: What is marginalisation?  
<https://www.liberties.eu/en/stories/marginalization-and-being-marginalized/43767>
- Video: Hearing the unheard – how to successfully engage with marginalised groups <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOaBwQICJ54>

### **Positive action**

- Report: A guide to positive action 2020/21  
<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/46021/a-guide-to-positive-action.pdf>
- Article: Positive Action - Meaning, Importance, Steps & Example,  
<https://www.mbaskool.com/business-concepts/human-resources-hr-terms/17890-positive-action.html>

