

01. Equal Opportunities & Anti-Discrimination

1. Purpose of Policy

- i. Carers Link believes that people of all ages and any ability have the right to the support and services they are required to enable them to fully participate in their communities.
- ii. This initial notice explains some of the practices that Carers Link has in place to ensure that you are not discriminated against when using, or attempting to use, our services.

2. Policies

- i. Carers Link aims to oppose discrimination in any form, whether on grounds based on their sex, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, age, disability or responsibility for dependants. We do not discriminate on any of these grounds when working with Staff or Volunteers, nor when providing a service to Carers and their families, or indeed to any other organisation or persons involved.
- ii. Carers Link will also not discriminate unfairly on the basis of conviction or offending background.
- iii. Our **Equality Policies** include **Recruitment** (EO 4) and **Training** (SE 3) of Staff and Volunteers, and **Access to Services** (C 2) for Carers. We also have policies on identifying and preventing **Harassment, Bullying** (page EO 2) and **Abuse** (C9, 10 and 11). These latter policies are available for both adults and young people.

3. Anti-discriminatory Practice

- i. Equality is everyone's issue in a fair and just society. Two of the major barriers to equality are the existence of negative attitudes and discrimination. Anti-discriminatory practice is about taking positive action to counter discrimination and our practices are listed below.
- ii. Carers Link will ensure that:
 - All Staff and Volunteers are trained in equality training as a way of challenging negative attitudes and stereotypes
 - All Staff and Volunteers are trained in awareness of Carers issues.
 - All staff are trained in disability awareness and also receive training in anti-racism and cultural awareness.
 - All Volunteers are provided the opportunity to receive additional training in disability awareness and anti-racism and cultural awareness.
 - Our offices, premises and services are accessible – in particular, we will provide home visits and telephone support services.
 - Our recruitment processes do not discriminate and also encourage applications from Carers and people with a disability. We are recognised as being Positive About Disability and are a Carer Positive Employer (Exemplary Status).
 - Our Board of Management has Carers involved – at least half of the Board should be Carers or former Carers and we will strive to reach a majority of Carer representation. At time of writing, 80% of the Board of Management have caring experiences.
 - People who are, or who have been, Carers, are involved in the development of the organisation and services
- iii. We will support Carers, Staff and Volunteers to live an independent life, rich in purpose, meaning and personal fulfilment. You will be valued for your ethnic background, language, culture and beliefs and

will be treated equally and supported to live in an environment free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.

4. Additional Activities

- i. The primary Carers Link Leaflets are available to download from the website and within a range of public venues. We will make these available in other formats on request.
- ii. The Carers Link Generic leaflet has been translated into 4 community languages and we are registered with Translation Services. We are in the process of developing web-links to additional translated materials.
- iii. Carers Link operates a free-phone telephone service for all Carers, a service originally developed from feedback amongst Carers for whom cultural and privacy issues were preventing them from openly accessing services.
- iv. Whilst endeavouring to make our service accessible to BME groups within East Dunbartonshire, the service will continue to develop a relationship with the local Ethnic Minority Forum and its member organisations.
- v. There is no dedicated LGBT organisation within East Dunbartonshire, however we are in contact with groups in Glasgow and will ensure that the service develops closer working relationships to encourage referrals regarding caring responsibilities.
- vi. As an organisation dedicated to Carers, we work closely with other organisations that target people with health conditions and/or disability. This promotes further access to Carers in these care groups but also to Carers who themselves may have a disability.

5. Implementation and Monitoring

- i. Every Carer or other user of our services can help us to ensure that our work practices do not discriminate against you, and also that we respect and celebrate diversity. If you felt that you were being discriminated against, not treated with dignity or that your beliefs were not being respected then we encourage you to raise your concerns. You'll be supported to complain effectively without fear of victimisation.
- ii. Please use the **Complaints Procedure** (Q 2) to ensure any instance of alleged discrimination is dealt with.
- iii. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for developing, monitoring and reviewing our policies. If you know of any discrimination in our work or in groups and organisations associated with us, please raise your concerns in confidence on 0800 975 2131.

6. Policy Review

- i. This Policy will be reviewed annually or as appropriate and in accordance with legislation.

Date	Activity	Date	Activity
April 2004	Policy Created		Choose an item.
May 2006	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
December 2008	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
February 2013	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
March 2014	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
January 2015	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.
June 2015	Reviewed & Updated		Choose an item.