

Diversity & Equality in the Healthcare Environment Policy

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VERSION CONTROL.

V1 Sep 18 Policy Created

INTRODUCTION

**This policy has been written to dictate the company's provision of
Diversity & Equality in the Healthcare Environment.**

A separate policy covers the HR side of Equality and Diversity and should be read in conjunction with this.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Company's **Equal Opportunities and Harassment policy** & its **Disciplinary, Dismissal and Grievance Policy**

STATEMENT

Unlawful discrimination occurs in the following circumstances:

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs where one individual treats or would treat another individual less favourably on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, disability, age, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, or political preference ("the protected categories").

It is unlawful for a business or individual to discriminate against a person on the grounds that they are members of a protected category. -

- in the terms on which the company or individual offers to provide any of its services;
- by refusing or deliberately omitting to provide any of its services;
- in the way it provides any of its services.

Indirect Discrimination

A claim of indirect discrimination arises when an employer applies a provision, criterion or practice generally, but which is such that a proportion of persons in a protected category who can comply with it are considerably smaller than the proportion of persons who are not in that protected category.

Equality and diversity are at the heart of **Southern Ultrasound** values. Throughout the development of the company's policies and processes, we have given due regard to the need to:

- Reduce health inequalities in access and outcomes of our services
- Integrate services where this might reduce health inequalities
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic (as cited in under the Equality Act 2010) and those who do not share it.

SOUTHERN ULTRASOUND COMMITMENTS.

Southern Ultrasound embraces diversity and equality and will seek to promote the benefits of each in all of our healthcare activities. We will seek to develop a Company culture that reflects that belief, such that diversity and equality are seen as a cornerstone of our operations throughout all sectors and levels of our services.

Southern Ultrasound will promote diversity and equality to all employees and subcontractors, and insist all adhere to such a policy at all times. We will review our services on an on-going basis to identify potential issues and avoid unlawful or undesirable discrimination.

Southern Ultrasound will treat everyone equally; irrespective of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, age, disability, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, political feelings or criminal convictions; and places an obligation upon all staff to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

Southern Ultrasound is committed to providing training for its entire staff in equal opportunities practice, with particular emphasis on ensuring equality for all patient groups.

Southern Ultrasound will not discriminate against any patient or their representative / associates on any grounds other than their clinical needs -

- in the arrangements e.g. booking procedure for an examination
- in the terms on which our service is offered eg priority of examination, performance of examination; or
- in providing the ultrasound examination; with the Examination Protocol and Examination Report being solely dependent on the patients' clinical needs & the referral guidance provided by the referring Doctor.
- by subjecting him or her to any other detriment (detriment will include refusal to assist the individual or to their reasonable requests, or harassment).

Southern Ultrasound will take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids or services if this would make it easier for an individual to use our services. For instance, an appropriate auxiliary aid or service may include the provision of a sign-language interpreter.

Wherever possible **Southern Ultrasound** will make reasonable adjustments to hallways, passages and doors in order to provide and improve means of access for disabled individuals. However, this may not always be feasible

Southern Ultrasound will not accept any discrimination towards, or harassment of, any patient or their representative / carer, under any circumstances. All staff will be regularly encouraged to read and implement this equality policy. Reports of discrimination will be rigorously investigated and if proved disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including dismissal and reporting to any professional body or state registration board.

SANCTIONS & PROSECUTIONS

Any worker or Practitioner who **Southern Ultrasound** finds to be responsible for unlawful harassment, of any form, will be subject to the Company Disciplinary Procedure; and any sanction may include termination and reporting to any professional body or state registration board.

[A person who discriminates or harasses may be liable for payment of damages to the person offended, in addition to any damages payable by **Southern Ultrasound** should it have been found to have failed to ensure the practice ceased forthwith. Under the Criminal Justice Act 1994, harassment became a criminal offence, punishable by a fine of up to £5,000 and/or a prison term of up to 6 months. Under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the penalties for aggravated harassment are an unlimited fine and/or 5 years imprisonment.]

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Equality is a standard part of the Company's mandatory training requirement. Staff training and awareness of this and associated policies is undertaken at induction and may be discussed as part of staff appraisals.

REFERENCES

- Equality Act 2010 – in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty
- NHS England - Equality and diversity in the NHS

POLICY STANDARDS

Monitoring processes

Monitoring of this policy, together with its implementation, shall be performed by the IG Lead. All complaints received will be investigated by a Company Director and discussed at the next meeting of the Board of Directors. Once the investigation is concluded, the incident will be revisited by the Board of Directors, in conjunction with a trend analysis by the Clinical Governance Lead or the Information Governance Lead.

Distribution & Awareness Plan

All staff are made aware of the policy as part of their induction training. Any changes to the policy are communicated to them via team briefs and staff meetings.

Promotion of this Policy is provided by Company Directors to Service Leads, particularly at induction. A copy of the policy is available to all staff via the Company's on-line Governance Framework folder, and can be accessed 24/7 from any location with Web Access. A hard copy version is retained at all sites of operation and can be viewed or downloaded from the Company's website.

Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been performed on this policy and procedure. The EIA demonstrates the policy is robust; there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken.

		Yes/No	Comments
1.	Does the policy affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:		
	Race	No	
	Ethnic origins (inc. gypsies and travellers)	No	
	Nationality	No	
	Gender	No	
	Culture	No	
	Religion or belief	No	
	Sexual orientation including lesbian, gay and bisexual people	No	
	Age	No	
	Disability - learning disabilities, physical disability, sensory impairment and mental health problems	No	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	
3.	If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	NA	
4.	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	NA	
5.	If so can the impact be avoided?	NA	
6.	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	NA	
7.	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	NA	

Policy Approval & Review

This policy has been approved by the undersigned and will be reviewed annually and any time there is a change in the law or NHS recommendations.

Policy Created: 18/09/18



Date of Last Review:

Kevin Rendell

15/03/19

Director & IG Lead.