



Equality & Diversity Policy

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Staff Handbook			

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The Breastfeeding Network (BfN) is committed to promoting Equality of opportunity, of access and of participation for all users of its services and its members in all of its structures and their workings.

BfN values diversity and has due regard for those groups of people with identifiable characteristics which can lead to visible and invisible barriers thus inhibiting their joining and full participation in the BfN.

BfN aims to make all its services and resources available to all and intends that no user, trainee, job applicant or staff member will be unlawfully discriminated against on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. These characteristics are specifically protected by the Equality Act 2010.

BfN recognises variation in family structure, parenting styles and diversity in family life.

BfN is committed to promoting equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination in its services, its recruitment and employment practices, its policies and its training and coordination of volunteers.

BfN is committed to monitoring and evaluating its performance in promoting equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination. In order to put the above policy into practice, BfN will distribute and publicise this policy to its users, volunteers and staff aiming to:

- Ensure that any user or staff member who believes that they or another user or staff member have received unequal or unfair treatment is able to express this via BfN's Grievance Procedure.
- Ensure that any complaint about unequal or unfair treatment is investigated promptly and acted upon appropriately. Victimisation, discrimination, and harassment will be treated as disciplinary offences and may result in disciplinary action including dismissal.
- Ensure that any user or staff member who makes or supports a complaint about unequal or unfair treatment is protected from victimisation.

- Ensure that all decisions taken about recruitment and promotion are based solely on merit.
- Ensure that any policies, practices and strategies do not directly or indirectly discriminate unfairly against anyone.
- Provide training for all those with responsibility for making sure that this Equality and Diversity policy is put into practice.
- Ensure that trainees receive support and are given an equal chance to learn free from discrimination and prejudice and this principle will also apply to opportunities for continuing professional development for all volunteers and employees.
- Understand the particular needs of families from all ethnic backgrounds and to ensure our services, including training, written materials, literature and publications reflect our diverse and multicultural/ racial community.
- Deliver services in a way that genuinely recognises the importance of an inclusive society that brings opportunities and access, not barriers to individuals.

Users, employees and volunteers of our services are expected to support the Equality & Diversity Policy and not to behave in a discriminatory way or to express prejudiced views. Volunteers are also guided by their Code of Conduct.

Raising concerns about this policy

The equality and diversity policy is fully supported by BfN Senior Management and the BfN Board of Directors. Employees should refer to BfN's Grievance Procedure if they have any concerns or complaints about equality and diversity in relation to their own employment. Service users and volunteers should raise concerns via the BfN Complaints Procedure,