

**BUDDIES COMMUNITY CARE LTD**

**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY**

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## **Policy Statement**

BUDDIES is committed to promoting equality, diversity and human rights (EDHR) and recognises its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and The Human Rights Act 1998.

BUDDIES is committed to creating a culture in which equality and diversity are promoted actively and unlawful discrimination is not tolerated. BUDDIES recognises that the experiences and needs of every individual are unique and strives to respect and value the diversity of its clients and staff members.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Clients**

Clients of BUDDIES have a right to be treated fairly. They will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Clients can expect to be cared for with dignity and respect.

### **Staff Members**

BUDDIES staff members can expect to work in an environment where diversity is valued, and equality of opportunity is promoted. Staff have a right to be treated fairly in recruitment and career progression.

As an equal opportunities employer, BUDDIES will promote equality with due regard to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The management of Equality and Diversity is important to BUDDIES as it will help to:

- ensure that the services we provide are accessible to all people
- actively promote equality
- deliver person-centred care
- ensure staff, and clients are free from unlawful discrimination
- develop services which best meets the needs of our diverse communities
- eliminate from our services, policies and decision making, any adverse impact on the promotion of equality and inclusion for our clients and staff
- promote the reputation of the business.

## Scope

This policy and the procedures apply to members of staff, contractors, agency and temporary workers, suppliers, clients and carers, and anyone else with whom we come in to contact with during the course of our work.

## Definitions

**Equality** - Equality is not about treating everyone the same. It recognises that:

- everyone has individual needs and the right to have those needs respected
- inequality exists and that unlawful discrimination needs to be tackled
- company services and employment should be accessible to all
- it is about treating people fairly where everyone can participate and have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

**Diversity** - Diversity is about respecting and valuing individual difference. It recognises that:

- a diverse approach aims to recognise, value and manage differences to enable all clients and staff to contribute and realise their full potential
- diversity challenges us to recognise and value all sorts of differences in order to make the company a better working environment and to ensure that we provide an excellent service for all clients.

**Inclusion** - is about embracing people regardless of their characteristics and ensuring equality of opportunity and removal of discrimination.

## Procedures

No individual will be less favourably treated, either directly or indirectly, as a result of their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity.

These are known as protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.

Discrimination on the basis of work pattern (part-time working, fixed term contract, flexible working) which is justifiable, will also not be tolerated.

All staff members will be encouraged to develop their skills and fulfil their potential and to take advantage of training, development and progression opportunities. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability alone.

### **Reasonable Adjustments**

BUDDIES will make the following reasonable adjustments to ensure that that clients with a disability can access and use services on an equal basis to others:

- offer information in an accessible format (e.g., coloured paper for persons with dyslexia, large print, easy read, braille, verbal rather than written etc.) where required
- utilise translators where English is not spoken
- utilise a British Sign Language interpreter
- involving an OT with service user consent, to install equipment (e.g., ramps/grab rails)
- providing support to access banks/cinemas/groups/hospital appointments etc.
- provide extra/specialist staff to assist where required (e.g., bariatric).

BUDDIES will make every reasonable effort to meet people's preferences.

### **Accessible Information Standard**

BUDDIES recognises the needs of people who are deaf, blind, or deafblind, or who have a learning disability and its obligations under the Accessible Information Standard.

**BUDDIES** will ensure all clients needs are met by following NHS England's Accessible Information Standards, this will include:

1. Identifying/asking clients if they have any information or communication needs.
2. Finding out how to meet the clients individual needs.
3. Recording those needs in a clear and consistent way in the clients records.
4. Flagging the clients notes so it is clear that they have information or communication needs. Recording a plan as to how to meet those needs, within the clients flagged note.
5. Sharing clients' information and communication needs with other providers of health and social care, if required/is beneficial for their health and treatment. This is only when the client has given their consent or permission to do so.

Meeting the needs of the client by making sure clients receive information they can access and understand. Clients will receive communication support if required (This will include providing language interpreters where appropriate).

As BUDDIES is not providing NHS funded care or other publicly funded adult social care, the Accessible Information Standard does not apply. However, BUDDIES recognises the needs of people who are deaf, blind, or deafblind, or who have a learning disability and will provide material in alternative formats as required.

### **Use of Technology**

BUDDIES 's telephone system is easy to use because we use a single phone number, the team is small and management is accessible via that number (07999 16 17 18).

BUDDIES online/digital services are easy to use via our online chat system.

Clients will be advised on adjusting their individual technology to meet their individual needs as per their technology provider for example changing the screen / sound format on their tablet/phone, setting voice recognition or setting the device to read aloud - [Accessibility for older people on phones, tablets and computers | Age UK](#),

### **Prohibited Conduct**

BUDDIES will actively eliminate and avoid unlawful discrimination, including direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, associative discrimination, perceptive discrimination, harassment, victimisation, disability-related less favourable treatment, failure to comply with a duty to make reasonable adjustments and social exclusion.

**Direct discrimination** - means treating someone less favourably compared to others because they have certain protected characteristics or:

- because they are thought to have a protected characteristics (perception) and
- are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic (association).

**Indirect Discrimination** - can occur when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a particular protected characteristic.

**Harassment** - unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women in the workplace. It may be related to any personal characteristic of the individual and may be persistent or an isolated incident. The key is that the actions or comments are viewed as unwanted conduct that violates people's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It is difficult to categorise all forms of harassment, but examples of some more easily recognisable forms of harassment are covered in more detail in the Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure.

**Victimisation** - happens when a person is treated less favourably because they complain about discrimination or they witness it and give evidence about it.

**Due Regard** - The Equality Act 2010 requires us to pay 'Due Regard', when considering the effects on different groups protected from discrimination (protected characteristics).

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. If you believe that you may have suffered discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, you should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with your line manager or another colleague in a relevant position of seniority. You may decide in the alternative to raise the matter through the Bullying and Harassment or Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure. BUDDIES will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. However, false allegations of a breach of this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

A person found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Staff members may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning that they can be sued by the victim.

### **Monitoring**

This policy will be monitored as part of the monthly leadership meeting and on an individual 1:1 basis with staff members.

### **Related Policies**

This policy and procedure should be inherent in every other policy and procedure within BUDDIES.

- Bullying and Harassment Policy (under construction)
- Disciplinary Policy

### **Legislation and Guidance**

#### **Relevant Legislation**

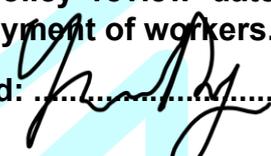
- Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998

## Guidance

- ACAS resources:  
<https://www.acas.org.uk/search?keys=equality+and+diversity>
- Accessible Information Standard  
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/accessibleinfo/>
- <https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/gps/gp-mythbuster-67-reasonable-adjustments-disabled-people>
- [Regulation 15: Premises and equipment | Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk)
- [Guidance for service providers | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

## END OF POLICY

The policy review date is **ONGOING**. On registration with **CQC**, and upon employment of workers.

Signed:  (MANAGING DIRECTOR)

Date: ..... 28<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024