



Treating people fairly and equally



Inside

- What is equality and diversity?
- MHP equality and diversity policy
- What can I do to make sure everyone is treated fairly and equally?

Treating people fairly and equally



We want to make sure our staff and service users are treated equally and that we celebrate difference. We have an 'MHP Equality and Diversity Policy' to make sure that we do this.

What is equality and diversity?

Equality and diversity means treating people as equals. It also means celebrating people's differences.

Discrimination is where people are not treated equally. It is against the law to discriminate against people because of their:

1. Religion or beliefs (for example, if a person is a Muslim)
2. Race (for example, if a person is of mixed race)
3. Gender (for example, if a person is a woman)
4. Sexuality (for example, if a person is gay)
5. Disability (for example, if a person uses a wheelchair)
6. Age (for example, being told that they are too young or too old)

What are MST's and MHP's values on equality and diversity?

- We value diversity (different people's backgrounds).
- We promote a culture where the differences between people are respected and celebrated.
- We are committed to dealing with people as individuals, and not as people defined by race, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, age, immigration status, criminal record and so on.

- We recognise that people may share common experiences based on these categories. We value an understanding of those experiences and of the different cultures or our communities.

We believe that by recognising, valuing and using diversity we can work with you to make sure we have a positive attitude to diversity when planning our services and giving you support.

What are MST's and MHP's goals to make sure everyone is treated fairly and equally?

We want to make sure that:

- we treat our staff and the people who use our services fairly, with dignity and respect
- we work together to create tolerant communities where everyone is included
- we support the people who use our services and our staff to meet their needs
- we make decisions openly and fairly
- we challenge racism and discrimination
- we welcome feedback about the equality and diversity of our services and we work to make them better

- we tackle disadvantage by supporting people who have particular needs.

Our policy makes sure that we are constantly working to achieve our aims. Each year we have a plan that says what we need to do to make sure we run a fair service. We check this plan every three months to see how we are getting on in meeting our goals.

How will MST make sure everyone who applies for support from MST is treated fairly and equally?

We will make sure:

- that everyone who applies to us goes through the same referral process
- that the people we accept meet the conditions for our services.

We will also ask for people's ethnic backgrounds to make sure that the number of people we accept from black and minority ethnic groups reflects the local community and the number of referrals we receive from this group.

How will MST make sure that everyone who gets support is treated fairly and equally?

We will provide support in a way that is sensitive to the needs of everyone who uses our services.

We will:

- employ and train staff to make sure that they are committed to, and have the skills to work with, different communities and deliver support services that meet our customers' needs
- identify the needs of the varied groups we work with. We will then develop our services to meet those needs
- consult everyone on any changes being planned to the service we provide
- make sure that everyone is benefiting from the services we offer.

What can I do to make sure everyone is treated fairly and equally?

To help us meet our goals, you can:

1. Tell us if you feel that you or anyone else has been treated unfairly or been discriminated against.

We have a 'Comments, Complaints and Compliments' process that you can use to do this.

We encourage you to use it where you feel appropriate. We know that we can make mistakes, and we need you to let us know so that we can continue to learn and improve what we do.

2. Tell us if you are being harassed.

We have a policy against harassment which is included in this Guide. We take all types of harassment very seriously, especially incidents of racial or sexual harassment if someone is prejudiced. You also have the right to take legal action against someone who is harassing you. We will support you to do this.

3. Let us know how you feel about our services and what needs to change.

Our 'Comments, Complaints and Compliments' process is a way for you to give feedback on our services, and information is included in this Guide. There are also a lot of other ways you can have your say. Information on this is also included in this Guide. Your involvement is a very important way of making sure that we value diversity and treat everyone fairly and equally.