

Healthwatch Croydon Equality and Diversity Policy

Purpose of this document

Healthwatch Croydon wishes to secure genuine equality of opportunity, whether required by legislation or not, in all its activities. It is committed to promoting anti-discriminative and anti-oppressive practices and will not tolerate any kind of discrimination, harassment or oppressive behaviour (see appendix 1).

It is the individual responsibility of everyone connected with and acting on behalf of Healthwatch Croydon to adhere to this policy.

We will review this policy on a regular basis.

Date:

Date for review:

Healthwatch Croydon aims to ensure that it:

- Is aware of Equality and Diversity issues
- Contributes towards promoting Equality and Diversity
- Avoids discrimination
- Puts this policy into practice

Legal Framework for Equality and Diversity

The Equality Act 2010 covers nine Protected Characteristics and aims to ensure people are not treated in a discriminatory or oppressive way:

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

Code of Practice

Healthwatch Croydon will take positive action to:

- Actively provide genuine equality of opportunity, enabling people from all groups to become members of the Healthwatch Croydon
- Help or encourage those in under-represented and seldom heard groups to engage with all Healthwatch Croydon activities
- Challenge and redress any internal discriminatory and oppressive practices and behaviours
- Withdraw Healthwatch Croydon membership from an individual who refuses to address their discriminatory behaviour; or fails to participate in any appropriate training deemed necessary

All members of Healthwatch Croydon should:

- Co-operate with measures to support and promote the Equality and Diversity Policy
- Take a pro-active approach to minimising oppressive practices, behaviour and attitudes
- Inform the Healthwatch Croydon Board if they have evidence of discrimination or inequality
- Comply with Equality and Diversity legislation

Responsibilities of Healthwatch Croydon Board

- All Healthwatch Croydon Board members should participate in appropriate Equality and Diversity training
- Investigate any alleged discrimination within Healthwatch Croydon activities and take appropriate action
- Ensure that Equality Impact is addressed in developing all new Healthwatch Croydon policies, policy reviews and plans
- Allegations of discrimination/harassment against a member/s of Healthwatch Croydon will be dealt with under the Healthwatch Croydon Complaints Policy.

Appendix 1

Definitions of Discrimination, Harassment, Victimisation and Anti Oppressive Practice

- Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated differently and worse than someone else because of who they are. This may be as a result of conscious or unconscious action or bias in a policy, system or procedure
- Indirect discrimination is when there's a practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a worse effect on some people than others
- Harassment is attention from another person which may be unwanted and makes you feel uncomfortable, even if the person doesn't mean to embarrass or harm you in any way. It also includes when a person deliberately wishes to frighten you for whatever reason. Harassment extends to interaction between people which they find acceptable but is offensive to a third party and includes, but is not limited to:
 - Physical or verbal threat or abuse
 - Mockery or innuendo
 - Assault
 - Unacceptable touching
 - Humiliation
- Anti-oppressive practice is an attempt to acknowledge oppression in societies, cultures and groups and remove or negate the influence of that oppression