

**PROMOTING
ANTI-
DISCRIMINATION
PRACTICE**

Work Manual

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Promoting Anti-Discrimination Practice

Work through this manual and answer the questions at the end returning to your team leader as soon as possible discussing any issues arising

What is Discrimination?

‘Discrimination means treating a person less favourably than others because of a particular factor/feature, than others would be treated in the same or similar situation or circumstances’

The feature/factor could be: -

- Race
- Sex
- Age
- Ability
- Class
- Sexuality
- HIV Status
- Language
- Religion

When can discrimination be appropriate fair and just?

Discrimination would be appropriate fair and just when a person is identified and selected because they are in some way disadvantaged and action is taken to redress the balance and therefore gives equal opportunities. Example- providing a dyslexic student could be identified because of being disadvantaged because they can not recognise words easily and then by providing a typewriter it makes it easier to recognise words balance the difference with others and therefore by providing a wheelchair ramp you are fairly discriminating, but by doing so you are providing equal opportunities for all - without the ramp it would not have allowed the opportunity for everyone to enter the building themselves

Equal opportunities - this does not mean treating everyone the same, as we are all different unique beings; it means providing services in a way that acknowledges differences redresses the balance and allows everyone the same opportunity

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Give some other examples of fair and just discrimination

Match the description with the stereotype: -

1. Busty, low cut blouses, blonde, outspoken and friendly
2. Little green man with antennas
3. Skinhead, big boots, drinks a lot, has tattoos
4. Wears a long college scarf, a bit eccentric, male,

- a) Man from Mars
- b) Oxford professor
- c) Football Hooligan
- d) Barmaid

Stereotypes may be strongly reinforced and become part of our beliefs becoming difficult to identify

Stereotyping

- means assuming that people within a group are the same because they share a common characteristic
- means making assumptions about people on the basis of a commonly shared feature e.g. red-haired women have a bad temper
- prevents care workers from viewing clients as individuals as having stereotypical picture of a group focuses on the things that are common between people rather than their differences

It is important that we realise that we all carry some stereotypical images around with us and importantly that we are aware of our attitudes if we are to avoid discriminatory practice

Care workers must be aware of their own beliefs, values, attitudes and stereotypical images they carry if they are to avoid discriminatory practice and care for people equally and non-judgmentally

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Complete the following exercises: -

Think about the following situation, discuss with colleagues, and then answer the questions at the end of each scenario

Sexist Attitudes

You have just been interviewed for a job At the group discussion before the formal interview, you realise you have the best qualifications in the group as well as the most relevant experience You feel the interview went well but you did not get the job You ask for information about why you did not get the job and they tell you ‘that young women are not a good bet as they only work a couple of years before getting pregnant or something’

Is this sexist? To women? To men?

Are there reasons for this policy?

Do they justify the policy?

How would you feel if this happened to you?

Can you think of other examples?

Sexist attitudes result in care workers treating people who are female (or male!) differently because they are women (men) and is an example of discriminatory practice

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Ageist Attitudes

In Britain we are not allowed to drive until we are 17 years old. Once we pass our driving test, we can drive on the same license until we are 70 years of age. After 70 we have to have periodic health checks and may have to take another test to continue driving

Is this ageist? At 70 years? At 17 years?

Are there reasons for this policy?

Do the reasons justify the policy?

Would you feel differently about this issue if: -

- you were 16?
- you were 65?

Can you think of other examples?

Ageist attitudes result in care workers treating older people differently from others because they are old and is an example of discriminatory practice

Racist Attitudes

The Manager asks to see you. She explains that Mrs. Walden has asked that you do not visit her again. You paid your first visit yesterday. You feel upset and ask what the problem is. The Manager is embarrassed and uncomfortable but finally tells you that Mrs. Walden does not like 'foreign people' as the client has the right to choose. The Manager agreed to a change.

Is this racist?

Who is being racist: the client? the Manager?

Is client choice an issue here and should it be supported?

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Does this justify the Manager's action?

How would you feel if it happened to you?

Can you think of other examples?

Racist attitudes result in care workers treating people from other ethnic backgrounds differently from others because they are a member of an ethnic minority and is an example of discriminatory practice

There has been a heavy focus in recent years on the main areas of discrimination often leading to legislation to make it unlawful

Example: -

Sex discrimination Act 1975

The Equal Pay Act 1975

Race Relations Act 1976

Mental health Act 1983

Disabled Person's Act 1986

The Children's Act 1989

The National Health Service and Community care Act 1990

However these main issues may still persist as a problem area as we have seen in the last 3 exercises

Discrimination often focuses around issues such as racism, sexism, and ageism, but it can also be subtle.

Can you add to this list below of subtle forms of discrimination?

- Offering a better service because you have been visiting them a long time
- doing things differently for a client because you like or dislike them
- spending less time with clients that are challenging

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- treating clients differently because they have a different social status or professional status
- always asking the same person to compromise because they are willing and flexible
- doing things differently because you already know or knew about the client

Practice can be **non-discriminatory**. This is a passive activity where the care worker recognises what discrimination is and tries to adopt a non-judgmental approach

or

Anti-discriminatory - an active approach that challenges discrimination when it occurs

Care workers need to be positively and actively anti-discriminatory rather than non-discriminatory which is a passive process

So how can we promote anti-discriminatory practice in care?

Basically treat clients as individuals, respect their wishes, doing things as they want them or explaining why it is not possible; empower the client upholding their rights. Be aware of your own attitudes and challenge discrimination don't ignore it

Recognise care is about doing with not doing for

Examples

- Individual eating habits to be respected
- jokes comments and language not to give offence
- culture and customs to be respected
- respect for individual differences encouraged
- access to an interpreter if required
- aids and adaptations to be made available (should also include time and assistance given to individual needs to ensure equal opportunities)
- respect for mother tongue
- staff behaviour to model good practice; physical care products and aids to be enabling
- staff to be encouraged to be self aware;
- acknowledgment and acceptance of people's sexual orientation
- availability of advocacy (advocacy is speaking on behalf of others)
- discriminatory remarks to be challenged

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- staff to be encouraged to be aware (of own prejudice attitudes and up-bringing)

Promoting Anti Discrimination practice

Questions

1. What is unfair unjust discrimination?
2. Give some stereotypical names given to the elderly?
3. What effect can stereotyping can have?
4. What is prejudice?
5. What are equal opportunities?

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Answer activity - match the stereotype

1 = d

2 = a

3 = c

4 = b

Answer activity - Sexist attitudes

This is sexist to women

There are no reasons for this policy apart from companies being frightened that they may have to pay maternity benefit. This is not justified and if it happened to me I would be very angry and insulted. Other examples - A woman who is wearing a short skirt etc is asking for men to sexual harass her.

Answer activity - Ageist attitudes

Yes this is ageist at 70 years

There are some very unfit young people and some very healthy 70 year olds

The policy is generalizing and is not justified as any age can be affected. It would therefore be better and non discriminatory to include all ages in the health checks.

A minimum age to drive is ageist because some people are very mature at 17 whereas a lot of older people are immature and would make dangerous drivers it would be difficult to gauge individual's ability so a set age seems reasonable or would it then be ageist to 13 year olds if 14 year olds were allowed to drive

I would feel stronger about the issues if I was the same age as it directly would affect me and I would feel personally discriminated against

Other examples-:

Retirement at 65 years - some people are very fit and would like to continue working

Under 18 year olds cannot be independent and claim benefits

Most agencies class you as too old adopt after 40 years of age

Answers activity - Racist attitudes

Both the client and care co-coordinator have behaved racist

the client choice is an issue here and should be supported but the rights of the care worker also should be supported.

The action of the co-coordinator is not justified the clients attitude should be challenged The care co-coordinator should have discussed the clients

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feelings because she may be able to quell any worries the client may have about 'foreign people' and by supporting the carer she would show her faith in the carer: promote anti discrimination and still give choice to the client.

If I was the carer I would feel unhappy angry and hurt

Other examples would include refusing a carer because of their sex: sexual inclinations; religion etc

Although the right of the client should be supported and their choices respected racist and abusive behaviour should not be condoned as the abused person also has rights.

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Answers to Questions

1. What is unfair unjust discrimination?

A. Discrimination is unfair and unjust when it involves favouring an individual or groups over others on the basis of characteristics e.g. beliefs, culture, gender, colour, abilities, or even just because you like them better

2. Give some stereotypical names given to the elderly?

A. Crinklies; O.A.P; old codger; the stroke in room 3

3. What effect can stereotyping can have?

A. It prevents care workers from seeing clients as individuals - this can lead to clients losing their self esteem and confidence

4. What is prejudice?

A. To pre judge - it is an unfavourable opinion formed without a proper judgement

5. What are equal opportunities?

A. Allowing everyone the same opportunity- which means you need to provide for individual needs e.g. provide a wheelchair ramp to the cinema so everyone has access and therefore is allowed the same opportunity