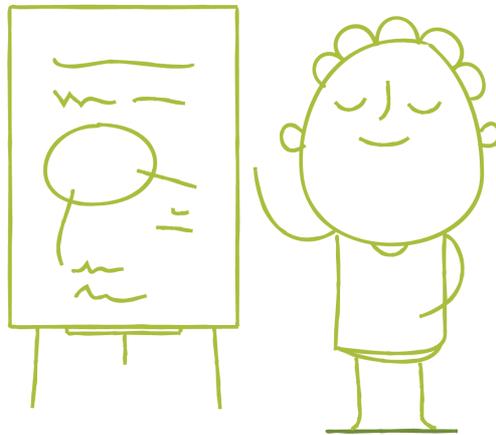


CARE CERTIFICATE

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

STANDARD 4 Equality and diversity



Diversity

Diversity is about difference. It is about recognising the difference between individuals and groups, and respecting this. It's also about challenging others if necessary and speaking up for the service users you support when they cannot speak up for themselves.

As a support worker, you need to be open minded because you will be supporting people who are different from you. They may be of a different gender, be of a different sexual orientation or have different beliefs to you.

If you are not aware of how a service user is different from you, you will not be able to provide the correct support. For example, suppose you were supporting a service user who is Muslim. Many Muslims choose to wash in running water rather than taking a bath. You could cause offense to them if you were not aware of this.

Even though you don't mean to cause any upset, you may still do so if you do not know about a service user's religion, culture, way of life and the things that are really important to him/her. A lack of awareness of social, religious or cultural differences can lead to insensitive care.

Remember – we are all equal but we are not all the same.

Prejudice and discrimination

Have you ever been unfairly judged because of the way you look, how you dress, your accent, your hairstyle, the music you like, the things you believe in?

Prejudice means how we think about other people, how we pre-judge other people.

Prejudice means jumping to conclusions about people based on incomplete information. For example, because your hair is a certain colour and style and you have body piercings, people may label you as a trouble maker.

Once people act on these beliefs, the prejudice becomes discrimination. This is the unfair and unequal treatment of an individual or a group.

Remember – Prejudice is the thinking, discrimination is the behaviour

Most people have experienced discrimination in one way or another but some people are more likely to suffer discrimination. These people might be:

- Older people
- Young people

- Women
- People with disabilities
- People from the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community
- Ethnic minorities
- People with mental health problems

Examples of discrimination

- Not employing a married woman because she is likely to have time off due to pregnancy and childcare in the future work
- A woman with visual and hearing impairments has booked a taxi. The driver asks her to pay the fare in advance, something he would not require from other passengers. The driver believes without good reason that because of her disability she is less likely to be able to pay
- A GP refers all black patients to a black doctor at the practice, solely because of their ethnicity, not their particular needs.
- Failing to offer culturally appropriate food, such as kosher or halal foods

Different types of discrimination

- **Direct discrimination** – here, the discrimination is deliberate, done on purpose. Certain individuals are treated less favourably or given a lower standard of service because of their gender, ethnicity, culture, disability, religion, sexuality, social class, mental health or age. You must be aware of your own prejudices and make absolutely sure that you do not provide an inferior standard of support to certain individuals.
- **Indirect discrimination** – here, the discrimination is inadvertent, not done on purpose. A rule or policy that applies to everybody is disadvantageous for people from a certain group. For example, if a council only produces information about its housing applications procedure in English, this puts people whose first language is not English at an unfair disadvantage and could be seen as indirect discrimination.
- **Victimisation** – Could take place if someone is treated badly because they have done something that is disapproved. For example, they may have made a complaint about their workplace and are being victimised because of this.

Equality and inclusion

Inclusion is a human right for every individual. The aim of inclusion is to embrace all people irrespective of race, gender, disability, medical or other need, culture, age, religion or sexual orientation.

It is about giving equal access and opportunities and getting rid of discrimination and intolerance.

People who receive support with daily living are often vulnerable. They are vulnerable because they are, to some degree, dependant on others. They may have been forced to live on the “edge” of society and so miss out on the opportunities enjoyed by other people. They may not be seen as having equal value because others judge them negatively.

Sometimes people with learning disabilities are judged negatively and are seen as having nothing useful to contribute to society. They may become excluded from their community and discriminated against (treated unfairly).

Equality and inclusion for people with learning disabilities means being heard and taken seriously, being treated as an adult, enjoying a life free from prejudice and discrimination, having the same rights as other people, not being isolated and marginalised in society and being included in the life of the community.

Another type of discrimination is ageism – treating someone unfairly because of their age.

Examples of ageism:

- Being refused a new credit card on the grounds of old age
- A GP deciding not to refer a patient to a Consultant because s/he is “too old”
- A GP not recognising an older patient has depression because of the belief that “all old people are miserable”
- Being seen as careless and irresponsible because you are a teenager

Inclusive support

In your role you need to:

- Understand that treating people fairly does not mean treating people in the same way. You need to recognise difference and respond appropriately.
- Increase your knowledge and understanding of people who are different from you.
- Avoid stereotyping or making assumptions about people
- Avoid using inappropriate and disrespectful language