

South Staffordshire



Primary Care Trust

## **Gender Equality Scheme**

Published 8<sup>th</sup> May 2007

This Scheme will be subject to initial and ongoing consultation and the involvement of managers and staff side organisations and 'key stakeholders' as identified – see Section 8 and Appendix 2 of this document

## **1 Introduction**

Statement of Commitment and intent from the Chair, Chief Executive and Board to fulfilling the duties of the PCT under the Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1975 (as amended by the Equality Act 2006).

The PCT wholly accepts and recognises its duties under the Acts to :

- promote equality of opportunity within the community it serves between all people irrespective of their gender
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act. This can be either direct discrimination which relates to less favourable treatment of a person due to their gender, and can be people employed by the PCT or in receipt of services from the PCT
- eliminate harassment of people within the community it serves that is related to their gender. This shall include not only people who have complained about unfair treatment based on their gender, but also others who might speak out to support a colleague, relative or friend who they feel has been treated unfairly on the basis of their gender.
- promote positive and sensitive attitudes towards people irrespective of their gender, amongst both employees and more widely within the community it serves
- encourage participation by people in all aspects public life within the local community irrespective of their gender.
- to take steps to recognize the differing needs of people relating to their gender and to meet those needs, even where this may require more favourable treatment.

This scheme seeks to outline the arrangements established, or which the PCT will establish to ensure that the PCT fully meets it's responsibilities in respect of all of the above duties.

## **2. Designation of Responsibilities**

The PCT believes that all employees have a role and responsibility in helping the PCT fulfill its responsibilities relating to the needs and interest of people relating to their gender, within the community it serves, and the Action Plan, (see Appendix 1 and Section 9 below), will incorporate an on-going training programme to ensure that all staff have an understanding of their role and responsibilities, and also have an awareness of the differing needs and interests of people relating to their gender. (see Section 7 below).

The PCT will however designate :

- A lead Non-Executive Director to take the lead on behalf of the Board
- A lead Executive Director to take the lead in the management and measurement of progress in implementing this scheme
- A designated Gender Action Plan manager, to manage and co-ordinate activities and the achievement of targets across the PCT.

Notwithstanding the responsibilities of all employees, the PCT recognizes the particular responsibilities and contributions of :

- Managers - in respect of employment practices within the PCT
- Service lead managers and planners – to take account of the differing needs and interests of people relating to their gender in the planning and delivery of services.
- Commissioner leads – to ensure in the commissioning of services from providers – that those services take and full and relevant account of the differing needs and interests of people relating to their gender.
- Patient and Public Involvement, and Patient Advice Liaison Service Leads.
- HR leads – to ensure that employment practice and employment policies and procedures meet the differing needs, circumstances and interests of people relating to their gender.

The PCT will establish a Gender Equality Scheme Action Group, involving representatives of the above, and representatives from 'key stakeholders' (See Section 8 below), to be responsible the further development and measurement of progress of the Gender Equality Action Plan (see Section 9 below). This group will also have responsibility for actions and progress in respect of other areas of equality and diversity, including equality issues relating to race, disability, age, sexual orientation, and religious belief.

### **3. Mapping and initial assessment of current position.**

A priority responsibility of the Equality Action Group will be to undertake an initial assessment of the current position of the PCT in relation to its gender equality duties. This will included an examination of current employment policies (see Section 5 below) and services to identify what is working and where the gaps and main priorities are. This will enable them to assess how the PCT is performing on gender equality and prioritize areas for action.

The group will need to make use of information available relating to employment of people and the use of, and access to services of people based on their gender, to assess the PCTs current position. The group will also need to review and improve arrangements for the on-going gathering of information to enable the PCT to monitor and improve services and policies and procedures (see Section 4 below). The Group will also consider establishing a set of relevant performance indicators and setting objectives to measure successful outcomes of proposed actions within the Gender Equality Action Plan.

Arising from this assessment the Group will be responsible for producing and regularly updating a rolling 3 year Gender Equality Action Plan (see Section 9 below).

The Action Plan (see Appendix 1) will include a programme for the review and updating existing policies. (see Section 5 below).

### **4. The gathering and use of information**

The PCT recognizes that in order to monitor services effectively for any relevance to gender equality, it is necessary to have information on regarding staff and service users relating to their gender.

The PCT will review current arrangements for the gathering and use of relevant information, and will make use of a full range of methods for data capture and use, including :

- the outcomes of staff and service user surveys
- the use of targeted surveys
- consulting with staff network groups
- consulting with voluntary and statutory organisations
- organising specific focus group sessions.

The PCT will ensure that relevant questions are included in the annual staff opinion survey.

The PCT will also review the capture and accuracy of data captured by the PCTs workforce information systems (PRISM/ESR).

The PCT will particularly gather and analyse data relating to the grades and salaries of employees to identify and address any gender pay gap.

The PCT may also initiate one-off pieces of research where necessary, and will also consider and make use of information and reports from relevant external sources, such as the current Equal Opportunities Commission.

## **5. Assessing and reviewing current policies**

The PCT has a range of existing policies relating to the promoting of equality and the combating of disadvantage and discrimination which are relevant to the situation of employees with a gender. These include the PCT's :

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Guidelines
- Dignity and Respect at Work Policy
- Policy and Guidelines Sickness Absence and the management of ill health sickness absence
- Policy and guidelines on flexible working
- Policy on Special Leave for Domestic, Personal, Family and other Reasons

The Gender Equality Action Plan will include a programme the assessment of existing policies for relevance and how they will be prioritised in order of relevance to gender equality. In addition, a timetable will be drawn up for the assessments to be completed within the initial three year lifetime of the gender equality scheme.

## **6. Impact Assessment**

The PCT recognizes the value and importance of undertaking impact assessments in relation to both current and new policies, and services.

The PCT will screen each new or changed policy or service to establish it's relevance to gender equality. Those policies and services, or service developments, identified as relevant will be subject to a full impact assessment.

The PCT has established a framework and protocol for Equality Impact Assessment which will be used in this context. All relevant managers and service planners will

receive training and briefing in the Impact Assessment process. All relevant reports and service development proposals considered by the PCT Board, and other relevant bodies within the PCT, will include the outcome of the Impact Assessment as part of their consideration for approval.

## **7. Training – Staff Awareness, Understanding and Skills**

The PCT recognizes the importance of ensuring that all staff :

- Have a proper awareness of the requirements of this scheme, of relevant legislation and of other relevant PCT policies and processes.
- Are aware of their responsibilities under the provisions of this scheme and other relevant policies.
- Have the knowledge, skills and confidence to undertake duties relevant to the scheme, such as the undertaking of impact assessments.
- Are aware the range of differing circumstances, needs and requirements of both employees and service users relating to gender differences.

The PCT will have an on-going programme of training for staff to meet the above needs. A general Equality and Diversity session will be part of the required 'mandatory training' for all PCT employees.

## **8. Involvement and Engagement – key stakeholders**

The PCT recognizes the value and need to actively involve people (both staff and service users) in achieving gender equality and that involving people from the outset will help the PCT identify priorities for actions on gender equality.

This scheme and its implementation will be the subject of on-going and regular consultation with and development in light of feedback from, people and groups, both from within the PCT and within the community the PCT serves.

The PCT will establish a Register of Key Stakeholders, of individuals and groups of people who have a particular and specific experience, expertise or interest in issues relating to gender, who can be asked to participate and contribute to the development and implementation of this scheme, in the review of existing policies (see Section 5 above), and in the Impact Assessment Process (see Section 6 above). This register will include :

- service users with a experience of service provision where gender is an important consideration in recognising and meeting needs.
- carers and advocates of people relating to differing gender needs
- representative organisations, including groups representing the transsexual community
- patient forums
- people from the wider community with an interest or concern for people based on their gender
- staff with a particular interest in the above and/or recognizing and meeting the differing employment needs of staff based on their gender
- staff network groups
- trade unions.
- Support groups, including transgender support groups

An initial Register of Key Stakeholders will be developed as a priority – see Appendix 1 – Gender Action Plan and Appendix 2. This register will be the subject of continuous and on-going development and updating.

The PCT's Gender Equality Action Plan will ensure that people with a specific experience, perspective and/or interest in gender issues are actively involved in:

- developing methods of data collection
- research into barriers to participation
- disseminating evidence
- identifying gaps in employment functions and services to the public
- agreeing the way forward, including what should be incorporated into the action plan.

The PCT will make use of existing arrangements for consultation and involvement such as the PCT's JSP, but also recognizes the need to use as relevant and necessary other methods such as :

- events specifically organised for the purposes of consultation, inviting people with particular interests, experiences or expertise in gender issues relating to employment or service provision to take part
- forums and workshops
- one-to-one interviews with volunteers.

## **9. Action Plan**

An initial Gender Equality Action Plan is attached to this scheme (Appendix 1)

This will be the subject of on-going review and updating. The lead responsibility will be that of the Equality Scheme Action Group (see Section 2 above), but the Action Plan, and changes to it will be the subject of the involvement of, and consultation with 'key stakeholders' (see Section 8 above) and agreement by the PCT Board.

The Action Group will ensure that the Action Plan is developed to ensure that it includes :

- proposals for monitoring all policies and functions which have a gender equality dimension
- proposals for developing a local Register of Stakeholders of local groups and people with an interest and expertise in recognising and addressing gender issues.
- proposals for carrying out impact assessments, with timescales for completion
- proposals for future involvement and engagement of people with an experience of disparities in employment and service delivery in developing proposals for how these will be addressed
- proposals for ensuring access to information and services, including physical access to premises, as well as action to improve written and verbal communication
- proposals for training staff on the requirements of the SDA and raising the awareness of staff in the differing needs and sensitivities of people based on or relating to their gender

- Proposals for guidelines and advice to managers and staff on managing the needs of members of the transsexual community and those experiencing gender reassignment
- proposals for publishing the results of monitoring, impact assessments and progress against targets and making information available to staff and the public
- proposals for analyzing and addressing any pay equality gap within the PCT
- a timetable for taking this work forward, including clear targets, and outcomes
- an indication of resources needed to take actions forward
- an indication of responsibilities for taking actions forward and who will be ultimately accountable.

The Action Group will also define arrangements for monitoring on how progress in implementing the Action Plan will be monitored. This will include the identification key relevant performance indicators and relevant PCT objectives or targets relating to these indicators.

## **10. Commissioning – contracts and the provision of service by other providers**

It is recognized that the PCT has a duty under the legislation to ensure that services it commissions meet the requirements of the law. As the PCT will review its commissioning processes to ensure that gender considerations are built into the process.

As such the PCT will ensure that services commissioned by providers, including independent contractors are also assessed for any relevance to Gender Equality and that this includes ensuring that the provider/contractor has measures in place to meet the Gender Equality Duty.

A programme will be undertaken to ensure that all current contracts are reviewed and revised to include criteria which :

- information on the SDA in standard terms and conditions for contracting services
- inserting a clause in contracts specifying that the contractor must comply with the anti-discrimination provisions of the SDA
- specifying in a contract what evidence the contractor needs to gather to demonstrate compliance with the duties
- ensuring that gender equality is appropriately reflected and given due consideration in the specification, selection and award criteria, and the contract conditions
- ensuring that contractors fully understand the gender equality requirements of the contract
- monitoring the performance of gender equality where relevant to the contract.

## **11. Reporting on Progress**

As a minimum progress on the action plan will be reported at least once a year to the PCT Board and information included in the PCT's Annual Report.

The results of impact assessments will be reported as they are carried out and will include in reports and proposals submitted to the PCT Board for consideration/approval.

Reports on progress to staff will be made through the JSP, PCT staff newsletters and the PCT's websites.

It is recognized that it is important that information is given to service users and the general public on progress and the results of impact assessments in accessible formats to those who need this information.

Information which is posted on the website will also be made available in hard copy for those who do not have the ability to access to computers and other formats, on request, such as audio, Braille, large print, and Easyread.

## Appendix 1

### Initial Gender Action Plan – April 2007

This Action Plan is the initial plan of actions and objectives agreed for the PCT to achieve and fulfil its duties under the . the Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1975 (as amended by the Equality Act 2006).

It will be the subject of ongoing development and review by the PCT Equality Action Plan Group who will ensure that all proposed changes are reported to and agreed by the PCT Board.

Section Ref.	Activity	Target Date	Lead Responsibility
1	Consideration and agreement of Scheme by the PCT Board	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev.
2	Consultation with a view to agreement with PCT JSP	May and June 2007 JSP meetings	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev
3	Dissemination of Scheme to staff via Newsletter and websites	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev
4	Designation of Director Leads and Action Plan Manager	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev
5	Establishment of Equality Scheme Action Group	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev
7	Completion of initial assessment of current position. Updating of this Equality Scheme Action Plan in light of assessment.	31 <sup>st</sup> September 2007	Equality Scheme Action Group
8	Review of available data relevant to gender equality. Development of plan to improve data capture and accuracy and arrangements for reporting on data	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2007	Equality Scheme Action Group
9	Development of a plan to review and update existing policies and procedures to take account of gender equality issues	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev
10	Dissemination of Impact Assessment Protocol, Documentation and Guidance to relevant staff within the PCT. Commencement of a programme of briefing and training on the process with relevant staff.	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev
11	Development and commencement of a full training programme to meet the needs of all staff in relation to Gender Equality issues – as outlined in Section 7	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev
12	Development of a Register of key gender equality stakeholders	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev
13	Undertake analysis to assess and address any equality pay gap within the PCT	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev
14	Develop guidelines and a protocol for addressing issues relating to the provision of services and employment of members of the transsexual community	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2007	Head of Workforce, Learning & Dev

10	Establishment of arrangements and programme to review contracts and commissioning arrangements to ensure consideration of gender equality issues	31 <sup>st</sup> September 2007	Director of Commissioning and Redesign
11	Ensure dissemination of this scheme and updated Action Plan to staff and all 'key stakeholders'	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2007	Head of Communications

## Gender Equality Scheme Register of 'key stakeholders'

(to be developed see Gender Equality Action Plan – Appendix 1)

### Supporting Web Sites:

#### 1 Useful Web Sites - General :

<http://www.sws-pct.nhs.uk/iwl/iwl.htm>  
<http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk>  
<http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HumanResourcesAndTraining/ModelEmployer/ImprovingWorkingLives/fs/en>  
<http://www.nhsemployers.org/excellence/equality-diversity.cfm>  
<http://www.eoc.org.uk/>  
<http://www.cipd.co.uk/default.cipd>  
<http://www.acas.org.uk/>  
<http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/nhs/>

#### 2 Gender Issues

### Supporting Web Sites:

<http://www.gender.org.uk>  
<http://www.gender.org.uk>  
<http://www.wedo.org>  
<http://www.eurosur.org/wide/home.htm>  
<http://www.eoc.org.uk/>