

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy

This policy applies to: Trustees
Staff
Volunteers

Introduction and Definitions

1. AvMA is committed to the principles of equality, inclusion and diversity in respect of those who work for us and in how we work with and represent the interests of our beneficiaries. 'Beneficiaries' are the people our charity aims to help, including both our 'clients' (those in receipt of our services) and other people affected by or who may be affected by avoidable harm in healthcare. We also want to promote these principles in all the ways we work.
2. 'Equality' means ensuring no-one working in a paid or voluntary capacity with AvMA is affected by discrimination and has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential at work. It also means ensuring that our beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries can access and benefit from our activities free from discrimination. 'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work or in their engagement with AvMA and feels the worth of their contribution. 'Diversity' means positively seeking to attract people of all kinds and welcoming and respecting individual differences amongst everyone who works with, engages with or receives services from AvMA.

Principles/Statement of Policy

3. We will actively support equality, diversity and inclusion and ensure that all our employees, volunteers, trustees and beneficiaries are valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone involved with AvMA to reach their full potential.
4. We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All job applicants, employees, volunteers, trustees and others (including agency workers) who work for the organization are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of involvement with AvMA including recruitment, selection, training, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored, and policies and practices are amended if necessary, to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.
5. Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law are to the benefit of all individuals in our charity as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for preventing discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to prevent discrimination and provide equality throughout the charity.

Management Responsibilities

6. Management will ensure that recruitment, selection, training, development and promotion procedures result in no job applicant, employee, or volunteer receiving less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010 which are race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin and caste), religion or belief, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership and age.
7. In accordance with our overarching equal treatment ethos, we will also ensure that no-one is treated less favourably on account of their trade union membership or non-membership, or on the basis of being a part-time worker or fixed-term employee. The charity's objective is to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted, and otherwise treated solely on the basis of their relevant aptitudes, skills and abilities.
8. This policy will be communicated to relevant private contractors, speakers at conferences etc informing them that we require them to ensure work conducted on our behalf should be done in ways which are consistent with this policy.
9. This policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.
10. Management and the Council of trustees have the primary responsibility for successfully meeting these objectives by:
 - promoting and putting into practice our principles of equality, diversity and inclusion to everyone inside the organisation and to those we work with
 - not discriminating against employees, volunteers or job applicants
 - operating an open and fair recruitment procedure (see below)
 - not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination
 - bringing to the attention of our workforce that they may be subject to action under the disciplinary procedure, or other appropriate action, for breaching this policy or unlawful discrimination of any kind.
 - taking reasonable steps to ensure opportunities for employment or involvement with AvMA, or access to our services are advertised or promoted so as to reach and appeal to a diverse range of people
 - monitoring to what extent we are achieving our goals of equality, diversity and inclusion and, where necessary, being proactive in addressing any shortcomings
 - removing as far as possible any physical barriers to employment, involvement or access to services
 - addressing through our influencing work how our principles of equality, diversity and inclusion can be better put into practice in the external environment for the benefit of our beneficiaries
 - providing training where necessary to help staff, volunteers or trustees understand why we have this policy and how to put it into action

Individual Responsibilities of staff, volunteers and trustees

11. You must contribute by:

- promoting and putting into practice our principles of equality, diversity and inclusion
- not discriminating against any individuals including fellow employees, volunteers, beneficiaries, clients, suppliers or members of the public with whom you come into contact during the course of your duties
- not inducing or attempting to induce others to practise unlawful discrimination
- reporting any discriminatory action to your Line Manager or if this is not possible to the Chief Executive (or in the case of trustees, to the Chair)

The successful achievement of these objectives necessitates a contribution from everyone, and you have an obligation to report any act of discrimination known to you. If you consider that you are a victim of discrimination you may raise the issue through the grievance procedure.

Our Beneficiaries, the public and other stakeholders

12. We place great emphasis on ensuring that our beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries do not experience unfair discrimination with regard to access to or delivery of our services or activities. We also expect our staff, volunteers, and trustees to comply with this policy in how they deal with any external stakeholders. We will try wherever possible to achieve diversity in all of our activities, including conferences, meetings, projects etc.

If you feel you have been discriminated against by anyone acting on behalf of AvMA, you can raise this through our complaints procedure.

Recruitment

13. When we recruit staff, volunteers or trustees we will do so as follows:

- Vacancies will be advertised so as to reach a diverse range of people and with a clear statement of our commitment to equality and diversity. Consideration will be given to targeted advertising to attract candidates from under-represented groups
- If an employment agency is used, the agency must demonstrate that it can reach a diverse range of people and that it works in ways consistent with this policy
- Applicants will be assessed objectively on how they meet essential and desirable criteria. Criteria will be set so as not to discriminate by setting criteria which are not necessary and in effect exclude people.
- Applicants who have declared they have a disability will be guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential criteria
- At least two people will shortlist and interview applicants for paid employment

Monitoring and Review

14. Each department will have an objective to promote equality, inclusion and diversity and report on what it is doing to support these principles. Equality, inclusion and diversity in AvMA will be reviewed by the Council of Trustees annually.

Related Policies

- Grievance Policy & Procedure
- Complaints Policy & Procedure

Agreed at: Council 24.3.20

To be reviewed: 2023

Lead Committee: Executive Committee