

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

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1 Introduction

Equality and Diversity is about accepting and embracing people's differences. Harnessing differences creates a productive environment in which everyone feels valued and where talents are fully utilised.

Healthwatch Havering recognises that people have been discriminated against and still are because of many things, for example; ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, sexuality religion and also through unemployment, ill health, social exclusion, socio-economic factors and other less obvious reasons.

This commitment applies to everyone involved with Healthwatch Havering

- Directors
- Staff
- Lead and Active Members
- Supporters
- Those with whom we come into contact

2 Definitions

Equality is about treating people fairly and with respect, giving regard for others rights and wishes.

Diversity is those human qualities present in other individuals and groups that are different from our own and outside the group to which we belong. Diversity consists of visible and non-visible difference. Diversity includes characteristics that are inborn and unchangeable; age, ethnicity, physical abilities/qualities/disabilities and differences that are acquired and those that may change throughout life. Examples are educational background, geographical location, income, marital status, religious beliefs, health and work experience.

3 The Commitment

Healthwatch Havering participants commit:

- To contribute to an environment that is without discrimination, accessible, comfortable, healthy, welcoming and free of harassment, victimisation and bullying
- To demonstrate and share their commitment to valuing equality and diversity and to develop attitudes and behaviour that support this
- To challenge what they consider to be unacceptable behaviour, be pro-active with regard to diversity.
- To identify their own learning and development needs on equality and diversity issues continuously and undertake relevant training to maintain and improve their knowledge and contribute to the learning and developments of others
- To consider what may be of offence to somebody else
- To not tolerate exploitation of position within the organisation
- To recognise that it is not acceptable to withhold information and knowledge necessary to allow others to undertake their duties
- To not make subjective judgements on ability and future potential

4 Complaints

Any complaint will be taken seriously and dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner on accordance with Healthwatch Havering Complaint Procedure. The Healthwatch Havering Complaint Investigator is available for confidential consultation with Healthwatch Havering participants relating to discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation.

5 Conclusion

Healthwatch Havering is committed to advancing equality and diversity as a key feature within all its activities, as it believes this to be ethically right and sociably acceptable. Healthwatch Havering will review this statement on an annual basis to ensure it continues to recognise current legislation and meets the diverse needs in which the Healthwatch Havering operates