

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

### **1.0 STATEMENT OF INTENT**

- 1.1 Livingstone House strives to be an equal opportunities employer. The purpose of this policy is to assist Livingstone House and its Board of Trustees in achieving this aim.
- 1.2 Livingstone House recognises that discrimination exists and people are most commonly disadvantaged by discrimination on the grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, disability, religious belief or political opinion.
- 1.3 As a charitable organisation that provides services for people with substance misuse needs, Livingstone House also recognises the discrimination and disadvantage experienced by people with these needs.

Livingstone House is committed to:

- Ensuring that current and potential employees will be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.
  - Promoting conditions in which employees can reach their full potential and maximise their contribution to the work of Livingstone House.
  - Tackling any sign of institutional racism or any form of discrimination.
  - Taking positive action to promote equal opportunities and raising awareness of the value of diversity in employment and in communities.
  - Employing a workforce whose composition reflects that of the community it serves.
- 1.4 This policy covers all aspects of employment, from vacancy advertising, selection recruitment and training to conditions of service and reasons for the termination of employment.
  - 1.5 Ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of records relating to the above will provide the basis for appropriate action to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.
  - 1.6 This policy has been informed by advice from the relevant bodies (e.g. the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities

Commission, and the Department of Health's Positively Diverse Programme).

- 1.7 This policy will be supported by an action plan for each area of potential discrimination which will set out the specific actions to be taken to address the needs identified and ensure that the policy commitment's long term objective is achieved.

## **2.0 VACANCY ADVERTISING & JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

- 2.1 All vacancies will be advertised externally in Addiction Recovery Today and local Birmingham Evening Mail for a minimum period of ten working days.
- 2.2 The Board of Trustees and Home Director have discretion to decide whether to advertise internally initially and only proceed to external advert if no appointment is made or whether to advertise internally and externally simultaneously.
- 5.2 Every advert will contain the Two Ticks Disability Symbol. Depending upon the need identified in Livingstone House, adverts will also include a positive statement of encouragement for particular groups to apply, including people with experience of a substance misuse problem and **who are committed to abstinence and following a 12 step programme of recovery from substance misuse.**
- 2.4 Every post advertised must be supported by a written job description and person specification based on objective job related criteria.
- 2.5 Person specifications will not require applicants to have a standard of English higher than that needed for safe and effective performance of the job.
- 2.6 Details of external adverts will be sent to job centres, and appropriate voluntary/statutory organisations which have significant minority group rolls in order to increase the pool of applicants to Livingstone House.
- 2.7 Managers will be provided with information about minority press/media in which adverts may be placed to target particular minority groups. It will be for the manager to determine the appropriate media depending upon the need identified in their service area.
- 2.8 Where ever necessary, use will be made of the "genuine occupational qualification", to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups.

**3.0 SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT**

- 3.1 Short listing for a post must always be carried out by more than one person, and one of those individuals, must have undertaken Livingstone House's Recruitment and Selection training or have been assessed as competent by the Board of Trustees.
- 3.2 Selection interviews must always be carried out by more than one person. As a minimum, the Chair of the interview panel must have undergone Livingstone House's Recruitment and Selection training programme or have been assessed as competent by the Board of Trustees.
- 3.3 A formal record of short listing decisions and a record of appointment decisions together with reasons for rejection/selection will be made and kept for one year in respect of each post.

**4.0 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1 Specialised training and refresher courses will be provided for all staff responsible for recruitment and selection, performance management and appraisal to provide them with the knowledge and skills to carry out these responsibilities in accordance with Livingstone House's policy.
- 4.2 More general Diversity Awareness training will be provided for all staff with supervisory responsibilities and/or responsibility for interpretation of conditions of service or Livingstone House employment policies. One of the key outcomes of this training will be to develop a greater awareness of how discrimination can take place unwittingly as a result of poor communication/understanding of people from different cultures.
- 4.3 Every employee will take part in an annual appraisal and, together with their manager, will develop and agree a personal development programme, which will be regularly reviewed.
- 4.4 All employees will be encouraged to utilise the training, education and development facilities available to enable them to progress within Livingstone House and the wider professional community providing treatment for substance misuse.
- 4.5 Wherever possible and appropriate, special training will be provided for under-represented groups to prepare them to compete on genuinely equal terms for jobs including promotions. However, recruitment to all posts will still be strictly on merit.

- 4.6 A section of the corporate induction programme will be used to ensure new staff are made aware of the existence of this policy and the rights and responsibilities it confers.

## **5.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

- 5.1 Wherever possible, efforts will be made to identify and remove unnecessary/unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged and/or under-represented groups.

## **6.0 RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF**

- 6.1 Employees are required to comply with this policy, as with all Livingstone House policies and procedures.
- 6.2 Failure to do so will be viewed most seriously and may result in disciplinary action being taken, which could result in dismissal in cases of gross misconduct.

## **7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOME MANAGER/HOME DIRECTOR**

- 7.1 Managers must apply all employment policies fairly but particular attention must be given to policies on Discipline, Capability, Sickness, Grievance, Bullying & Harassment, Recruitment and Selection, so as to avoid direct and indirect discrimination.
- 7.2 Managers must make all reasonable efforts to promote equality of opportunity within their sphere of responsibility. This will form part of their annual objectives against which their performance will be measured.
- 7.3 Managers must investigate and deal appropriately with any concerns reported to them by staff.
- 7.4 Managers must monitor the behaviour of staff they manage, and take appropriate action if necessary.

## **8.0 POSITIVE ACTION**

- 8.1 Depending upon the needs identified in Livingstone House or in a particular part of Livingstone House, positive action, as permitted by the Race Relations and Sex Discrimination Acts may be taken. Positive measures should always be discussed with the Board of Trustees/Home Director. Such measures might include:-

- Including experience of a substance misuse problem in the essential criteria of a person specification.
- Support for networks of under-represented groups.

## 9.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND CODES OF PRACTICE

- 9.1 This policy is informed by and complies with the current law and codes of practice of the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission.

## 10.0 DOCUMENTATION

### 10.1 Internal References

Race Equality Policy  
Recruitment and Selection Policy  
Appraisal Policy  
Induction Policy  
Personal Development Plan  
Disciplinary Procedure and Policy  
Grievance Procedure and Policy  
Supervision Policy  
Harassment and Bullying Policy

### 10.2 External References

National Treatment Agency, (2002), **Models of Care in Adult Drug Misusers**, NTA, London

Department of Health, (2003), **National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Adults (18 to 65)**, DOH, London.

National Treatment Agency, (2003), **Staff development toolkit for residential drug and alcohol services**, NTA, London.

National Treatment Agency, (2003), **Staff development toolkit for drug and alcohol services**, NTA, London.

Darlington PCT NHS Trust, (2003), **Equal Opportunities Policy**.

City Hospital Sunderland NHS Trust (2007), **Equal Opportunities Policy**, Department of Human Resources.