

Purpose

This policy explains how we ensure that all people can access and use our service on an equal basis, are treated with dignity and respect, and have their information managed safely and lawfully.

This policy supports compliance with:

- Regulation 9: Person-centred care
- Regulation 10: Dignity and respect
- Regulation 13: Safeguarding service users from abuse and improper treatment

Reasonable Adjustments

Making Reasonable Adjustments

We make reasonable adjustments to ensure people with disabilities can access and use our service equally. This includes:

- Adjusting appointment times
- Allowing additional time for assessments
- Providing support for mobility, sensory, cognitive, or communication needs
- Allowing carers, family members, or advocates to attend appointments
- Adapting how information is explained and provided

Adjustments are identified:

- At referral or booking
- Prior to the appointment
- At any point during service delivery if needs change

Accessible Technology and Systems

Our technology is designed to be easy to use and accessible:

- Telephone systems allow clear communication and call-backs where required
- Digital communication is simple, clear, and jargon-free
- Alternative methods of contact are offered where digital access is difficult
- Reasonable alternatives are provided if standard systems are not suitable

Understanding and Respecting People's Needs

Identifying Personal, Cultural, Social, and Religious Needs

We recognise that people's needs may be influenced by:

- Cultural background
- Religious beliefs
- Social circumstances
- Personal preferences

These needs may relate to:

- Communication
- Physical contact
- Gender preferences
- Modesty or privacy
- Appointment timing

How Staff Respect and Respond to These Needs

Staff will:

- Ask individuals about their needs and preferences
- Record relevant information in clinical records
- Deliver care in a respectful, non-judgemental way
- Adapt service delivery to reflect identified needs where possible
- Challenge discriminatory attitudes or behaviour

Information Sharing and Management

Sharing Information

Information about people who use our service may be shared:

- With GPs or other healthcare professionals
- With other providers involved in the person's care
- Where required by law or safeguarding responsibilities

Information is shared:

- With the person's consent, where appropriate
- On a need-to-know basis
- In line with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018

Recording and Managing Information

- Accurate and up-to-date records are maintained for all service users
- Records include consent, assessments, reasonable adjustments, and outcomes
- Information is stored securely, both electronically and in paper format
- Access to information is restricted to authorised individuals only

Addressing Unacceptable Behaviour

Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination

We have a zero-tolerance approach to:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Discriminatory behaviour
- Abusive or threatening behaviour

This applies to:

- Staff
- Service users
- Visitors
- Representatives

How Unacceptable Behaviour Is Managed

- Concerns are addressed promptly and proportionately
- Behaviour is challenged calmly and professionally
- Incidents are recorded and reviewed
- Safeguarding procedures are followed where necessary
- Services may be paused or ended if behaviour places others at risk

Legal and Human Rights Compliance

Accessible Information Standard

- Communication needs are identified, recorded, and met
- Information is provided in formats people can understand
- Support is offered to help people engage with the service

Equality Act 2010

- Discrimination is not tolerated
- Reasonable adjustments are made
- Equal access to services is actively promoted

Human Rights Act 1998

We uphold people's rights to:

- Dignity and respect
- Privacy and family life
- Freedom from degrading or inhumane treatment

UK GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018

- Personal data is processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently
- Information is stored securely
- Data is only shared appropriately and legally

Relevant Legislation and Guidance

- Accessible Information Standard
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/accessibleinfo/>
- Equality Act 2010
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Human Rights Act 1998
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

- UK GDPR
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/679/contents>
- Data Protection Act 2018
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents>

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually or following changes to legislation or guidance. Legislation and guidance links are checked and updated as part of the annual policy review.

Last review date: 04/02/26

Next review date: 03/02/27