

Simply Teeth Dental Clinic

Equal Opportunities Policy

Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Policy Statement	3
3	Discrimination.....	3
4	Implementing Equality of Opportunity	4
5	Discipline and Grievance	6
6	Monitoring	6
7	Communication	7
8	Responsibilities	7
9	Other Policies and Procedures	7
10	Review	8

1. INTRODUCTION

Simply Teeth Dental Practice is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst its workforce. Simply Teeth Dental Practice's aim is that its workforce is truly representative of all sections of society and that each member of staff feels respected and able to give their best.

2.

POLICY STATEMENT

2.1

Simply Teeth Dental Practice fully supports the principle of equal opportunities in employment and opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, age, trade union membership, domestic circumstances, social and employment status, HIV status, political affiliation or disability. All staff, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect.

2.2

Simply Teeth Dental Practice is committed to ensuring that every member of staff has a working environment that promotes dignity and respect, and where individual differences and the contributions of staff are recognised and valued.

2.3

Simply Teeth Dental Practice will take every possible step to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career management and provision of other benefits are based solely on objective and job related criteria.

2.4

Simply Teeth Dental Practice will also ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that its stakeholders and any contractors also maintain the principle of equal opportunities for all.

2.5

This policy covers all aspects of employment from vacancy advertising, selection, recruitment, and training to conditions of service and reasons for termination of employment.

3. DISCRIMINATION

3.1

The law on discrimination is particularly complex. Briefly, it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the following grounds: sex or the fact that an individual is married; race, ethnic or national origins; sexual orientation; religion or belief; disability or age.

3.2

Discrimination can take many forms:

3.2.1 Direct Discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably from others in the same circumstances due to a particular characteristic. An example would be a refusal to appoint someone to a particular post simply because of his or her sexual orientation.

3.2.2 Indirect Discrimination - It is also unlawful to discriminate indirectly against anyone. That means applying a provision, criterion or practice which although applied equally to everyone is such that a considerably smaller proportion of a particular group can comply with it and which cannot be justified. An example would be making a rule about dress or uniform which would disadvantage those from a certain racial or ethnic group and for which there was no justification.

3.2.3 Harassment - Subjecting someone to harassment can amount to discrimination. Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment having regard to all the circumstances and the perception of the victim. Simply Teeth Dental Practice has a separate

Dignity at Work Policy with a view to preventing harassment in the workplace and to ensure that appropriate action is taken when allegations of harassment by staff, service users or members of the public are made.

- 3.2.4 Victimisation occurs where an individual is treated less favourably than colleagues because he/she has taken action to assert their legal rights or have assisted a colleague in that regard.
- 3.2.5 Disability Discrimination occurs if a disabled person is treated less favourably by their employer (or potential employer) because of a reason relating to their disability, without a justifiable reason. In addition, employers are required to make reasonable adjustments to working conditions or the workplace where that would help to accommodate a particular disabled person.

3.3 Discrimination is only permitted in very limited circumstances if there is a genuine occupational requirement for an individual to have a particular characteristic. Selection for recruitment or promotion must be on merit; however in some circumstances it is possible to take certain steps to redress the effects of previous inequality of opportunity. This is called positive action and employers may give special encouragement to, or provide training to individuals with a specific characteristic.

4. IMPLEMENTING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

4.1 Simply Teeth Dental Practice will apply equal opportunity requirements throughout all of its employment practices, and will ensure equal opportunities through the following measures:

Recruitment and Selection

- 4.2 Recruitment and employment decisions will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria and in accordance with Simply Teeth Dental Practice's Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- 4.3 All secondments will be advertised internally in order to provide an equal opportunity for all interested persons to apply. An exception to this applies when special arrangements are made for those employees who would otherwise be at risk of redundancy or redeployment on the grounds of ill health or disability.
- 4.4 Simply Teeth Dental Practice will ensure that the local community is encouraged to apply for jobs by circulating those vacancies released for external advertising through local media, job centres, careers offices, employment agencies, and local community groups. Steps will be taken to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches under represented groups both internally and externally.
- 4.5 If a particular group is under represented in the workforce or at a senior level Simply Teeth Dental Practice may consider positive action to redress imbalance. Such action may include improving access to training and/or giving special encouragement to apply for vacancies, but appointments will continue to be made on merit.
- 4.6 All vacancy advertisements will include an appropriate short statement on equal opportunity.
- 4.7 Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements, which are necessary for the effective performance of the job.
- 4.8 The requirements of job applicants and existing members of staff who have or have had a disability will be reviewed to ensure that wherever possible reasonable adjustments are made

to enable them to enter into or remain in employment with us. Promotion opportunities, benefits and facilities of employment will not be unreasonably limited and every effort will be made to ensure that disabled staff participate fully in the workplace.

- 4.9 All Simply Teeth Dental Practice personnel who participate in recruitment and selection will receive training in this area.

Training and Development

- 4.10 Simply Teeth Dental Practice will reflect the commitment to equal opportunities through equality of access to training and career development opportunities.
- 4.11 Training programmes will be designed to support the aims of this Policy. Care will be taken to ensure that all training materials do not stereotype, prejudice or discriminate in any way. Every effort will be made to select external courses which also meet these requirements.
- 4.12 Training opportunities will be based upon a member of staff's ability, business needs, and the availability of appropriate work related courses. Wherever practical training will be arranged so that all categories of staff may attend, for example part-time workers.
- 4.13 All new staff will receive induction training. As part of the induction process staff will be made aware of this Policy and what it means for them. Existing staff will receive refresher training on this Policy and other training as appropriate. Refresher training will be provided on all development review processes, interviewing techniques, communication skills, and supervisory/management courses.
- 4.14 All staff will be subject to an annual development review process and this will involve a discussion to identify available and appropriate training opportunities.

Work/Life Balance

- 4.15 In accordance with the Flexible Working Policy Simply Teeth Dental Practice will review working patterns so as where possible to offer flexible working to staff.
- 4.16 Simply Teeth Dental Practice aims to encourage a healthy work/life balance for staff through the following policies and procedures:
- Flexible Working Policy
 - Special Leave Policy (which includes paternity leave)
Maternity Leave Policy
 - Retirement Policy

Adapting Working Practices

- 4.17 Simply Teeth Dental Practice is committed to recognising cross cultural differences and to this end Simply Teeth Dental Practice will respect an individual's needs regarding the observance of their faith such as specific prayer times. Requests for annual leave to attend religious festivals will be respected and accommodated as far as is practical within the particular working environment. Staff are reminded that some religious festivals are the busiest times for Simply Teeth Dental Practice.
- 4.18 Simply Teeth Dental Practice has an Improving Working Lives Group which will meet to consider all issues relating to diversity.

Working Environment

- 4.19 Allegations of harassment or discriminatory action by service users or members of the public will be taken seriously and action will be taken by the appropriate manager to support the employee and eliminate the problem.

Interpreters

- 4.20 Simply Teeth Dental Practice provides an interpretation and translation service for callers, which will include British sign language in future. Staff may make use of this service if required, and should contact their manager to inform them of their requirements and find out how to access the service.

Review of Practices, Policies and Procedures

- 4.21 From time to time Simply Teeth Dental Practice reviews all of its employment practices, policies and procedures to identify and remove any barriers to equal opportunities.

Disability

- 4.22 If any individual is finding it difficult to undertake their role due to a disability then Simply Teeth Dental Practice will make all reasonable adjustments to that role so that this can still be carried out. If that is not possible then Simply Teeth Dental Practice will look to redeploy the employee into suitable alternative employment.

5. DISCIPLINE & GRIEVANCE

- 5.1 Any person who feels that they have been treated less favourably than others in the same circumstances has the right to use Simply Teeth Dental Practice's Grievance Policy and Procedure to seek redress. All complaints and grievances in respect of equality and equal opportunity issues will be thoroughly investigated and dealt with fairly and consistently.
- 5.2 All staff have the right to work in an environment, which is free from any form of harassment. Harassment at work in any form is unacceptable behaviour and will not be permitted or condoned. Any individual who considers they have been subject to harassment may take action in accordance with Simply Teeths Dental Practice's Dignity at Work Policy.
- 5.3 Discriminatory behaviour on any grounds or any breach of this policy will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with Simply Teeth Dental Practice's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- 5.4 Simply Teeth Dental Practice will maintain confidential records of complaints covered by the scope of this Policy and any investigation undertaken.

6. MONITORING

- 6.1 The Human Resources Directorate will undertake equal opportunities monitoring and produce an annual report for the Simply Teeth Dental Practice Board.
- 6.2 Monitoring will consist of a statistical analysis of the ethnic origin, sex, age, contract status and disability, of all staff. Of particular importance will be the statistics showing the number of:

- 6.2.1 staff in post;
- 6.2.2 applicants for employment, training and promotion (and success rate);
- 6.2.3 staff who receive training;
- 6.2.4 staff involved in grievance procedures;
- 6.2.5 staff subject to disciplinary procedures;
- 6.2.6 staff who cease employment; and
- 6.2.7 changes in the distribution of staff employed by Simply Teeth Dental Practice over a period of time.

6.3 All monitoring will be carried out on an anonymous basis.

6.4 If monitoring shows that we are still not attracting applications for employment, training and promotion from all sections of the local community then positive action may be taken by encouraging such applications and/or providing training. However, all jobs and training courses will be appointed to on merit.

7. **COMMUNICATION**

Simply Teeth Dental Practice will communicate this Policy effectively to all staff. Simply Teeth Dental Practice will ensure that all employees, managers and supervisors are aware of their responsibilities, and will provide training on this Policy. Wherever possible training will be given in partnership with staff side to managers and trade union representatives.

8. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

8.1 The Managers at Simply Teeth are responsible for ensuring that this Policy is implemented and monitored.

8.2 We will ensure that all personnel policies, procedures and employment practices do not discriminate in any way and are consistent with this Policy.

8.3 Every member of staff is required to support this Policy and to ensure that discrimination does not occur in the workplace.

8.4 Managers have a responsibility to set the standards of acceptable behaviour expected of staff and so must act with fairness and equity. All managers are responsible for implementing fair, non-discriminatory practices within their areas and/or surgeries. In addition, all managers must ensure that all those making selection decisions are aware of and have received training in the requirements of this Policy.

8.5 We will ensure that all subsequent new Simply Teeth Dental Practice building works meet the criteria for access of disabled people.

9. **OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

9.1 This policy will be supported by the following policies and procedures:

- Dignity at Work Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Flexible Working Policy
- Special Leave Policy
- Maternity Policy
- Retirement Policy

10. REVIEW

10.1 This Policy will be reviewed no later than 1 October 2012.