

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

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1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1. This policy applies to all Serenta Homecare employees except for employees whom separate arrangements apply (e.g. as part of transfer arrangements).
- 1.2. Serenta Homecare is committed to equality of opportunity and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.
- 1.3. We value our employees as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All employees are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, 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.
- 1.4. Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Company as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating 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.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or

sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

- 2.2. All employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect by colleagues and clients. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be supported and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Company.

3. Policy Review

- 3.1. Serenta Homecare will review this policy when required and at least every 12 months. Underlying procedures in operation within the business will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis, in response to business need and the changing operating environment.

4. Responsibilities, Accountabilities and Duties

Board of Directors

- 4.1. The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is applied fairly, consistently and in a non-discriminatory manner.

Managers and Supervisors

- 4.2. Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that they understand this policy and that this policy is applied within their own teams and departments.
- 4.3. Managers should ensure they understand and adhere to their obligations in relation to the policy.
- 4.4. It is important for managers to make their employees are aware of this policy including referring new employees to the policy as part of their induction process and on-going refresher training.

Human Resources and Senior Management

- 4.5. HR and Senior Management have responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

Employees

- 4.6. All employees have a responsibility to read and understand this policy and their statutory regulatory, contractual and/or professional responsibilities.
- 4.7. The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout Serenta Homecare.
- 4.8. All employees should advise management if they suspect that discrimination is taking place and co-operate with investigations.
- 4.9. It is an expectation that all Serenta Homecare employees do not participate in any discriminatory behaviour towards colleagues or clients, encourage others to behave in a discriminatory manner, or attempt to victimise those who have made complaints or provided information on acts of discrimination.

5. Our Commitments as an Employer

5.1. The Company is committed to:

- creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued
- entitling every employee, worker or self-employed contractor to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- providing training, development, and progression opportunities to all staff.
- understanding equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- reviewing all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness

6. Our Commitments as a Service Provider

6.1. The Company is committed to:

- making sure our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our clients and clients by assessing and meeting the diverse needs of our clients
- fully supporting this policy by senior management and ensuring agreement has been reached with employee representatives
- selecting those for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit purely on the basis of aptitude and ability
- monitoring and reviewing this policy annually

- having clear procedures that enable our clients, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated
- treating breaches of our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings
- encouraging all staff to come forward with any issues they need assistance and understanding with, no matter their background, identity, or circumstances, such as if they are victims of domestic abuse or have caring commitments.

7. Types of Discrimination

7.1. There are multiple types of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour. Below are definitions of the types of discrimination.

7.2. Direct Discrimination

- This is where a person is treated less favourably than others are or would be treated in the same circumstances on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 as detailed below. For example, it is directly discriminatory to use any of these grounds as the basis for making a decision on whether to employ someone, terminate their employment or to give them adverse terms and conditions.

7.3. Indirect Discrimination

- This occurs where conditions or requirements are applied which, whether intentionally or not, are such that the proportion of persons of a particular group who can comply with it, is smaller than the proportion of persons not of that group who can comply with it, and it cannot be shown to be justifiable.

7.4. Harassment

- This is unwanted conduct or behaviour that violates a person's dignity, makes someone feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated, or offended or creates a hostile environment. It is how this behaviour is perceived by the recipient that is important in deciding whether harassment has occurred.

7.5. Victimisation

- This is when an individual is treated detrimentally because they have made a complaint or intend to make a complaint about discrimination or harassment or have given evidence or intend to give evidence relating to a complaint about discrimination or harassment.

7.6. Unconscious Bias

- Company recognises the dangers of unconscious bias arising at work, which is where an opinion is formed on an individual by a manager or colleague without them necessarily being aware they have formed it.
- There are many different forms of unconscious bias, ranging from an affinity towards those of a similar background to placing too much significance on what has been identified as a negative trait.

7.7. The organisation will work against forms of discrimination and unconscious bias in all decisions taken for employment, including recruitment, promotion, and training opportunities, with a focus on promoting diversity and inclusion.

7.8. In particular, the Company will implement the following:

- Maintaining a diverse Senior Management Team to make decisions
- Referring to specific job criteria when making recruitment decisions
- Discounting any favourable personal relationships with staff
- Making decisions collectively between HR and the Senior Management Team.

8. The Equality Act 2010 & Our Equal Opportunity Statements

8.1. Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity, equality and respect for all. Serenta Homecare will not tolerate any acts of unlawful or unfair discrimination (including harassment) committed against an employee, contractor, client, applicant, or visitors because of a protected characteristic. The Equality Act 2010 sets out the following protected characteristics:

- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin);
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religion and/or belief (or lack of) and
- Age

Age

8.2. We will:

- ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that people of working age are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities and challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability

8.3. We will:

- provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people.

Race

8.4. We will:

- challenge racism wherever it occurs
- respond swiftly and sensitively to any and all allegations of racism, towards our staff members by either colleagues or clients

Gender

8.5. We will:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about gender
- offer equal access for men and women to representation, services, employment, training and pay
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

Sexual orientation

8.6. We will:

- challenge discriminatory behaviour towards any staff due to how they identify their sexual orientation.

Religion or belief

8.7. We will:

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible and
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity

8.8. We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of our employees and ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of our employees' pregnancy or maternity.

Marriage or civil partnership

8.9. We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity regardless of marriage or civil partnership
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees and ensure that no individual is disadvantaged in respect of marriage or civil partnership.

9. What Should I Do If I Have Concerns?

- 9.1. If you believe that you may have suffered or witnessed discrimination because of any of the above protected characteristics, you should consider the appropriateness and feasibility of attempted informal resolution by discussion in the first instance with your immediate supervisor or line manager. If you find raising this issue with your immediate supervisor or line manager difficult, you may approach a more senior manager.
- 9.2. If you need to make a Grievance submission, please refer to the Grievance Policy available on the Staff portal section of the Serenta Homecare website or from a manager.

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