Polymyalgia Rheumatica & Giant Cell Arteritis UK

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

PMRGCAuk recognises and values people's differences and will assist them to use their talents to reach their full potential.
The organisation will do all it can to ensure it recruits, trains and promotes people based on qualifications, experience and abilities for all roles within the organisation, paid and unpaid.

Aims of this policy

PMRGCAuk recognises and values people's differences and will assist them to use their talents to reach their full potential.
The organisation will do all it can to ensure it recruits, trains and promotes people based on qualifications, experience and abilities for all roles within the organisation, paid and unpaid.
This policy is designed to ensure that PMRGCAuk complies with its obligations under equality legislation and demonstrates our commitment to treating people equally and fairly.
PMRGCAuk is unreservedly opposed to any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (these are defined as Protected Characteristics).
Using fair and objective employment practices, the organisation aims to ensure that:

- All employees and potential employees are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their employment
- All employees, trustees, volunteers, members and those accessing the charity's support and services (described in this policy as "service users") have the right to be free from harassment and bullying of any description, or any other form of unwanted behaviour. Such behaviour may come from other employees or by people who are not employees of PMRGCAuk, such as volunteers or members.
- All employees, volunteers, members and other service users have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination.
- All employees, trustees, volunteers, members and service users have the right to be free from discrimination because they associate with another person who possesses a Protected Characteristic or because others perceive that they have a particular Protected Characteristic, even if they do not.

Scope of this policy

The policy applies to employed staff and job applicants, trustees and volunteers, members of PMRGCAuk and all those accessing our support and services.

Policy Statement

As an organisation, we value the variety of different views, outlooks and approaches that a diverse team of paid staff and volunteers bring. This assists us to provide improved services and increase our understanding of our members.
We will do all we can to ensure no one will receive less favourable treatment or is to be disadvantaged by requirements or conditions, which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

Responsibilities

- Employees, volunteers and trustees of PMRGCAuk have a duty to act within this policy, ensure it is followed and to draw attention to any suspected discriminatory acts or practices.
- Responsibility for promoting awareness of this policy and monitoring that it is being followed rests with the board of trustees.
- Breaches of this policy by employees may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- Breaches of this policy by trustees may result in the termination of their role.
- Breaches of this policy by a volunteer may result in the termination of the volunteering agreement.
- Employees, volunteers and trustees are also personally liable under equality legislation for any act of unlawful discrimination.

Equality and Diversity in Practice

In carrying out the policy, the organisation will carry out the following actions:

- In the recruitment of staff and volunteers, those involved in the process will strive to recruit persons on merit alone.
- We will ensure that all relevant requirements of the Equality Act are met and adhered to. This will include making reasonable adjustments to ensure access to employment or volunteering tasks and opportunities for disabled people.

Implementation of the Policy

All staff, trustees and volunteers will be involved in creating an equality environment and one that values diversity.

STAFF RECRUITMENT

- Those involved in staff recruitment will strive to create a recruitment process that is fully inclusive, recognising that interview technique, assumptions, written material and advertising can exclude persons at every stage.
- We will record and analyse anonymised equal opportunities monitoring information.

COMMUNICATIONS

- This policy will be provided to and discussed with all new staff, trustees and volunteers as part of the induction process.

USERS OF OUR SUPPORT AND SERVICES

We will endeavour to make our services accessible in the following ways:

- We will attempt to make all meetings and events accessible to disabled people.
- We will consider suitable formats for all our online and printed materials and consider whether information should be available in alternative formats e.g. large print
- We will consider the diverse make up of our staff/ volunteers in relation to our members
- We will consider the impact of proposed new services on our user group(s)

MONITORING THE POLICY

- This policy will be monitored to judge to what extent it is working and identify areas for improvement.
- Monitoring will relate to both employees/ volunteers and will involve an annual review by trustees.

Reporting Discrimination/potential Discrimination

- Employees who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise the issue with their line manager.
- Volunteers who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise the issue with a relevant member of staff, e.g. in the case of group organisers, they should raise it with the Director.
- Trustees who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise the issue with the Chair of Trustees.
- Members and service users who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should refer to our complaints policy.
- Employees/volunteers/members/ service users should also use this approach if they feel that they have been the subject of harassment from someone who is not an employee of PMRGCAuk. PMRGCAuk will not tolerate any harassment from third parties towards its employees/volunteers/members/service users and will take appropriate action to prevent it happening again.
- If an employee/volunteer/member/service user witnesses behaviour that they find offensive in relation to age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, even if it is not directed at them they should also use this procedure.
- **All complaints will be treated seriously, promptly and confidentiality.**

Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the needs and practices of the organisation.
- The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that policy or practices should be altered

Last reviewed: February 2025
Next review: February 2026