

Stellar Healthcare

Equal Opportunities Policy for Visitors and Patients

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Policy Statement

Stellar Healthcare is committed to providing equitable, accessible, and high-quality services to all patients, visitors, and contractors. We treat everyone with dignity and respect and comply fully with the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty, the NHS Accessible Information Standard, and CQC requirements.

This policy applies to all patients, their families, visitors, and contractors (collectively referred to as “visitors”). It does not apply to employees, who are covered by the separate Equal Opportunities Policy for Staff.

Protected Characteristics

We will not discriminate against, harass, or victimise any visitor because of any of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:

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

We also recognise discrimination by association or perception.

Our Commitments

- Provide the same high standard of care and services to everyone, making reasonable adjustments for disabled people (including communication support under the Accessible Information Standard).
- Promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups.
- Ensure information is accessible and communication needs are identified, recorded, and met.
- Not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.
- Treat all complaints of discrimination seriously, confidentially, and in line with our Complaints Procedure.
- Provide this policy in accessible formats on request and display a summary in waiting areas and on our website.

Procedure if You Feel You Have Experienced Discrimination by Stellar Healthcare

1. Raise the matter with a member of staff, the service manager, or reception as soon as possible.
2. The concern will be investigated thoroughly and confidentially by the designated lead (or deputy). We aim to acknowledge within 3 working days and provide a full response within 20 working days (or an agreed extended period if complex).
3. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may escalate through our formal Complaints and Comments Procedure (available on our website or on request).

Discrimination or Harassment of Staff by Visitors

Stellar Healthcare operates a zero-tolerance approach to any discrimination, harassment, or abusive behaviour towards our staff.

Any visitor behaving in this way will be asked to leave the premises immediately. Repeated incidents may result in removal from the practice list or restricted access to services, in accordance with NHS England guidance and our Unacceptable Behaviour Policy. Such decisions will be proportionate, documented, and consider any underlying protected characteristics or health needs. Affected patients will be informed in writing and given information on how to register elsewhere.

Support and Further Information

- Patients with communication needs can request reasonable adjustments, interpreters, or accessible formats.
- Advocacy support is available via the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) or Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS).
- This policy links to our Complaints Policy and Accessible Information processes.