

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. CARIS Islington is a Christian based organisation. As such we believe that all men and women are made in the image of God. God's command to "Love your neighbour as yourself" is universal.

We recognise that in our society groups and individuals have been, and continue to be, discriminated against on the basis of race, sex, marital status, disability, sexuality, age and religious belief. We believe that discrimination on any ground whatsoever is unacceptable and an affront to the purposes of God. The aim of CARIS Islington is, therefore, to provide genuine equality of opportunity for our employees, volunteers and for the clients who use our services.

2. CARIS Islington will seek to ensure that there is no discrimination in service provision and delivery. All clients and visitors and volunteers will be treated with dignity and we will endeavour to ensure that our services respond appropriately to the needs of all sections of our community. We recognise that this will involve careful monitoring of the use made of our services and may result in the development of positive action programmes to target the needs of specific groups within the community around us.

3. CARIS Islington recognises the importance of training in assisting Management Committee members, employees and volunteers to understand and operate effective equal opportunities practice. It will enable them to meet the requirements of all those who might wish to make use of our services and to develop their own skills and abilities to full advantage. It will also increase awareness to recognise and to deal with oppression, racism or discrimination when observed or experienced.

4. CARIS Islington will seek to ensure that in recruitment and employment practice there is no discrimination, and will endeavour to ensure that its structures and committees represent all sections of the community. However as a Christian based organisation, CARIS Islington will require employees to be committed to the aims and objectives of CARIS as a Christian organisation and to share a vision of the organisation as the visible expression of care with a Christian ethic of respect and love for all regardless of creed, race, age or gender.

5. CARIS Islington will ensure that both employees and volunteers have adequate support to deal with discrimination in their work. It also undertakes to provide a mechanism for clients to register complaints where necessary. Complaints will be dealt with promptly, initially by the Service Co-ordinator, and if necessary by the Chair of the relevant Project Committee and for final appeal by the CARIS Main Committee Chair person.

6. CARIS Islington undertakes to develop systems which audit and monitor service delivery.

7. A review of the Equal Opportunities Policy and its implementation will be carried out regularly. We will consult with our employees and volunteers on the development of our services on a regular basis.

8. CARIS Islington is committed to work positively and practically to achieve the aims set out in this policy statement. We are committed to an efficient monitoring and evaluation process to ensure effective implementation of the policy.