



Policy on Equal Opportunities

The Rock Clinic Association (RCA) is fully committed to the principle of equality of opportunity for all those currently working within the clinic and for all prospective practitioners and staff.

We are also committed to achieving equality of opportunity in access to and provision of our services. As such we endeavour, in as far as is practicable, to provide treatment and facilities that are accessible, welcoming and available to all and to ensure that no-one feels disadvantaged or excluded from the services we offer.

No person using the services or working for the RCA will be treated less favourably than any other person because of their age, appearance, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, HIV status, medical condition, political views, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or trade union involvement (excepting those services that by their nature are specifically related to a particular client group).

Aims

The RCA is committed to:

- Ensuring that all clients are given equal access to the services we offer. Where we are unable to offer appropriate help to a prospective client, we will aim to direct them to other services in the community.
- Challenging prejudice and discrimination at the Clinic, through appropriate awareness-raising and training.
- Seeking to increase the involvement of people from marginalized groups in all the Clinic's activities.
- Promotion of its services throughout all sections of the community.

Staff and Practitioner Recruitment and Training

The Rock Clinic Association is bound by employment legislation relating to race, gender, sexual orientation and disability. As such, our policies relating to recruitment, training and promotion will operate within the requirements of the relevant legislation. Whilst no such legislation currently exists in relation to age, we will be mindful at all times of equality of opportunity for all members of the community.

The Rock Clinic Association endeavours to:

- Ensure information about staff vacancies can easily be accessed by as much of the community as possible, by placing advertisements in community wide publications.
- Ensure information about training placements can easily be accessed via contact with local and regional training boards.
- Ensure information about practitioner vacancies can be easily accessed via contact with professional associations and local community information services.

- Provide detailed job description and personal specifications for each staff vacancy and ensure candidates are selected on the basis of their ability to meet criteria as detailed in these.
- Monitor recruitment practices to ensure that candidates are selected on the basis of their ability to fulfil such criteria.
- Ensure that interview panels and other selection methods are conducted fairly and effectively.
- Ensure that all staff and practitioners have equal access and opportunities to participate in training and further developments and regularly monitor practice to ensure that this is being adhered to.
- Ensure that volunteers on training placements are treated no less favourably than other practitioners.
- Ensure that those responsible for the recruitment and selection of staff and practitioners are aware of the RCA's Equal Opportunities Policy and the commitment it implies.
- Ensure that all staff and practitioners are aware of the RCA's Equal Opportunities Policy and the commitment it implies.

Participation in the Rock Clinic Association's decision-making process

The Rock Clinic Association is committed to open decision-making processes in line with its constitution, as adopted by its practitioner members and accepted by the Charity Commission. It endeavours to ensure that:

- An Executive Committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to oversee the principles and practices of the RCA.
- The Executive Committee holds an annual AGM where all members of the Association have the right to attend and express their views, and practitioner members have the right to vote as outlined in the Constitution.
- The Executive Committee circulates minutes of the AGM and all decisions taken as a result of these.
- Any member may call a special meeting at any time according to the provisions of the Constitution.
- The Executive Committee attends and responds to any complaints for those accessing treatments or facilities provided by the RCA and ensures that a Complaints Procedure is available to anyone wishing to make use of it. Where the material discussed is confidential or of a sensitive nature, the Executive Committee will communicate outcomes only to those persons directly affected.

Access and Provision of Services

The Rock Clinic Association is committed to providing, in so far as is practicable, a centre which is equally available to any member of the public wishing to access its services. It is further committed to ensuring that provision of services is regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure no-one be denied treatment on inappropriate grounds which might contravene the Equal Opportunities Policy.

The RCA aims to provide information about its services in an easily accessible format and in a variety of contexts to reach all members of the community. In addition, the RCA is committed to expanding access to affordable counselling to those members of the community who might

otherwise be excluded through financial disadvantage. To this end we seek charitable funding to support subsidised schemes providing counselling at a substantially reduced rate.

The RCA aims to make its services accessible to those with disabilities and those for whom English is not their first language, in so far as is practicable, and to be mindful of the impact cultural and other differences may have in our work. We acknowledge that the very nature of our psychological services, as 'talking therapies', suggests that they may not be the treatment of choice for some clients, who may be able to benefit more from alternative treatments. However, we aim to evaluate each client as an individual and make an unbiased assessment of their needs and the appropriateness of the services we have on offer, explore ways in which we can accommodate any special needs where practicable or refer the client on to a more appropriate service .

The treatments and facilities provided by the RCA are monitored through service user evaluation in order for feedback to be incorporated into future policy and procedural matters.

Code of Conduct

Discriminatory behaviour or remarks by RCA members are considered unacceptable. It is expected that all members and clients of the RCA should be treated with dignity and respect and that their feelings and right to confidentiality be respected.

If a member of the RCA believes that he or she has been subject to discrimination or harassment, or is aware of discrimination or harassment against another member or client of the RCA, it is his or her responsibility to report the matter to the Clinical Director, Clinical Manager or Executive Committee as appropriate. All allegations of discrimination will be treated seriously in accordance with the Association's Complaints Procedure.

Service users who complain of discrimination or harassment will be advised of the Complaints Procedure. Complaints will be treated seriously and a thorough investigation will be carried out, whilst maintaining confidentiality.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Executive Committee.

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