

Policy name: Equality & Diversity Policy

5.4

Policy name: Equality & Diversity

Document Control	
Version number	1
Author	SH
Date	Mar 19
Last Revised	Nov 18
Updated	Mar 23
To be reviewed	Apr-25

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
1	Sandra Haughton (SH)	Mar 17	First draft
2	Natalie Pepper (NP)	Nov 18	Updated legislation
3	Karen Clandon (KC)	Mar-21	No changes
4	Karen Clandon (KC)	Mar-23	No major changes
5	Karen Clandon	Apr-23	No major changes
6	Karen Clandon	Mar-25	No major Changes

5.4 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

5.4.1. Policy Statement

iSIGHT Clinics Limited (iSIGHT) recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the Company and its employees to utilize the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the Company to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favorable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the **protected characteristics**).

Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give their best.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment.

All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped 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 organisation.

Our staff will not discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass customers or clients because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the Company's goods and services.

This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

5.4.2. Relevant Legislation

This policy will be implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation, which includes:

- Equality Act 2010
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997

iSIGHT endeavours to keep up to date with all relevant legislation and amend our policies and procedures accordingly.

5.4.3. Our Commitment

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and will lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trade unions and/or employee representatives.
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually

iSight supports the national policy agenda on promoting equality, diversity and human rights and is committed to ensuring that:

- Equality & Diversity is considered within all **decisions through embedding Equality Impact Assessments** and decision-making structures are constituted in a way that enables equality, diversity and human rights issues to be appropriately considered when key decisions are taken.
- Equality, diversity and human rights is a fundamental principle in **all HR policies** and procedures, all policies and procedures are effectively promoted and used equitably across the organisation..

- **No discrimination occurs** in the employment relationship and no job applicant receives less favourable treatment than any other. We will assess the effectiveness of HR processes through workforce equality monitoring and take action to investigate and address any evidence of potential discrimination.
- All employees are supported to develop the skills and abilities they require to carry out their current and any likely future role in the organisation. **Equality of access** for all staff to both training and development opportunities is key to motivation, business performance and the organisation's aspiration to be an employer of choice and will be subject to regular monitoring.
- There is an environment where everyone feels valued and is able to perform to their best potential. To achieve this all staff must have an **awareness of equality, diversity and human rights** issues and all managers must have **effective skills in managing diversity** so that they can achieve the best performance from their staff and improve the overall performance of the organisation.
- All Directors, staff, customers, patients and visitors understand and follow the **standards of behaviour** that are necessary for the management of equality, diversity and human rights.
- We demonstrate positive employment practices through attainment and on going maintenance of accreditations e.g. Two Ticks Positive about Disabled People, Mindful Employer, Age Positive and Stonewall Diversity Champions

5.4.4. Responsibilities of Management

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the Chief Operating Officer, Karen Clandon. The Senior Management Team will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each manager will ensure that:

- all their staff are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
- grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- proper records are maintained.

Human Resources / Head Office will be responsible for monitoring the operation of the policy in respect of employees and job applicants, including periodic departmental audits.

5.4.5. Responsibilities of Staff

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

5.4.6. Third Parties

Third-party harassment occurs where a Company employee is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients or customers. iSIGHT will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform their manager / supervisor at once that this has occurred. iSIGHT will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

5.4.7. Related Policies and Arrangements

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. The Company policies will be reviewed regularly and any discriminatory elements removed.

5.4.8. Recruitment and Selection

iSight has a fair and objective system for recruiting, which places emphasis on individual skills, abilities and experience. This enables people from all backgrounds to demonstrate their ability to do a job. Selection criteria contained within the Job Descriptions and Personal Specifications is reviewed before each recruitment episode to ensure that the content is justifiable, is essential for the role and does not inadvertently unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against any groups.

We will not discriminate, victimise or harass any applicant in the recruitment and selection process.

Staff involved in interviews will receive recruitment training and undertake equality and diversity training. We ensure that there is more than one person involved in the selection process and that the selection panel is diverse, even if this means obtaining panel members from outside the organisation.

Steps will be taken to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reach underrepresented groups, community organisations and individuals internally and externally through positive action initiatives including a community jobs by email distribution and placing generic positive action recruitment advertisements in specialist media and participating in community events.

Equality monitoring questionnaires are used to monitor each stage of the recruitment and selection process to ensure that we are treating candidates fairly and equitably. The monitoring results are collated and analysed annually in the workforce equality monitoring report in line with our Single Equality and Human Rights Scheme and are reported to the Board. Actions are agreed to address and remove any evidence of discrimination.

5.4.9. Rights of Disabled People

The Company attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, managers are required to:

- make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment);
- include disabled people in training/development programmes;
- give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

5.4.10. Equality Training

A series of regular briefing sessions will be held for staff on equality issues. These will be repeated as necessary. Equality information is also included in induction programs.

Training will be provided for managers on this policy and the associated arrangements. All managers who have an involvement in the recruitment and selection process will receive specialist training.

5.4.11. Monitoring

- The Company deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and assumes that this will be translated into practice consistently across the organisation as a whole. Accordingly, a monitoring system will be introduced to measure the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements.
- The system will involve the routine collection and analysis of information on employees by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion / beliefs, grade and length of service in current grade. Information regarding the number of staff who declares themselves as disabled will also be maintained.
- There will also be regular assessments to measure the extent to which recruitment to first appointment, internal promotion and access to training/development opportunities affect equal opportunities for all groups.
- We will maintain information on staff who have been involved in certain key policies: Disciplinary, Grievance and Bullying & Harassment.
- Where appropriate **equality impact assessments** will be carried out on the results of monitoring to ascertain the effect of the Company policies and our services / products may have on those who experience them.
- The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.
- If monitoring shows that the Company, or areas within it, is not representative, or that sections of our workforce are not progressing properly within the Company, then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, Company policies and practices as well as consideration of taking legal Positive Action.

5.4.12. Grievances/Discipline

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the Company Grievance or Harassment Procedures.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Company Disciplinary Procedure.

5.4.13. Discrimination Complaints

Harassment and bullying at work undermines the performance of our business and cannot be allowed to go unchallenged. There is always a need to consider the full situation in all cases.

All complaints will be dealt with swiftly, seriously and confidentially and staff will be protected against victimisation from making, or being involved in, a complaint. Intentional false allegations will be considered a form of harassment and dealt with appropriately.

Discrimination, harassment/bullying and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Harassment and Bullying / Disciplinary Policy.

5.4.14. Review

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Company Chief operating officer.

Equality Monitoring Form

iSIGHT Clinics Limited (iSIGHT) collects equality information solely for monitoring purposes to ensure that our policies and procedures are effective. Our Equality Policy commits us to having a workforce that reflects all sections of society – the data you share will be used to monitor and evaluate if these obligations are met or not.

iSIGHT is committed to the principles of fairness, consistency, meritocracy and equality of opportunity. No applicants will be discriminated against regardless of their age, colour, disability, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, race, religion or belief and / or sexual orientation or if you do not wish to complete this form.

The information you enter on this Equality and Diversity monitoring form will be used for monitoring purposes only and will not be used in assessing and or scoring your application or at interview stage. This information is kept fully confidential and accessibility is strictly limited in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

1. Position applied for:

2. Are you:

- Staff member full time
- Staff member part time
- Volunteer
- Job Applicant
- Job Applicant – from an Agency
- Board member

3. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Do not wish to disclose

If you are undergoing the process of gender reassignment, please tick the box that applies to your future gender.

Do you live and work in a gender other than that assigned at birth

- Yes
- No
- Do not wish to disclose

4. What age group do you belong to?

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56 –65
- 65+
- Do not wish to disclose

5. How would you describe your sexuality?

- Heterosexual
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Bi-sexual
- Do not wish to disclose

6. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

The Equality Act 2010 protects people who are disabled including those with long-term health conditions.

- Yes
- No
- Do not wish to disclose

If 'Yes' please state the type of impairment which applies to you. People may experience more than one type of impairment, in which case you may indicate more than one. If none of the categories apply, please mark 'other'.

- Physical Impairment
- Sensory Impairment
- Mental Health Condition
- Learning Disability / Difficulty
- Long-standing Illness
- Other

7. Please indicate which ethnic group you consider yourself to belong to?

White

- White – British (to include Northern Ireland, Scotland & Wales)
- White – Irish
- White - European
- Other White

Black

- Black or Black British – Caribbean
- Black or Black British – African

Other Black

Asian

Asian or Asian British – Indian

Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi

Chinese

Other Asian

Mixed

Mixed – White & Black Caribbean

Mixed – White & Black African

Mixed – White & Asian

Other Mixed

Other/unknown

Ethnic identity not known

Do not wish to disclose

If you have selected 'Other' please state which group you consider yourself to belong to:

8. Please indicate which religion you consider yourself to belong to?

Buddhist

Christian

Hindu

Jewish

Muslim

Sikh

No religion

Do not wish to disclose

Other religion please state:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this equality monitoring form.