

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

## **AIMS:**

This policy aims to ensure that no service user, volunteer or trainee receives less favourable treatment on grounds of gender, race, culture, religion, nationality, age, marital/parental status, sexuality or disability. No one should be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

### Responsibilities of Carrey - Friend

- (1) To promote equal opportunities for all.
- (2) The language of official Carrey - Friend documents should be non-sexist and non-racist.
- (3) To make this policy known to all volunteers, trainees and service users.
- (4) To examine and review this policy on a regular basis and make necessary changes.

### Responsibilities of Carrey - Friend Volunteers

- (1) All volunteers should co-operate fully with this policy.
- (2) Do not discriminate. Sexist and racist language and behaviour is not acceptable.
- (3) Do not attempt to encourage others to discriminate.
- (4) Do not harass, abuse or intimidate others.
- (5) Do complain to the Committee about any acts of discrimination.

### Advertising

Carrey - Friend will be publicised in a wide variety of publications and places. Training courses will be advertised in a wide variety of publications. Personal recommendations from existing volunteers as a primary or sole method of attracting trainee volunteers should not occur.

### Recruitment

All prospective trainee volunteers should apply through recognised channels. They should complete a standard application form (assistance can be provided for anyone with specific difficulties). They should follow a standard selection procedure. The Committee should apply selection criteria, regardless of a trainees gender, race, culture, religion, nationality, age, marital/parental status, sexuality or disability. Trainees should be told Carrey - Friend operates an Equal Opportunities Policy at interview.

### Training

Initial training courses should contain an Equal Opportunities component. The Training Group and Committee will receive training to ensure they understand how discrimination can be avoided. At least one ongoing training session a year should be concerned with Equal Opportunities.

### Befriending/Support

Volunteers should try to be equally accepting of all service users, regardless of the users colour, gender, ability, class, age, religion, sexuality or cultural origins. Be aware of possible cultural differences, but do not make assumptions about a caller. Avoid stereotypical thinking. Try to emphasize with the individual. Volunteers should be prepared to give more time to a user from a social group different from their own. They should check on the users understanding of culturally variable terms e.g. "What does 'family' mean to you?" Try to use the users terms and language. If the volunteer is genuinely in difficulty, then the users best interests may be served by referring them on to another volunteer or agency. If appropriate, volunteers may give users the choice of speaking to someone with experience closer to their own.

### Grievances

Please take any complaint to a member of the Committee.