

**PROCEDURE FOR THE EMPLOYMENT AND RETENTION
OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1** The Trust's policy statement on Equal Opportunities states "Our policy is to ensure that no job applicant or member of staff receives less favourable treatment in selection or any aspect of employment on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, marital status, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability and age".
- 1.2** The aim of this procedure is to reinforce the Trust's commitment to valuing staff and ensure a caring and fair approach to people with disabilities.

We commit to:-

- a) Interview candidates for posts who declare they have a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy considering them solely on their ability to do the job.
- b) Make reasonable efforts to ensure that staff who become disabled during their employment and who are unable to continue in their job, despite reasonable adjustments, are treated as 'at risk' under this policy and efforts are made to find suitable alternative employment.
- c) Examine thoroughly the special needs concerning work or the working environment for disabled people who join the Trust or become disabled whilst working for the Trust.
- d) Work with disabled staff to develop their skills and potential.
- e) Raise the awareness of staff about the facts concerning disabled people; challenging stereotypical attitudes which limit opportunities for people with disabilities.
- f) Listen to grievances raised by disabled employees where they feel discrimination has taken place; assessing the grievances and taking appropriate action.
- g) Ensure that disability issues are reported in the Equal Opportunities Annual Report and appropriate action taken
- h) Ensure that staff contracted to work for the Trust via agencies, other businesses or on a self-employed basis are aware of this policy and to ensure that successful tenders follow best practice on the employment of the disabled.
- i) Audit the physical environment of the Trust to ensure ease of access for disabled staff to our services and ensure action is taken to address issues identified.

2.0 PRINCIPLES

The Trust will:-

- Encourage people with disabilities to apply to work in our Trust,
- Obtain and maintain the right to use the Disability “two ticks” symbol to underline our message that we welcome applications from people with disabilities,
- Send information out to applicants which will include an information sheet on our policy for the employment of disabled people including the offer of a guaranteed interview for those people with disabilities who meet the minimum criteria for the job,
- Develop and maintain contact with the Disability Employment Advisor (DEA).

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Director of Human Resources

It is the responsibility of the Director of Human Resources: to ensure that all managers and supervisors develop awareness of disability; review the policy and procedure annually; consult with interested parties.

3.2 Managers

It is the responsibility of managers to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination against people with disabilities with regard to recruitment, terms and conditions, transfers, disciplinary action, dismissals, career development, training and promotion, and to protect all staff with a disability from unfair treatment or harassment. In support of this policy the manager will ask staff with a disability at least once per year what the Trust can do for them to make sure they can develop and use their abilities at work through the Personal Performance Review system. Where the manager is a budget holder they must support the requirement to spend reasonable funds in order to maintain our duties under the Disability Discrimination Act.

3.3 Human Resources

It is the responsibility of the Human Resources Department to support best practice in the recruitment, retention and employment of people with a disability; to liaise with the Disability Employment Adviser and other agencies where necessary for advice on assessment, aids, adaptations and grants.

3.4 Occupational Health

It is the responsibility of the Occupational Health Department to advise the Trust on the suitability of applicants with a disability, informing managers of any potential limitations on their ability to do the job, or any help which may be required to allow them to function to their maximum capability.

Where a member of staff becomes disabled during employment the Occupational Health Department will assess the individual and advise the manager of any adjustments in working

arrangements which should be considered, any potential limitations on their abilities or their suitability for alternative employment.

4.0 AT RISK PROCEDURE FOR THOSE WITH A DISABILITY

- 4.1 Staff assessed by the Occupational Health Physician, as being medically unfit to continue in their present post because of their disability will be considered to be “at risk”. They will be given preferential consideration in respect of appropriate vacancies within the Trust, at an equivalent or lower grade than their current post, for a period of 3 months.
- 4.2 Any suitable alternative employment will be identified by the Trust in consultation with the member of staff and his/her staff representative. Where suitable alternative employment is at a lower grade this will be subject to protection under the Trust’s Policy for the Protection of Pay and Conditions of Service.
- 4.3 Where a vacancy has been deemed suitable by the Trust, all who apply who are “at risk” because of their disability will be given an interview. Managers should also consider reasonable adjustments to posts that are identified as suitable alternatives. An appointment should be made unless there are substantial reasons for not doing so (i.e. they are not capable of satisfactory performance in the job). Selection decisions will be based purely on the ability of the candidate to meet the criteria contained within the person specification for the post. The interview will be given prior to the vacancy being advertised.

Reasonable adjustments that the Trust can consider are:

- a) making adjustments to premises
 - b) allocating some of the disabled person’s duties to someone else
 - c) transferring the disabled person to fill an existing vacancy
 - d) altering hours of work or training
 - e) changing the place of work or training
 - f) allowing an employee to be absent during working hours for treatment, assessment or rehabilitation
 - g) special arrangements for training or mentoring
 - h) modifying equipment
 - i) modifying instruction or reference manuals
 - j) modifying procedures for testing or assessment
 - k) providing a reader or interpreter
 - l) providing supervision or other support
- 4.4 In the event that the candidate does not meet the person specification, reasonable consideration will be given to re-training in order to meet the relevant criteria.
 - 4.5 If no suitable alternative employment is obtained then the Trust will have kept the employee fully informed of other options such as early retirement or the potential for terminating the employment on the grounds of incapacity.