

## ***Equal Opportunities***

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Centre's decision, services and programs meet the legal requirements which protect against unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

### **2. Responsibilities**

It is the shared responsibility of the Centre's Board and CDO to ensure that this policy is implemented.

### **3. Principles**

It is unlawful to discriminate against people because of their particular personal characteristics or because they belong to a certain group.

### **4. Definitions**

Unlawful discrimination – treating someone unfairly because of their age, sex, chosen gender, race, disability, sexuality, marital or domestic partnership status, pregnancy, association with child, caring responsibilities, identity of spouse or religious dress.

Sexual harassment – sexual behaviour which makes someone feel offended, afraid or humiliated.

Victimisation – treating people unfairly (including retaliating or disadvantaging someone) because they have used the equal opportunity laws.

Whistleblowing – reporting to the authorities information which is in the public interest (including information about risks to health and safety or the environment, illegal activities, waste of public monies or misused resources).

### **5. Policy**

We believe in building an inclusive culture where all people are welcomed at our Centre irrespective of their age, sex, chosen gender, race, disability, sexuality, marital or domestic partnership status, pregnancy, association with child, caring responsibilities, identity of spouse or religious dress.

The following strategies underpin building an inclusive culture:

Access – the Centre will make services and programs available to everyone who is entitled to them, free of any form of unlawful discrimination.

Equity – the Centre will develop and deliver services on the basis of fair treatment of all those users/clients who are eligible to receive them.

Communication – the Centre will use all necessary strategies to inform the community of the services and programs available, their entitlements, and how they can obtain them. The Centre will also consult with Centre users and the community regularly about the adequacy, design and standard of services and programs.

Responsiveness – the Centre will be sensitive to the needs and requirements of people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and be responsive as far as practicable to the particular circumstances of individuals.

Effectiveness – the Centre will be focused on meeting the needs of people from all backgrounds.

Efficiency – the Centre will optimise the use of available community resources through a user-responsive approach to its work that meets the needs of the community.

Accountability – the Centre will ensure that policies and procedures incorporate access and equity and that opportunities to report possible breaches are established.

The Centre will:

- take all reasonable steps to build inclusion and to prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- respond quickly, seriously and effectively to complaints about discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- support those who have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised.

## 6. Procedures

The Board of Management and CDO will incorporate access and equity considerations into:

- strategic and business planning
- policy and procedure development
- service and program development
- budgeting and reporting processes.

If unsure about how to proceed, the CDO or Board will seek advice from the Equal Rights Commission about how to respond to complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

## 7. References

- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984.

## 8. Forms or Attachments

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## 9. Approvals

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	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
Approving Authority	Board of Management	Board of Management
Approval Date		
Next Review Due		