

Discrimination, diversity, equality and inclusion in health

Sociology



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Discrimination Diversity, Equality and Inclusion To understand what discrimination is, we first have to understand the meanings of diversity, equality and inclusion within our society and social healthcare. Diversity outlines difference and variety; we are all different we have characteristics that make us individual, these come from and include: race, religion, age, gender, beliefs, appearance, abilities, talents and sexual orientation. These characteristics give us our uniqueness in society, not only as individuals but also within groups and different cultures.

Equality means treating people fairly, where everyone can participate and has an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. To be able to understand what diversity and equality both mean, we have to first acknowledge our own prejudices, values and beliefs, and then we can positively accept difference in our society, and in the role of Social Care Workers. By accepting diversity and equality we support, value and respect service users, thus providing a quality standard of care.

Inclusion means including all individuals and groups, treating people fairly and with respect, giving choices, not tolerating discrimination, breaking down barriers and providing a supportive and nurturing quality standard care service. Discrimination can be indirect or direct; it means treating an individual or a group of people less fairly than others, giving a lower standard of service because of how we view them. We can discriminate without realising we are doing it. Indirect discrimination can occur when a condition or practice or requirement is provided through a service, e. . information leaflets only printed in English and not providing the information in other formats. We are indirectly discriminating against some of our service

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users who may have different levels of communication and need information in other forms, e. g. braille, large fonts, different languages or on audio. Direct discrimination can occur in different forms. Sometimes people do not realise that what they are saying or doing can be discriminative to others, e. g. stereotyping and generalisations.

What is your initial thought when you see a person dressed in a hoodie, homeless person, a coloured person or an old person? If it is a negative thought or fear, the values and beliefs you hold could turn these into prejudices. You possibly formed an opinion based on an assumption rather than on fact. Values are taught to us usually in childhood and we carry these with us throughout our life. Values, beliefs and any prejudices can be changed, usually through knowledge and life's experiences. By seeing things from a different perspective and keeping a positive attitude, we can all be open to change.

There are other ways discrimination can happen in social care. Through communication: the words and expressions we use, derogatory language, belittling people, patronising, humiliating and disrespecting people. These are all discriminative. Telling jokes about particular groups of people, based on their race, age, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, ability or disability, is discrimination. We must think about not only what we say or do but also what our colleagues say and do. Stereotyping, generalisations and labelling do not define the people we care for.

Calling someone little as in ' Little Mary' because the lady is small in height, this does not define her as a human being. She happens to be small, but is ' Mary' first. When people who want to take part in society, employment, <https://assignbuster.com/discrimination-diversity-equality-and-inclusion-in-health/>

education, an exercise or activity, or a service, and are excluded or treated less fairly based on their age, race, ability or disability, gender, sexuality or other prejudice, this is discrimination. The effect of discrimination can lead to isolation, impacting on mental and physical health, stress, lack of confidence and low self esteem.

The use of Inclusion and anti- discriminatory practice in social care can help us recognise, support, challenge and change any discrimination. We have to keep an open mind and not allow our own values or beliefs to interfere with how we support clients. Because it is not right for us, does not mean it is not right for someone else. Give people choices, ask them or theirfamily. Read through their care plan which is about their life, likes, dislikes, interests and beliefs. This will help break down any barriers.

Sometimes in social care we need to act on behalf of our clients, to help them understand, choose and exercise their right. This could be because of a number of factors. There might be emotional, physical or communication barriers that effectively stop people from accessing help, advice or from making decisions about their life. By doing this we are promoting independence and not dependence. Because we live and work in a diverse society, there are laws, regulations and guidance to help you understand discrimination and how to deal with it.

Your workplace will have policies about this that will include:

- Equality Act 2010 (this act supersedes all previous acts and covers all aspects of discrimination)

- HCPC (Health & Care Professions Council) formally GCSS code of practice

You can ask your manager for further advice about:

- Duty of care
- Safeguarding
- Effective communication
- Standard of care

Other organisations which can provide further help are:

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Law Centre

Be respectful, polite and courteous, value yourself and others this will help you deliver quality care.