

Equal opportunities and diversity policy

For Parkinson's UK, being an inclusive organisation that listens and responds to the needs of everyone affected by Parkinson's is central to our goals and values. This policy underpins our work to make sure that no one has to face Parkinson's alone. It is intended to help us to function effectively as a fair and united organisation, building on the strengths that a diverse team of staff, volunteers and supporters can bring to our activities on behalf of all sections of the Parkinson's community.

Commitment

At Parkinson's UK, we're committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity throughout our work and organisational culture.

It's our policy to treat everyone with respect and dignity irrespective of:

- age
- disability
- race
- ethnicity
- stage of Parkinson's
- religion and belief
- mental health status
- sex/gender reassignment
- sexual orientation
- socio-economic status
- care setting
- geographical location
- marital/civil partnership status
- pregnancy and maternity

Organisational culture

We will make sure that equality and diversity are at the heart of our culture and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

We are committed to:

- providing leadership that communicates the importance of equal opportunities and diversity across the organisation

- ensuring that recruitment on to our board of trustees takes diversity into account and that the board represents the needs of everyone affected by Parkinson's
- making sure that our strategic planning considers the equality and diversity impact of our potential projects and developments and engages people from diverse groups
- incorporating equal opportunities and diversity issues into the monitoring and evaluation of all our projects and activities
- developing and reviewing policies in accordance with equalities legislation and good practice in promoting diversity
- ensuring everyone who comes into contact with the charity is treated fairly
- striving for best practice in equal opportunities and diversity beyond the minimum statutory requirements
- ensuring our contractors and partners are committed to equal opportunities and diversity, and adhere to our equality and diversity policy

Services

We will provide services that are accessible and appropriate to everyone affected by Parkinson's.

We are committed to:

- monitoring our services to identify diverse communities of people affected by Parkinson's who we're currently under-serving
- engaging people from diverse and under-served groups to help shape, monitor and evaluate our services, to make sure these are accessible and meet their needs
- promoting our services and support to everyone affected by Parkinson's, with a particular focus on under-served communities
- providing people with information and support free of charge
- ensuring the right services and support are available to people at all stages of Parkinson's
- making sure our information and support is accessible to people with hearing, sight and speech difficulties through the use of amplification, accessible font sizes, audio versions of resources and a text relay service
- ensuring we make our information and support accessible to people whose first language is not English, by offering translation and interpreting services in response to need
- providing a choice of different routes into our information and support services
- providing support to people affected by Parkinson's whatever their care setting, lifestyle or circumstances
- organising inclusive activities and events
- making sure the places where we provide our services are physically accessible and that any special needs are catered for

Local groups

We will enable our group network to provide inclusive local support.

We are committed to:

- supporting local groups to ensure the venues they use are culturally and physically accessible to all sections of the community and that diverse needs are catered for
- supporting the local group network to identify parts of their community they aren't currently engaging and to extend their reach to diverse and under-served groups
- enabling local groups to offer an inclusive programme of activities to benefit the whole Parkinson's community in their area
- assisting local groups to ensure open and transparent processes are in place for elections to leadership roles in the organisation
- supporting local groups to actively seek volunteers for leadership roles from the whole Parkinson's community

Employment

We will ensure that Parkinson's UK is an equal opportunities employer and that staff are valued and respected.

We are committed to:

- valuing staff and recognising that people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perspectives
- monitoring the diversity of our workforce, reviewing advertising and recruitment practices as required
- providing a working environment that is free from harassment, intimidation and unlawful discrimination and letting staff know how our grievance and disciplinary procedures can be used to enforce this
- providing and following good practice guidance when recruiting and selecting staff so that candidates are chosen in accordance with objective job-related criteria and equalities legislation
- advertising vacancies so that they're likely to reach and attract all potential applicants, proactively targeting and encouraging applications from diverse communities, and providing recruitment materials in accessible formats
- ensuring applications from people affected by Parkinson's are encouraged and that job opportunities are promoted to the Parkinson's community
- making sure all aspects of the pay system are free from bias
- using the expertise and skills of all employees and making sure they have equal access to training, development and other career opportunities according to objective criteria and organisational need
- supporting flexible working wherever operationally practical, and treating people fairly irrespective of their working arrangements
- ensuring all new staff have a thorough induction that communicates the importance of working in a respectful, inclusive way and makes clear their rights and responsibilities in relation to equal opportunities and diversity

- providing staff at all levels with regular diversity training, enabling them to apply the equal opportunities and diversity policy to their area of work
- including ability to work with diverse groups in all relevant person specifications
- incorporating working with diverse groups into staff supervision and appraisals, and providing access to training when needed
- making appropriate adjustments in the working environment and practices to accommodate diverse groups and meet the needs of people with disabilities, in keeping with the Equalities Act 2010

Publicity, campaigning and education

We will represent the interests of everyone affected by Parkinson's and ensure all our publicity is inclusive.

We are committed to:

- consulting with a wide range of people affected by Parkinson's to determine our policy positions and key messages, making a particular effort to involve people from under-served groups
- being proactive in challenging inequalities in our policy, campaigning and educational activities
- taking every appropriate opportunity to promote the policy and service development interests of people affected by Parkinson's from under-served groups and enable them to have a voice
- ensuring all public and media statements reflect our the inclusive nature of our values and are targeted at and relevant to a diverse audience
- communicating our commitment to valuing diversity and promoting equality in policy documents and publications.
- making sure that all our resources, materials, training and digital media are fully inclusive in language and imagery, and properly reflect the profile of people affected by Parkinson's in relation to ethnicity, age and gender and other aspects of diversity
- identifying and using a variety of channels to ensure we reach everyone affected by Parkinson's

Volunteering

We will work to ensure that Parkinson's UK promotes diversity and equal opportunities in volunteer recruitment, support and development, and that we value all our volunteers.

We are committed to:

- promoting volunteer opportunities to a wide range of audiences, with a particular focus on under-represented groups
- making sure that we recruit and select volunteers in a fair and transparent manner
- providing flexible, wide-ranging learning, support and development opportunities
- recognising and valuing our volunteers' different skills, knowledge and experience

- making sure that all our staff apply equal opportunities when engaging with, recruiting and supporting our volunteers
- making sure that we inform all our volunteers about our equal opportunities and diversity policy
- developing support and training so that our volunteers work within our equal opportunities and diversity policy

Implementation and evaluation

We will put in place a programme of training and support to enable implementation of the policy. We will also undertake diversity auditing to help us benchmark our progress and develop plans for further improvement.