

## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY**

### **Neuro Gateway Support Network**

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#### **1. Introduction and Statement of Commitment**

*Neuro Gateway Support Network* is committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity, and fostering inclusion in all aspects of its work. The organisation recognises that individuals who access its services often do so at times of vulnerability, distress, or uncertainty, and may face a range of barriers related to health, disability, social circumstances, or systemic inequalities. The organisation affirms that every individual has the right to be treated with dignity, respect, fairness, and compassion. It is committed to ensuring that no individual is disadvantaged or excluded from accessing support on the basis of personal characteristics, identity, or background.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are not regarded as standalone principles, but as fundamental components of ethical, effective, and person-centred practice. This policy sets out the organisation's approach to embedding these principles into service delivery, governance, and organisational culture.

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#### **2. Legal and Regulatory Framework**

This policy is informed by and aligned with the Equality Act 2010, which provides a comprehensive legal framework for protecting individuals from discrimination in the United Kingdom. The Act identifies a number of protected characteristics, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The organisation also operates in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998, which upholds the right to dignity, respect, and private life, and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, which emphasises wellbeing, voice, and control for individuals accessing care and support.

In addition, the organisation recognises the principles underpinning the Public Sector Equality Duty, particularly in the context of partnership working with statutory agencies in Wales, and seeks to align its practices with these expectations where appropriate.

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#### **3. Scope and Application of the Policy**

This policy applies to all individuals acting on behalf of *Neuro Gateway Support Network*, including trustees, volunteers, and any individuals engaged in delivering services or representing the organisation.

It applies to all aspects of the organisation's work, including the delivery of services, communication with individuals and families, recruitment and engagement of volunteers, partnership working, and internal decision-making processes.

The principles outlined in this policy are expected to inform all interactions with individuals who access the organisation's services, ensuring that those interactions are inclusive, respectful, and responsive to individual needs.

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#### **4. Understanding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**

*Neuro Gateway Support Network* recognises that equality, diversity, and inclusion are interconnected but distinct concepts that must be understood and applied in practice. Equality involves ensuring that individuals are treated fairly and that barriers to access are identified and removed. It recognises that individuals may require different levels of support in order to achieve equitable outcomes.

Diversity refers to the recognition, understanding, and valuing of differences between individuals. These differences may relate to background, identity, culture, lived experience, or personal circumstances.

Inclusion refers to the creation of an environment in which all individuals feel respected, valued, and able to participate fully. It requires proactive effort to ensure that individuals are not only able to access services but feel welcomed and supported in doing so.

The organisation acknowledges that individuals affected by neurological conditions may face additional challenges related to communication, cognition, stigma, and access to services. These factors must be considered in order to ensure that services are genuinely inclusive.

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#### **5. Commitment to Non-Discrimination**

*Neuro Gateway Support Network* is committed to ensuring that no individual is subject to discrimination, harassment, or victimisation in the delivery of its services or in any aspect of its operations.

The organisation recognises that discrimination may be direct, where an individual is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic, or indirect, where policies or practices have a disproportionate impact on certain groups.

All reasonable steps will be taken to prevent discrimination and to ensure that any concerns are addressed promptly and effectively. The organisation is committed to creating an environment in which all individuals feel safe, respected, and able to access support without fear of prejudice or bias.

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#### **6. Inclusive and Accessible Service Delivery**

*Neuro Gateway Support Network* is committed to ensuring that its services are accessible to all individuals, regardless of their circumstances or background. The organisation recognises that barriers to access may arise in many forms, including physical, cognitive, linguistic, cultural, and digital barriers.

In delivering its services, the organisation will take reasonable steps to adapt its approach to meet individual needs. This includes communicating in clear and accessible language, allowing additional time for individuals to process information, and being responsive to different communication preferences.

The organisation acknowledges that individuals affected by dementia and other neurological conditions may require specific communication approaches, including simplified language, repetition, and reassurance. It will seek to respond flexibly and sensitively to these needs.

Where individuals face barriers related to language, literacy, or access to technology, the organisation will make reasonable efforts to provide support in a way that is appropriate and accessible.

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## **7. Respect, Dignity, and Person-Centred Practice**

All individuals who engage with *Neuro Gateway Support Network* will be treated with respect, dignity, and compassion. The organisation is committed to a person-centred approach, recognising that each individual's situation is unique and that support must be tailored accordingly.

The organisation will ensure that individuals are listened to, that their views and preferences are taken seriously, and that they are supported to make informed decisions about their circumstances. Where appropriate, the involvement of family members and carers will be recognised, while ensuring that the rights and wishes of the individual remain central.

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## **8. Addressing Inequality and Disadvantage**

*Neuro Gateway Support Network* recognises that some individuals and groups may experience greater levels of disadvantage or face systemic barriers when accessing support. This may include individuals from minority ethnic communities, those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, individuals with disabilities, or those who are socially isolated. The organisation is committed to recognising these inequalities and taking steps to address them where possible. This may involve adapting services, providing additional support, or working in partnership with other organisations to ensure that individuals are able to access appropriate resources.

The organisation acknowledges that equality does not always mean treating everyone the same, but rather responding to individual needs in a way that promotes fairness and inclusion.

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## **9. Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity**

The organisation recognises that cultural beliefs, values, and practices can influence how individuals experience illness, care, and support. It is committed to ensuring that its services are delivered in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner.

Individuals will not be stereotyped or judged based on their background, and the organisation will approach all interactions with openness and respect. Where cultural considerations are relevant to the support being provided, these will be taken into account in a thoughtful and appropriate manner.

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## **10. Responsibilities and Accountability**

The trustees of *Neuro Gateway Support Network* hold overall responsibility for ensuring that the organisation upholds its commitments to equality, diversity, and inclusion. They are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively and that equality considerations are embedded within governance and decision-making processes.

All individuals acting on behalf of the organisation are responsible for adhering to the principles set out in this policy. This includes treating others with respect, challenging

discriminatory behaviour where appropriate, and ensuring that their actions contribute to an inclusive environment.

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### **11. Responding to Concerns and Complaints**

The organisation takes all concerns relating to discrimination, exclusion, or inappropriate behaviour seriously. Any individual who feels that they have been treated unfairly or in a discriminatory manner has the right to raise a concern.

Such concerns will be addressed in accordance with the organisation's Complaints Policy, and where relevant, may also be considered under safeguarding procedures. The organisation is committed to responding promptly and fairly to any such concerns.

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### **12. Training and Awareness**

*Neuro Gateway Support Network* recognises the importance of awareness and understanding in promoting equality and inclusion. Trustees and volunteers will be expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and to apply its principles in their work.

The organisation will encourage ongoing reflection and learning to ensure that its approach remains responsive and inclusive, particularly as it develops and expands its services.

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### **13. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement**

The organisation is committed to reviewing its practices to ensure that it is meeting its equality and inclusion objectives. While respecting confidentiality, it may review anonymised information about service users to identify patterns or gaps in access.

This information will be used to inform improvements in service delivery and to ensure that the organisation continues to reach those who may be most in need of support.

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### **14. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if required, to ensure that it remains aligned with current legislation, guidance, and best practice.

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### **15. Final Statement**

*Neuro Gateway Support Network* is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable environment in which all individuals feel valued, respected, and supported. The organisation recognises that promoting equality and inclusion is an ongoing process and is dedicated to embedding these principles into all aspects of its work.

Through its commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, the organisation seeks to ensure that all individuals are able to access the support they need and to navigate complex systems with confidence and dignity.