

Disability Equality Scheme 2011 -14



'Supporting people with learning disabilities in the community'

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Branching Out Disability Equality Scheme

Reviewed every year

Introduction

Duties under Part 5A of the DDA we require:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: clients, staff, parents, carers and other people who use Branching Out or may wish to; and
- Prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how we will meet these duties.

This scheme and the accompanying action plans set out how our Trustees, General Manager, staff, and clients will promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Branching Out is exempt from the DDA for the following reason:

It helps to tackle disadvantages that particularly affect someone with a protected characteristic.

However as an organisation we strive to review our facilities, resources, and performance as a duty to the clients who use our facilities.

- increasing the extent to which disabled people can participate in the activities;
- improving the environment of all facilities to increase the extent to which disabled people can take advantage of our services;
- To monitor the quality of the service for the clients who use our facilities.

The DDA also means that you have a right to information about healthcare and social services in a format that is accessible to you. So long as it is reasonable for the service provider to provide it in that format.

Single equality duty from April 2011 includes plan for:

Single equality Scheme (SES)

Employment

Education

Access to goods and services and facilities

Age

Gender reassignment

Sexual orientation

Race

Religion or belief

New in 2011:

Discrimination by association or perception Protection also applies where direct discrimination and harassment happens because a person is associated with a disabled person or is wrongly perceived to be disabled.

1. **Ethos, Vision & Values**

Branching Out is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, Service users and any others involved in our community, with any form of disability and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices and service delivery.

Branching Out will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment or of people who act as carers of disabled people.

Branching Out Vision Statement:

When we achieve we have value, when we make mistakes we have understanding, when we look after our environment we have a community.

1.1 **What do we understand by disability?**

“Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities” (DDA 1995 Part 1 Para. 1.1.) This definition was amended and broadened in December 2005 under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act and now includes people with long term medical conditions such as those with cancer or surviving cancer, HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis. It also includes mental impairments and the need for these to be clinically recognised has been removed by the Act.

Branching Out accepts the “social model” of disability which recognises that disability is not caused by the individuals, but by the physical, environmental and attitudinal barriers which exist in society as a whole. Branching Out therefore uses the social model of disability throughout our work.

Branching Out helps clients with a protected characteristic. All our clients require our support because they have got a learning disability. Some people may in addition have other disabilities and Branching Out will work to actively support all clients by making reasonable adjustments.

We also recognise that social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are part of this overall definition where they have a substantial and long-term effect on a person’s ability to carry out day to day activities.

1.2 **Strategic Priorities**

During 2011 -14 Branching Out worked to develop:

- 1) Improve site accessibility for clients with visual impairment. We intended to develop environmental adaptations to enable our clients and visitors to move around the site with independence. We requested advice from the Sensory Team to consider reasonable specifications with adaptations the site/s.
- 2) Site accessibility for clients with physical support needs to enable them to move around the site with independence.
- 3) To improve signs around the site/s to make reasonable adjustments enabling better understanding of site information for adults with learning disabilities.
- 4) Improve the staff skills in the use of communicating with clients who have none or limited verbal skills.
- 5) Worked proactively with our clients to enable a better understanding of their right not to be discriminated against and what course of action to follow.
- 6) Promoted a better understanding of our clients within the community and also work towards promoting a better understanding within the community of the rights of our clients to respect appropriate behaviour from the public.

1.3 Involvement of disabled people, staff and parents

- We requested advice from the specialist for Visual impairment, health professionals from East Cambridgeshire Community Health Team including Speech and language therapist, Occupational Therapists and physiotherapists.

1.4 Information gathering

- We identified the range of disabilities of our clients on an annual basis in the autumn for our management and trustees and any issues about our facilities required to make reasonable adjustments for our clients to access the site, facilities, and activities.
- The Branching Out Disability Equality Team reviewed the impact and set actions.

1.5 Impact assessment

- We have considered the impact of our Disability Equalities Scheme in the work of our trustee committees for Activities, Finance and Premises’.
- We have evaluated the impact of the scheme from 2011 – 14 and continue to review the scheme on an annual basis and adjust or set new priorities.

2. Identifying the main priorities of the scheme and actions

Year 1: 2011 -12

- Invite the Sensory Team to visit Branching Out and give feedback on reasonable adjustments.
- Invite the Community Health Team to Branching Out and give feedback on reasonable adjustments.
- Invite the Hate Crime Team to visit Branching Out suggesting training materials.
- Write and distribute a statement of Branching Out's strategic priorities.
- Assess the signage/posters at Branching Out with a view to increasing understanding.
- Purchase and install a new stair lift for access to the first floor.
- Repair concrete paths.
- Purchase ramps for access to the buildings.
- Use textured paint in bright colours for guiding rails.
- Review the range of disabilities of our clients and facilities required to make reasonable adjustments.
- Survey the clients on an annual basis to ascertain how many have been victims of discrimination in the community recently, what type of discrimination and liaise the results with the Hate Crime Team before undertaking work to support the clients.

Year 2: 2012 - 13

- All support staff to attend Total Communication Approach Training.
- Take part in a variety of community activities and publicise those activities.
- Improved marketing of Branching Out.
- Open Day opportunity for the community to see our clients at work.
- Install a sensory walkway.
- Replace locks on ladies toilets to help clients privacy.

Year 3: 2013 - 14

- Consult with clients, parents and care homes to seek their views about the scheme and listen to their feedback.
- Measure the amount of incidences clients report in the annual surveys of Hate Crime.

Year 4: 2014 – 15

- Involve the support staff using their knowledge of the vulnerable people we support to create a Sensory Room.
- Involve the support staff using their knowledge of the vulnerable people we support to create a Sensory Garden expanding on the previous sensory walkway idea.

3. Making it happen

The Disability Equality Scheme Team will implement actions and review progress at regular meetings.

The results of progress and any budget requirements will be reviewed by Branching Out Trustees on an annual basis.

3.1 **Implementation**

2014
The Sensory Room has been completed.
Work had almost been completed on the Sensory Garden

3.2 **Publication**

The scheme is published on www.branchingoutuk.com

3.3 **Reporting**

3.4 **Reviewing and revising the scheme**

The scheme will be reviewed on an annual basis by Branching Out.
Review Date:
11/10/2011 First meeting with Branching Out DES Team.
31/10/2011 Meeting to review scheme – attendees Susan Wiggans & Valerie Crossland.
28/11/2011 Branching Out Trustees meeting annual review.
13/12/2011 Second meeting with Branching Out DES Team.
25/03/14 Review of progress/action plan and setting actions for 2014

Branching Out Disability Equality Scheme Team consists of 4 staff and one volunteer, and one trustee:

Mrs Susan Wiggans; Mrs Christine Hook; Miss Rachel Wiggans; Mr Adrian Shaw; Mrs Valerie Crossland; Miss Ruth Baker.

Senior Member of Staff Responsible: Mrs Susan Wiggans

In addition we have a trustee responsible to the Board: Mrs Kim Taylor

Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan

BRANCHING OUT LTD

Period covered by the Action Plan: 2011 - 2014

Senior Member of Staff responsible:
Mrs Susan Wiggans

Trustee Responsible:
Mrs Kim Taylor

Priority	Action Required	Success Criteria	Resources	Timescale	Lead Person (s)	Review arrangements and date
High	Invite the Sensory Team to visit Branching Out and give feedback on reasonable adjustments.	No Response Equipment purchased.	Letter	January	Susan Wiggans	Closed 2014
High	Invite the Community Health Team to Branching Out and give feedback on reasonable adjustments.	No Response	Letter	January	Susan Wiggans	Closed 2014. Plans to remove vending machine January 2015.
High 2	Invite the Hate Crime Team to visit Branching Out suggesting training materials.	No Response	See item 1			Closed 2014. Plans to educate public via a shop window display during 2014
medium	Write and distribute a statement of Branching Out's strategic priorities.		Start draft – 'Our Future' document	February	Susan Wiggans	Trustees Reviewing May 2014
	Assess the signage/posters at Branching Out with a view to increasing understanding.	Completed	Survey – All signs converted to widget symbols	January	Ruth Baker	Completed 2013

	Purchase and install a new stair lift for access to the first floor.	New stair lift in place	Grant application completed – decision to be made approximately May. If unsuccessful trustee to agree purchase.	May	Susan Wiggans/Trustees	Completed 2013.
	Repair concrete paths.	Brick paths in place	Replaced with brick paver	April	Susan Wiggans	Completed 2012
	Purchase ramps for access to the buildings.	Purchased and in place	Research ramp for shop/cost. Purchase non fixed ramp for main site.	January January	Susan Wiggans Susan Wiggans	Completed 2012
	Use textured paint in bright colours for guiding rails.		When weather permits	May	Adrian Shaw	To be completed 2014
High	Review the range of disabilities of our clients and facilities required to make reasonable adjustments.	Completed survey. No response to letters sent. Support staff views consulted and adjustments made.			Ruth Baker/Valerie Crossland/Sensory Team/Community Health Team. Susan Wiggans to include results of survey in letter to the teams.	Completed 2013
High	The Sensory Room has now been equipped with all relevant equipment		All risk assessments and ancillary paperwork has been completed. Outside agencies and care homes will be notified shortly about using the facility	May 2014	Rachel Wiggans	Completed 2014
High	Gents Toilets		Occupational Health are looking into doing an audit of this area with a view to accessing the toilets.	June 2014	Rachel Wiggans	Ongoing during 2014

<p>High 1. – <i>to be completed before the visit from the Hate Crime Team.</i></p>	<p>Survey the clients on an annual basis to ascertain how many have been victims of discrimination in the community recently, what type of discrimination and liaise the results with the Hate Crime Team before undertaking work to support the clients.</p>		<p>Invite Hate Crime Team to run a workshop looking at what is Hate crime, peoples rights, and survey types of crime people have been victim of. Invite clients/parents/carers to attend.</p>	<p>Send invite to Hate Crime Team outlining what we want include asking for feedback on training material. January.</p>	<p>Susan Wiggans</p>	<p>Completed No response from Hate Crime Team Planning to educate public via shop window display 2014</p>
<p>High</p>	<p>Involve the support staff using their knowledge of the vulnerable people we support to create a Sensory Garden expanding on the previous sensory walkway idea.</p>		<p>Visiting teams to help. Support Staff views consulted for design. Fencing and other facilities purchased.</p>		<p>Susan Wiggans and Support Staff Team</p>	<p>To be completed 2014</p>