

# Equal opportunities

The Bedfordshire Centre for Therapeutic Studies accepts its legal obligations under the relevant legislation: The Equality Act 2010.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> 2010, a new Equality Act came into force bringing together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up the new Act that provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The headings of age, disability (which includes mental health and people diagnosed as clinically obese), race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment (people who are having a sex change, transvestites, and transgender people), marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity are now to be known as 'protected characteristics.'

## **There are now seven different types of discrimination:**

- Direct discrimination: discrimination because of a protected characteristic.
- Associative discrimination: direct discrimination because they are associated with someone with a protected characteristic.
- Indirect discrimination: when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a protected characteristic.
- Harassment: behaviour deemed offensive by the recipient.
- Harassment by a third party: employers are potentially liable for the harassment of staff or customers by people they don't directly employ, such as a contractor.
- Victimisation: discrimination against someone because they made or supported a complaint under Equality Act legislation.
- Discrimination by perception: direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic (even if they don't).

We value the unique experience of all individuals and groups, and respect people's right to hold their own values and beliefs and enjoy learning in a context which is free from prejudice and unfair discrimination.

Any acts of discrimination will be taken seriously by the centre.