

POLICY 5.2 DIVERSITY

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to describe the strategies employed by Better Together provide and support an environment of understanding, acceptance and respecting equality of our differences. The purpose of this policy is to;

- to assist service users from diverse backgrounds, values and beliefs to participate in the lifestyle of their choosing
- ensure service users with diverse needs can access Better Together services and are free from stigma, discrimination and stereotyping
- provide an environment that embraces workplace diversity and inclusion and is appropriate to the individual's diversity
- develop unconscious bias awareness within its staff

Applicability

This policy is applies to all Better Together staff, volunteers and committee members within the organisation.

Policy Statement

Better Together is committed to

- Recognising, respecting, promoting and celebrating the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, gender diversity, individual's faith belief systems and any non-hegemonic identified group.
- Recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the traditional owners of this land and that we will continue to support their rights to be front and center for their journey towards reconciliation.
- The belief that each individual/group are the experts in their own lives, values and history and our commitment to being educated through listening to diverse groups. We can them be guided by them on how to best engage, communicate and respect them as individuals and as an organisation.
- Adopting and implementing inclusive policies and strategies which promote diversity in all areas of its Services.
- The importance of diversity in the workplace to reflect the service user and communities it serves.

Better Together is committed to the goal of creating an inclusive culture that promotes the performance and wellbeing of our employees irrespective of family responsibilities, marital status, age, disability, race, religion, political beliefs, trade union activity, gender identity or sexuality.

Better Together is committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination, workplace bullying, sexual harassment and victimisation through modelling inclusive leadership, and promoting an inclusive and respectful workplace culture.

Principals:

To assist with the development of understanding, acceptance and inclusion of the uniqueness of all people Better Together will be guided by the following principals:

- All access material is in a mode that is required by the individual, whether that be an interpreter, translator simple English version etc.
- Ensure equitable access to all individuals requesting service delivery regardless of background, identity and choices.
- Develop an understanding of the role of service users and how their culture, religion and life choices play in their life and wellbeing and supporting this.
- Removal of any generalisations about an individual's choices and beliefs and culture whilst considering historical implications.
- Promote and support connection to external groups to support individuals with their diversity.
- Seek to progressively build opportunities for every person supported to participate and be involved in the life of their community (to the extent of their ability) and in the least restrictive way of their rights.
- Ensure values, diversity and inclusion as a key people management priority enables employees to feel safe and valued, leading to greater employee engagement, satisfaction, innovation and productivity.
- Treatment of employees and service users with fairness and respect and that their diverse knowledge and experiences makes us a better organisation because of them.
- To demonstrate appropriate workplace behaviours; we listen, engage, and understand our employees and respond appropriately to their individual needs and changing circumstances.
- Promoting workplace diversity and inclusion as everybody's responsibility and all employees should understand and be committed to uphold this value
- Sustain a culture where individuals feel free to raise issues pertaining to any unfair or discriminatory behaviour from others within the organisation.

Relevant Legislation

- The Privacy Act 1988
- The Fair Work Act 2009
- The Fair Work Regulations 2009
- The Racial Discrimination Act 1984
- The Human Rights Commission Act
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- The Anti-Discrimination Act 1991

Definitions

Diversity: Diversity refers to those unique human qualities that distinguish all individuals and groups from each other. The term refers primarily to the significant differences between people, including perceptions of difference. The primary dimensions of diversity include age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities and qualities, culture and sexual orientation. Secondary dimensions of diversity are those that may be addressed such as educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs, work experiences, language, family status, and literacy (Australian Multicultural Foundation 2010).