

RELIGION AND BELIEF

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Policy Statement

Everyone has a very different value and belief system, which is almost invariably informed by religion. This organisation believes in the individual's right to their own values, faith, religion and beliefs, no matter what form these may take. This is a particularly sensitive area for residents and staff. It is core to the delivery of the service that every resident must be free to choose and to follow wherever their values, faith, religion or beliefs leads them.

This document outlines the policy of this organisation in relation to the religion and beliefs of residents. This organisation believes that every resident has the right to freedom of religion and belief, and that this includes the opportunities and facilities to practice their religion. We will do everything possible to ensure that the way in which our service is delivered does not compromise this right.

The Policy

-  Residents will be informed of their rights in respect of religion and beliefs, as well as any help we can provide to further those rights, through the information we provide to prospective residents. We recognise that for some ethnic minorities religion is intrinsically linked with culture and sometimes with language; therefore, we will aim to ensure that this information is accessible, comprehensible and expressed sympathetically for those it concerns
-  Religious needs will be sought and recorded in the course of making or considering the assessment of a prospective resident's needs; this is to ensure that we be certain that our staff could respond appropriately if they provided care
-  If we honestly feel that we would not be able to provide appropriate care because of a prospective resident's religious needs then we will advise the person and (if necessary) their, relatives and representative, accordingly
-  The expected involvement, if any, of the organisation in meeting the resident's spiritual needs will be outlined in the resident's plan of care and in collaboration with the resident
-  We will brief all relevant staff on each resident's religious needs, ensuring that they understand what is being undertaken and perform all necessary steps to fulfil these elements of the care plan
-  We recognise that contact with places of worship and fellow believers are for many residents an important element of their continued integration with the community; if asked to do so, we will endeavour to facilitate and make meaningful such contact
-  In the care home the staff will respect the necessary space and privacy that the resident needs to engage in personal religious practice such as prayer, worship, meditation or the reading of scriptures, if and when they wish to
-  Staff that are involved with food preparation will strive to observe any dietary requirements that are based on a resident's religious beliefs and to take account of any special requirement of the resident in relation to festivals and anniversaries related to their faith
-  We acknowledge that religious belief and practice may assume a particular significance during times of dying or death. If our staff are involved at such periods we will try to observe any requests for special treatment, ritual, or family and community contacts that are requested, for residents both close to death and afterwards, and for their friends and relatives
-  We recognise that for some people the expression of personal and spiritual values takes forms outside a structure of religious belief and practice; in such instances we will do everything

possible to facilitate that expression in ways appropriate to the individual in order to enable their maximum personal fulfilment

-  We know that some people with severe disabilities, communication difficulties, mental disorders or terminal illnesses retain a sense of the importance of their personal faith; therefore, we will respect and try to respond to this need in any appropriate way
-  We will take vigorous steps to ensure that no resident is the subject of discrimination because of their religious beliefs or practices. Any staff member who displays a lack of respect for religious needs will be the subject of disciplinary action
-  We will seek in the social makeup of the staff group to reflect the diversity of faiths and cultures among residents and in the local community, as a way of helping our residents to feel accepted and respected. We will not discriminate on grounds of religion against applicants for posts in the organisation. We will attempt to accommodate staff whose personal religious beliefs require them to be away from work at certain times or on specified days
-  We see our efforts to promote appropriate responses to residents' religious needs as a part of wider efforts to provide each resident with as fulfilling and participative a lifestyle as is possible according to their personal preferences, needs and choices.

Training Statement

All staff members will be given a copy of this policy during induction. If any new service user presents religious needs with which staff are unfamiliar, we will take steps to ensure that the relevant staff receive appropriate briefing and training in order to provide good care in this regard.

Related Policies
Equal Opportunities
Equality and Diversity