PHSSL CARE LIMITED

CONTROLLED POLICY

B04 – EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

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Policy Owner	PHSSL Care Limited
Approved By	Lade Awosika, Director
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Applies To	All PHSSL Care Limited staff, workers and relevant contractors
Supersedes	New policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out PHSSL Care Limited's commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights in the provision of care and in employment. It aims to ensure that people are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and are supported to exercise choice, independence and equal access to opportunities and services.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all people receiving or seeking PHSSL Care Limited services and to all employees, workers, applicants, managers, contractors and others acting on behalf of the organisation.

3. Policy Statement

PHSSL Care Limited will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying or degrading treatment. Individual differences will be respected and care will be delivered in a person-centred way that recognises identity, culture, communication, beliefs, relationships, disability and individual preferences.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy will be applied with regard to the Equality Act 2010; Human Rights Act 1998; Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, particularly Regulations 9 and 10 and other relevant fundamental standards; UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018; Mental Capacity Act 2005; Care Act 2014; applicable employment law; and current CQC guidance.

5. Protected Characteristics

PHSSL Care Limited recognises the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. The organisation will apply legal protections according to the context in which they operate.

6. Equality in Care and Support

People will have fair access to assessment, care planning, support, review, complaints and communication. Decisions will be based on assessed needs, safety, lawful service scope and individual circumstances rather than prejudice, stereotypes or assumptions.

7. Dignity and Respect

Every person must be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. Staff must avoid language, behaviour, jokes, assumptions or practices that demean, exclude, humiliate or stigmatise a person or group.

8. Person-Centred Inclusion

Care planning will seek to understand what matters to the person, including routines, identity, culture, relationships, communication, faith or belief, dietary needs, personal care preferences and other factors relevant to their wellbeing.

9. Reasonable Adjustments

PHSSL Care Limited will make reasonable adjustments for disabled people where required and practicable. Adjustments may relate to communication, information formats, equipment, appointment arrangements, working practices or the way care and support are delivered.

10. Accessible Communication

People should receive information in a way they can understand. Staff must identify and respond to communication needs and consider interpreters, advocates, visual aids, accessible formats, communication technology or other appropriate support.

11. Culture, Race and Ethnicity

Staff will respect cultural, racial and ethnic identity and avoid assumptions about a person based on background or appearance. Care should take account of relevant cultural preferences while maintaining safety, consent, dignity and individual choice.

12. Religion and Belief

People will be supported to practise, change or decline a religion or belief as far as reasonably possible within the service. Staff must not impose their own religious, philosophical or non-religious beliefs on people receiving care.

13. Sex, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

People must be treated respectfully regardless of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity. Privacy, relationships, preferred forms of address and personal identity should be respected, subject to lawful safeguarding and care requirements.

14. Age

Age must not be used as a basis for unjustified assumptions about capacity, ability, lifestyle or preferences. Care and communication should reflect the person's individual needs and developmental circumstances.

15. Disability

People with physical, sensory, cognitive or other disabilities will be supported to participate in decisions and daily life as independently as possible. Staff must focus on individual abilities and support needs rather than defining a person by disability.

16. Pregnancy and Maternity

People must not be treated unfavourably because of pregnancy or maternity. Appropriate risk assessment, reasonable support and lawful employment or service arrangements will be applied according to individual circumstances.

17. Human Rights

PHSSL Care Limited will respect relevant human rights principles, including dignity, privacy and family life, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom from degrading treatment and protection from unlawful discrimination. Any restriction must have a lawful basis and be necessary and proportionate.

18. Privacy and Family Life

People's privacy, correspondence, relationships, family connections and personal space will be respected. Staff must knock before entering where appropriate, protect confidential information and support private communication unless a lawful and proportionate safety restriction applies.

19. Choice, Independence and Positive Risk

People should be supported to make choices and take reasonable risks. Equality and inclusion do not mean removing autonomy. Risk decisions should be person-centred, proportionate and consistent with capacity, consent and safeguarding responsibilities.

20. Mental Capacity and Decision-Making

A person must not be assumed to lack capacity because of age, disability, appearance, behaviour or diagnosis. Capacity is decision-specific and will be addressed in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and PHSSL Care Limited's Mental Capacity and Consent Policy.

21. Safeguarding and Discriminatory Abuse

Discriminatory abuse, hate-related behaviour, harassment or degrading treatment may be safeguarding concerns. Staff must report and respond to such concerns under PHSSL Care Limited's safeguarding procedures.

22. Equality in Recruitment and Employment

Recruitment, selection, training, supervision, development, allocation of work and other employment decisions will be based on legitimate role requirements, competence, performance and lawful considerations. Unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation are prohibited.

23. Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation

Bullying, harassment or victimisation by staff, people receiving care, relatives, contractors or others will not be ignored. Concerns will be addressed proportionately through safeguarding, employment, complaints or other appropriate procedures.

24. Staff Beliefs and Personal Views

Staff are entitled to their own lawful beliefs and views but must not allow personal opinions or prejudices to compromise professional care, dignity, equality, safeguarding or a person's rights.

25. Challenging Discrimination

Staff should challenge discriminatory language or behaviour appropriately and safely and report serious or repeated concerns. Staff may use safeguarding, complaints or speaking-up procedures where necessary.

26. Complaints and Speaking Up

People receiving care and staff may raise concerns about discrimination or exclusion without fear of retaliation. Complaints and whistleblowing concerns will be managed under the relevant PHSSL Care Limited procedures.

27. Information and Confidentiality

Sensitive information about identity, disability, health, religion, sexual orientation or other personal matters must be handled confidentially and shared only where lawful and necessary.

28. Training and Awareness

Staff will receive appropriate equality, diversity, inclusion and human-rights awareness through induction, training, supervision and updates. Learning will be reinforced where incidents, complaints or audits identify a need.

29. Staff Responsibilities

Staff must treat people fairly and respectfully; follow reasonable adjustments and communication plans; challenge or report discriminatory practice; maintain professional boundaries; protect confidentiality; and seek guidance where individual rights and safety appear to conflict.

30. Management Responsibilities

Management will promote inclusive practice; respond to discrimination and harassment; support reasonable adjustments; monitor complaints and safeguarding concerns; ensure fair employment arrangements; and use governance systems to identify and address inequalities.

31. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

PHSSL Care Limited will review relevant complaints, incidents, safeguarding concerns, workforce information, feedback and audit findings for evidence of inequality, exclusion or discriminatory practice. Improvement actions will be monitored to completion.

32. Related PHSSL Policies

- A01 Governance and Quality Assurance Policy

- A04 Records Management, Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy
- A05 Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Policy
- B01 Safeguarding Adults Policy
- B02 Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- B03 Whistleblowing / Speaking Up Policy
- B05 Mental Capacity, Consent and Best-Interest Decision-Making Policy
- C01 Recruitment, Selection and Safer Employment Policy
- C03 Staff Conduct, Capability and Disciplinary Arrangements Policy
- D01 Person-Centred Assessment, Care Planning and Review Policy
- D06 Dignity, Privacy, Choice and Independence Policy
- D07 Positive Risk-Taking and Risk Management Policy

33. Review and Document Control

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following significant legal or regulatory change, equality-related complaints or incidents, inspection findings, audit findings or identified weaknesses. The current approved electronic version is the controlled master. Printed or locally saved copies are uncontrolled unless specifically issued and recorded as controlled copies.

Approved by	Lade Awosika
Position	Director
Approval method	Approved electronically
Approval date	September 2026
Next review date	September 2027