



Comhairle na nDochtúirí Leighis
Medical Council

Medical Council

Final Equality and Diversity Policy



10th November 2014

Equality and Diversity in the Medical Council

Equality and Diversity Statement:

All Council and Committee members, employees, users and stakeholders have a responsibility to uphold a culture in which difference is respected and in which all people are valued as individuals.

Purpose of Policy / Equal opportunity statement

The Medical Council is committed to promoting a supportive and inclusive culture for all of its users and stakeholders. We aim to ensure that no member, employee, user, or stakeholder experiences less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital or family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability race or membership of the Travelling Community. By integrating individual strengths we can strive to deliver a first class service.

‘Diversity’ refers to:

- *The diverse nature of Irish society, for example, in terms of social class, gender, returned Irish emigrants, non-Irish national medical practitioners, family status, minority groups and the majority group.*

‘Equality’ refers to:

- *The importance of recognising different individual needs and ensuring equality in terms of access, participation and benefits for all members, employees, users and stakeholders.*

‘Minority Group’ includes, but is not limited to:

- *People with a disability*
- *The Traveller community*
- *Economic migrants*
- *Non ethnic minority*
- *Irish Language Speakers*
- *Refugees*
- *Asylum seekers*
- *Members of the gay or lesbian community*
- *Members of minority religious faith*

‘Stakeholder’ includes, but is not limited to:

- *The General Public and Patients*
- *Registered Medical Practitioners*
- *Medical Students*
- *Medical Schools*
- *Post-Graduate Teaching Bodies/Colleges*
- *Council and Committee Members*
- *Staff*
- *Other Registered Bodies and Health Regulatory Bodies*
- *The Department of Health and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs*
- *Media*

Equality Grounds

The equality grounds detailed under the Employment Equality legislation are as follows:

- **Gender:** *a man, a woman or transgender person*
- **Civil Status:** *covering a person who is single, married, separated, divorced or widowed, in a civil partnership or previously in a civil partnership*
- **Family Status:** *covering a person who is pregnant, a parent of a person under 18 or the resident primary carer or a parent of a person with a disability*
- **Sexual Orientation:** *Covering a person who is gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual*
- **Religion:** *Covering different religious belief, background or none*
- **Age:** *this applies to persons over 18 except for the provision of car insurance to licensed drivers under that age*
- **Race:** *Encompassing race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin*
- **Traveller Community:** *Covering people who are commonly called Travellers and identified by Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life*
- **Disability:** *Covering people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions.*

(Link to the Equality Legislation

http://www.iase.ie/pages/documents/legislation/The_Employment_Equality_Acts_1998_and_2004.pdf)

(Link to the Ethical Guide

<http://www.medicalcouncil.ie/News-and-Publications/Publications/Information-for-Doctors/Guide-to-Professional-Conduct-and-Ethics-for-Registered-Medical-Practitioners.pdf>)

(Link to Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts 2005 and 2010

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2005/en/act/pub/0010/index.html>)

Aims

The Medical Council will work to ensure that everyone who interacts with the Council is:

- Treated fairly and without discrimination throughout their dealings with the Council
- Treated equally in a healthy and safe environment free from hazards
- Treated with dignity and respect in a fair and consistent manner in an environment where inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable.

The Medical Council values the creative and innovative potential that people with diverse backgrounds, skills and abilities bring to the organisation. The Medical Council also applies a Code of Conduct to Council members which outlines that in order to fully fulfil its role and enhance its reputation it is essential that each Council Member strives to perform his/her duties in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, honesty, fairness, respect, loyalty, confidentiality and independence. This Code of Conduct has been established to promote and encourage these standards and has also been extended to all committee, sub-committee and working group members as well as Council staff. In its commitment to promote the values of this Equality and Diversity Policy, the Medical Council will strive to ensure our activities will focus on the diversity of the public as well as the diversity of registrants and other users.

Dignity and Respect

The Medical Council currently operates a Dignity and Respect policy this applies to employees, part – time, temporary and permanent irrespective of length of service, users and stakeholders this and applies both in the workplace and at Council associated events such as meetings, conferences and work related social events, whether or not on the Medical Council premises. This policy applies to harassment, sexual harassment and bullying not only by fellow members and employees but also by users, business contacts or other stakeholders with whom it would be reasonably expected to come in contact with in the course of their business with Council.

As part of this Equality and Diversity policy the Medical Council is committed to the following:

- The right to an environment that is free from harassment, sexual harassment and bullying.
- The right to fair and prompt procedures in dealing with allegations of harassment, sexual harassment or bullying.
- The responsibility of each Council/Committee member and employee to treat colleagues with dignity and respect and refrain from harassment, sexual harassment or bullying.
- The responsibility of each Council/Committee member and employee to support the policy on harassment, sexual harassment and bullying by bringing instances of such behaviour to attention at an early stage, by not making spurious or frivolous complaints and by co - operating with the procedures set out in this policy whether as a complainant, the respondent or as a witness.

Employment

The Medical Council is committed to equal opportunity of employment and all employment decisions will be based on merit, qualifications and abilities. Employee rights under the Employment Equality Act are guaranteed and no one will receive less favourable treatment than someone else because of their gender, civil status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability race or membership of the Travelling Community.

This Equality & Diversity Policy is underpinned by the numerous Equal opportunities, Dignity & Respect, Health & Safety Policies and Codes of Conduct (for both Staff and Council) already embedded in the Council's structure. The Medical Council will ensure that the principles of employment equality are applied to recruitment, promotion, training, career development and to all terms and conditions of employment. It will implement a positive and continuing programme of action to make this policy fully effective including appropriate training.

The Medical Council will strive to achieve equality of opportunity by continuously monitoring its employment practices to ensure that it creates a positive working environment at all times.

This also extends to the application procedures for membership of the various committees, sub-committees and working groups and the environment within which Council and Committee members operate. As part of the application process for Council and Committee positions prospective members are asked to identify their skills and competencies across a range of areas. One of the specific requirements relates to Equality and Diversity, specifically that the member:

- Promotes and appreciates the principles of diversity, considering its principles in the decision making process
- Is consistent and fair in treatment of others

Employment of people with disabilities

Statistical data on employment of people with disabilities:

Public sector bodies are obliged under the Disability Act 2005

- To promote and support the employment of people with disabilities
- To ensure, where practicable, the 3% if all staff employed are people with disabilities
- To report every year on the number and percentage of employees with disabilities.

The Disability Act 2005 defines disability as:

Disability, in relation to a person, means a substantial restriction in the capacity of the persons to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the state by reason of an ensuring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment.

In order to meet its legal responsibility the Medical Council collects data from existing staff, new staff and staff who leave the Medical Council on an annual basis. This information is used for statistical purposes only and all information is stored securely and confidentially. Employees have a legal right to see the information on record about their disability status and to seek to alter it if they believe it is no longer accurate, in line with the Medical Council's data protection policy.

Induction and Training

Induction is critical to the successful integration of Council, committee, sub-committee and working group members and staff. The Council is committed to including equality and diversity awareness as part of the induction process as well as on-going training and development programmes and all Council members will be encouraged to attend these programmes.

Outcomes

Outcomes will be measured through the inclusion of E&D related questions in the Annual Governance Appraisal for Council and the results of other surveys carried out through Medical Council activities. The Medical Council will reflect this valuable learning in the decision-making processes going forward.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Medical Council will regularly evaluate its services and the effectiveness of its equality and diversity policy. This will include monitoring data on the current composition of the workforce and Council, which is a necessary element to determining challenges and progress in achieving equality and diversity and will highlight those areas where concentrated efforts need to be made.

The Medical Council may survey Council, committee, sub-committee and working group members as well as staff on Equality and Diversity issues.

The Council will continue to monitor and analyse statistical information that relates to decision making by the Council and these statistics are published in the Annual report. The statistics reflect data across a range of areas and these include the ratio of complaints received against various

categories of doctors, prima facie decisions presented by division on the Register, country of origin, category, age and gender, breakdown of the Register by country of qualification and also gender.

Reporting

Should any member of Council, a committee, sub-committee or working group experience or witness anything that contravenes this policy please report it to:

Ms. Lisa Molloy
Head of Corporate Services & Secretary to Council
Medical Council
Kingram House
Kingram Place
Dublin 2
01-4983152
lmolloy@mcirl.ie

The Medical Council also operates a Dignity and Respect policy this applies to employees, part – time, temporary and permanent irrespective of length of service, users and stakeholders and any contraventions of this policy can be reported to:

Head of Human Resources
Medical Council
Kingram House
Kingram Place
Dublin 2
01-4983100