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| Document name: Equal Opportunities Policy  Author:  Approved by: |

**[insert company name]:**

**Equal Opportunities Policy**

The Company strongly supports equal opportunities in the workplace, recognising protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 to be: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We will never refuse to see a patient based solely on any of these characteristics.

The Company is an equal opportunities employer committed to promoting freedom from discrimination for all staff. We recognise the value and importance of providing fair and equitable development opportunities for all staff, throughout their careers and at every level of the organisation.

The Company’s complies with section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The company will, in consultation with the commissioner, and at reasonable request, demonstrate how it complies with this.   
  
The Company requires its staff to have due regard to:

* Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
* Permit no discrimination from any party.
* Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
* Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

In addition, the Company requires its staff to:

* Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
* Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
* Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

In particular, the Company’s ensures we meet the requirements of disabled patients with eye health needs, including those with communication difficulties, making reasonable adjustments where necessary in order to accommodate these patients. This might mean allowing slightly more time when treating a disabled patient, ensuring consulting rooms can accommodate wheelchairs and making provisions for carers. The Company understands that in the course of such accommodation, subcontractors may be required to treat some patients more favourably than others. However, this will not be regarded as conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010 or in any way compromising patients.

Any complaints regarding this equality statement or its implementation will be dealt with under the Complaints Policy or if more appropriate, another of the organisation’s policies and procedures for dealing with such matters.

The Company is committed to dealing sensitively, firmly and effectively with any complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation whether covered by existing legislation or not.

The Company’s equal opportunities policy will be reviewed annually from commencement date [insert date].