



COVER SHEET

Title:	Harmonious Working Environment Policy Statement	Ratified by Policy Committee: Yes
Ownership:	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	
Publication Date: July 2007		Review due: July 2008
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Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

HARMONIOUS WORKING ENVIRONMENT

POLICY STATEMENT

This Statement has been agreed between the Belfast Health Care Trust and the Trade Unions and Staff Organisations representing employees of the Trust. It recognises the moral and legal obligations placed on employers and trade unions by Northern Ireland employment equality legislation* and aims to provide a good and harmonious work environment, which respects the dignity of employees in the workplace.

Management, Trade Unions and Staff Organisations representing the employees of the Belfast Trust:

1. Declare and fully accept that discrimination, intimidation and victimisation in employment are unlawful and unacceptable and will be vigorously opposed by both unions and management.
2. Accept that every employee has the right to work free from harassment or intimidation on grounds of sex, religious belief, political opinion, marital, civil partnership or family status, race, age, sexual orientation, disability, whether or not they have dependants and persons who have undergone, are undergoing or intend to undergo gender reassignment.
3. Jointly condemn intimidation or harassment by word or actions and will take all reasonable steps to secure the safety of employees from intimidation or harassment in the workplace. Such intimidation or harassment will be regarded as misconduct, which will warrant disciplinary action and possible dismissal.
4. Declares that, as the Trust aims to provide a good and harmonious working environment, it therefore prohibits the display of flags, emblems, posters, graffiti; and the circulation of any materials or articulation of any songs or slogans, which may give offence or cause apprehension to other employees. The Trust recognises that some of the above issues may need sensitive consideration in patient, client or staff residential accommodation.

5. Oppose any attempt to prevent the employment, continued employment or career development of any person in contravention of employment equality legislation.
6. Are committed to ensuring that no employee will be treated less favourably because he or she has taken action or may take action connected with employment equality legislation.
7. Will have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity as required under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

ACTION:

This Statement will be prominently displayed in each of the Trust's facilities/ workplaces and will be circulated to each member of staff and distributed to new staff at induction. This policy will be kept under review and the Trust will consult with trade union representatives on any changes which may be required in the future.

*The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 (as amended), the Sex Discrimination (NI) Orders 1976 and 1988 (as amended) and Equal Pay Act (NI) 1970 (as amended), Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 (as amended), the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended), the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006, The Human Rights Act 1998 and the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

On behalf of the Trust

On behalf of Staff Side

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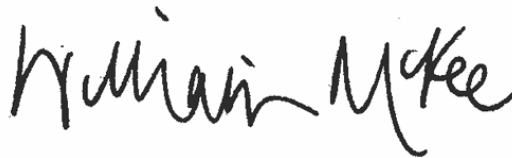
Name: Joan Peden, Co-Director,
Governance, Equality and Improving Working Lives

Directorate: Human Resources



Signature: **Date:** 20 February 2008
Marie Mallon, Director of Human Resources

Approved by: Policy Committee **Date:** 25 February 2008



Chief Executive: **Date:** 27 February 2008