

GUIDELINE MODEL

**EMBRACING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
RECORDING THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE USING OUR
SERVICES**

Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust is committed to equal opportunities for everyone both as a provider of healthcare and as an employer.

What are protected characteristics?

The Equality Act (2010) covers everyone in the United Kingdom and protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. It covers nine “Protected Characteristics”. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Trust must consider how their decisions and policies affect people with these characteristics, and make sure that their actions are not putting patients, carers or staff at a disadvantage due the factors below.

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or Belief
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Age
- Marriage or Civil Partnership
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment

Why do you want to ask about my protected characteristics?

There is growing concern that the needs of people from marginalised or minority groups are not being met by health services. We collect this information on a voluntary basis so that we can see:

- Who is using our services
- The varying needs of the different groups that we work with.

It will help to tell us if we need to make changes so that we can provide care that supports the needs of everyone who accesses our services.

What if I don't want to share this information?

Whilst we would encourage you to share this information with whoever is providing your care so they can understand how best to support you and if you have any specific needs, we understand that some people may feel uncomfortable sharing this information.

Our Staff can note that you do not wish to share this at present, but may check at a later date to see if you would like to discuss this in your care.