

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Statement / Policy

July 2021

Introduction

The British Association of Head and Neck Oncologists (BAHNO) is the professional membership organisation that encourages discussion and the sharing of knowledge between the various medical, surgical and allied health care professionals involved in the management of head and neck cancer. As a multidisciplinary organisation, it has a membership base from diverse clinical backgrounds including ENT, OMFS, plastic surgery, pathology, clinical oncology, restorative dentistry, clinicians and others involved in research, nursing, speech and language therapy, dietitians and radiography.

Purpose and intended outcomes

This policy has been produced to ensure our members and currently only paid employee (BAHNO secretariat) are aware of the duties placed on BAHNO by equality legislation and regulations. It explains the background, law and our intentions together with our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Guiding principles and reasons for the policy

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity policy is based on human rights core principles: dignity, fairness, equality, respect and autonomy. BAHNO is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture amongst the whole organisation thereby valuing differences and recognising that people from a variety of background and experience can bring new and valuable insights to the way we work.

BAHNO is the only multi-disciplinary professional group which can promote and speak up for the interests of head and neck cancer clinicians and patients in the UK. BAHNO pursues its aims mainly by holding regular scientific meetings (annual conference usually held in May of each year) and has produced important publications relating to the organisation of head and neck cancer services in the United Kingdom. Apart from one employee who is responsible for general administration and running of the BAHNO office, all Council members and Officers are not paid and fulfil their roles over and above clinical or professional duties.

It is in our best interest to promote diversity and eliminate discrimination in the workplace. These principles help members to flourish and fulfil their potential.

Scope of the policy

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing respect, equality and fairness to all elected and appointed members of Council and our current employee and not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, or sex and sexual orientation. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

Anyone (both professional and members of the public) who has any type of contact with BAHNO will be treated with fairness, respect and in a way that is non-discriminatory. This policy applies to all people whilst working or attending events including the Council, the President and other Officers (Past President, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and Conference Officer), members and other organisations with whom we work. These include conference organising bodies and sponsors who support and attend the Annual conference. BAHNO is affiliated with the European Head and Neck Society (EHNS) and BAHNO members enjoy a reduced conference fee when registering for EHNS meetings.

BAHNO is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and to promote diversity for all existing and potential staff and that our organisation is representative of all sections of society. In following an inclusive approach, BAHNO will comply with the Equality Act (2010) codes of practice and relevant best practice.

BAHNO will ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason in relation to employment or accessing its services.

Our aim is to ensure that all members are given equal opportunity when applying for positions on BAHNO Council and/or Officer positions and engaging in the various activities that the Association organises, including online webinars. Each member will be respected and valued and able to give their best as a result.

Council and officer positions are elected by the general membership after a call for nominations, with a supporting statement, is made. The process is overseen by the Honorary Secretary and a general election is held electronically. Recently BAHNO has produced and published a policy to actively discourage canvassing since some specialties have more members than others and such practice could disadvantage some applicants. We recognise that personal canvassing may still occur, but nonetheless discourage this practice.

Responsibilities

Every elected and appointed member of BAHNO Council and our employee has a responsibility to ensure the policy is put into practice in all areas of business when dealings with colleagues and the public external to BAHNO.

Commitments:

- To pro-actively challenge discrimination on grounds of any protected characteristics.
- To advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all team members are recognised and valued.
- To create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for every employee.
- To not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and to discipline those that breach this policy.
- To promote equality in the workplace, which BAHNO believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- To encourage anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns so we can apply corrective measures.
- To encourage members to treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- To regularly review all our practices and procedures so that fairness is maintained at all times.
- Will inform all members that an equality and diversity policy is in operation and that they are obligated to comply with its requirements and promote fairness in the workplace.
- The policy will also be drawn to the attention of funding agencies (?), stakeholders, customers, learners, and membership applicants.

Implementing, monitoring and review

The equality and diversity policy has been discussed and is fully supported by BAHNO Council and has been circulated to all BAHNO members.

Our policy will be monitored and reviewed bi-annually to ensure that equality and diversity is continually promoted in the workplace.