

	Title: ACCESS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY	
	Version: 1	Approved: July 2015
	Administered: Committee	Next Review: July 2018

Introduction

This policy applies to all Committee members, staff, volunteers and membership of Network West Incorporated.

Purpose

This document will outline Network West's commitment to access and equity in terms of service provision and internal organisational processes. This policy also aims, wherever possible, to provide services with equitable outcomes for all participants from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds acknowledging their traditions and customs.

Definitions

Access- Services are available to everyone that is entitled to them and should be free from any form of discrimination.

Equity- Services should be developed on the basis of fair treatment of all the stakeholders who are eligible to receive them.

Diversity- Recognize and value individual differences.

Legislative Context

All Victorian organizations, including Network West (must comply with Commonwealth and State legislation and directions such as:

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

Racial Hatred Act 1995

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Age Discrimination Act 2004

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

The major purpose of these Acts is to eliminate discrimination against people of diverse backgrounds including disability, race, gender, age, religion.

Principles

This policy is based on the principles of:

Equity – for people who are from a particular cultural, ethnic or religious group so that they do not experience disadvantage or discrimination

Responsibilities

1. Provision of services

All services delivered by Network West:

- Are accessible to people from all cultural, linguistic and religious background including Australian indigenous culture.
- Recognise and respond to specific issues of ethnicity, gender, disability, financial disadvantage, sexual preference, social, cultural and geographic isolation.
- Reflect sensitivity, relevance and awareness of different cultural and religious practices.
- Ensure that participants have the opportunity to contribute to decision-making and to express views without suffering any prejudice.
- Use appropriate data collection methods to enable Network West to target, plan, develop and evaluate all services in a way that is relevant, equitable and accessible.

2. Provision of information

- Promote and advertise its services so that they are readily accessible by all members of the Network.

3. Employment

Network West employment process and selection criteria will include:

- A demonstrated awareness and knowledge of multicultural diverse communities
- A demonstrated ability to involve people from diverse backgrounds in all activities
- Include people on selection panels who are knowledgeable about education and social issues affecting diverse cultural, linguistic and religious communities
- Evaluate the prospective employee's knowledge and experience of the community in which Network West is located
- Provide appropriate, high quality cross-cultural training for all employees where the need is identified