**Discrimination and Discriminatory Practice**

**Introduction**

This booklet is about discrimination and the discriminatory practice. This is where people discriminate against an individual’s age, skin colour, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexuality. (<https://prezi.com/w7okdtoggehw/discriminatory-and-non-discriminatory-practice/>). This booklet will be covering the basis of discrimination, forms of discrimination and the effects it can have within Health and Social Care.

**Discriminatory practice**

Discrimination is the practice of treating an individual or a group of people differently. Especially on the grounds of race, age or sex. (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/discrimination>). There are numerous categories that people can discriminate against. For example, there are age, culture, sexuality and disability etc. It is important that workers that work within a Health and Social Care setting because they will come across categories like those in those setting. However, it is important that everyone is treated fairly and isn’t discriminated against. Health and Social workers need to know the effects it can have on individuals so that they can make sure that no one has to go through discrimination.

**Basis of Discrimination**

Culture

Culture is the accepted norms and practices of a particular group of people. (parentline.com.au). Culture can be discriminated against when someone doesn’t agree with a particular cultures norms and values and start to act upon it. For example, children from a different culture may not be able to speak English fully. When at school they may be teased by other children because of this. Also, people can be denied job opportunities because of this. (Rasheed and Hetherington, 2010, Page 31).

Disabilities

In Health and Social Care, you will work with people with a range of different disabilities. This means that you need to know how to care for their needs. The disability discrimination act makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone who has a disability. (Stretch and Whitehouse, Page 65). No one should be discriminated against because they have a disability. Everyone has the right to be treated like anyone else and shouldn’t feel as though they do.

Age

Age discrimination happens when someone is treated differently because of their age. Is also happens when someone is harassed or victimised because of their age. (Stretch and Whitehouse, page 66). In Health and Social Care, people can be treated differently because of their age. However, this shouldn’t happen. Everyone should be treated the same and regardless of their age and given the treatment they require.

Social class

Social class is the place where you live and grew up. For example, there is working class, middle class and higher class. It is stated that the poor are more likely to become sick than the rich. (Stretch and Whitehouse, Page 66). This is because the very poor don’t have the money to pay for everyday essentials that are needed to keep a healthy lifestyle like the rich can. Therefore, this will lead them to become sick. Some people can’t pay for their medication that they need to get better if they are sick. This means that their illness can get worse. However, no one should be treated differently because of the class they come from. Everyone should have the same options no matter if they are from the rich or the poor.

Gender

A person shouldn’t be discriminated against because of their gender. This is because of the gender equality act 2007. (Stretch and Whitehouse, Page 67). People think that men get more opportunities than women. However, this can’t happen in a Health and Social care setting. Everyone should have the same options and opportunities as everyone else. People shouldn’t be judge because of their gender and everyone should be treated the same and not because of the gender they are.

Sexuality

No one should be discriminated against because of their sexuality. Although discriminating against people because of their sexuality is against the law (Stretch and Whitehouse, page 67) it is still happening in society. In a Health and Social care setting discriminating against someone sexuality cannot happen. Everyone should be treated the same no matter what their sexuality is. People need to feel comfortable wherever they are and accepting who they are really helps towards this especially in a Health and Social care setting.

Health status

Sometimes difficult decisions must be made regarding someone’s medical treatment. They must take into account the cost of the treatment, their expected quality of life after the treatment and overall life expectancy. (Stretch and Whitehouse, Page 67). People can be judged from the decision they make however, they don’t know why they have made that decision they have pre-judged them.

Family status

This can lead to a variety of discriminations. Against gay or lesbian parents, single parents, parents of different genders or parents of different races. (Stretch and Whitehouse, page 67). In a Health and social care setting, workers need to accept the family status of their patient. They shouldn’t discriminate against somebody because of their family history and make them feel uncomfortable in the place they are in. Discriminating against someone because of their family status happens a lot in society and needs to be stopped. Different family status’ need to be accepted.

Cognitive ability

Discrimination on the grounds of cognitive ability may arise because of a brain injury, a learning disability or difficulty, or a person’s class or education. (Stretch and Whitehouse, page 67). Discriminating against someone that has a learning disability can be easy for children to do when they are in school. This is because the children are young and they don’t know they are doing it because they haven’t been taught what discrimination is and the effects it can have on people.

**Forms of discrimination**

Direct discrimination

This is when you treated differently or worse than someone else for certain reasons. Direct discrimination can be because of;

* Age
* Disability
* Race
* Religion or belief

And a lot more. (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/direct-discrimination/>).

Indirect discrimination

This is when there is a policy, practice or rule that applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a worse effect one some people more than others. (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/indirect-discrimination/>). Indirect discrimination can be because of the same categories that are under direct discrimination. However, direct discrimination is aimed directly at someone.

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted behaviour which you find offensive or what makes you feel intimidated or humiliated. (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/discrimination-in-health-and-care-services/health-and-care-services-what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/discrimination-in-health-and-care-services-harassment/>). Harassment is discrimination against the equality act and you can take people to court if you are being harassed. Nobody should feel as though they are being harassed. When in a health and social care setting nobody should feel as though they are being harassed, you should feel comfortable in the setting you are in and not feel discriminated against.

Victimisation

this takes place where one person treats another person less favourably because they have asserted their legal rights in line with the act or helped someone else to do so. (<https://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/training/equalities-law/key-principles/victimisation>). This can take place when someone says to another that they have been a victim of crime however, everyone is ignoring them.

**The effects of discriminatory practice in Health and Social Care**

Marginalisation

This is when someone doesn’t feel part of a main group. (Stretch and Whitehouse, page 69). This can have a negative impact on a person when they feel like they aren’t apart of a group and they feel like they don’t belong. They can start to think negative thoughts. This can lead to the person being depressed and have anxiety. They feel isolated and have self-doubt.

Disempowerment

This is when an individual or a group are discriminated against by other individuals or more powerful groups will feel disempowered. (Stretch and Whitehouse, page 69). This is also when someone feel as though they are powerless when someone is discriminating against them. People can start to feel depressed thinking that they have no power.

Low self-esteem and self-identity

Discrimination can lead to people having low self-esteem and self-identity. (Stretch and Whitehouse, page 69). People that have low self-esteem can get depression because of all the negative thoughts that they are thinking about themselves. People that have low self-esteem can feel negative self-identity. This can lead to people having mental health issues because of feeling so low about themselves.

Restricted opportunities

All types of discrimination may lead to a person not using health services and this can lead to poorer health. (Stretch and Whitehouse, page 69). People being discriminated against may feel as though they shouldn’t have the same opportunities as everyone else. People not going to the doctors if they are sick because they feel like they can’t can be very dangerous. This can lead to the person getting very sick as they didn’t go to the doctors because they are being discriminated against. Everyone should feel accepted and they shouldn’t be discriminated against because the consequences are serious.

Negative behaviours such as aggression or criminality

Negative behaviour such as aggression or criminality can be caused by discrimination. Living with less money than people and being discriminated against can cause people to turn to criminal acts and change their behaviour. In a Health and Social care setting workers deal with aggression a lot because people may not want to accept what they are hearing. However, workers are trained how to talk to them to calm them down and handle their behaviour.

People on residential care may become aggressive because someone of the patients may have dementia. This means that they may forget who the people around them are and get scared and feel uncomfortable.

**Conclusion**

Having knowledge of the basis of discrimination, the different forms of discrimination and the effects it can have on people is very important to know and have an understanding of. Especially in a Health and Social care setting knowing this information is very important as it can help with their patients. Knowing the effects it can have on people can help workers understand their patients and help before it effects their mental and physical health.

Bibliography

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