

Policy for Equality Act 2010 on the Care of Patients Living with HIV

Policy Statement

Auckland Surgery is committed to providing high-quality, inclusive, and equitable healthcare to all patients, including those living with HIV. In line with the Equality Act 2010, this policy ensures that patients living with HIV are treated with dignity, respect, and without discrimination, guaranteeing their access to care and treatment is of the same standard and quality as all other patients.

Objective

The aim of this policy is to outline the practices and principles we follow to ensure that patients living with HIV receive care that is in full compliance with the Equality Act 2010, specifically addressing issues of access, treatment, dignity, and infection control.

Policy Details

1. Access to Treatment

- Patients living with HIV will have access to healthcare treatment on the same basis as all other patients. No patient will be denied or delayed treatment solely on the basis of their HIV status.
- All clinical decisions will be made based on the patient's clinical needs, not their HIV status.

2. Non-Isolation and Dignity of Treatment

- Patients living with HIV will not be isolated or treated in separate rooms solely because of their HIV status.
- All patients, including those living with HIV, will be treated with dignity and respect, and their care will be conducted in a manner that protects their confidentiality and privacy.

3. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Clinical staff will not use additional personal protective equipment (PPE) such as double gloving, aprons, or masks when treating patients living with HIV, unless it is part of the universal infection control procedures that apply to all patients.
- Universal infection control guidelines and PPE protocols will be adhered to for all patients, including those living with HIV, to prevent the spread of infection generally, not due to HIV status.

4. Scheduling of Procedures and Operations

- Patients living with HIV will not be placed at the end of the clinic list or given priority treatment because of their HIV status.
- Clinical decisions on scheduling will be based on medical need and clinical urgency, not on the patient's HIV status.

84A Auckland Road, London, SE19 2DF

Tel. 020 8653 5146

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5. Cleaning and Infection Control

- Additional cleaning measures beyond those required by universal infection control procedures will not be applied in areas where patients living with HIV have received treatment or care.
- All areas used for patient care, regardless of HIV status, will adhere to the standard infection control guidelines as set out by the relevant health authorities and NHS standards.

Responsibilities

- All clinical and non-clinical staff must ensure they follow the guidelines set out in this policy.
- The Practice Manager will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and ensuring that all staff receive appropriate training on non-discriminatory practices and the care of patients living with HIV.
- All staff will receive annual training in infection control, HIV awareness, and equality, ensuring that they are equipped to provide high-quality care to all patients, regardless of HIV status.

Confidentiality

The HIV status of patients is considered sensitive information. All patient data, including their HIV status, will be treated confidentially in line with GDPR and NHS data protection protocols. Staff are required to ensure that no patient's HIV status is disclosed without their consent, except in circumstances where it is necessary for medical care or required by law.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and any relevant health and safety standards. Feedback from patients, staff, and audits will be used to continuously improve our practices and ensure equality of care for all.

Conclusion

Auckland Surgery is committed to maintaining an inclusive and non-discriminatory environment for all patients. This policy is designed to ensure that patients living with HIV receive the same high standard of care, treatment, and dignity as all other patients, free from unnecessary barriers or discriminatory practices.

This policy will be communicated to all staff, and adherence will be monitored regularly.

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