

## Transgender Policy for Alana House Service Provision

Alana House women's centre, part of Parents And Children Together, is committed to valuing diversity, promoting equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that our services reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. Alana House is a women's centre and we are able to support:

- Women who are assigned female gender at birth
- Individuals who have acquired female gender through the statutory gender recognition process
- Transgender women including non-binary people and people transitioning to become female. As we provide a safe space for women, men are not permitted on site and therefore we are not able to support non-binary people who were assigned male gender at birth

We believe in creating a fully inclusive environment as we are a supportive and respectful organisation that believes each person is unique and we encourage all individuals to contribute as fully as possible and feel valued by others.

The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework for how Alana House will support trans women who are service users.

### **Definitions:**

For this policy, we use the following definitions:

- Trans / Transgender means someone whose gender does not, either partially or fully, align with the gender they were assigned at birth. Non-binary and non-transitioning transgender people are included under this definition.
- Cis / Cisgender means not transgender.
- Non-binary means someone with a gender/ identity that is not exclusively male or female, masculine or feminine—identities which are thus outside of the gender binary. May also be referred to as genderqueer. May also be agender/genderless.
- Assigned at birth means the gender category a person was given when they were born.
- Transition – the process of developing congruence with your gender identity. This may or may not involve surgery, hormone replacement therapy, and changes to assist being correctly identified through clothes, speech, etc.

### **Legal Basis**

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination<sup>1</sup>, harassment and victimisation and relates to nine protected characteristics, one of which is gender reassignment. The

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A for definitions of unlawful discrimination

Equality Act 2010 protects any trans person who 'intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment', which means that trans women who have taken any steps to move towards living as women are covered by the legislation. Alana House services are open to all self-identifying women who have taken, or are taking, steps towards living as women, in line with the provisions of the Equality Act.

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 enables transgender people to change their legal gender identity for the first time in UK history. The Act created a process to enable trans people to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate which recognises them as having all the rights and responsibilities appropriate to a person of their acquired gender.

### **Transgender Policy**

When planning for and providing the services delivered by Alana House, PACT adheres to the roles, responsibilities and duties of organisations as detailed in the Equality and Gender Recognition Acts. The Equality Act 2010 does allow for discrimination in the provision of single-sex spaces and services if they are "a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim". This means it is lawful if necessary to exclude a trans person from a single-sex space or service, whether or not they hold a Gender Recognition Certificate.

Alana House broadly takes the approach that we are here to support people who identify as women. We will take a person-centred and case-by-case approach to the inclusion of all women and all of our support work is open to all service users who identify as women.

There may be particular circumstances where, following a thorough risk and needs assessment, we need to adapt services in order to balance the needs of all service users.

### **Transgender procedure**

Alana House employees and volunteers will ensure that all service users are made aware that Alana House services are open to all people who identify as a woman.

Training in working with the LGBTQIA+ community is provided as part of the Alana House induction process for all employees and volunteers.

All people who attend Alana House are expected to treat each other with respect.

Alana House employees and volunteers will ask new referrals what pronouns they use, rather than assuming.

Alana House publicity will make it clear that its support offer is accessible to all people who identify as a woman.

As part of the collection of equal opportunities monitoring data during our referral process, all service users are asked about protected characteristics, including gender identity.

The Alana House referral form captures information on gender identity. The process, upon receiving a referral for a transgender woman, will be to follow the standard triage process which includes completing an assessment of need and conducting a thorough risk assessment. It is advised that prior to any risk assessments that will inform whether it is safe for a transgender woman to access services from Alana House premises, any face to face

triage assessments should be held either at Alana House at a time when no other service users will be present (or in a room that can be accessed without coming in to contact with other service users) or in a safe external venue.

If a transgender woman self presents at Alana House the team will immediately assess the situation prior to the trans woman entering the premises. Consideration will be given to how we can facilitate the individual's needs, which will include whether we can meet the trans woman in the building (based on the risk to the trans woman and impact on other service users who are present in the building), arrange to meet them at another location or arrange an alternative time to meet at Alana House. At the earliest opportunity, the usual process of completion of a referral form and a triage assessment will be completed.

Upon completion of the triage process, the Alana House Manager, as is the norm, will decide as to whether Alana House is best placed to support the referred woman and how that support will be delivered.

If a transgender woman presents unexpectedly at Alana House (i.e. she is in crisis or did not share their status on the referral form) the support worker will manage this as discreetly as possible. As with all service users, a private room would be sought to complete an initial assessment of need prior to offering support.

If a woman service user is transitioning or has transitioned and no longer identifies as a woman then support will be brought to an end as Alana House services are only available to people who identify as a woman. Every effort will be made to refer the service user onto a relevant service.

Our employees and volunteers will:

- Challenge transphobia by other employees, volunteers and service users, third party suppliers and partners
- Use correct and respectful language about trans service users' identity (e.g. they will ask which pronouns and /or names the service user prefers to be called)
- Keep trans service users' gender history confidential

### **Principles and responsibilities**

Alana House, as part of PACT, will:

- Do all we can to ensure that people who identify as female receive a service which is safe, which meets their needs, and which is inclusive.
- Respect and listen to people who identify as female, to take what they say seriously, and to empower them in every way possible, ensuring that they receive accurate information, advice and appropriate support.
- Work in partnership with agencies to support people who identify as female to empower women.
- Create environments and practices which support all people who identify as a woman to feel safe within Alana House.

- Recognise and respect diversity while ensuring the rights and safety of all people who identify as a woman are equally protected.

### **Feedback and complaints**

It's important that we know if our services are being provided effectively, are inclusive and are meeting your needs.

PACT encourages service users to engage in a conversation with the person you are working with promptly and attempt to resolve any issues or problems at this stage in an open and communicative way. If you are unhappy with any part of our service, or how you have been treated, please let the staff member you normally deal with know. They will try to settle the matter straight away. If you are still not satisfied, you can contact the Alana House Manager who will try to resolve your complaint. Information on PACT's complaints process can be found on our website - [Feedback - PACT \(pactcharity.org/feedback\)](https://pactcharity.org/feedback)

### **Review cycle**

This policy will be reviewed annually

## **Appendix A**

There are the different types of unlawful discrimination:-

- Direct– unnecessarily requiring someone not to be transsexual.
- Indirect– where transsexual people are particularly disadvantaged by a provision or some criteria which applies to everyone.
- By perception– where you think someone is transsexual, and you discriminate against them because of it, but they are not transsexual.
- By association– if you discriminate because of someone mixing with, or has an association with, transsexual people.
- Harassment– where you act in a way that violates the dignity of another person or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person because they are transsexual. There is protection from less favourable treatment of a worker because they submit to, or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment.
- Victimisation– it is unlawful to discriminate against someone because they have used the provisions of the legislation or have helped someone else to do so.