

707/03/2013

PRESS RELEASE

Trans seminar held for service providers

One of the groups that attract the most negative feeling in Northern Ireland is Trans people. A recent [Equality Awareness Survey](#) by the Equality Commission found a high level of negative attitudes towards Trans people in Northern Ireland. Over a third of people said they would mind having a transgender person as a work colleague; 40% would mind having them as a neighbour and over half (53%) said they would mind having a Trans person as an in-law.

While the public are becoming more aware of the issues and challenges facing the Trans community, many are still unaware that Trans people are protected from discrimination under sex discrimination laws. The Equality Commission in partnership with the Transgender NI and Youthnet today ran a seminar to highlight some of the issues faced by Trans people. It was targeted at service providers and aimed to help them promote good practice when dealing with transgendered people.

Patricia Feeney, a Commissioner of the Equality Commission, who opened the event, said, "We live in a diverse society in which everyone has a right to equality of opportunity and to be treated without prejudice. By sharing our knowledge and ideas at this seminar we hope to learn better ways of meeting the needs of the Trans community.

"Employers and service providers are increasingly seeking advice from the Commission on how to adapt their policies, practices and procedures to reflect the rights of Trans people. This seminar aims to raise awareness of good practice and explore the responsibilities of service providers towards them."

The seminar examined what Transgender means and the legislation that applies. A video called “My Transsexual Summer” explored the most prominent issues and barriers for Trans people. There were workshops to explore best practice and barriers to best practice, followed by lessons learned, recommendations, and signposting to further training. The audience heard from a number of Trans people and got helpful tips and advice on dealing with sensitive trans issues.

The Equality Commission offers free and confidential advice to Trans people as well as employers and service providers. We can be contacted on 028 90 500 600 or by emailing information@equalityni.org. Trans support groups are also available to give advice, and help and information is available at www.transgenderni.com