

# Social Value Policy



## Social Value Policy

### Executive summary

The Bluestones Medical social value policy outlines the actions we already implement and plan to implement to support our commitment to being a good corporate citizen. Our social value deliverables cover the 5 following areas:

- Supporting Covid-19 recovery
- Tackling economic inequality
- Fighting climate change
- Equal opportunities
- Health and wellbeing

This document outlines the rationale behind the implementation of this policy and the methodology for its application.

### Introduction

All public sector organisations are required to procure goods and services with due consideration to value for money. Value for money is a complex calculation which includes mandated services, need by a proportion of population vs extremity, effectiveness, availability, and impact, in addition to cost to budget. The 2012 Public Services (Social Value) Act and more recently the Procurement Policy Note (6/20) places an obligation upon all public sector organisations to consider how they can secure social, economic, and environmental benefits from the procurement of public contracts.

The below is the standard procedure followed by Bluestones Medical to ensure that we're maximizing the benefits of public procurement by encouraging employment opportunities, developing skills, improving employee wellbeing, and improving environmental sustainability.

Applying these principles helps make us more accountable for what happens because of the work we do, and means being accountable for more than whether we have achieved our commercial objectives.

### What is social value?

Social Value is defined as "the additional benefit to the community from a commissioning/procurement process over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes". Furthermore, Social Value is the term that describes the economic, social, and environmental impact on local people caused by a company or organisation as a direct result of the actions that they take to carry out work or services in a geographical area. Commissioners and

procurement teams are advised to use local priorities to judge the most beneficial social value offers from suppliers.

### **Our Governance**

Embedding social value within our organisation is a key priority and is driven by our leadership team. They understand the importance of genuinely implementing positive actions to continuously improve our position from a social value perspective. This policy links our strategic priorities and will help us to ensure that we consider social value in all our procurement practices, including:

- Taking a proportional and relevant approach to applying social value considerations
- Apply it in a way that generates positive outcomes without also creating barriers for stakeholders
- Ensure transparency and equality of treatment in the application of the social value considerations

**We are proactive in creating social value through the following initiatives:**

### **1.0 Supporting Covid 19 recovery**

Bluestones Medical understands that we have an obligation to support all stakeholders with COVID-19 recovery. This includes:

- Creating employment
- Re-training
- Creating other return to work opportunities for those left unemployed by COVID-19
- Supporting people and communities to manage and recover from the impacts of COVID-19
- Supporting the physical and mental health of people affected by COVID-19 (including reducing the demand on health and care services)
- Improving workplace conditions that support the COVID-19 recovery effort

Taking the above into consideration, the below highlights the action we have taken to support with Covid-19 recovery

- We've been, and continue to be, successful in building strong client relationships and increasing our market share within our clients who are predominately NHS Trusts across the North West, Midlands and South Wales. The NHS is facing a record breaking 10% vacancy rate (NHS.co.uk, 2022), and so the work that we do helps to plug their ever-growing staffing demands and in turn helps to ensure patients receive the highest level of care. Moreover, we're proud to have been awarded a place on both the Workforce Alliance and All Wales Frameworks, meaning we support these clients in the most cost-effective and ethical way possible
- In the financial year 2021/2022, we re-invested over £62,000 back into the NHS through the Workforce Alliance Framework
- All internal employees and full-time external staff have access to free private healthcare via Medicash. This allows them to claim the full amount back for things like dental and optical appointments as well as giving them access to 6 free counselling sessions which could really benefit anyone suffering with their mental health as a result of Covid-19 trauma/burnout
- We have an in-house team of experienced, qualified, registered nurses that supports healthcare workers to re-enter the profession after taking a break. This may be due to personal reasons, or burnout because of the Covid 19 pandemic. They ensure that the worker's training is up to date and that their knowledge and skills are up to standard. Their role is to ensure that these individuals are feeling confident and prepared for their first day back at work
- We regularly share advice and support articles along with helpful resources via mailers, social media, and blog posts on how healthcare workers can effectively deal with Covid 19 PTSD and burnout etc
- We're committed to removing unconscious bias from our recruitment process (internal and external). For example, if some was to have a gap in their CV due to being made redundant during Covid-19 or took a break due to Covid-19 burnout, we wouldn't let that effect their chances of getting the job. When you let one bad thing cloud everything else about a person, it's known as the Horns effect
- We offer all internal employees a hybrid working model

## **2.0 Tackling economic inequality - creating new businesses, new jobs, and new skills (external stakeholders)**

Bluestones Medical has a responsibility to help tackle economic inequalities within the local community. This includes influencing staff, suppliers, customers, and communities to support employment and skills opportunities in high growth sectors.

Measures that Bluestones Medical put in place to tackle economic inequality include:

- Our in-house clinical team of registered nursing professionals offers workers the opportunity to upskill through mentoring and skill set reviews. They also offer them support with transitioning into a new specialism which allows them gain new skills and experience
- We offer workers the opportunity to work in several different places, within different settings/specialisms, all within the space of a week (if they wish), meaning they will be continuously learning new skills and can gain new experience
- Our clinical team offers workers 1-2-1 revalidation sessions. Revalidation is about promoting good practice, as well as strengthening public confidence in the nursing and midwifery professions. Revalidation helps to encourage a culture of sharing, reflection, and improvement. A recent RCN Employment survey found that meeting revalidation requirements was a big reason for people leaving the profession and therefore, offering this service will be contributing to less people leaving the healthcare industry
- The continuous growth and development of Bluestones Medical has created the opportunity for entrepreneurship in the form of Bluestones Medical Complex Care that launched in 2021. They are a rapidly expanding business that provides solo care packages for adolescences with complex care needs. As a result, this has created job opportunities for local communities within the social care industry in England and Wales. According to the Nursing Times, posts filled within the social care sector has dropped by 50,000 in 2021-22, with 10.7% of roles being vacant in that same year. The work that Bluestones Medical Complex Care does has created local employment opportunities and encourages people to join, stay or re-enter the social care industry
- We offer specialists training opportunities to our workers such as PMVA (Prevention Management of Violence and Aggression) and ILS (Immediate Life Support) allowing them to upskill and develop
- Our Clinical Manager provides free, monthly, basic life support, first aid, defib awareness and manual handling training which is available for all workers to attend. This also counts towards their revalidation

## **2.1 Tacking economic inequality - creating new businesses, new jobs, and new skills (internal employees)**

- Providing opportunities for individuals to enter management is a priority for us. We invest in our employees by enrolling them in management training courses (NTG)
- Every employee receives regular 1-2-1 sessions and appraisals to allow them to establish areas for improvement and offer them the opportunity to ask for support should they need it

- We send a ½ yearly survey to internal employees in line with the Government’s [Good Work Plan](#) to allow employees to have their say on how they feel the business is performing in terms of satisfaction, fair pay, participation and progression, well-being, safety and security, voice and autonomy. Their responses allow us to identify areas for improvement and take appropriate action
- We take part in Best Companies employee engagement survey that allows all our staff to give 100% anonymous feedback on how they feel we perform in the following areas:
  - Their manager
  - The company
  - Their team
  - Leadership
  - Personal growth
  - Fair deal
  - Wellbeing
  - Giving something back

2022 results:



### 3.0 Tacking economic inequality – increasing supply chain resilience (external stakeholder)

A resilient supply chain is defined by its capacity for resistance and recovery. Bluestones Medical takes our responsibility to create a diverse supply chain extremely seriously. We must support innovation and disruptive technologies as well as the development of scalable and future-proofed new methods to modernise service delivery and increase productivity.

- As an on-framework agency, we have an obligation to provide our NHS clients with efficient and cost-effective staffing solutions. We would risk losing our place on the Workforce Alliance and All Wales Frameworks if we were to take advantage of the current staffing crisis

the NHS is facing and so we will always collaborate with them ethically and responsibly

- We have achieved our Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation
- From tracking database trends, and understanding workers behaviour, we have expanded our service offering to ensure we can cater to a larger scale of individuals. To support this further, we've recently invested heavily in to a bespoke, custom-built app called Bluestones Scheduler that is exclusive to Bluestones Medical workers. As a result, if a worker wants a transactional service, Bluestones Scheduler allows them to do everything they need at the touch of a button. However, if a worker wants a more person-centred service, we have a dedicated team of consultants that can offer them this
- We encourage our clients to accept blind CVs which removes the opportunity for them to act on their unconscious bias. Therefore, workers will be accepted for the role based on their skills and experiences alone

### **3.1 Tacking economic inequality – increasing supply chain resilience (internal stakeholder)**

- We make a conscious effort to educate internal staff on the importance of supply chain resilience not just for our benefit, but for the benefit of our clients and their patients too

## **4.0 Fighting climate change**

Bluestones Medical understands our responsibility to demonstrate effective environmental stewardship. Therefore, as a business, we are taking the following action to reduce our carbon footprint

- We have drawn up our carbon reduction plan (CRP) and will provide an assessment within the next year. As a result, we will be working towards Net Zero by 2050
- Our hybrid working model has reduced the amount of carbon emissions our workforce emit due to their commute
- Our office has recycling facilities available, and the office has clear signage to show where these facilities are located around the office
- We're enrolled with Ecologi, meaning we're a climate positive workforce. We have funded over 3,000 trees to be planted and allowed for over 237 certified tonnes of CO2 to be reduced so far

- We share advice, top tips, myth busters and helpful resources via mailers, social media, and blog posts on how both internal and external shareholders can effectively reduce their carbon footprint

### **5.0 Equal opportunities – reducing the disability employment gap**

You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. A person has a disability for the purposes of the Act if he or she has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Ways in which Bluestones Medical helps to reduce the disability employment gap include:

- We actively educate stakeholders to support them to be aware of any barriers that disabled people may encounter which in turn helps to create an inclusive, supportive culture
- We allow for flexible working hours, additional breaks, and offer the opportunity to work from home
- We consistently review our policies, application forms, interview arrangements, and aptitude and proficiency tests to ensure they're inclusive and accessible for all

### **5.1 Equal opportunities – tackling workforce inequality**

The law is clear that discrimination based on protected characteristics, whether in the workplace or wider society, is illegal. According to the Equality Act 2010, these characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Actions that Bluestones Medical take to tackle workplace inequality include:



- All directors have undertaken equity, diversity, and inclusion training through APSCo. This training equips them with the necessary knowledge and understanding surrounding the impact of discriminatory behaviour from both a personnel and overall business perspective. Moreover, it allows them to breed the right behaviours and instil an inclusive culture from the top down
- All employees are provided with ED&I training to educate them on the topic and teach them about best practice. They are then required to complete a quiz to ensure they have understood the content and how they can actively implement positive actions or change their behaviours
- We promote flexible working for people with primary family care responsibilities
- We regularly check in with our external and internal stakeholders to find out how they feel we're performing from an inclusivity perspective and ask for any feedback they have on how we can improve
- We promote inclusive interviewing
- We promote inclusive job advertisements. This includes:
  - Keeping them clear, simple, and no more than 500 words
  - Being mindful of gender-coded language and use of pronouns
  - Being inclusive of workers with disabilities
  - Avoiding phrases and requirements which perpetuate racial or faith bias
  - Including transparent job details

## 6.0 Improving health & wellbeing

Bluestones Medical is committed to being recognised as a responsible employer, and with that, supporting the wellbeing of all our stakeholders. Bluestones Medical recognises that our employees may encounter, throughout their lives, events that may affect them in the workplace including those related to their health, personal or domestic situation as well as work-related problems.

The below outlines the actions we have taken to improve the health and well-being of our stakeholders:

- Continuously working to develop a culture that encourages employees to talk about wellbeing issues they may have, whilst equipping managers to respond
- Providing advice and information that promotes general wellbeing
- We provide free private healthcare through Mediacash to all consistent external employees and all internal staff. This also gives them access to up to 6 free counselling sessions

- Our Clinical Manager is a Registered Nurse and our Registered Mental Health First Aider. Both our internal and external employees are made aware of this and have her contact details should they need to reach out to her
- We provide all internal employees and consistent external employees with a free Blue Light Card giving them access to great discounts, cashback & more
- We've introduced a lunchtime walking club with the aim of encouraging employees to get away from their desks, get some exercise and have nonwork-related conversations
- To raise the profile of mental health and wellbeing, we invite guest speakers in to talk to internal employees about the rising emotional problems people face in a technologized and performance-oriented culture

### **6.1 Improving community integration**

- We are an official foodbank collection point for the West Cheshire Foodbank
- Every internal employee has a charity day to take, and we actively encourage them and support them to do so
- We have partnered up with the local Hospice of the Good Shepherd and have been actively supporting them over the past year
- We offer self-care sessions to internal employees
- All internal employees have weekly touchdowns with their manager which gives them time to discuss any issues or worries they may have



# Social Value Policy

## Contact us:



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