



A Sexual Rights Charter for Older Adults

This Charter describes how we can support the sexual rights of people as they get older. Sexual rights are human rights as applied to sexuality, where sexuality refers to our sexual thoughts, feelings, behaviours, and identity. Sexuality is a normal part of life and can contribute to health and well-being. Sexual rights apply to everyone, yet they tend to be denied to people as they age.

Age is a Protected Characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. The Charter aims to protect people from discrimination because of their age in the provision of information and services related to sexuality. It is part of our commitment to building an age-friendly Sheffield and a great place for everyone to grow older, and is for the public, community groups, policy-makers, researchers, voluntary and community sector workers, and other professionals.

We should recognise that:

- Sex and intimacy are normal parts of life for people as they get older
- Many older adults view sexual activity as an important component of quality of life
- Sexual and intimate relationships contribute to health and well-being across the life-course

We should respect that:

- Older adults' sexual and gender identities and relationships can be diverse (e.g. heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, asexual, non-binary)
- A culmination of life experiences can influence the sexuality of adults, including religious and cultural factors, and these can affect how people experience and express sexuality

We should ensure that:

- Older adults are treated with dignity and respect when it comes to their sexuality
- Services create a culture of openness that is supportive of adults' intimate and sexual relationships, respectful of privacy, and enables important conversations to be had
- Scientifically accurate and understandable information related to sexuality and ageing is available to older adults, younger adults, and the workforce through communication channels they are familiar with
- Comprehensive sex and relationship education, that is age-appropriate and grounded in a positive approach, is available
- Older adults are fully informed about the potential impact of medicines and treatments for health conditions on sexual function, pleasure, and desire
- Sexual rights remain important when adults are not sexually active and do not want to be

For information about how to use the Charter scan the code or visit agesexandrights.com

