

STEP SKILLS

PREPARE FOR SUCCESS IN HERTS

EMPLOYER'S HANDBOOK TO DISABILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE

Contents

1 [Introduction](#)

2 [Key considerations for recruitment and selection](#)

3 [Neurodiversity](#)

15 [Physical Disabilities](#)

27 [Learning Disabilities](#)

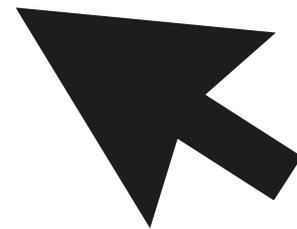
28 [Mental Health Conditions](#)

39 [Long Covid](#)

40 [Access to Work Scheme](#)

42 [The Supported Employment Model](#)

44 [Disability Confident Scheme](#)



Click to skip to the relevant section

Less than
10%
of disabled people
use wheelchairs

Introduction

There are many benefits to employers who have an inclusive and diverse workforce. Talented disabled people we work with bring motivation, passion and diverse skills and abilities that any business needs to succeed. Studies show that people with disabilities take fewer absence days and turnover of staff with a disability is 48% lower than that of non-disabled workers[JB1] [LK2] .

There is a strong business case for employing people who might otherwise face exclusion from the workplace. This guide aims to support you through the process of employing and supporting workers with a disability. Flexibility and knowledge are key and once you gain an understanding of what is involved in employing a disabled workforce you will gain the confidence and skills needed to put into practice. Much of the advice is about implementing good management practices and you will find that there is also access to support and funding to cover additional costs of supporting employees with disabilities.



An inclusive workforce can help address your corporate social responsibility goals, make your brand stand out and enhance your reputation. We want to help you overcome any of these resources have been brought together with the aim to help employers gain a better understanding of what they can do to make their workplace more inclusive for people with disabilities. We have introduced and explained some disabilities including neurodiversity, physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health conditions. We have included general advice and information about what employers can do to support individuals. The degree to which individuals are affected by their condition varies enormously, so it is important to remember that the individual is the expert on their condition and as such, should be your primary source of information about how it affects them. Further reading and research links are included should you require additional information on a particular disability.

Key considerations for recruitment and selection

1 in 3
of employees with a long term
health condition have
**not discussed it
with their employer**

For people with disabilities to have full access to more employment opportunities, employers need to consider and plan for accessibility and inclusion from the very beginning:

Join the Disability Confident Scheme and use the logo on your careers pages to show you are committed to disability inclusion. Allow applicants to ask for reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process.

Job description and person specification - Use plain English avoiding jargon, be precise and use at least font size 12. Carefully consider what are truly the essential requirements for a job and which are desirable and avoid including skills that are not essential for the role to be carried out effectively. Default skills or qualities such as 'excellent communication skills' or 'good team player' are not always necessary and can mean that suitable applicants are put off applying despite having strong essential skills for the duties involved.

Review where you advertise your role and consider using specialist disability recruitment [JB1] [LK2] [WN3] [AT4] services ([Member Organisations | British Association for Supported Employment \(base-uk.org\)](#)) to reach out to the disabled community letting them know you are positive about disability.

- Be open about your approach to disability - this will encourage applicants to disclose at all points along the recruitment journey.
- Given 80% of disabled people have hidden impairments do not make any assumptions about who does and does not have a disability. Be genuinely open and engaging to all people about any adjustments needed to do the role, and you might be surprised at the level of honesty and commitment you get back.
- Ensure the interview takes place in an accessible location.
- If using assessment centres, consider developing a policy that includes being able to offer reasonable adjustments if requested, e.g. allowing additional time.
- If the role requires a medical questionnaire or health check, be open and transparent around the reasons and assessment criteria.
- It is important all people involved in the recruitment process should have appropriate disability awareness and/or related training and development

Neurodiversity



Neurodiversity (ND) occurs when cognitive processing is different to that which society expects from a “typical” person’s brain, known as neurotypical (NT). These processing differences mean that neurodiverse individuals may find some tasks easier and some harder; what is often described as a spikey skills profile.

It is estimated that around 20% of the population are neurodivergent, therefore it is vital that businesses understand and are able to support this percentage of their workforce and customers alike. It is worth bearing in mind that many individuals aged 40+ may never have been diagnosed with a neurodiverse condition, due to these conditions not being understood historically.

The term neurodiversity encompasses several conditions that include:

Dyslexia

A learning difference which affects skills involved in reading, spelling and writing. People with this condition will have normal intelligence and normal vision.

ADHD Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

ADHD is a neurological condition that impacts part of the brain that help us to plan, focus and execute tasks. People with ADHD may have trouble paying attention, appear hyperactive and impulsive. However, when someone is able to control these symptoms they are better able to take advantage of the benefits of ADHD. This can be increased energy levels, creativity, problem solving, perseverance the ability to multi task. Symptoms vary for each individual.

Tourette's Syndrome

Tourette's syndrome is a condition that causes a person to make involuntary sounds and movements called tics. Tourette's does not affect intelligence.

Autism/Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)/Asperger's

Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition which is described as a spectrum condition because of the variable severity. It is usually characterised by differences with social interaction and communication and by repetitive thought and behaviour.

Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia can affect co-ordination skills. For example, with tasks requiring balance, playing sports or learning to drive a car. Dyspraxia can also affect fine motor skills, such as writing or using small objects. Dyspraxia does not affect intelligence.

Dyscalculia

Dyscalculia is a condition that affects the ability to acquire mathematical skills. Dyscalculia does not affect intelligence.



Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental condition affecting brain structure and neurotransmission: the way in which messages are communicated around the brain. ADHD is present from childhood, but an increasing number of adults are now being diagnosed, having been 'missed' when they were younger partly because the condition was not as well understood as it is now. ADHD does not affect intelligence and it can look very different in adults than children.

ADHD has three core symptoms which affect people with it to different degrees: Inattention affecting concentration, short term and working memory, planning and getting started and organisation.

Impulsiveness - acting on the spur of the moment, regulation of emotions.

Hyperactivity – lots of excess energy, restlessness.

There are 3 types of ADHD:

Hyperactive - people can act as if 'driven by a motor', act impulsively and appear impatient, talkative and may interrupt others.

Inattentive - may have difficulty focussing, finishing tasks and can be easily distracted and forgetful.

Combined - may have a mixture of all the above symptoms

ADHD can be successfully treated with a combination of approaches including medication, behavioural therapy, support with nutrition and exercise and coaching.

The positives of ADHD are numerous. People with ADHD can be creative, empathic, tenacious and excellent problem solvers. They can also have a excellent attention to detail, be able to multi task and having the ability to hyperfocus on a task can be a serious advantage in the workplace.

Some people are also diagnosed with attention deficit disorder, without hyperactivity: this is particularly the case for girls and women . Whilst not a core symptom, many people with ADHD may have problems with sleep.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Ask applicant if they need any adaptations
- Offer alternative to online applications
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments can be made to Psychometric Testing if used.
- Ensure interview area has minimal distractions and background noise

Retention

- Understand the coping strategies used by the individual
- Allowing useful IT, larger screens, wall charts, reminders
- Structured work programmes and to-do lists
- Allowing use of headphones to block out distractions
- Offer increased supervision / frequent check-ins and feedback
- Weekly planning and progress meetings with line manager
- Tasks broken down into clear, bite-sized steps
- Give instructions and meeting notes in writing rather than verbally
- Operate a buddy system for tasks to help maintain focus
- Allow regular movement / stretching breaks

Further reading, external links:

[An Employer's Guide to ADHD in the Workplace - ADHD Foundation : ADHD Foundation](#)
[Neurodiversity in Business](#)

Tourette's Syndrome

Tourette's Syndrome is a condition that causes a person to make involuntary sounds and movements called tics. Tourette's does not affect intelligence. Tourette's Syndrome is a neurological condition characterised by a combination of involuntary and repeated movements and sounds referred to as tics. It usually starts during childhood and for over half of those affected, symptoms will continue into adulthood. A large proportion of people with Tourette's Syndrome will also have other conditions, the most common of which are ADHD and OCD.

There are four main categories of tics:

1. Simple motor tics e.g. eye blinking, head movements, shrugging, teeth grinding
2. Complex motor tics e.g. jumping, touching things, copying other people, twirling
3. Simple sound tics e.g. throat noise, sniffing, coughing clicking tongue
4. Complex sound tics e.g. uttering words out of context, swearing, repeating sound or words.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Ask applicant if they need any adaptations
- Offer alternative to an in-person interview
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments can be made to candidate presentations
- Ensure interview area has minimal distractions and background noise

Retention

- Understand the coping strategies used by the individual
- Help them to find ways to manage stress levels e.g, helping them to plan and be organised, breaking down tasks into smaller steps
- Provide a private area or office space so the individual can tic discreetly
- Use of technology – use of emails instead of phones and holding meetings online
- Talk through any potential changes in the workplace and give them support and reassurance
- Encourage taking regular breaks from tasks, getting up and walking around
- Offer a quiet space to work free from distractions and noise
- Discuss if, when and how they want to tell others about their condition

Further reading, external links:

[Tourette's Action \(tourettes-action.org.uk\)](https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk)

[Tourette's syndrome - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Autism/Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)/Asperger's

The Autistic Spectrum, or 'Autism' is a lifelong neurological condition that is classified as a developmental disability. It is described as a 'spectrum condition' as it affects everyone differently across a full range of abilities and to varying degrees. There are some characteristics related to social interaction, communication, behavioural traits and environmental sensitivity that can be common to many who identify with autism. However, just as is the case in the general population, everyone is unique with their own abilities, strengths and way of being.

Social communication

Autistic people have difficulties with interpreting both verbal and non-verbal language like gestures or tone of voice. Some autistic people are unable to speak or have limited speech while other autistic people have very good language skills but struggle to understand sarcasm or tone of voice.

Other challenges include:

- Taking things literally and not understanding abstract concepts
- Needing extra time to process information or answer questions
- Repeating what others say to them (this is called echolalia)
- Social interaction

Repetitive and restrictive behaviour

With its unwritten rules, the world can seem a very unpredictable and confusing place to autistic people. This is why they often prefer to have routines so that they know what is going to happen. They may want to travel the same way to and from work, wear the same clothes or eat exactly the same food for breakfast.

Change to routine can be very challenging for autistic people and make them very anxious. Having to adjust to big events like Christmas, work lunches, facing uncertainty at work, or a simple change to a bus route like a detour, can trigger their anxiety.

Autistic people often have difficulty with non-verbal communication such as recognising facial expressions or understanding others' feelings and intentions, as well as struggling to express their own emotions. This can make it very hard to navigate the social world and its unwritten rules.

Autistic people may:

- Appear to be insensitive
- Seek out time alone when overloaded by other people
- Not seek comfort from other people
- Appear to behave 'strangely' or in a way thought to be socially inappropriate
- Find it hard to form friendships

Experiencing anxiety is a real difficulty for many autistic people, particularly in social situations or when facing change. It can affect them psychologically, physically and impact on their quality of life. Many autistic people understand what can trigger their anxiety and will have coping mechanisms or will avoid particular things or situations.

Further reading, external links:

Employing autistic people (autism.org.uk)

Neurodiversity at work | CIPD

Neurodiversity in Business



Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Recruitment procedures often inadvertently create barriers for autistic people. There are many minor adjustments your organisation can make to your processes that will help autistic candidates to apply for jobs and enable them to demonstrate their skills as potential employees. Many of these adjustments may also benefit other candidates and enhance your overall efficiency in recruitment.
- Ask applicants if they require any adaptations or access arrangements – with the opportunity to request these prior to applying.
- Interviews - particularly ‘traditional’ conversational type interviews - rely heavily on social and communication skills, so autistic candidates may well struggle to 'sell themselves' in an interview, even if they have all the right skills. Offer alternative ways to apply, choice of recruitment methods such as arranging ‘working interviews’.
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments can be made to Psychometric Testing if used.
- Making reasonable adjustments during an interview is essential to allowing autistic candidates to portray their skills and competencies fully, so that you can make an informed choice about who to recruit
- Adapting the interview for autistic candidates by:
 - providing interview questions in advance - up to two days before the interview and providing clear and concise written and visual information about the interview
 - including directions to, or maps of, the location of the interview and photographs of the entrance of the building (such as google street)
- Ensure interview area has minimal distractions and background noise

Retention

- Understand the coping strategies used by the individual
- Clarify the expectation of the job
- Discuss your working arrangements and consider giving worker allocated desk and space to work
- Consider specialist equipment (computer headset) or remote working
- Be prepared to write down instructions and requests
- If possible, provide written notes in advance to allow for reading time
- Avoid asking the individual to read aloud
- Job Coach, if needed – you can apply for Access to Work to fund this

Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia, also known as developmental co-ordination disorder (DCD), is a common disorder that affects movement and co-ordination; it affects around 5% of the population. Dyspraxia does not affect intelligence. It can affect co-ordination skills – tasks that require balance, playing sports or learning to drive a car. Dyspraxia can also affect fine motor skills, such as writing or using small objects. It can have an impact on fine motor skills, memory, attention, ability to focus, time management and organisational skills.

Dyspraxia affects individuals differently, so it is important not to assume someone with the condition is affected with all the difficulties associated with the condition. The individual is the expert in how Dyspraxia affects them so they should be your number one source of information.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Display Disability Confident membership and use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Ask applicant if they need any adaptations
- Offer alternative to handwritten forms
- Consider Dyspraxia, a reasonable adjustment could include use of IT (e.g. MS Word offers speech to text options)
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments can be made to Psychometric Testing if used such as extra time
- Allow plenty of time for them to give answers to questions- avoid repeating the question
- Ensure interview area has minimal distractions and background noise

Retention

- Understand the coping strategies used by the individual
- Consider specialist equipment such as headset for computer use
- Be prepared to write down instructions and requests
- Where possible provide written instructions or allow extra time
- Ensure an organised and tidy working environment
- Try not to interrupt them and suggest focusing on one thing at a time
- When using technology, is emailing and texting better than calling or speaking?

Further reading, external links:

<https://dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk>

[Dyspraxia \(DCD\) - British Dyslexia Association \(bdadyslexia.org.uk\)](https://bdadyslexia.org.uk)

Dyscalculia

Dyscalculia is a condition that affects the ability to acquire mathematical skills. Dyscalculia does not affect intelligence.

Dyscalculia affects a person's ability to understand, recall or use numerical information. Some people may feel anxious when having to undertake any mathematical related tasks and so may avoid situations where they have to do this, such as paying bills or avoiding specific jobs.

Dyscalculia can also affect the way numerical information is processed which can mean people can also have difficulty with memory, speed of thinking, organisation and sequencing and may struggle to tell the time.

Number skills difficulty includes accurate recording of numbers, reversing numbers e.g. 117 read is 171, difficulty reading long numbers, may get confused or forget pin codes and passwords, difficulty interpreting charts or measurements, confusing mathematical signs, struggling with simple mathematical tasks.

People with dyscalculia are likely to have a range of strengths in other areas including: good verbal communication skills, innovative problem solving and troubleshooting skills, creative, intuitive and lateral thinking. Stronger in the areas of art, music, design, architecture and engineering with ability to see the bigger picture, think strategically and take a holistic approach.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Ask applicant if they need any adaptations
- Offer alternative to online applications
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments can be made to Psychometric Testing if used

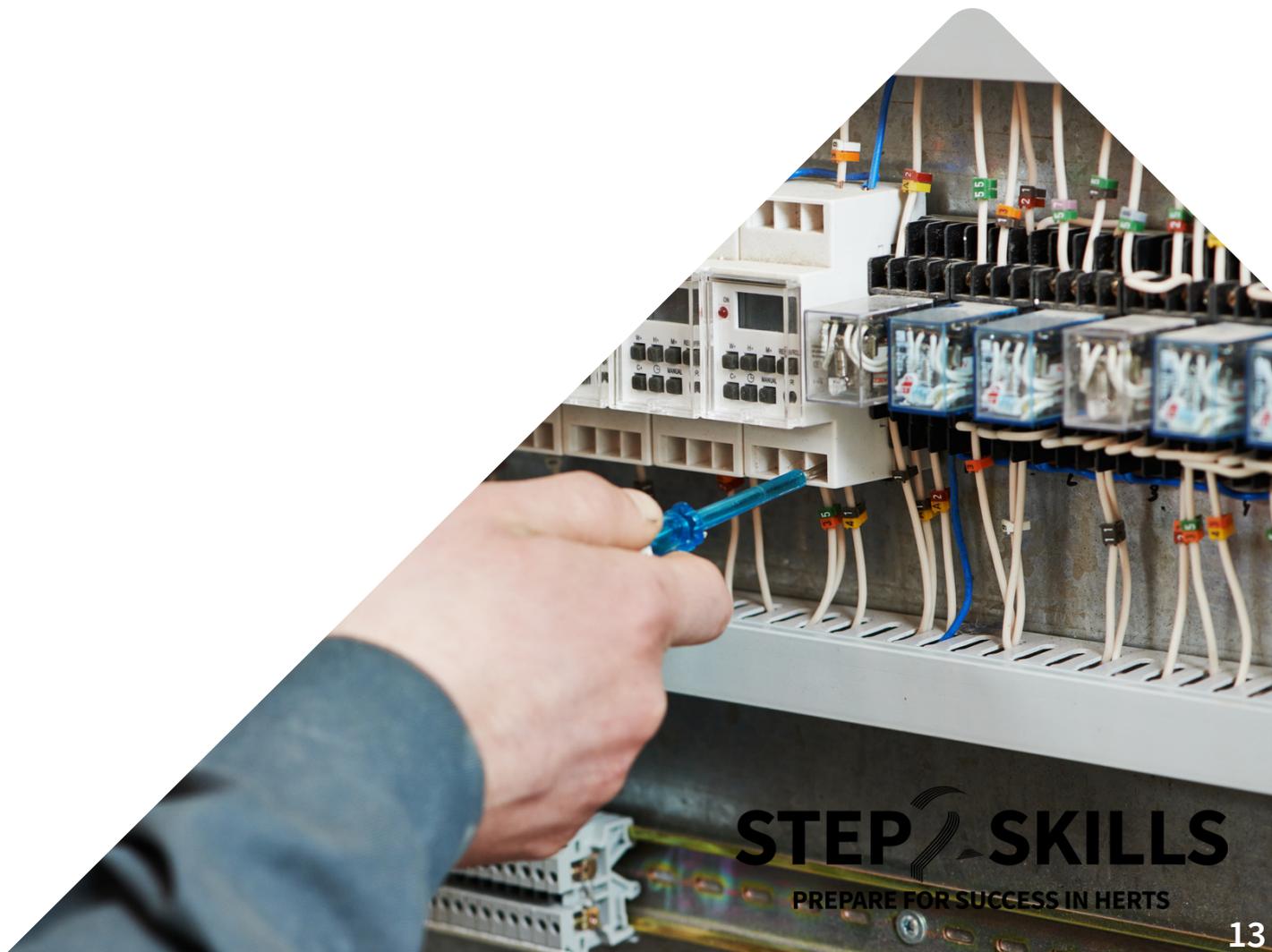
Retention

- Understand the coping strategies used by the individual
- Allowing useful IT, larger screens, wall charts, reminders
- Job carving to remove mathematical elements
- Offer increased supervision / frequent check-ins and feedback
- Use of apps that assist with number work such as Photomaths
- Give instructions and meeting notes in writing rather than verbally
- Operate a buddy system for tasks to with math tasks
- Discuss coping mechanisms and tasks which cause anxiety

Further reading, external links:

[Designing for people with dyscalculia and low numeracy - Design in government \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://blog.gov.uk/designing-for-people-with-dyscalculia-and-low-numeracy/)

[Dyscalculia - British Dyslexia Association \(bdadyslexia.org.uk\)](https://bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyscalculia/)



Dyslexia

A learning difficulty which affects skills involved in reading, spelling, and writing. Intelligence and eyesight are not affected by the condition.

It can have an impact on learning, literacy, written work, organisational skills, short-term memory, time management and result in low self-esteem.

Dyslexia affects the ability to learn to read, write down ideas/stories and spell, the severity of a person's dyslexia can vary. It is associated with standout strengths in areas such as 3D visual thinking, verbal skills, problem solving, creativity and long-term memory.

Dyslexia literally means 'difficulties with words'; however, modern science has discovered that this is a symptom, not a cause.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Ask applicant if they need any adaptations
- Offer alternative to handwritten forms
- Consider dyslexia, a reasonable adjustment could include use of IT (e.g. MS Word offers speech to text options).
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments can be made to Psychometric Testing if used.
- Ensure interview area has minimal distractions and background noise

Retention

- Understand the coping strategies used by the individual
- Consider specialist equipment such as a headset for computer use.
- Be prepared to write down instructions and requests
- Where possible, provide written notes in advance and allow additional reading time.
- Avoid asking the individual to read aloud.
- Contrast options – discuss colour schemes on the VDU screen to understand what will help.

Further reading, external links:

Dyslexia - The Brain Charity

Local Dyslexia Associations - British Dyslexia Association (bdadyslexia.org.uk)

Herts Dyslexia Charity – Hertfordshire Dyslexia Association

Dyslexia Foundation (dyslexia-help.org)

Physical Disabilities



A physical disability is defined as a ‘limitation on a person’s physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina’ that has a substantial and long term effect on an individual’s ability to do complete daily activities.

Common Types of Physical Disabilities include:

Sight loss

Sight loss or blindness is one of the commonest causes of disability in the UK. Someone can be registered blind if they can see only the top letter of an optician’s eye test chart from 3 metres or less. Or as partially sighted if they can see only the top letter from 6 metres or less.

Deaf/Hard Hearing

Hearing loss or deafness are terms used to describe someone who has some level of hearing loss. This can be described as only able to hear:

Mild 20-40 dBHL Quiet Sounds

Moderate 41-70 dBHL Normal Speech

Severe 71-95 dBHL Alarm Clock, Car Engines

Profound 95+ dBHL Loud Machinery, Pop Concert

Cerebral Palsy

Cerebral Palsy is the name for a group of lifelong conditions that affect movement and coordination. It is caused by a problem with the brain that develops before, during or soon after birth.

Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a condition that can affect the brain and spinal cord, causing a wide range of potential symptoms which includes problems with vision, arm or leg movement, sensation or balance. 85% of people diagnosed have relapsing MS where the symptoms appear then fade away completely. Once diagnosed, MS cannot be cured but medication can help manage the symptoms.

Absent Limb or Reduced Limb Function

Limb loss refers to the absence or partial absence of one or more limbs. Limb loss can be acquired from birth, an accident, war injury, disease, a health condition or surgery.

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)

Acquired Brain Injury is the result of trauma to the brain leading to a variety of impairments. ABI can be caused by an accident, surgery, brain tumour or stroke. The effects can be permanent or temporary



Cerebral Palsy

Cerebral palsy is the name for a group of lifelong conditions that affect movement and coordination. It is caused by a problem with the brain that develops before, during or soon after birth.

Cerebral palsy can affect people different ways and degrees of severity. Some people have very mild symptoms that may not be immediately apparent to many people, whereas others can be more severely affected. The condition is not progressive, but it can put increased strain on the body, causing pain, especially in the joints as the person ages.

The impact on work will depend on the nature of the job and the severity of any symptoms. Some people will not require any adjustments, whereas others with more severe and complex disabilities will need more.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Ask the applicant if they need any adaptations
- Allow enough time to say whatever they want to; someone with cerebral palsy may speak more slowly. Do not interrupt or finish sentences for them
- Be honest – do not pretend to understand if you do not. Do not be afraid to ask someone to repeat or rephrase what they just said
- Accessing, using, and leaving buildings can be difficult for many people with conditions affecting mobility. Where possible, building regulations and health and safety legislation try to mitigate these. Review your premises for accessibility needs
- Offer flexible working hours, where possible, or hybrid working

Retention

Understand the coping strategies used by the individual

Consider relocating a workstation to ease access to suitable facilities

Consider specialist equipment such as dictation software, headset for computer use.

Consider preferred communication methods, utilise technology such as Microsoft Teams and Slack.

Accessible lifts and handrails in key areas.

Heavy doors should ideally have push-button openings

Job Coach, if needed – you can apply for Access to Work to fund this.

Further reading, external links:

[Home](#) | [Disability charity Scope UK](#)



Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a condition that can affect the brain and spinal cord, causing a wide range of potential symptoms, including problems with vision, arm or leg movement, sensation or balance. 85% of people diagnosed have relapsing MS where the symptoms appear then fade away completely. Once diagnosed, MS cannot be cured but medication can help manage the symptoms. MS can develop at any age. MS is a lifelong condition that can be challenging to live with. However, new treatments can slow the progression of the disease for many people. Many can live full and active lives for many years with little or no visible sign of the disease.

The symptoms of MS vary widely from person to person and will depend on where the damage is and its extent in the brain and spinal cord. The most common symptoms include:

Physical and mental fatigue, difficulty walking, blurred vision, bladder and bowel problems, including a sense of urgency. Numbness or tingling in different parts of the body. Muscle stiffness, spasms, difficulty with speech and swallowing. Balance and co-ordination. Problems with thinking, learning and planning.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to inclusivity
- Ask the applicant if they need any adaptations
- Accessing, using, and leaving buildings can be difficult for many people with conditions affecting mobility. Where possible, building regulations and health and safety legislation try to mitigate these. Review your premises for accessibility needs
- Offer flexible working where possible, hours or hybrid working

Retention

- Understand the coping strategies used by the individual
- Consider relocating a workstation to ease access to accessible facilities including a washroom
- Consider specialist equipment such as dictation software, headset for computer use.
- Consider preferred communication; utilise technology such as Microsoft Teams and Slack
- Business travel can be tiring and bring additional challenges for someone with MS. Adjustments may include allowing extra time especially for long-distance and overseas travel
- Accessible lift; and handrails in key areas
- Heavy doors should ideally have push-button openings
- Job Coach, if needed – you can apply for Access to Work to fund this

Further reading, external links: [mstrust.org.uk](https://www.mstrust.org.uk)

Absent Limb or Reduced Limb Function

Limb loss refers to the absence or partial absence of one or more limbs. Limb loss can be acquired from birth, an accident, war injury, disease, health condition or surgery. The impact on daily life will vary depending on the severity of the limb loss, number of limbs, and stage of recovery.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Ask individuals prior to application to let you know if they need any adaptations or have access arrangements
- Provide the opportunity for adjustments to be made in the selection process for example written assessments may not be applicable to an individual with the loss of an arm
- Not everyone with limb loss will declare this prior to interview so be prepared to be open and accommodating. The individual is likely to be accustomed to dealing with such situations and you should not be overly concerned
- Avoid assumptions about any negative implications for the job as the result of the limb loss.
- Accessing, using, and leaving buildings can be difficult for many people with conditions affecting mobility. Where possible, building regulations and health and safety legislation try to mitigate these. Review your premises for accessibility needs
- Offer flexible working where possible, hours or hybrid working

Retention

- Understand the coping strategies used by the individual
- Consider relocating a workstation to ease access to suitable facilities
- Consider specialist equipment such as dictation software, headset for computer use.
- Consider preferred communication methods; utilise technology such as Microsoft Teams and Slack
- Accessible lifts and handrails in key areas
- Heavy doors should ideally have push-button openings
- Access to work can be considered to support funding for any workplace adaptations required including a job coach

Further reading, external links:

[Limb Loss & Limb Difference \(limblosslimbdifference.co.uk\)](http://limblosslimbdifference.co.uk)

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)

Acquired Brain Injury is the result of trauma to the brain leading to a variety of impairments. ABI can be caused by an accident, surgery, brain tumour or stroke. The effects can be permanent or temporary and will vary from person to person.

These may include: Difficulty with staying organised and meeting deadlines; executive function, such as concentration on tasks, organisation, multitasking, problem-solving, managing emotions appropriately and making rational decisions. These skills can often be affected by brain injury. Some people may develop a weakness of limbs or experience problems with their balance however these may not always be visible. Vision may also be affected such as an increased sensitivity to bright lights. Fatigue is a chronic tiredness that is a common effect associated with brain injury.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Display Disability Confident membership and use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Ask applicant if they need any adaptations
- Offer alternative to handwritten forms
- Consider providing interview questions in advance.
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments can be made to Psychometric Testing if used such as extra time
- Allow plenty of time for them to give answers to questions- avoid repeating the question
- Ensure interview area has minimal distractions and background noise

Retention

- Encourage the use of daily to-do lists and check items off as completed
- Provide a calendar to mark meetings and deadlines
- Understand the coping strategies used by the individual
- Consider specialist equipment such as a headset for computer use.
- Be prepared to write down instructions and requests
- Where possible provide written instructions or allow extra time
- Ensure an organised and tidy working environment
- Try not to interrupt them and suggest focusing on one thing at a time
- Recognise emotional changes and/or irritability may be a common symptom
- Assign a mentor for daily guidance/regular supervision to provide support
- Provide picture diagrams of problem-solving techniques (such as flowcharts)

Further Information:

[Headway - the brain injury association](#) | [Headway](#)

Sight Loss

Every individual has different levels of sight loss, this does not however impair their skills or knowledge. Some may use a long cane to navigate around obstructions or use for depth perception, a symbol cane to be identified as having a sight loss or a trained guide dog.

Sight loss can also mean they may not be able to see the 'whole room' but part of it or some may only see patches, limited to central vision or even peripheral vision.



Assistive technology can offer employees with sight loss an excellent way of reading and writing at work. Assistive technology can magnify text or images making them easier to see, enlarge text on computer screen or laptops and read aloud the written text. Adapted scanners can also scan printed material onto a computer. For jobs that require measuring/weighting or calculations – there are devices that 'talk' which enable them to do their job.

Driving and transporting might be limited depending on the level of sight loss. Flexibility is important. They may require mobility training to learn new routes or have to make an application to the Access to Work scheme (ATW) for transport (e.g. a taxi).

Standout strengths in areas such as 3D visual thinking, organisation skills, creativity, long term memory, planning and using their innovation skills.



Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive.
- Ask applicant if they need any adaptations or reasonable adjustments. They may bring a trained guide dog with them to the meeting or place of work.
- Ask for contact preference – avoid using handwritten notes, instead use your voice or email. Assistive technology can be used at their end to read the text on their behalf.
- Ensure interview area has minimal distractions, not too bright and minimal background noise. It would be helpful to describe the setting to candidate.
- Focus on person's qualifications to do the job with or without adjustment, not the person with sight loss.
- When greeting a candidate, the employer should address the candidate by name and then introduce themselves and other people present in the room. Remember that the candidate may not be able to see and offer a handshake.

Retention

- Make reasonable adjustment including desk positioning and fire evacuation plan or PEEP
- Organise sight loss awareness training for all staff (funded by Access to Work)
- Involve Occupational Health for reasonable adjustments depending on the individual.
- Dots of silicon on switches will enable an operator with sight loss to identify and align controls on machine.
- Avoid non-verbal communication such as pointing, gesturing or nodding head. They may not see what you are doing
- Do learn communication tips – do's and don'ts

Further reading, links:

- [Sight or vision loss: Guidance for employers - Business Disability Forum](#)
- [Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition: What Access to Work is - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Communication and sight loss - Business Disability Forum](#)
- [Employers | RNIB](#)

Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Every individual has different levels of hearing loss, this does not however impair their skills or knowledge. There are various types of hearing aids to support with listening such as bilateral hearing aids, cochlear implants or bone conduction aids. A wide variety of deaf people in this category may or may not have clear speech or use no voice sounds. They may prefer to communicate via lip-reading or British Sign Language (BSL). Deaf people can do anything except hear.



Congenital deaf people also use the term “grassroots deaf” and may struggle with English and grammar due to using BSL as their first language. In BSL the grammatical structure is different from the spoken word. This can be overcome by a variety of ways, one being the use of a Registered Qualified BSL Interpreter funded by Access to Work (ATW) to support deaf people at work. This does not impair either their cognitive abilities or physical ability.

The use of visual demonstrations would be more helpful for those who do not use sign language but rely on lip-reading. Lip-reading is challenging (depending on the individual) as on average approximately 30%-60% of words can be understood or lip readable providing the person knows the conversation topic. Some BSL users can lip-read however, never assume they can and always ask the individual for their communication preferences.

Standout strengths of deaf people are in areas such as 3D visual thinking, problem solving, creativity, long-term memory, efficiency and innovation.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Make time allowance for interview
- Ask applicant if they need any adaptations
- Ask for their contact preference such as email or text message, please do not “call”
- Ensure interview area has minimal distractions and background noise
- If a BSL interpreter is booked, always give preparation materials or brief them on the interview content.
- A BSL interpreter for an interview can be funded by the Access to Work scheme
- Look at the deaf person when talking or asking a question, never address the interpreter directly, the interpreter is there to facilitate communication.

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive
- Make time allowance for interview
- Ask applicant if they need any adaptations
- Ask for their contact preference such as email or text message, please do not “call”
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- A BSL interpreter for an interview can be funded by the Access to Work scheme
- Look at the deaf person when talking or asking a question, never address the interpreter directly, the interpreter is there to facilitate communication.

Retention

- Make reasonable adjustments including desk positioning and fire evacuation plan
- Complete deaf awareness training for all staff (funded by Access to Work)
- Keep meetings to a maximum of 2 hours with an interval to prevent eye fatigue
- Presentation materials need to be shared with the deaf individual before meeting and ensure to “spotlight” BSL interpreter remotely especially when sharing slides.
- Do learn communication tips – do’s and don’ts

Further reading, links:

- [Deaf awareness - RNID](#)
- [Making your services and workplace deaf-friendly| Professionals \(ndcs.org.uk\)](#)
- [Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition: What Access to Work is - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Deaf Awareness Training - Royal Association for Deaf people \(royaldeaf.org.uk\)](#)

Learning Disabilities



Individuals who have a learning disability are considered to have a lifelong intellectual impairment (usually acquired from birth). People with learning disabilities may find it harder to learn new tasks and skills, and generally need more time to learn, process and perform tasks. Good examples where extra support may be needed are: managing money, travel and telling the time.

Individuals with learning disabilities are also very likely to have one or more additional conditions such as; Autism, learning difficulty (dyslexia), a physical disability, epilepsy or a mental health condition

Down's Syndrome

Down's Syndrome is a permanent condition where an individual has an extra chromosome (also referred to as Trisomy 21). This extra chromosome impacts how the person's body and brain developed from infancy. Individuals with Down's syndrome usually have learning disabilities, with an IQ in the mild to moderately low range and may have challenges communicating.



STEP SKILLS
PREPARE FOR SUCCESS IN HERTS

Mental Health Conditions



A mental health condition or poor mental health can be defined as “when someone experiences significant changes in their thinking, feelings or behaviour which affects how they function or causes distress to them or to other people”.

Common mental health conditions include:

Depression

Depression is a low mood condition which can last for a long period of time and/or keep on re-occurring. Depression affects people in different ways and can cause a wide variety of symptoms which range from mild to severe. Some of the most common symptoms are feeling constantly tired, sleeping badly, low in spirit, feeling stressed and anxious. Depression is usually triggered by an event such as bereavement, giving birth or losing a job, however, some individuals become depressed for no obvious reason.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a feeling of unease that can be mild to severe. Many people experience feelings of anxiety during their life in circumstances such as: taking an exam, having an interview or having medical tests, which is perfectly normal. However, it is considered a condition when people find it hard to control their own worries for longer periods of time and often struggle to remember when they last did not feel anxious. This has a negative impact on home, work and school life.

Bipolar

Bipolar disorder is a mental health condition which can affect a person's mood by swinging from one extreme to another (previously known as manic depression). People with Bipolar can experience episodes of depression (feeling low and lethargic) to episodes of mania (feeling high and overactive).

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Individuals with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder usually experience frequent obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours which can be distressing and interfere with their life. An obsession is considered an unwanted, unpleasant thought, image or urge which repeatedly enters a person's mind causing feelings of unease. A compulsion is a repetitive behaviour or a mental act which a person needs to do, to relieve the feelings of unease brought on by the obsessive thought.



Mental Health conditions/ poor mental health

Poor mental health or a mental health condition can be defined as “when someone experiences significant changes in their thinking, feelings or behaviour which affects how the person functions or causes distress to them or to other people.

Seen as the main reason for sickness leave among employees, employers recognise that prevention is better than cure and in recent years are taking steps to understand mental health and promoting good mental wellbeing among the workforce.

Individuals who experience mental health conditions or poor mental wellbeing will be affected differently and will require different support needs and adjustments.

Following are some of the most common mental health conditions experienced by individuals in the UK;

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Bipolar
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder



Depression

Depression is a leading mental health condition in the UK and it is the leading cause of disability worldwide. It affects one in five people at some point in their life. For most people who experience depression, this will occur just once in their life, and they will recover fairly quickly with little support but others may experience depression throughout their life and will need treatment and further support in the workplace.

Traits associated with depression can include isolation, self-doubt, tiredness, changes in sleep and eating habits, low self-esteem, poor relationships with peers, family and friends, indecisiveness and lack of energy, difficulties with concentration or focus and an incessant low mood.

Many people who have experienced depression can recover with a stronger and healthier mindset and become highly practical and solution-driven at work.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Join the DCS and display your Disability Confident membership – this will encourage potential candidates with poor mental health to apply for roles at your organisation
- Prevent rather than resolve - establish a culture of Mental Health Wellness in the organisation - let this be seen in your recruitment/web pages
- Engage with a supported employment provider for advice and guidance in relation to the recruitment process
- If the candidate has obtained an interview, personally call them and introduce yourself and be welcoming and supportive
- If the individual has declared their condition, discuss the adjustments needed at the interview. Consider offering a quieter location, seating positions, reduced panel, good room temperature
- If needed, allow a job coach/advisor to accompany the candidate to the interview
- Look out for signs of distress during the interviews and offer a break if needed

Retention

- Promote and deliver a culture of Mental Health wellbeing in the organisation by displaying leaflets on boards, info on intranet pages, Employment Assistance Programme, Anti-bullying policies, encouraging healthy eating and healthy menu choices in the canteen, mental well-being training for managers and staff and openly discussing mental wellbeing as an organisation
- Appoint a 'Mental Health Champion' by teams/departments
- Offer flexible working/hybrid working, allow time off for any medical appointments and if possible unpaid time off
- Find out about individual's support needs at work and ensure these are reviewed regularly
- Look out for signals of the depression worsening such as feeling useless, worthless, low, bleak, no motivation and difficulties in concentration. Revisit support needs at work and adjust accordingly
- Offer positive feedback and celebrate success which will help boost self-esteem and confidence
- Be conscious and diplomatic in the language you use to not trivialise what they are experiencing
- Identify and avoid potential workplace activities that may trigger their depression
- Allocate a "MH buddy" to support and act as an emergency contact if the individual is going through a critical episode
- Where possible, make work tasks as 'physical' as possible and encourage outdoor activities for an opportunity to gain 'fresh-air'
- Undertake activities which are goal orientated to provide focus
- If the MH conditions are affecting the individual's ability to perform at work, support can be provided by the Access to Work scheme

Further reading, links

- [Hertfordshire Healthy Hubs](#)
- [MIND- Taking care of your staff](#)
- [NHS Depression and Anxiety. Self-assessment Quiz](#)
- www.mind.org.uk
- www.rethink.org

Anxiety

Anxiety is a condition which includes stress, fear and worry. An emotion which is experienced by most people at some point in their life. However, when anxiety is an enduring condition which fluctuates over time and can cause changes to one's ability to function with their daily life this is when anxiety becomes a disorder.

Anxiety is also linked to depression as 60% of individuals who have anxiety also have symptoms associated with depression.

Traits associated with anxiety can include; heart palpitations, sweating, dizziness, experiencing feelings of dread, shortness of breath, nausea, mind racing, unpleasant thoughts, tiredness, difficulty with sleeping, experiencing 'the shakes', change in character, and even fainting.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Join the DCS and display your Disability Confident membership – this will encourage potential candidates with poor mental health to apply for roles at your organisation
- Prevent rather than resolve - establish a culture of Mental Health Wellness in the organisation - let this be seen in your recruitment/web pages
- Engage with a supported employment provider for advice and guidance in relation to the recruitment process
- If the candidate has obtained an interview, personally call them and introduce yourself and be welcoming and supportive
- If the individual has declared their condition, discuss the adjustments needed at the interview. Consider offering a quieter location, seating positions, reduced panel, good room temperature
- If needed, allow a job coach/advisor to accompany the candidate to the interview
- Offering a 'working interview', as a chance for employers to assess the candidate's skills on the job
- Look out for signs of distress during the interviews (e.g. nail biting/sweating) and offer a break if needed

Retention

- Promote and deliver a culture of Mental Health wellbeing in the organisation by leaflets on boards, info on intranet pages, Employment Assistance Programme, Anti-bullying policies, encouraging healthy eating and healthy menu choices in the canteen, mental well being training for managers and staff and openly discussing mental wellbeing as an organisation
- Appoint a ‘Mental Health Champion’ by teams/departments.
- Offer Flexi Working/Hybrid working and allow time off for any medical appointments.
- Find out about individual’s support needs at work and ensure these are reviewed regularly.
- Look out for signals of Anxiety conditions worsening (for example panic episodes, confusion, poor concentration, constant worrying, fidgeting) and adjust workplace requirements accordingly
- Offer positive feedback and celebrate success
- Minimise work changes and limit pressure on deadlines
- Identify and avoid potential workplace activities that may trigger the Anxiety condition. For instance, asking to present to the team
- Allocate a “MH buddy” to support and act as an emergency contact if the individual is going through a critical episode
- If the MH conditions are affecting the individual’s ability to perform at work, support can be provided by the Access to Work scheme

Further reading, links

[NHS Depression and Anxiety. Self-assessment Quiz](#)

www.mind.org.uk

www.rethink.org

www.anxietyuk.org.uk

[Hertfordshire Healthy Hubs](#)

[MIND- Taking care of your staff](#)

Bipolar

A condition which affects an individual's ability to experience a 'normal' range of mood. With Bipolar people can experience periods marked by episodes of both depression and mania. There isn't a set pattern for an individual. Also known as 'manic depression' it is marked by intense fluctuations in mood, thought, behaviour and energy.

During an episode marked by depression individuals with Bipolar may experience the following traits: tiredness, lack of appetite, low confidence, hopelessness, feeling numb and low energy, worry, lack of motivation, even unexplained aches and pains.

During an episode marked by mania, individuals with Bipolar may experience the following traits: Hyperactivity, problems with sleeping, reckless spending, over confidence, neglect, feel agitated or even irritated and distraction.

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Promote and deliver a culture of Mental Health wellbeing in the organisation by displaying leaflets on boards, info on intranet pages, Employment Assistance Programme, Anti-bullying policies, encouraging healthy eating and healthy menu choices in the canteen, mental wellbeing training for managers and staff and openly discussing mental wellbeing as an organisation
- Appoint a 'Mental Health Champion' by teams/departments
- Offer Flexi Working/Hybrid working and allow time off for any medical appointments

Retention

- Find out about individual's support needs at work and ensure these are reviewed regularly.
- Look out for signals of bipolar conditions worsening. For example feeling extremely low, struggling with concentration, full of energy, over confidence, agitation and irritation.
- Offer positive feedback and celebrate success (during 'low' episodes)
- Minimise work changes and limit pressure on deadlines.
- Be conscious and diplomatic in the language you use to not trivialise what they are experiencing
- Identify and avoid potential workplace activities that may trigger their depression
- Allocate a "MH buddy" to support and act as an emergency contact if the individual is going through a critical episode
- Where possible, make work tasks as 'physical' as possible. Particularly for individuals going through a 'low episode'.
- If the MH conditions are affecting the individual's ability to perform at work, support can be provided by the Access to Work scheme

Further reading, Links

[https://www.bipolaruk.org-Employers guide to bipolar at work](https://www.bipolaruk.org-Employers%20guide%20to%20bipolar%20at%20work)

www.mind.org.uk

www.rethink.org

[Hertfordshire Healthy Hubs](#)



Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD))

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is a form of anxiety disorders characterised by various obsessions and compulsions. When these traits start affecting people's daily life that is when one will suffer from OCD.

Although OCD affects everyone in different ways the ritual is usually Obsession (which repeatedly enters the mind), Anxiety (the obsession causes an increase in Anxiety), Compulsion (repetitive behaviours or thoughts caused by the obsession) Temporary Relief- once the compulsive behaviour has been carried out, individuals will have a temporarily relief of anxiety which is shortly lived as the Obsession soon returns and the cycle starts again.

Individuals with OCD may experience the following traits: tidying items in a certain way, checking gas, windows, taps, doors before leaving the house, cleaning repeatedly, checking items, clothes and possessions for fear of contamination, counting, repetition of words, phrases and numbers

Things you can do

Recruitment

- Join the DCS and display your Disability Confident membership – this will encourage potential candidates with poor mental health to apply for roles at your organisation
- Prevent rather than resolve - establish a culture of Mental Health Wellness in the organisation - let this be seen in your recruitment/web pages
- Engage with a supported employment provider for advice and guidance in relation to the recruitment process
- If the candidate has obtained an interview, personally call them and introduce yourself and be welcoming and supportive
- If the individual has declared their condition, discuss the adjustments needed at the interview Consider offering a quieter location, seating positions, reduced panel, good room temperature
- If needed, allow a job coach/advisor to accompany the candidate to the interview
- Look out of signs of distress during the interviews and offer a break if needed.
- For those candidates with MH who are bipolar, employers need to understand it is a fluctuating condition- the impression candidates may give during the interview may not reflect how they will perform at work- consider “Working Interviews” as an alternative

Recruitment (continued)

- Promote and deliver a culture of Mental Health wellbeing in the organisation by displaying leaflets on boards, info on intranet pages, Employment Assistance Programme, Anti-bullying policies, encouraging healthy eating and healthy menu choices in the canteen, mental well being training for managers and staff and openly discussing mental wellbeing as an organisation
- Appoint a ‘Mental Health Champion’ by teams/departments.
- Offer Flexi Working/Hybrid working and allow time off for any medical appointments.
- Find out about individual’s support needs at work and ensure these are reviewed regularly.
- Look out for signals of MH conditions worsening.
- Offer positive feedback and celebrate success

Retention

- Minimise work changes and limit pressure on deadlines.
- Be conscious and diplomatic in the language you use to not trivialise what they are experiencing
- Identify and avoid potential workplace activities that may trigger the MH condition. For instance asking to present to the team
- Allocate a “MH buddy” to support and act as an emergency contact if the individual is going through a critical episode.
- Where possible, make work tasks as ‘physical’ as possible. Particularly for individuals with a depression condition.
- If the MH conditions are affecting the individual’s ability to perform at work, support can be provided by the Access to Work scheme.

Further reading, Links

[NHS Depression and Anxiety. Self-assessment Quiz](#)

www.mind.org.uk

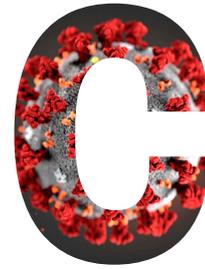
www.rethink.org

www.anxietyuk.org.uk

[Hertfordshire Healthy Hubs](#)

[MIND- Taking care of your staff](#)

Long Covid



An individual is said to be suffering with Long Covid when they experience symptoms associated with Covid 19 which last longer than 12 weeks. Among many, the most common Long Covid symptoms are extreme tiredness (fatigue), shortness of breath, loss of smell and muscle aches.

Long Covid is defined as 'signs and symptoms that develop during or following an infection consistent with Covid-19 which continue for more than 12 weeks and are not explained by an alternative diagnosis'. Everyone's experience of long Covid is unique to the person. Symptoms are usually unpredictable and fluctuate over time. An employee can have a time of recovery followed by a sudden relapse and on occasions with new symptoms.

Reported symptoms associated with long Covid include:

- Fatigue, Breathlessness, Brainfog, Chest pain,
- Short Term Memory loss, Headaches, Sore throat
- Vertigo, Muscle pain, Loss of taste/smell
- Menstrual changes/ early Menstrual cycle
- Depression/ anxiety , high blood pressure

Recruitment

- Apply for and display your Disability Confident membership – use logo on recruitment pages to demonstrate your commitment to being inclusive.
- Establish a culture of health and wellbeing and ensure this is visible on your organisation's website and recruitment pages.
- If you are an SMEs organisation in Hertfordshire, consider joining the <https://www.hertshealthyworkplace.org.uk/>
- If a candidate discloses having Long Covid on their application, discuss the reasonable adjustment needed for their interview (this may vary according to their symptoms)

Retention

Supporting employee's health and wellbeing is the right thing to do and part of ensuring that people feel safe and valued at work. If the employee is given support to manage their condition, they are more likely to perform at their best at work.

Access to Work Scheme

Access to Work is a publicly funded employment support grant scheme that aims to support disabled people start or stay in work. It can provide practical and financial support for people who have a disability or long term physical or mental health condition. Support can be provided where someone needs support or adaptations beyond reasonable adjustments.

An Access to Work grant can pay for practical support to enable your employee to start or stay in work, or to support an individual if you are self-employed.

How can it help employers?

Access to Work can support employers to:

- hire disabled people with the skills you need
- retain an employee who develops a disability or long term condition (keeping their valuable skills and saving both time and money recruiting a replacement)
- show that you value and will support your employees by having good employment policies and practices
- Your employee can get support with the extra costs of working they may have because of their disability or long term health condition, for example:
 - aid and equipment in the workplace
 - adapting equipment to make it easier for them to use
 - money towards any extra travel costs to and from work if they cannot use available public transport
 - money towards any extra travel costs for travel costs within work
- an interpreter or other support at a job interview where there are difficulties in communicating
- A wide variety of support workers
- the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service
- other practical help at work, such as a job coach or a sign language interpreter



Access to Work
Making work possible

Access to Work (continued)

If your staff member has a mental health condition, they will be offered assistance to develop a support plan. This may include steps to support them remaining in or returning to work and suggestions for reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

- Examples of assistance to develop a support plan:
- flexible working patterns to accommodate changes in mood and impact of medication
- providing a mentor to give additional support at work
- arranging additional time to complete certain tasks
- providing additional training
- regular meetings between you and your employee to talk about their concerns
- a phased return to work, such as reduced hours or less days
- Access to Work does not provide the support itself, but provides a grant to reimburse the agreed cost of the support that is needed.

Who can get Access to Work?

To be eligible for support, a person must:

- have a disability or long-term health condition that means they need an aid, adaptation or financial or human support to do their job or have a mental health condition and need support in work
- be 16 or over
- be in, or about to start, paid employment, including self-employment
- not be claiming Incapacity Benefit or Employment Support Allowance once they are in work
- A workplace can include an individual's home if they work from there for some or all of the time.
- Access to Work funding is not affected by how much an individual earns. Any Access to Work funding granted does not affect benefits and does not need to be paid back.

How to apply

Individuals can check if they are eligible via the link and then apply for an Access to Work grant.

<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply>

Access to Work Plus

The **Access to Work Plus** employer element has two funding strands:

- A workplace adjustment strand which provides a one-off payment for adaptations the employer has made to the working environment up to £1,000 to enable the disabled employee to work, and/or
- A job role strand if the employer shapes or flexes the job role to enable the disabled employee to work. The total yearly amount of funding available is £3,000. The £3,000 is banded to reflect the number of hours the employee works per week. The banded working hours and funding available are as follows:
 - £1,000 for 7-15 hours worked per week,
 - £2,000 for 16-23 hours worked per week,
 - £3,000 for 24+ hours worked per week.

The employer element can be combined with the enhanced personal element or paid independently. The maximum amount of in-work support, a disabled employee can receive is £66,000 per year. This funding can be provided by the existing **Access to Work** scheme, **Access to Work Plus** or a combination of both.

Introducing a new Access to Work offer for employers

If the employer opens up an employment opportunity, funding is available for the employer and the disabled employee to try out the job role ahead of starting employment.

To ensure the employer has the correct adaptations in place and that the job is correctly shaped **Access to Work Plus** will fund 8 weeks enhanced support for the disabled employee. Providing 8 weeks work experience will enable disabled person to try out the job role to build confidence, ensure their disability needs can be accommodated and provide financial security, as the disabled employee will be able to remain on benefits during the work experience period.

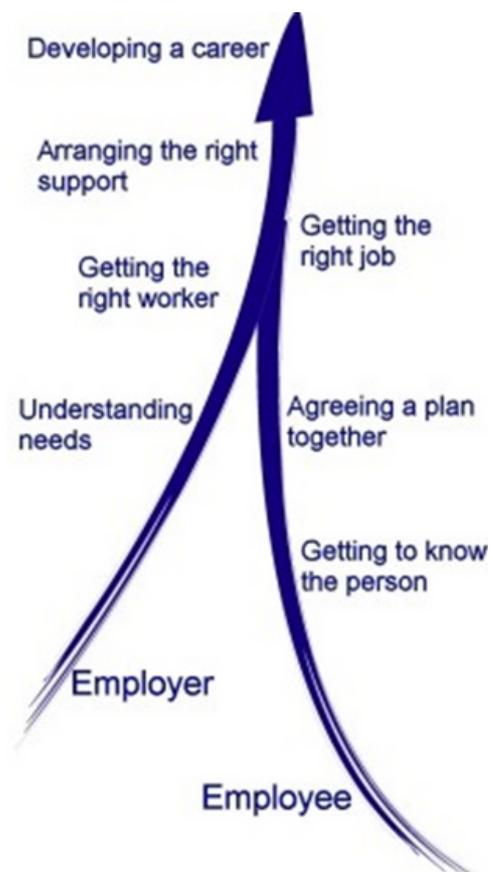
The Supported Employment Model

The Inclusive Employment Project has been designed using the Supported Employment model. Supported employment is a very personalised approach to matching the right person to the right job. Employers are seen as key customers for supported employment services because without them, there would be no jobs! The aim of our members is to successfully place someone into sustainable work which involves working closely with the jobseeker and the employer.

The Supported Employment model works on the premise that anyone can become employed if they are motivated, given the right job and the right support; Supported employment is a flexible and continuous process, designed to make this happen. BASE members regard employers as key customers of their services and there is a strong business case for employing a diverse workforce, as many companies have discovered. The model is equally applicable to supporting job retention.

There are 5 key elements:

1. Customer engagement and vocational profiling
2. Employer engagement
3. Job Matching
4. In-work Support
5. Career development



Disability Confident Scheme



The Disability Confident Campaign is creating a movement of change, encouraging employers to think differently about disability and take action to improve how they recruit, retain and develop disabled employees. Step2Skills are taking an active role in supporting businesses and organisations to sign up to the scheme which will create a more inclusive and diverse workforce in our county.

The scheme helps employers recruit and retain great people and helps:

- Challenge attitudes and increase understanding of disability
- Draw from the widest possible pool of talent
- Secure high-quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hard working
- Improve employee morale and commitment by demonstrating fair treatment
- Identify those employers who are committed to inclusion and diversity in the workplace

1.The scheme is easy and free to join; sign up online <https://disabilityconfident.dwp.gov.uk/> and membership can be renewed after three years (opportunity to progress to a higher level during the 3 years)

2.You will have access to guidance and support associated with the recruitment and retention of disabled staff such as workplace adjustments, impairment-specific information and peer support groups on social media

3.Extra funding to help cover additional costs of supporting employees with disabilities.

<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

4.Webinars, workshops, case studies and videos on key topics such as mental health.

5.An accreditation certificate and Disability Confident Logo which can be used on your recruitment pages and website. These can act as a great sign in the community that your organisation is inclusive and actively committed to recruiting fairly.

If you would like to register or find out a bit more about the scheme and how it can help your business, please get in touch with Step2Skills, either

Anne Tinker Anne.Tinker@hertfordshire.gov.uk or

Georgina De-Allie Georgina.De-Allie@hertfordshire.gov.uk