



Looking Beyond Labels

**Widening the Employment Opportunities for
Disabled People in the New NHS**

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Foreword



The Government believes disabled people should be able to participate fully in society and live as independently as possible. For most people of working age the chance to get and keep a job is central to their independence and participation in society. The same should be true for disabled people.

The NHS is already contributing to this challenging agenda. There are many examples of good practice in its approach to the employment of disabled people, but some disabled people are still not getting a fair deal when it comes to recruitment, retention and career advancement.

The Disability Discrimination Act has given disabled people new and important safeguards in the field of employment. The Act is only a legal minimum. There are very good social and business reasons why NHS employers need to consider going beyond the requirements of the Act. They don't just need to ensure that they do not discriminate against disabled people; they need to develop and sustain good equal opportunities practices, which will enable disabled people to gain NHS jobs and to retain their active mainstream employment. As the largest employer in the country, the NHS cannot duck its responsibility to turn this vision into a reality for the disabled workforce.

The NHS needs the best staff to deliver the best possible service to patients. Employers are missing out on a huge pool of talent if they do not widen their net to include those groups who are under-represented in the workforce. Some employers are already facing skill shortages. More will do so and will need to make better use of untapped talent, including disabled people.

Offering more and better employment opportunities to disabled people brings other benefits too. Tackling inequalities and improving the health and well being of the population are central to the Government's programme of modernisation for the service. But these goals can only be achieved if we have a workforce that is closer to its communities. Such diversity will reassure users that they will be better understood and will get the services that they need, whilst bringing a new and fresher perspective to service delivery.

The employment opportunities for disabled people can -and will- only get better if they are given the opportunity to show what they can do. This is why we have produced this guide to help you to recruit and retain disabled staff. I see this guide as a useful tool for all those working to improve practice in this area.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Denham". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

John Denham, Minister of State for Health

Acknowledgements

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Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 The NHS is not just a provider of services; it is also the largest employer in the country. Just as there must be a strategy to ensure that disabled patients have good access to high quality services, it is also important that a strategic approach is taken to remove the barriers to the employment of disabled people at all levels within the NHS. It must be remembered that disabled people are employees first and foremost and their disability is secondary. Employees and job applicants need to experience equality of opportunity and be welcomed as part of a diverse workforce.
- 1.2 Whenever human resources policies and strategies are being developed, the disability dimension must be considered. Good employment practices like flexible working, individual development programmes and effective communication strategies should all promote fairness, and ensure that disabled people also have opportunities for development and training.
- 1.3 The aim of this guide is to highlight areas of best practice for your organisation to consider in the employment of disabled people. It looks at how you can ensure that disabled people receive fair treatment, in all aspects of employment, and how you can harness the strengths and abilities many disabled people can offer, to build an inclusive approach to employment that will benefit both your employees and your organisation.
- 1.4 It does not pretend to be comprehensive and does not set out to be a detailed guide to the Disability Discrimination Act. It will point you in the right direction in complying with the requirements of the Act, but more importantly, will help you work towards best practice in the employment of disabled people.

Section 2: Policy context

Wider developments

- 2.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was the first attempt by the British Government to legislate against the discrimination faced by disabled people (see section 3 for more information). The employment provisions, in particular, marked an important step forward by providing disabled people with significant rights. But there are acknowledged gaps and weaknesses in the Act which have meant that disabled people have not enjoyed the same protection afforded by sex and race legislation.
- 2.2 The Government's manifesto included a commitment to establish "*enforceable civil rights for disabled people against discrimination in society or at work, developed in partnership with all interested parties*". In this respect, it established a Ministerial Task Force which has considered the full range of issues that affect a disabled person and has advised on what further action the Government needs to take. Its first task was to set up the Disability Rights Commission, which provides disabled people with an effective mechanism to assert their rights. The Commission also works with employers and service providers to ensure equal treatment for disabled people.
- 2.3 In recent years there has been a number of other significant developments aimed at reducing inequality and discrimination more generally. The various New Deals (see below), the work of the Social Exclusion Unit and the Better Regulation Task Force's Review of Anti-Discrimination Legislation have all sought to achieve greater inclusiveness and integration for marginalised sectors of society. In addition, the publication of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report of an inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny in February 1999, which highlighted the damaging effects of institutional racism, will impact on how the public sector responds to equality and diversity more generally.

Developments in the NHS

- 2.4 Tackling discrimination and inequality is a key commitment in the Government's drive to modernise health services. However, it would not be possible to tackle discrimination in service delivery without first ensuring that the workforce reflects the community it serves, and is educated and equipped to respond effectively to diversity.

- 2.5 “*Working Together*”, the first human resources framework for the NHS reiterates the Government’s commitment to equality of opportunity by setting a number of priority areas for local action, including equality in the workplace and achieving a more representative workforce.
- 2.6 Flexibility in working patterns plays an essential part in developing the quality workforce that the NHS needs and *Working Together* sets particular targets in this area which NHS employers will have to meet. In helping them meet these targets we have launched the “*Working Lives*” resource pack and the “*Improving Working Lives Campaign*” which will make a real difference to improving the working lives of NHS staff – enabling them to balance their commitments both inside and outside work.
- 2.7 Major programmes are also underway to help ensure that the NHS workforce reflects the diversity of the communities it serves. The “*Positively Diverse*” programme, for example, is a service-wide development programme to encourage the recruitment and development of staff from local communities.
- 2.8 As part of the implementation of *Working Together*, an equalities framework for the NHS *The Vital Connection* was launched on 6th April 2000, helping to secure the mainstreaming of equality and diversity within the NHS. It commits NHS employers to take action to deliver on the Government’s commitments on equality and social inclusion and to demonstrate that they have done so. This means that the activities of your organisation, and how you respond to equality and diversity, will be under constant review through the mainstream NHS performance framework. The Vital Connection sets a target that each local employer should meet the criteria to use Employment Services Disability Symbol *Two Ticks* by April 2001.

Welfare to Work and the New Deal for disabled people

- 2.9 A key aim of Government policy is to enable disabled people to make the most of their talents and abilities at work and in wider society. “*Welfare to Work*” is the Government’s overall policy framework and programme for reform of the welfare state. It is committed to increasing incentives and opportunities for people who want to work, and to help people who cannot. Part of this programme is the “*New Deal*” which aims to help particularly disadvantaged groups back into employment. As Health Minister, Alan Milburn wrote to all NHS Trusts and Health Authorities encouraging their participation in the scheme, which offers employers a streamlined system for filling vacancies and a financial subsidy for each employee under the scheme.

- 2.10 The New Deal for Jobseekers with Disabilities is helping people in receipt of Jobseekers allowance that have a disability or health condition. Disabled people do not have to have been unemployed for six months to gain access to New Deal help (if aged between 18 and 24. The qualifying period for those aged 25 and over is 12 months).
- 2.11 In addition, the New Deal for the Disabled is being piloted in some areas to help people claiming Incapacity Benefits to get into work. Personal Advisers have been provided in these areas to work with disabled people to help them gain employment and help employers retain disabled people.
- 2.12 The results of these pilots have been encouraging – having been able to place a number of severely disabled people, who have been out of the job market for many years, into employment. Further consideration is being given to developing a national service.
- 2.13 As the largest employer in the country, the NHS is well placed to both contribute and gain from the New Deal. As an employer, it's a chance for your organisation to recruit job seekers, which are motivated, committed and prepared for work. It also provides an ideal opportunity for you to demonstrate your commitment to the wider needs of the community you serve by providing access to work and a career in the NHS for those sections of the local population who might be currently under-represented in your workforce.
- 2.14 For more details about the New Deal:
- Access the New Deal website at <http://www.newdeal.gov.uk>
 - See your local Disability Employment Advisor (DEA) or Employment Service Advisor
 - Ring the New Deal Hotline on 0800 163 339

The General Whitley Council Handbook also provides further guidance on the employment conditions for participants working in the NHS¹.

¹ Advance Letter (GC) 2/98. Section 43 of the General Whitley Council Handbook: A national statement on the participation of NHS employers in the New Deal Welfare to Work programme

Section 3: The legal position

This section is not intended as a comprehensive legal guide and should not be treated as one. If in doubt about any of the areas covered, you should seek further advice.

Introduction

- 3.1 The employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) came into force at the end of 1996. The Act gives disabled people new rights in the field of employment. Under the Act it is unlawful for any employer to treat a disabled person less favourably than someone else because of his or her disability, and they cannot show that there is good reason. This applies to all employment matters including recruitment, promotion, development and training, retirement and dismissal.

Future changes to legislation

- 3.2 The Disability Rights Taskforce has been advising the Government on how to meet its manifesto commitment to secure comprehensive and enforceable civil rights for disabled people. In addition to a number of non-legislative measures and issues for the Disability Rights Commission to take forward, the Taskforce's report² contains a number of recommendations that address the recognised weaknesses in the Act. These include major extensions to the coverage of the Act and refinements to its detail, particularly on issues around the definition of disability (*see below for more information*). At the time of writing this Guide the Government had not yet formally responded to the Taskforce's recommendations. It is likely, however, that the changes will be made to legislation in the foreseeable future.

Definition of disability

- 3.3 According to the Act, a disabled person is currently someone who:
- has a physical or mental impairment;
 - the impairment has an adverse and substantial effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities;

² "From Exclusion to Inclusion" – Report of the Disability Rights Taskforce. December 1999.

- the effect of the impairment is long term.
- 3.4 The Act also prohibits discrimination against people who have had a disability as defined by the Act in the past, but no longer do so.
- 3.5 Physical or mental impairments are not defined in the Act but examples of conditions covered include:
- Physical impairments: diabetes; epilepsy; multiple sclerosis; cancer, cerebral palsy; heart disease.
 - Mental impairments: schizophrenia; dyslexia; bi-polar disorder (manic depression); learning disabilities.

Sensory impairments, such as blindness, having partial sight or hearing loss are also included within “physical and mental impairments”

- 3.6 The Disability Rights Taskforce has proposed a number of changes to the definition of disability that, if adopted, will afford better protection to those currently covered, or not covered by the Act. These include extending the Act to cover both people with HIV from diagnosis, and cancer when it has significant consequences on their lives.

Justification of less favourable treatment

- 3.7 The Act states that less favourable treatment of a disabled person for a reason relating to his or her disability is justified only if the reasons for the treatment are both “material” to the circumstances of the particular case (i.e. significant and relevant) and substantial (i.e. more than minor or trivial). It is unlikely that less favourable treatment will be justified unless it directly relates to the ability of the individual concerned to do the tasks required by the job. For example:

A decision not to recruit a person with multiple sclerosis, following a skills assessment, *may be justified* if a significant deterioration in performance as a result of the disability is expected.

- 3.8 Conversely:

A decision not to recruit a person with a mental health problem, on the basis that other employees would feel uncomfortable working with her would not be justified.

- 3.9 The practice of blanket exclusions, that is excluding people with certain types of disability from certain jobs, may amount to discrimination and will need to be justified in each individual case.

A Trust, which is split over several sites, excludes someone from an estates job, which involves driving between, sites because of his epilepsy. The job, in practice, only requires a standard license and normal insurance cover. The person in question has such a license and the trust would be able to obtain such cover. The trust will probably have discriminated against him if they excluded him from consideration.

Reasonable adjustments

- 3.10 Employers also have a duty to look at what changes, or reasonable adjustments, they could make to the workplace or the way the work is done which would overcome the effects of the disability. Not to do so is classed as discrimination under the Act.
- 3.11 It is not the responsibility of the disabled person to tell the employer what needs to be done. It is the employer's responsibility to find out what is needed. An employer cannot seek to justify less favourable treatment unless they have addressed their duty to make reasonable adjustments.

A porter, who relies on an audible pager to be kept informed about his duties, suffers hearing loss. It would be reasonable to expect his employer to replace the audible pager with one that vibrates or carries a visible message before any alternative, which could result in the porter losing his job.

Reasonable adjustments are covered in more detail in **Section 6**, which deals with **retention**.

Scope of the Act

- 3.12 The Act is intended to cover all members of staff, full or part-time, contract workers – whether they are hired from an employment agency or are self-employed. Employers with less than 15 members of staff (individuals not posts), for example many General Practices, are exempt from the Act. Employers with fewer than 15 employees should, however, make reasonable efforts as far as possible to address the spirit of the law and to meet the obligations placed on larger employers by the Act.
- 3.13 The Disability Rights Taskforce have proposed that the employment provisions should extend to all employers, irrespective of their size.

Section 4: Employing disabled people – The need for action

Some facts and figures³

- More than 6 million British adults are disabled – **18%** of the working age population.
- The economic activity rate for disabled people is around **51%** as compared with **85%** for non-disabled people.
- There are **2.9 million** disabled people in employment – an employment rate of **46%**. This compares with a rate of 80% for non-disabled people.
- The unemployment rate for disabled people is nearly twice that for others of working age (**11%** as compared with **6%**).
- People with mental health problems or learning difficulties experience much higher unemployment rates (**over 20%**) than people with other types of disability.
- Nearly two fifths (**38%**) of unemployed disabled people have been unemployed for at least a year, compared with **26%** of the non-disabled.
- Almost half, (**41%**) of those who were economically inactive are disabled.

4.1 As these figures illustrate, there is little doubt that disabled people are disadvantaged in the job market.

4.2 Despite campaigns of persuasion over many years, and the introduction of the DDA, there still remain deep-seated assumptions and anxieties amongst some employers about the employability of disabled people. Many assume that they will not be able to perform adequately at work or have low expectations of what a disabled person could offer their organisation. Some suggest that other staff members may feel uncomfortable working alongside a disabled colleague. Others equate disability with ill health and increased sickness absence levels. They may also cite issues around physical access as a reason for not employing disabled people, even when no special provision is needed.

3 Winter 1998/99 Labour Force Survey

- 4.3 Contrary to the myths and stereotypical attitudes many employers hold about disabled people, their integration into mainstream employment is feasible, in all kinds of jobs and at all levels. In a properly adapted workplace disabled employees will be able to offer the same range of skills, abilities and personal qualities as their non-disabled peers. The number and size of adjustments that are required is often very limited. For example, a survey by the Department for Education and Employment⁴ found that only one in ten disabled people needed any adaptations to get into a building or to use facilities at work. Those who did generally required only minor modifications to equipment or premises or some kind of flexible working arrangement. Experience shows that co-workers can be often very supportive of their disabled colleagues. Finally, as far as sickness absence levels are concerned, research by major companies such as DuPont shows that disabled people, more often than not, have exemplary attendance records.

Equality diversity and quality

- 4.4 The business case for pursuing good practice in the employment of disabled people is overwhelming, particularly for the NHS with its ambitions to improve health by increasing fairness and reducing inequalities. The following sub-headings demonstrate why having a working environment that promotes diversity can bring positive benefits to your organisation.

- **Using people's talents to the full**

Most disabled people become so during their working lives. By retaining someone who becomes disabled rather than letting them go, lets you keep their skills and experience and so avoid the cost and inconvenience of replacing them.

Disabled people have as wide a range of talents as the rest of society. Some develop new skills in response to life as a disabled person, such as organisational skills from juggling care needs. These are often overlooked and good practice can help you capitalise on them.

- **Ensuring that selection decisions and policies are based on objective criteria, and not on unlawful discrimination, prejudice or unfair assumptions**

Good practice is the only way in which an organisation can hope to avoid the pitfalls of unlawful discrimination. To try purely for compliance will waste time and money. By becoming an employer of choice you will be able to maximise your opportunity to recruit and retain staff from the widest possible labour market. This will help you ensure that you do not miss the best person for the job. In areas where there are skill shortages, and as demographic changes lead to a reduced pool of potential employees, this is a significant advantage.

⁴ "Employment of Disabled people: Assessing the Extent of Participation". DfEE July 1998.

- **Getting closer to customers and understanding their needs**

A representative workforce will enable you to relate with confidence to the needs and expectations of your patients and service users. Disabled people can help inform the development of good practice for patients and working with disabled people can help other staff who work with disabled patients.

- **Making the organisation more attractive to investors**

Partnerships with other organisations are a significant feature of these times. A wide variety of sources of finance and other resources have to be explored and a positive approach to disabled people can make an organisation a more attractive proposition.

- **Making the organisation more attractive to customers and clients**

Your reputation within the local community will be enhanced, as you will be recognised both as a good employer and service provider. People will see your positive attitude towards disabled people and this, in turn, can help them feel more positive towards the organisation.

- **Avoiding the cost of discrimination**

As well as all the other reasons for good practice there is now legislation which outlaws discrimination. The actual expense of being taken to an employment tribunal is not the only cost consideration. You also need to consider the cost to your organisation of adverse publicity and low staff morale.

Section 5: Making a commitment to widening employment opportunities

Why does it matter?

- 5.1 If your organisation has made a commitment to improve its employment policies with regard to disabled people, it will only work if this commitment extends throughout the organisation. Fair and equal access to employment opportunities does not happen by chance but requires the needs and potential of all employees (including those who are disabled) to be considered by all staff.
- 5.2 Changes in attitudes usually have their foundation in a written equal opportunities policy. It is important that your organisation encourages all staff – not just those who are disabled – to become involved in its formulation as this will encourage ownership and a change in culture.
- 5.3 Disability issues need to be recognised as everybody's business within the NHS. However, unless Boards and senior managers are giving the lead on these, there is a risk that they will never achieve the priority required. If equality and diversity are shown to be top level priorities, it is more likely that words will be translated into action.

Going public

- 5.4 It is important that you publicise your commitment to working towards best practice in employing disabled people. This will help inform disabled people who are considering applying for a job with your organisation and will indicate to the wider public your commitment to equal opportunities for all.
- 5.5 Going public can be achieved through:
 - **Recruitment literature; the Annual Report or advertising**

In attracting disabled people through these methods, the way in which you publicise your organisation will be crucial. You will need to make it clear that you welcome disabled people. Written material needs to be clear and positive. If you use photographs or illustrations in your publications and printed material ensure that you include pictures of disabled people in positive and active situations. At all costs avoid using stereotypes, for example disabled people as objects of pity.

- **Establishing networks with other organisations, both locally and nationally, joining the Employers' Forum on Disability**

There are a number of local networks of employers who have come together to provide a forum for debate and communication to develop new ideas and influence local service providers. The Employers' Forum on Disability (EFD) (*also see sources of help*), is recognised as the authoritative UK employers' voice on disability. It brings together employers and other stakeholders to share best practice; provide guidance and advice; set standards for employer policy and practice; and to facilitate employer input into policy development.

- **Use of the Employment Services Disability Symbol**

You should work with your local Disability Employment Adviser to qualify to use the Employment Service's Disability Symbol (or "Two Ticks" symbol). The symbol has been developed so those employers can show their commitment to good practice in employing disabled people.

The disability symbol

Employers who use the symbol make these five commitments:

- ✓ To interview all disabled job applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy, and consider them on their abilities.
- ✓ To ask disabled employees, at least once a year, what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities at work.
- ✓ To make every effort to keep staff in their jobs should they become disabled.
- ✓ To ensure that key employees develop the awareness needed to make the commitments work.
- ✓ To review these commitments annually, to plan improvement and to tell all employees about achievement and future plans.

Once eligible, employers can use the symbol on recruitment literature, letterheads and stationary, internal magazines and on publicity materials.

When you feel your organisation is able to meet the symbol's commitments, you should seek the advice of your local Disability Employment Adviser (DEA). When the DEA successfully assesses you they will add your name to their register of local symbol users. DEAs are based at local job centres and are listed in the phone directory under "Employment Service".

Making a commitment – checklist

- ✓ Does your organisation have an Equal Opportunities Policy, or Diversity statement, and does that policy specifically refer to disability?
- ✓ Is your policy communicated to all staff? Have they been involved in its formulation?
- ✓ Is your policy well advertised? And to whom?
- ✓ Is progress in equal opportunities reviewed regularly by your Board and senior management?
- ✓ Are you a user of the Positive about Disabled symbol?

Section 6: Staff retention – Keeping newly disabled staff working in the health service

Introduction

- 6.1 Whilst some people are born with disabilities, or acquire them during childhood or adolescence, the majority – approximately 70% – will have become disabled during adulthood and whilst in work.
- 6.2 With advances in technology, increased opportunities for part-time working and more positive attitudes, disabled people, even those with severe disabilities should have a much better chance of continuing to work within their chosen career. However, despite these improvements, some employers invariably view medical retirement as the only option when staff become disabled.
- 6.3 If a newly disabled employee wishes to remain in the same or a similar job you should, wherever possible, aim to retain them. Retirement on ill-health grounds can be expensive for the employer and its cost will not just be in financial terms either. Losing the services of disabled employees will also deprive you of their skills, experience and commitment. The resulting drop in income, difficulties in finding new employment and a loss of self-worth can make ill-health retirement an unsatisfactory experience for the employee too.
- 6.4 Employees who develop a condition that begins to affect their competence are often unwilling, or unable, to admit or accept its implications as far as their job is concerned. It is therefore of utmost importance that all employees know that it is your organisation's policy to retain them if at all possible if they become disabled. This can avoid a lot of anxiety on their behalf and show that your organisation values its employees. Flexibility in absence and leave policies can help in these circumstances.

Making reasonable adjustments

- 6.5 Under the DDA, employers must make reasonable changes both to the workplace and to the employment arrangements so that a disabled person is not at any substantial disadvantage in comparison with their non-disabled colleagues. The obligation to make a reasonable adjustment applies not only when a disabled person applies for a job but when:
 - a member of staff becomes disabled;

- an existing employee's impairment or medical condition deteriorates;
- there is a change in the duties of, or location of, a disabled employee;
- a disabled employee requires further training.

6.6 You do not have to make an adjustment if:

- the disabled person experiences only a minor disadvantage;
- you do not know that a person has a disability and it is reasonable that you do not know;
- the type of adjustment that is required to overcome the disadvantage is not reasonable.

6.7 The DDA lists a number of factors that may have a bearing on whether it will be reasonable to make a particular adjustment. These are:

- **How effective the adjustment will be in preventing the disadvantage**

It may not be reasonable to make an adjustment that would only afford a small improvement to the productivity of the employee in question.

- **How practicable the adjustment is**

For example, where an adjustment would mean re-allocating some of the disabled person's duties, this may not be practical in a small team if the other employee was, for whatever reason, not at work and alternative cover would be difficult to arrange.

- **The reasonableness of the financial and other costs of the adjustment and how disruptive the adjustment would be to the employer's activities**

It would be reasonable for an employer to spend at least as much on making an adjustment than what would be needed to recruit and train a replacement.

- **The size of the employer's financial and other resources**

Larger and more affluent organisations will be expected to be more flexible in making adjustments and to make more expensive ones. Because of the size and resources of many health service employers, they will be expected to go to considerable lengths to accommodate disabled workers.

- **Financial or other assistance available to the employer**

The availability of assistance, for example the Access to Work scheme, could make an adjustment “reasonable” which may otherwise be too costly for the employer to make.

6.8 The refusal to make a reasonable adjustment is a critical point where the possibility of discrimination, or at least negative publicity, may arise. It is important that, although anyone should be able to agree an adjustment, you are clear at what management level a refusal is given. In some commercial organisations, IBM for example, this is at a very senior level.

6.9 The type of adjustments you may need to make will range from adjustments which extend only to the individual concerned, for example altering the content or hours of a job, to more wider-ranging changes such as improvements to access to premises. The DDA lists a number of adjustments that may be reasonable for an employer to make:

- **Making adjustments to premises**

You might need to make alterations to the place of work, such as providing car parking, installing a ramp, widening a door, lowering door handles and light switches, improving lighting and redesigning signs. Adjustments which make a building more accessible for disabled people will benefit public and staff, disabled and the non-disabled alike.

Automatic doors were installed at the entrance to a local health clinic. This made it easier for people with mobility impairments and parents with pushchairs to enter and leave the clinic.

Improvements to lighting and signage and efforts to reduce background noise in an open plan office not only benefited visually and hearing impaired members of staff, but also improved the working environment for all members of staff.

- **Allocating some of the duties of the disabled person to another person**

In many cases changes can be made to the job so that a disabled person can perform it. Often this may be possible by giving another employee the duties the disabled person cannot do.

The filing duties of a *wheelchair user* medical records clerk are transferred to someone who enjoys filing. The disabled employee is then free to do other duties in return.

Or combining the elements of a number of different jobs to suit someone who is unable to do the tasks required by a specific post.

An administrative assistant, whose back problems prevent him from sitting for more than a few hours at a time, is offered a variety of different work activities.

- **Altering Working Hours**

The effect of a person's disability may not necessarily require that the job is changed and it may be more appropriate to review, in full consultation with the employee concerned, how the work is organised. It may be necessary to reduce the hours, temporarily or otherwise, of a disabled employee who finds work tiring. Employees with certain types of condition may need to take more rest breaks, or breaks for medication. Flexible contracts, where an employee is required to work a certain number of days each year, without specifying when these are, may help employees whose disability entails regular absences from work. Similarly flexi-time may help people with certain types of disability.

A finance director with a mental health problem takes medication, the side effects of which makes it difficult for him to be alert in the morning. He is able to start later in the day and work flexi-time.

It may be the journey to work that is causing difficulties and in cases such as these a flexi-time arrangement may, again, be the best solution.

The clinics of a Registrar with Crohns Disease are rescheduled to avoid the delays, and subsequent problems, peak time travel would bring.

- **Assigning the disabled person to a different place of work**

The location of the post, or conditions of the work environment, may pose particular problems for a disabled employee and sometimes this may necessitate a move to a different site or work station. Again this must always be decided upon in full consultation with the employee concerned.

A nursing assistant develops a disability, which affects her mobility and means she has to rely on public transport. She is moved to a Community Unit, which is nearer a main bus route.

A clerical officer who was experiencing problems with continence is relocated to a more private office which meant that her frequent absences were less obvious to colleagues, and less embarrassing for her.

- **Allowing absence during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment**

If a person becomes disabled or the affect of their disability changes then, an employer may need to let them have time off to receive treatment. Where regular time off is required for treatment, and the amount of time off is not excessive, it is good practice not to count this as sick leave, or to expect it to be taken as annual leave or flexi leave.

A radiographer with cystic fibrosis is allowed time off on a regular basis for treatment. There is no requirement to take annual lave or to use flexi time to attend appointments. The time taken off is recorded as casual absence rather than being counted as sick leave.

- **Giving or arranging training**

This may be training to use a specific piece of equipment a disabled person needs to perform the job, or altering training which is designed for all employees so that a disabled member of staff is able to participate.

A team of computer operators is given training on a new machine. A visually impaired member of the team is given additional software so he can use a computer with speech output.

- **Acquiring or modifying equipment**

Often a disabled person may require special equipment in order to do a particular job. More usually, adjustments like these will relate to adaptations to office furniture, such as specially designed desks, or modifications to IT or other equipment that is necessary for the job.

A switchboard operator who has partial hearing loss is provided with a headset with an amplified receiver and volume control to overcome the difficulties.

A part-time receptionist with restricted growth in an outpatient' clinic is provided with an adapted base for a standard chair. This provided additional height and allowed her to carry out her job

Others may be of a completely different nature.

A psychiatric nurse with contact dermatitis is issued with special gloves to wear whilst he is working.

A nursing auxiliary with a hearing impairment is provided with a badge that says "lip reader please speak clearly".

- **Modifying instructions or reference manuals**

The way instructions are normally given to employees may need to be altered for disabled people. Formats of instructions may need to be modified (for example produced in Braille or provided on audiotape). Instructions for people with learning disabilities may need to be communicated orally with individual demonstration.

A finance officer with mild dyslexia is provided with financial instructions printed on blue paper.

- **Modifying procedures for testing or assessment**

Procedures for testing or assessing staff should not discriminate against disabled people.

Candidates for a management development scheme are expected to give a presentation as part of the selection process. A deaf candidate is able to give a presentation via a sign interpreter.

If it is not possible to administer a test in such a way that a disabled candidate will have an equal chance to compete, you must consider whether the test is relevant in determining the ability to perform a job. It may be more appropriate to administer an alternative test; accept a lower score or even waive the requirement of a test completely.

- **Providing an interpreter or reader**

Where the work involves interaction with other staff it may be necessary for people with certain disabilities, for example hearing loss, to be assisted by an interpreter to help with communication at work. In other situations, support workers will be able to help people with visual impairments to read.

A blind personnel manager is provided with someone to read to her hand-written applications.

- **Providing support**

Some disabilities may require a different approach to staff management and supervision. For example, a “buddy” may be provided until the disabled person has settled in

A person with learning difficulties is assigned someone to work alongside them to help them learn, and become confident in, the post of ward domestic.

- **Transferring the disabled person to fill an existing vacancy**

When a person becomes disabled and cannot, even with a reasonable adjustment, return to their job an employer may have to retrain them for another job.

A porter who develops multiple sclerosis and is unable to continue in the job is transferred to a vacant CCTV operator post for which he is given training.

6.10 Remember that disabled people are not a homogenous group – in fact there is probably more diversity amongst the disabled population than there is amongst the non-disabled. Collectively they may share similar experiences of barriers and discrimination but as individuals they will face different problems, as no two disabilities are exactly alike.

6.11 It is therefore always important that you consult on the nature of adjustment required. **Do not make assumptions.** Usually the best people advise and decide on what adjustments are required, including what special equipment may be needed, are the disabled employee and their line manager. Other team members may have helpful suggestions too. You may find that their suggestions are far easier to manage, and far more cost-effective, than you think!

- 6.12 Where suitable adjustments are difficult to identify, or hard to provide, you may need to ask for specialist help from Occupational Health specialists (OHS) or the local DEA. OHS can be used for a wide range of services – not just those connected with pre-employment checks. They should advise managers on workplace assessments and work with them to identify appropriate adjustments. They should act as advisors in sickness absence and medical retirement/termination decisions. It is therefore important that OHS understand the requirements of the job are fully conversant with the employment provisions of the DDA and understand your policies relating to the employment of disabled people, and their role in determining adjustments.⁵ Guidance from the NHS Executive sets out the role of OHS in more detail.
- 6.13 Funding to support many of the adjustments a disabled person may require may be available from the **Access to Work scheme** operated by the Employment Service. More details on this scheme can be found in **Section 12, Sources of help and advice**.
- 6.14 Finally on the subject of adjustments, although the Act does not require an employer to make changes in anticipation of employing a disabled person, it would nevertheless be sensible to prepare in case an adjustment is needed in the future. This, of course, will be something you will need to consider in your plans to implement Section 21 of the DDA (Access to goods and services).

Although the headquarters of a health authority did not have any deaf employees, it was considered more cost effective in the long run to make its new telecommunications system accessible to the hearing impaired.

Absence management

- 6.15 Disability is often equated with sickness, but most disabled people are as healthy as the rest of the population. However, some conditions may present particular problems with regard to absence from work. Adopting a flexible approach to the management of disability related absence by, for example, flexibility in leave or working patterns, or holding back trigger points for absence management procedures may be all that is required. In some cases, failure to make reasonable adjustments to sickness absence policies and procedures may amount to unlawful discrimination.

⁵ *The Management of Health, Safety and Welfare Issues for NHS Staff* issued with HSC 1998/064. April 1998.

- 6.16 The “*Working Lives*” campaign is focussing effort across the NHS to find more flexible and supportive ways of working. Much of the emphasis in the past has been on family friendly working patterns – enabling people to combine work with their responsibilities as parents. Working Lives acknowledges that flexible-working patterns can benefit other groups, including those who find themselves newly disabled and still wish to continue working.
- 6.17 Special leave to enable a disabled person to be absent during working hours to attend rehabilitation, assessment or treatment is considered a reasonable adjustment for employers to make, and would be relatively easy for employers to organise.
- 6.18 Special leave can also be used to give newly disabled employees time to come to terms with their new situation, even if they do not have specific treatment needs which necessitate time off. Leave in cases such as these can be useful as a period of reflection – to investigate possibilities and decide whether continued work is feasible, and if so, what adjustments will be needed. It can help prevent a premature decision to take early retirement that is later regretted.

A health authority offers it's newly disabled people leave to allow them time to adapt to their disability or learn new life skills. This is recorded as casual absence. Guidelines on the operation of the scheme make it clear that authorised time off which is related to a disability will not lead to the loss of bonus payments, or related allowances.

- 6.19 Short but unpredictable absences present a bigger problem for employers. However, a little thought and forward planning could cover for eventualities. Consider enabling individuals to bank overtime to compensate for some absences. Home working a temporary reduction in hours or a move from full-time to part-time work may also help. Absences from work are often the result of workplace stress. Managing workloads and tackling the causes of stress may help reduce some employees need to take time off.
- 6.20 The DDA does not require you to keep a member of staff on indefinitely if they are constantly absent but may require you to keep them longer than a non-disabled employee.
- 6.21 Where an employee’s disability necessitates a lengthy period off work, ensure that you keep the employee regularly updated on developments within their field and within their team and circulate any relevant or useful information to them.

- 6.22 When a disabled employee returns to work, both time and flexibility will be required to allow both you and the employee to adjust to the new circumstances. Disabled employees, who are able to do so, may initially find that working from home is easier to cope with than re-entering the working environment. A trial period may prove helpful, as it will enable you to fully assess whether the employee is able to cope with a return to work. Finally, a gradual return to full-time hours may be advisable until full confidence and ability are restored.

Ill-health retirement or termination of employment

- 6.23 Even after thoroughly exploring all other avenues, such as reasonable adjustments, redeployment and retraining, in some cases you may decide that ill-health retirement is the only realistic option. Remember that the NHS pension scheme will only pay an ill-health retirement pension where a person is permanently incapable of carrying out the duties of their employment.
- 6.24 The decision to terminate employment should always be made in full consultation with the employee concerned and, where applicable, with the NHS Pensions Agency.

More than just the job

Finally, don't forget that the social side of work contributes greatly to job satisfaction. Always try to ensure that the venues chosen for social events are accessible to disabled members of staff.

Retention – Checklist

- ✓ Do you have a policy which states that you will make every effort to retain employees who become disabled?
- ✓ Are all your employees aware that help will be available if such a situation arises?
- ✓ Do you know what reasonable adjustments need to be made?
- ✓ Who makes the decision not to make the adjustment?
- ✓ Will you offer redeployment, with the necessary training, if the disabled employee cannot return to their original position?
- ✓ Can you be flexible on hours to enable the employee to return to work?

Section 7: Recruitment and selection – Helping employers recognise the talent of disabled applicants

Introduction

- 7.1 Many employers find it difficult to attract applications from disabled people. The recruitment and selection procedures adopted by some organisations often exacerbate this. Discrimination can take place at every stage of the recruitment process so procedures need to be examined to ensure that reasonable adjustments are considered at all stages and that disabled people are not being discriminated against.
- 7.2 The DDA does not prevent you from recruiting the best person for the job, so long as you have not unjustifiably rejected a disabled person for a reason that relates to their disability. Nor does it expect you to discriminate in favour of a disabled person. What it does expect is for you to recognise and remove the barriers that prevent disabled people being on the same footing as other candidates, and give them a level playing field on which to compete.

Job descriptions and person specifications

- 7.3 The recruitment process must always begin with a job description and person specification.
- 7.4 When drawing up a job description, you should not just avoid unnecessary and marginal requirements. Consideration also needs to be given to how the job, and its conditions, can be adapted (for example is it suitable for part-time or home working) so that it may become more suitable to a wider range of applicants. Full time career grade posts for doctors, for instance, should be advertised in such a way that candidates unable for personal reasons to work full time are able to apply.
- 7.5 The person specification defines competencies. It outlines the minimum qualifications, skills and experience required to perform in the post. It should show what are essential criteria and what are desirable criteria for the post and should indicate how the criteria will be evaluated. Person specifications should be output focussed, for instance “*able to produce written reports*” rather than “*word-processing skills to a reasonable standard*”. An otherwise excellent candidate may need to use alternative methods of producing reports, which can be easily arranged.

- 7.6 They should also reflect only what is needed to carry out those tasks listed in the job description. They should not, for instance, stipulate a certain educational standard and particular qualifications if this is not necessary for the job. This could exclude some disabled people that may have a non-traditional educational background. Similarly, the person specification should not, unless absolutely necessary, introduce requirements for particular work experience and skills and qualities which a disabled person may not have had the opportunity to acquire.
- 7.7 Do not introduce selection criteria such as “must be in good health”. Disability is not the same as ill health. Employers who view a disability as a health or sickness problem, and do not give any consideration to possible adjustments, may run the risk of litigation under the DDA.
- 7.8 If the post does require an element of heavy lifting, climbing or other physical activity you will need to be precise and state what exactly is required of the post holder. This will allow potential applicants to gauge whether they are equipped do the job and also to prepare the ground for considering reasonable adjustments.

Application forms and recruitment literature

- 7.9 Your application forms and recruitment literature can say a lot about your organisation’s attitude towards disabled people. Potential applicants may be discouraged by the format of these or by the way they are worded. It is therefore important that you review the language and images used to ensure that they are positive about disabled people. If your organisation holds the Disability Symbol use it.
- 7.10 One thing to bear in mind is that any recruitment literature must give a true reflection of your organisation’s commitment to equal opportunities. Your policies and procedures must support any public commitment to equality of opportunity. If they do not support such a commitment, then this could have a negative effect on recruitment.
- 7.11 Applicants must be given the opportunity to receive and return information in a variety of ways depending on the nature of their disability, condition or impairment. A mandatory requirement for hand written forms could possibly dissuade some people with certain disabilities, for example people with dyslexia or with some types of muscle weakness or cerebral palsy, from applying.
- 7.12 In order to encourage applications from disabled people you should consider the following:
- being able to provide application packs in formats, which are suitable for the visually impaired. Bear in mind that if you provide formats such as

Braille for instance, you must be able to receive information in these formats and will need to know where you can get prompt interpretation;

- providing and receiving applications on tape – these can always be transcribed onto standard application forms;
- sending the form by e-mail or by disc as many disabled people may find it easier to use a word processor to complete their form;
- using matt, pastel coloured paper will help the visually impaired and those with certain types of dyslexia.

7.13 Remember that some disabled people may not have filled in an application form for sometime and may welcome guidance or assistance to do so.

7.14 Think carefully about how potential applicants are being asked to obtain information about the post on offer. Many organisations ask people to telephone or write in for an application form or further information. Consider installing a Minicom (which transmits text rather than speech) to enable deaf people to apply for vacancies or, alternatively, register with TypeTalk.

Asking about disability

7.15 The law as it currently stands does not prohibit asking questions about a person's health or disability and many application forms do include a question to elicit this kind of information. This is, of course, very important for monitoring purposes but there are a number of reasons why you should exercise caution in this area.

7.16 The Disability Rights Taskforce have, however, recommended that that disability or disability related questions before a job is offered should only be permitted in limited circumstances. For example, where it is necessary to establish the need for reasonable adjustment for interview or selection process or thereafter to do the job and for certain monitoring purposes.

7.17 Employers often confuse disability with ill health and believe that a disabled employee will have higher sickness absence rates. For most disabled people their condition is static and will not require extra time off. In a few cases, however, a chronic health condition will constitute a disability under the DDA and this may entail higher than average absenteeism. Where absenteeism rates are being used as part of the selection criteria for a post, you must consider the requirement for reasonable adjustment if an individual's attendance record is the result of their disability.

- 7.18 Some disabled applicants may be cautious of declaring a disability at this stage because of the discrimination they may have faced when applying for jobs in the past. They may feel that information about their disability is irrelevant to their ability to do the job and may only serve to prejudice the interviewer. In certain circumstances questions relating to a person's disability may even be discriminatory and could lead to litigation.
- 7.19 Questions about a person's disability must always be restricted to those which are relevant to the person's ability to do the job, and should be worded as sensitively and as appropriately as possible. Include an explanation that candidates will not be discriminated against on this basis and full consideration will be given the provision of reasonable adjustments.
- 7.20 A useful approach may be to use the phrase "Please let us know how we can make the application and assessment process as accessible as possible". To ensure that the information is used appropriately, and that candidates are reassured, this would be best done in a separate form, or tear off strip.
- 7.21 Similarly, an interrupted work history can be a barrier to some disabled people in gaining employment. You can help off-set this by emphasising on the application form that volunteer work and other life experiences will be relevant to the application.

Advertising

- 7.22 As so many employers report that they find it difficult to recruit disabled people, it is crucial that you advertise your vacancies as widely as possible. Send job advertisements to your local Disability Employment Adviser who keeps a list of suitable applicants with disabilities. Use newspapers and other publications that attract readers with disabilities for example, "Disability Now". Also, try to foster links with local disability organisations and try different and more imaginative methods of reaching suitable applicants

A large teaching trust holds an annual Disability Road Show to advertise vacancies and encourage disabled people to apply. Sign language interpreters and other representatives are on hand to give advice about financial assistance and training.

A health authority operates a job seekers register for disabled people. People on the register receive regular mailings about job vacancies and are guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential criteria for a particular vacancy.

- 7.23 As far as the actual advertisement is concerned, make sure that it is clear and concise and that the wording clearly shows a positive attitude to equal opportunities. If your organisation is a Disability Symbol user, ensure that this is included in the advertisement. Anything that might be understood to indicate that either having a disability would be a disadvantage, or that the employer would be reluctant to make adjustments, should be avoided.

A trust puts in an advertisement for an office worker that states *"Sorry but gaining access to our administration block can be difficult for some people"*. A man who can only walk with the aid of crutches but can do office work applies for the job. He is subsequently turned down. It is likely that he has been discriminated against, as the trust cannot prove that he did not get the job for any other reason than his disability.

Interviews

- 7.24 The majority of disabled people need little or no additional facilities or support for an interview and their disability, impairment or medical condition may be largely irrelevant to the job. Others, however, may need some support or a particular facility and therefore it is important to plan in advance how to meet their specific needs.
- 7.25 Invitations to interview should give information about the accessibility of the interview venue, as much clear information as possible on public transport access and disabled parking availability, and the interview's format, particularly if a test or other method of selection is involved. The applicants should be asked to inform you whether they would have any specific needs in order to participate fully in the interview process. If someone has already identified himself or herself as being disabled which requires special provision (for example taped or Brailled information) make sure that the invitation letter answers that need.
- 7.26 If a disabled person turns up to the interview and that is the first you know of it, you must make what adjustments are reasonable without notice. For instance, at that point to obtain an interpreter for a British Sign Language (BSL) user would not be reasonable but to agree to write the interview questions down for them would be.
- 7.27 Other adjustments you may need to consider include:
- a ground floor venue, or one that is accessible by lift;
 - a loop system, sign language speaker or interpreter or lip-speaker;

- adjustments to the room arrangement/lighting so that the light falls onto the face of the interviewer(s) and not behind them, and there is uncluttered space for people with visual or mobility impairments;
- a guide to accompany candidates to and from the interview room. some candidates may have difficulties in reading signs, finding their way around the building or coping with distances;
- providing candidates with the opportunity to be accompanied by appropriate support, for example a personal assistant or advocate. In addition, support dogs, including guide dogs, will need to accompany their owners;
- an increased length of time for the interview, to allow for a candidate's questions and answers.

- 7.28 Ensure that reception staff are disability aware, and alerted to any specific needs such as the availability of a drink for someone needing to take medication. They need to know about accessible toilets and the need to ensure they have the attention of hearing impaired people before trying to communicate with them. Make sure that the waiting area is accessible, with a range of seating heights.
- 7.29 Consider the possible transport difficulties the disabled candidate may experience. Be prepared to offer advice on accessible overnight accommodation and travel facilities, including accessible taxi numbers and local mobility bus times.
- 7.30 Most people are anxious at interview – disabled people are often even more so because they are so used to being rejected. It is especially important therefore that interviewer(s) have undergone some appropriate disability awareness training, are well versed in disability etiquette and are experienced and skilled in interviewing in accordance with good equal opportunities practice. Make the applicant comfortable by making the interview as un-intimidating as possible. Encourage the candidate to ask for questions to be repeated or rephrased if they are not clear. Although interviewers need to think about what they say and what they do during the interview, it is important that they do not let the disability dominate the interview, as this may appear patronising to the candidate.
- 7.31 Questions about the candidate's disability, impairment or medical condition should always be avoided. Interviewers must focus on the candidate's skills and experience. Remember that the disabled person would not be applying for the job if they did not think they could do it. Where the subject of a candidate's disability is broached, for example if the candidate wishes to explore reasonable adjustments to the job, interviewers should stress the selection decision will not be influenced by the disability or the extent of the adjustments required. However, good practice would suggest that reasonable adjustments should be explored only if it has been agreed that the interviewee is the best person for the job.

Medical examinations, Occupational Health and reasonable adjustments

- 7.32 All NHS staff should have a pre-employment health assessment carried out fairly, objectively and in accordance with equal opportunities legislation and good OHS practice. When conducting such checks, care needs to be taken to ensure that any decisions relate specifically to the particular job being done by that person.
- 7.33 Where a job specific query raise occupational health specialists may well need to be involved. Their role should be to advise on whether the job, or particular tasks within it, can be undertaken by the disabled person in question taking into account reasonable adjustments. They should be well aware of the requirements of the job and should be able to have a thorough discussion with the disabled person to advise on what reasonable adjustments would assist. More detailed guidance can be found in Chapter 4 of *Management of Health, Safety and Welfare Issues for NHS Staff* issued with HSC 1998/064 (April 1998). There must be a skills assessment, to focus on what the person can do, not what he or she is unable to do.
- 7.34 All new employees need time to adjust to their job and environment. Many people with disabilities will need no additional help to settle in. However, in some cases you may need to ensure that certain items are covered. It is important that any particular needs a disabled person has in relation to their new post, (whether through internal move or as a new recruit), are identified as soon as possible after appointment, as arrangements for these may take some time, particularly if external assessment or funding is needed.
- 7.35 Consult, first and foremost, with the individual concerned about what special adjustment they will require. If they have worked before they will know what their specific requirements are, if not, Occupational Health could well have ideas and, if external advice or help is needed, the Disability Employment Adviser at the local job centre can help.
- 7.36 Always ensure that the employee is fully involved in any discussions. Never make any assumptions about what will be required, you may be very wrong, and as a result waste scarce resources.
- 7.37 Information needed by the disabled person may need converting into an accessible format; for example disk large print, Braille or a simplified, perhaps pictorial format.
- 7.38 Physical alterations may need to be made to the working environment, for example doors re-hung to open more accessibly, toilets made accessible, or call systems modified for an employee with a hearing impairment. Equipment may need to be obtained for example a computer with a voice output for a blind

employee or voice operated input for someone who cannot use his or her hands well. Support may need to be arranged, for example a reader, support worker or job coach.

- 7.39 Some people feel more at ease if colleagues know about their disability, impairment or condition. Others will prefer confidentiality. This will vary depending on the individual concerned and their approach to disability. Where an employee has a hidden disability, such as dyslexia, a heart condition, diabetes or a history of mental health problems and chooses not to disclose their disability to colleagues you should always respect their decision.
- 7.40 Some colleagues may have specific concerns about a new disabled employee. The disabled person concerned may wish to address these, or may welcome support to deal with them, but they must be in agreement with whatever is done. Issues arising out of a hidden impairment could manifest itself in a crisis, for example someone with diabetes may have a hypoglycaemic attack, or in an emergency evacuation, someone may experience significantly higher levels of distress because of their particular condition. Good first aid training is essential regardless of the needs of the disabled employee. It is never safe to assume that you know how staff without evident disability will react in a crisis.
- 7.41 It may be after some discussion with the disabled employee, specific awareness or other training may be needed. For instance, training may be needed for the colleagues of a newly appointed hearing-impaired person to familiarise themselves with alternative methods of communication. It is important when analysing training needs generally to consider some form of disability equality training any regular staff-training programme. This would help to dispel any negative attitudes or misconceptions they may hold about disabled people.

Review and feedback

- 7.42 Offer the disabled employee the opportunity to review their employment needs after the induction period. By then they will have a clearer idea of what the job entails. If there is the likelihood of *Access to Work* funding being required it is important to check how long it is available for and to review within that period. Some disabled people may also need extra support, feedback and reassurance during the first few months of their employment. It is important to ensure that this is given appropriately.

Recruitment and selection checklist

- ✓ Are job requirements strictly related to the needs of the job?
- ✓ Do your job advertisements state that you positively welcome applications from disabled candidates?
- ✓ Do you place all jobs with the your local Job Centre and ensure that the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) is aware of all vacancies?
- ✓ Do you inform local disability organisations of job vacancies?
- ✓ Is all your job application forms and recruitment literature accessible to disabled people?
- ✓ Do you have the capability to deal with applications in alternative formats?
- ✓ Do you operate a guarantee interview scheme for all disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria? Do you state this on advertisements?
- ✓ Do you ask interview candidates in advance whether they have any special needs?
- ✓ Is reception staff fully briefed in advance?
- ✓ Have interviewers received disability awareness training?

Section 8: Monitoring the effectiveness of HR policies for disabled people

- 8.1 Unless an organisation is aware of the composition of its workforce it would be difficult, if not impossible, for it to know whether it has achieved a fair representation of disabled people. Nor can it assess the operation of its equal opportunities policies. Monitoring is the means by which your organisation will be able to keep its policy and procedures under constant review to ensure that they do not inadvertently disadvantage people.
- 8.2 Many NHS organisations already carry out regular disability monitoring of their workforce. Those that do, usually find that monitoring encourages good employment practice, helps employees understand why equality is important and builds equality into their business planning and objectives. Monitoring also helps prevent discrimination claims from arising, as it gives early warning of areas of problem areas. Where monitoring information is shared with employees, they can often help find the solution to identified problems.
- 8.3 The most important areas to examine are recruitment, promotion, transfers and training, since these are the entry routes to career progression. Effective monitoring in these areas can show, for instance, whether disabled people are:
- not applying for jobs, promotion or training, or fewer are applying than might be expected;
 - not being recruited, promoted or selected for training, or are being selected in lower proportions than their application rate would suggest;
 - concentrated in certain jobs or grades and whether there is a point beyond which they do not rise.
- 8.4 As well as looking at these areas, your organisation should also examine terms and conditions of employment (for example, hours of work, pay and benefits and special requirements such as shift work and geographical location), grievances and disciplinary procedures and resignation, redundancies and dismissals. As these issues may well affect career progression and their importance should not be underestimated.
- 8.5 Systematic analysis of the information produced by monitoring should take place on an annual basis. Only by examining the data collected will you be able to identify where the blocks to equality are and why these occur.

- 8.6 Also, to get any real value from monitoring there must be board level commitment to monitoring as part of your equal opportunities policy. Information gained from monitoring exercises, and details of plans for improvement, should be communicated through organisational literature such as the Annual Report.
- 8.7 A particular problem with monitoring disability within the workforce is the reluctance of some people to self-classify themselves as disabled for fear of discrimination. Monitoring can be made much less threatening if you ensure that the mutual benefits that monitoring can bring are fully explained and that they are reassured that confidentiality will be maintained.
- 8.8 Disability is also difficult to measure due to the problems in defining it. The DDA definition of disability is not the only, or indeed, the most useful one. The Labour Force Survey uses the definition *'a problem which affects the kind of work they might do and was expected to last more than a year'*. This provides you with a more comprehensive and realistic picture of the incidence of work limiting disabilities within your workforce.
- 8.9 The most successful, and easiest, monitoring systems are those based on exception reporting and self-disclosure. This means that only those employees who feel that they have a career limiting disability are asked to declare themselves as disabled. Asking managers to report solely on the numbers of disabled people working in their departments who they believe to have a disability is not always a good idea. There may be significant numbers of disabled people who have "invisible" disabilities, which the manager may not always be aware of. You may also run the risk of alienating people who may resent being labelled as disabled by somebody else.
- 8.10 Finally, there are a number of words and phrases, which disabled people may find inappropriate and offensive and it is important that these are avoided in any monitoring questionnaires, or other communications, to employees, or potential employees. **Section 13, on Disability etiquette**, contains more information on appropriate language.

Monitoring checklist

- ✓ Do you collect data on the number of disabled employees?
- ✓ Is this data analysed by grade to monitor internal progression?
- ✓ Do you keep a record of disabled applicants at all stages of the recruitment process?
- ✓ Do you monitor to ensure that disabled employees are not missing out on training opportunities?
- ✓ Does your organisation have a plan of action identifying priority areas?
- ✓ Is progress on disability equality issues reviewed regularly and reported to the Board and senior management?
- ✓ Is progress communicated to all members of staff?

Section 9: Staff training and development – Not just a job, but a career for disabled people

Introduction

- 9.1 Disabled people should have the same opportunities as other members of staff to develop full and rewarding careers. However, sometimes they may not have had the same educational and training opportunities as their non-disabled colleagues and, as a result, lack both self confidence and key skills and abilities. It is therefore crucial that disabled employees have full access to training that will enable them to build their confidence and the range of skills they can offer.

Training

- 9.2 Ensure that disabled people are offered as wide a choice of training and opportunities as their non-disabled colleagues. Ask all employees what they need in order to get the most out of training to ensure that no one who may not be evidently disabled is missed. Make sure what is requested is available or the individual knows that it is not possible.
- 9.3 Some of the things you might need to consider are that:
- the venue is fully accessible;
 - training materials are available in an appropriate format, for example, handouts should be available in large print or on tape; training videos should be subtitled and/or signed (consideration should be given to this when purchasing resources) if not available transcripts should be made and provided;
 - a particular type of seating or an induction loop are available;
 - there are defined breaks to enable people to take rests, food or medication are provided.

Career development

- 9.4 When assessing the career development of a disabled member of staff, consult with the individual concerned and with their agreement decide on the best development opportunities to follow. Ask whether more can be done to make sure that they have the chance to develop and use their abilities at work. Never make assumptions about what a disabled employee may or may not want to do.

Disability awareness training

- 9.5 All staff can benefit from some form of disability awareness training. This is one of the best ways of making sure that everyone is aware of the issues involved, and ensuring equality of opportunity for disabled people, whether staff or service users. Ideally all staff should receive some training, including senior management in particular, to help reflect the priority given to the subject by your organisation and those involved in the recruitment process.
- 9.6 The NHS Executive have launched a disability awareness distance learning package, “*Welcoming Patients with Disabilities*” which is intended to equip staff with the skills needed to offer equal access to patient care. The training it provides will also help in the workplace too.

Staff training and development: checklist

- ✓ Do you provide alternative methods of learning other than courses for example open learning or computer software packages?
- ✓ Are course venues accessible to disabled people?
- ✓ Do you check in advance whether course participants have any special needs? Do you make sure that staff are aware that special needs can be catered for?
- ✓ Has your training staff received disability awareness training?
- ✓ Does personal development programmes take appropriate account of a person's disability?
- ✓ Do you ensure that disabled candidates for management training schemes are considered on equal terms with other members of staff?

Section 10: Health and safety

- 10.1 Health and safety issues are often of great concern to some employers if they are unfamiliar with the needs of the disabled. Such fears are generally unfounded. Good practice in health and safety procedures should deal with most issues, although in some circumstances discussion to clarify matters with those concerned and a general tightening up on procedures may be appropriate.
- 10.2 Health and Safety law does not override the DDA but it should be used with care, and should not be seen as a way of not employing a disabled person. It requires reasonably practicable adjustments to be made, and this need to be carefully revised in relation to the particular individual and the job they will be doing.
- 10.3 Typical adjustments to ensure a disabled person's safety during an emergency could include the following:
- fire alarms fitted with flashing lights or providing a vibrating pager to alert a hearing impaired employee;
 - assigning work colleagues to alert and assist in an emergency;
 - making sure that employees with learning difficulties fully understand safety procedures and fire regulations;
 - ensuring first-aiders are fully conversant with the first aid implications of, for example, diabetes and epilepsy;
 - a thorough lifting and handling assessment and the purchase of appropriate equipment

Health and Safety – Checklist

- ✓ Do you have an agreed procedure to ensure that disabled people can evacuate the building in an emergency situation?

Section 11: Key problem areas and solutions

Mental Health

“Unemployment, social isolation,...stigma, contempt and fear surround people with mental health problems like a shroud. It is easier to live in society with a prison record than with a psychiatric record”

Witness to the Mind inquiry into social exclusion⁶

- 11.1 In any one-year, up to a quarter of the population experience some of mental distress; however, people experiencing mental health problems are amongst the most socially excluded in Britain today. For instance, they have the highest unemployment rates of all the disabled groups.
- 11.2 These statistics raise a number of important issues for employers:
- action needed to reduce stress at work;
 - how to support and retain staff who suffer stress or mental health problems;
 - fair recruitment practices for applicants with experience of mental health problems.
- 11.3 Many employers are beginning to recognise that by creating mentally healthy working places, (including the support of employees who are experiencing, or those who have previously experienced mental health problems), constitutes good employment practice.
- 11.4 There however remains reluctance amongst some employers employ people with a mental health problem. They may assume that people with a history mental health problem may be unable to cope with the stresses of work or will act in a bizarre and anti-social way. Health and social care organisations, traditionally have shown reluctance to employ people with a mental health problem and this has been particularly true since the enquiry into the Beverley Allitt case.

⁶ “Creating Accepting Communities” – Report of the Mind Inquiry into social exclusion and mental health problems

The NHS Executive's Mental Health in Employment Working Group is looking at these issues with a view to producing further guidance in the near future.

- 11.5 There is a very small minority of people whose medical condition means that they are unsuited for work in the health sector because of the potential risk they pose to patients. Good recruitment practice will reduce the likelihood of someone inappropriate being taken on. Appointments must not be made on the basis of stereotypes, but on the evidence relating to that particular individual. Before anyone is rejected on this basis an appropriate skills assessment may need to be made. The assessment should focus on what the employee can do rather than what they cannot and should take into consideration a whole range of issues including those around the environment; ergonomics; work demands, organisational and social aspects of the job.
- 11.6 There are a number of reasons why NHS organisations, particularly those in the mental health sector, should employ people who experience mental health problems. People who have used mental health services often want to work within this setting and those who have been successful in managing their own mental health problems can only enhance and improve service provision. There are other benefits too. Work is important in maintaining and promoting health, and if the NHS can demonstrate the ways in which people with mental health problems can be effectively accommodated in the workforce this will encourage in employers in other sectors to follow its lead.

User-Employment Project: the South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust

The successful employment of mental health service users is being Demonstrated to great effect by the South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust. The trust is seeking help people with more serious mental health problems to gain and sustain employment. Since 1995, it has provided support in employment for a number of service users in existing posts within the trust and has developed a volunteer programme which has enabled other users to gain the experience and references they need to move on to open employment. The trust has also pioneered efforts to decrease employment discrimination within the trust against people who have experienced mental health problems. So far, seven other trusts have established similar projects, and efforts to establish at least a dozen more are in progress.

- 11.7 Many job applicants are often reluctant to reveal that they have, or have had, a mental health problem for fear that they will be discriminated against. It is therefore important that your organisation fosters a climate where potential employees can be open about any mental health problems that they have or may have had. This will make it possible for employees and managers to agree what adjustments may be required to improve performance and productivity and to ensure the support of colleagues.
- 11.8 Mental health problems do not always affect a person's ability to work, and even when their capacity is impaired to some degree, it may only be for a short period of time and may not require any real adjustment at all. When they do these will be identical to those needed to deal with other employees who are managing a fluctuating or unpredictable condition. Typical adjustments could include:
- flexibility in the operation of sick pay policies and the rules applying to annual holidays i.e. booking leave at short notice;
 - alterations to working arrangements such as part-time working or a change in start and finish times, for example to reduce the stress of "rush hour travel" or to attend medical appointments;
 - changes to the physical environment to aid concentration and memory. Such alterations may include room dividers, soundproofing/visual barriers, occasional or permanent home working;
 - providing written instructions to decrease anxiety and help those who have difficulty organising themselves;
 - communication by e-mail for those who find face to face communication difficult;
 - tolerance and understanding by fellow workers of behaviours which they may consider unusual;
 - stress management strategies;
 - feedback on performance may need to be more frequent.
- 11.9 It is however, vital not to make assumptions about what someone needs, as everyone is different.

Progressive or fluctuating conditions

11.10 Some conditions such as arthritis, multiple sclerosis, HIV or AIDS (see below) and mental health problems may present particular problems:

- symptoms may be so slight, particularly in the early stage of some conditions, that you find it difficult, or impossible, to tell that someone is affected;
- employers tend to confuse a progressive or fluctuating disability with ill health and do not consider the possible adjustments that could be made;
- absences from work may be unpredictable and frequent;
- employers may falsely assume that the employee will be unable to work at some point in the future;
- many employees with progressive or fluctuating conditions are reluctant to disclose their disability because they are afraid of being discriminated against. This is particularly true of stigmatising conditions such as HIV and mental health problems.

11.11 Many employees with long term medical conditions will be able to continue to work provided they have regular work patterns and are able to take breaks. Flexibility over timekeeping and working hours may also be required.

11.12 Some progressive or fluctuating conditions may result in variations to a person's stamina over the day. Flexibility over working hours can often hold the answer.

11.13 Progressive and fluctuating conditions may also present particular problems with regard to absence from work. Special leave would be one way of managing such absences. Another may be to allow individuals to bank overtime to compensate for future absences. Other alternatives may be to allow home working or a move from part-time to full-time work.

HIV infection

11.14 Health care workers who have HIV infection or AIDS raise particular issues within the healthcare environment. Assuring healthcare professionals that their status and rights as employees will be safeguarded as far as is practical, whilst avoiding the problems prejudice and fear can cause can be problematic.

11.15 The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate against an employee or job applicant for a reason relating to their disability, unless the employer can show that the discriminatory treatment is justified. There has to be a "material and substantial

reason” in order for the discrimination to be justified. Employees with asymptomatic HIV infection are not covered by the Act, though the definition of disability is presently under review. Although symptomatic HIV infection or AIDS is covered by the Act, restricting such employees from performing certain risky (‘exposure prone’ – defined in guidance referred to below) procedures where patients would be exposed to risk of HIV infection would be justified. The same justification would not apply if a worker was able to continue to work whilst avoiding ‘exposure prone’ procedures.

- 11.16 Patient safety and public confidence in services is dependent on the healthcare worker who is HIV infected, or who has been exposed to risk of HIV infection observing their professional obligation of self-declaration to an occupational health physician. However to help ensure that this happens, NHS employers must foster a climate that encourages disclosure.
- 11.17 Ensuring confidentiality is one way of encouraging disclosure. It is vital that HIV infected employees receive the same rights of confidentiality as any patients seeking or receiving medical care. Knowing that your organisation has a positive equal opportunities policy and that there is a willingness to make reasonable adjustments will also encourage disclosure.
- 11.18 Restriction would also be justified if an occupational physician recommended that a worker was considered generally unfit to practise because of physical or psychological impairment, or if a working environment was considered likely to place the worker’s health at risk.
- 11.19 When work cannot be continued, either because the member of staff is too ill, or because there is an unreasonable risk of transmission of HIV, your organisation must consider the scope for retraining or redeployment to a suitable post where ‘exposure prone’ procedures can be avoided. Only as a last resort should ill-health retirement or termination of employment be considered.
- 11.20 The Department of Health has issued more detailed guidance on this issue and details can be found in **Section 15**. Advice about individual cases can be obtained on an anonymous basis and in strict confidence from the UK Advisory Panel for Health Care Workers infected with Blood-borne Viruses through its DH Medical Secretariat. Their address can be found in **Section 14**.

Section 12: Sources of help and advice

The DDA Helpline (formally know as the DDA information line)

The DDA Helpline provides information and advice on all aspects of the DDA, as well as signposting to specialist organisations where appropriate. In addition, it can offer good practice advice on the employment of disabled people. Booklets and fact sheets on all aspects of the DDA are provided free of charge, and in alternative formats. The service is available to employers, service providers and the general public.

Telephone: 0345 622 633

Textphone: 0345 622 644.

The Employment Service/Disability Service

Through your local job centre you can contact the Employment Service's Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) for your area. They are in contact with disabled job seekers, can give employers advice and practical help on recruiting, retaining or training disabled people and can offer advice on useful contacts locally for different disability issues. In particular the DEA can advise on:

- developing good employment policies and practices in the recruitment, retention, training and career development of disabled people;
- practical and financial help towards employing disabled people, including adaptations to premises and the provision of special aids to employment under the Access to Work Programme (see below);
- using the disability symbol;
- Employment Service programmes such as the Job Introduction Scheme and Supported Employment Programme (see below).

Access to work schemes

Access to Work (AtW) provides funding to support disabled people in employment and is suited to the individual needs of a particular job. It can apply to any job, full or part time, permanent or temporary and could, for example, pay for:

- a communicator at a job interview for people who are deaf or who have a hearing impairment;
- a reader at work for someone who is blind or who has a visual impairment;
- a support worker if someone needs particular help either at work or travelling to work. This could include a communicator or interpreter to attend meetings, training courses or conferences; a job coach to support someone while they familiarise themselves with the tasks of a new job; an assistant to help with the personal needs of someone in the workplace; or an escort to travel to and from work;
- transport to get to work or travel during work;
- alterations to existing equipment to suit an individual's particular needs. this could include computer equipment (screen can be enlarged, keyboards can be adapted or removed) or telephone aids (amplifiers or minicomms);
- alterations to the working environment. For example, help towards adapting or lowering machinery, installing alarms with flashing lights or adaptations to a lift.

AtW is the main option for external funding of reasonable adjustments. If you are taking on a new employee the full cost could be met through AtW. For an employee who becomes disabled or for a disabled employee whose needs change, assistance or contribution will be required from the employer.

The Job Introduction Scheme

The Job Introduction Schemes (JIS) enables a disabled person to be taken on by an employer for a trial period. The Scheme pays the employer an allowance for the employee, who is then paid the normal rate for the job, to demonstrate their potential and for any practical problems to be sorted out. The job can be full or part-time and must last for at least six months after the trial period ends. Note: a trial period not set up under this scheme would almost certainly be classed as discrimination unless other new employees had the same treatment.

Supported Placements

Supported placements enable you to provide opportunities for people with more severe disabilities to work alongside employees in your organisation. The host firm providing the work, or the sponsoring organisation (which can be the local authority, voluntary body or Remploy) can employ the person. They are paid the rate for the job, and the Host Company pays an agreed amount to the sponsor based on the amount of work done.

How to apply for Access to Work, Job Introduction or Supported Placements

Access to work is only available in respect of a named disabled person. The scheme cannot fund general alterations. Your local Disability Employment Adviser will be able to discuss with you whether you are eligible for the scheme. They will also be able to give you details of the Job Introduction and Supported Placement Scheme.

The Employers' Forum on Disability

The Employers' Forum on Disability is the UK's employers' organisation focused on disability. Funded and managed by its members they make it easier for organisations to recruit and retain disabled employees and to serve disabled customers. They do this by:

- promoting information exchange about best practice and the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA);
- having an information line;
- providing a networking and publications service;
- producing DDA best practice publications, disability communication guides and briefing guides on reasonable adjustments in employment for a range of disabilities including visual impairments, mental health, dyslexia and RSI;
- promoting communication and partnership between employers, disabled people, service providers and Government. They are involved in a number of New Deal projects and hold an annual strategy consultation event where key people in all these areas address current issues;
- representing employers in policy debates. They further their members' views to feed in on a wide range of disability employment initiatives;
- working with the newly formed Disability Rights Commission.

The Forum currently has over 360 members who represent around 20% of the UK workforce from both the private and public sector, including a number of NHS Trusts. More information about the benefits of membership is available from:

The Employers' Forum on Disability
Nutmeg House
60 Gainsford street
London SE1 2NY

Tel: 0171 403 3020

E-mail: efd@employers-forum.co.uk

Website: <http://www.employers-forum.co.uk>

Trade Unions

The Trade Union movement has a particular interest in the development of good practice for disabled members and local officials. Many have access to examples of good practice that can be adopted. A number of unions such as UNISON have groups for their disabled members that provide peer support. The RCN has significant information on reasonable adjustments informed in part by the WING – Work Injured Nurses Group.

The Voluntary Sector

There are a number of national organisations in the voluntary sector that will be able to offer advice, with regards to specific disabilities, on employment matters. Some can offer expertise on specific impairments, while others can give advice on particular ways of assistance such as supported employment or flexible working. There are many more at regional and local level whom may be able to provide your organisation with relevant advice. For more information on local organisations consult your phone book.

Section 13: Disability etiquette

The Employers' Forum on Disability publishes a series of Disability Communication Guides designed to help people feel more comfortable when meeting, working with or writing about disabled people.

- Focus on the individual and their personality **not** their impairments
- Avoid phrases that portray disabled people as victims or sufferers. Because someone is disabled does not mean that they are any braver than anybody else is.
- Say what you mean but say it positively.

What to avoid	What to say
"Handicapped" "The disabled" "Invalid"	"Disabled person/people"
"Victim of" "Crippled by" "Suffering from" "Afflicted by"	"Person who has" "Person with" "Person who has experienced"
"Wheelchair bound" "Confined to a wheel chair"	"Wheelchair user"
"Mentally handicapped" "Sub-normal" "Retard"	"Person with a learning disability"
"Mentally ill"	"Mental health service user"
"Deaf and Dumb"	"Deaf person" "Sign language user"
"The Blind"	"Visually impaired" "Blind People"
"Spastic"	"Person with cerebral palsy"
"Epileptic"	"Person with epilepsy"
"Normal" "Able bodied"	"Non-disabled"

- Do not be embarrassed about common expressions such as “*see you later*”, “*I’ll be running along*” or “*did you hear about*” which may relate to a person’s disability. Everyday phrases such as these are unlikely to cause offence.

Section 14: Contacts and organisations

This section lists organisations that should be able to answer general questions, or questions related to specific disabilities. They are mostly national organisations. For information on local organisations contact the Council for Voluntary Organisations (see the Phone Book).

General

Ability Net
PO Box 94
Warwick
Warwickshire CV34 SW5
Tel: 01926 311345
Fax: 01926 312847
E-mail: enquiries@abilitynet.co.uk
Website: www.abilitynet.co.uk

AbilityNet is a joint initiative between the Computability Centre and the Foundation for Communication of the Disabled, to extend their work of making mainstream computer technology more accessible to disabled people.

The Association of Disabled Professionals (ADP)
170 Benton Hill
Wakefield Road
Horbury
West Yorkshire WF4 5HW
Tel: 01924 283253

The ADP is a membership organisation concerned with the training and employment of disabled professionals. It has a Register of Professional Advisers – comprising members qualified and practising in a number of professions – who can help and advise on employment prospects in particular fields.

British Council of Organisations of Disabled people (BCODP)

Litchurch Plaza

Litchurch Lane

Derby DE24 8AA

Tel: 01332 295551

Minicom: 01332 295 581

E-mail: bcodp@bcodp.org.uk

Website: www.bcodp.org.uk

BCODP is an umbrella organisation that seeks to promote awareness and provide practical help and support on a range of disability issues.

Centre for Accessible Environments

Nutmeg House

60 Gainsford Street

London SE1 2NY

Tel & Minicom: 020 7357 8182

E-mail: cae@globalnet.co.uk

Website: www.cae.org.uk

The Centre provides information and advice on access issues; training and consultancy on legislation; fact sheets and publications, including an access audit pack. It can also carry out access audits.

DIAL UK

Disablement Information and Advice Lines

Park Lodge

St Catherine's Hospital

Tickhill Road

Balby

Doncaster DN4 8QN

Tel: 01302 310123

E-mail: dialuk@aol.com

DIAL UK operate a network of local advice centres running telephone helplines and drop in centres for anyone needing disability related information. For details of the nearest DIAL Advice Centre contact DIAL UK.

Disability Information Trust
Mary Marlborough Centre
Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre
Headington
Oxford OX3 7LD
Tel: 01865 227592
Fax: 01865 227596
E-mail: ditrust@btconnect.com
Website: <http://home.btconnect.com/ditrust/home.htm>

The Disability Information Trust can provide information on equipment available to disabled people

Disability Matters
Berkley House
West Tyherley
Wiltshire SP5 1NF
Tel/Minicom: 01264 811120
Fax: 01264 810889
E-mail: disabilitymatters@compuserve.com
Website: <http://www.disabilitymatters.com>

Disability Matters offers specialist a consultancy service to help organisations to develop a strategic approach to diversity and disability.

Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities
123 Minorities
London
EC3N 1NT
Tel: 0207 481 2727
Fax: 0207 481 9797
E-mail: eopps.ho@care4free.net

This organisation can help with queries relating to employment.

Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation

RADAR

12 City Forum

250 City Road

London EC1V 8AF

Tel: 020 7250 3222

E-mail: radar@radar.org.uk

Website: www.radar.org.uk

RADAR works with, and for, physically disabled people in a number of areas, including employment. It provides an information and advisory service; arranges conferences and seminars; and produces a newsletter, "Bulletin", which gives a wide range of topical information. A publication list is available.

Skill – National Association of Students with Disabilities

18-20 Crucifix Lane

London SE1 3JW

Tel: 020 7450 0620 (with minicom)

Fax: 020 7450 0650

Tel Helpline: 0800 328 5050

Minicom Helpline: 0800 068 2422

Skill aims to promote opportunities that empower young people and adults with any kind of disability to realise their potential in further and higher education. They provide a free information helpline for staff and employers.

Hearing Impairments

British Tinnitus Association

4th Floor

White Building

Fitzalen Square

Sheffield S1 2AZ

Tel: 0114 279 6600

Helpline: 0800 018 0527

Fax: 0114 279 6222

The British Deaf Association (BDA)

1-3 Worship Street

London EC2A 2AB

Tel: 020 7588 3520

Fax: 020 7588 3527

Minicom: 020 7588 3529

E-mail: info@bda.org.uk

Website: www.bda.org.uk

Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)
19-23 Featherstone Street
London EC1Y 8SL
Tel: 020 7296 8000
Helpline (Tel): 0870 6050 123
Helpline (Textphone): 0870 6033 007
Fax: 020 7296 8001
E-mail: helpline@rnid.org.uk
Website: www.rnid.org.uk

Language and Speech Impairments

British Stammering Association
15 Old Ford Road
London E2 9PJ
Tel: 020 8983 1003
Fax: 020 8983 3591
E-mail: mail@stammering.org
Website: <http://www.stammer.demon.co.uk>

Specific Learning Difficulties

British Dyslexia Association (BDA)
98 London Road
Reading RG1 5AU
Tel: 01189 662677
Fax: 01189 351927
E-mail: infor@dyslexiahelp-bda.demon.co.uk
Website: www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk

The Dyspraxia Foundation
8 West Alley
Hitchin SG5 1EG
Tel: 01462 454986
Fax: 01462 455052
Website: <http://www.emmbrook.demon.co.uk>

National Autistic Society
393 City Road
London EC1V 1NE
Tel: 020 7833 2299
Fax: 020 7833 9666
E-mail: nas@nas.org.uk
Website: http://www.oneworld.org/autism_uk

Prospects

Catherine Burkin

Manager

Studio 8, The Ivories

6-8 Northampton Street

London N1 2HY

Tel: 020 7704 7450

Fax: 020 7359 9440

E-mail: cburkin@nas.org.uk

Website: www.oneworld.org/autism_uk/prospects/employers.html

Prospects provides information, advice and support to people with autism/Asperger's syndrome and their employers. Assistance is available prior to and during the term of employment.

Learning Disabilities

Down's Syndrome Association

155 Mitcham Road

London SW17 9PG

Tel: 020 8682 4001

Fax: 020 8682 4012

Website: www.downs-syndrome.org.uk

Mencap National Centre

123 Golden Lane

London EC1Y 0RT

Tel: 020 7454 0454

Fax: 020 7608 3254

E-mail: info@mencap.org.uk

Website: <http://www.mencap.org.uk>

National Development Team for People with Learning Disabilities

St Peter's Court

8 Trumpet Street

Manchester M1 5LW

Tel: 0161 228 7055

Fax: 0161 228 7059

E-mail: office@ndt.org.uk

Website: www.ndt.org.uk

Medical Conditions

British Colostomy Association (BCA)

15 Station Road

Reading RG1 1LG

Tel: 01724 391537

Fax: 01724 569095 CHECK

E-mail: sue@bcass.org.uk

Website: <http://bcass.org.uk>

British Diabetic Association

10 Queen Anne Street

London W1M 0BD

Tel: 020 7323 1531

Fax: 020 7637 3644

Website: www.diabetes.org.uk

British Epilepsy Association

New Anstey House

Gate Way Drive

Yeadon

Leeds KS19 7XY

Tel: 0113 2108800

Fax: 0113 3910300

Helpline: 0800 309020

E-mail: epilepsy@bea.org.uk

Website: www.epilepsy.org.uk

British Heart Foundation

14 Fitzhardinge Street

London W1H 4DH

Tel: 020 7935 0185

Fax: 020 7486 5820

Website: www.bhf.org.uk

Cancer BACUP

3, Bath Place

Rivington Street

London EC2A 3DR

Tel: 0808 800 1234

Website: <http://www.cancerbacup.org.uk>

Cancerlink

11-21 Northdown Street

London N1 9BN

Helpline: 0808 808 0000

Tel: 020 7833 2818

Fax: 020 7833 4963

E-mail: cancerlink@cancerlink.org.uk

Haemophilia Society

3rd Floor

Chesterfield House

385 Euston Road

London NW1 3AU

Tel: 020 7380 0600

Fax: 020 7387 8220

E-mail: info@haemophilia.org.uk

Website: www.haemophilia.org.uk

Ileostomy and Internal Pouch Support Group

PO Box 132

Scunthorpe DN15 9YW

Tel: 0800 018 4724

Fax: 01724 721 601

Website: <http://www.ileostomypouch.demon.uk>

ME Association

4, Corringham Road

Stanford-le-Hope

Essex SS17 0AH

Tel: 01375 642466

Fax: 01375 360256

E-mail: enquiries@meassociation.org.uk

Website: <http://www.meassociation.org.uk>

National Asthma Campaign (NAC)

Providence House

Providence Place

London N1 0NT

Tel: 020 7226 2260

Fax: 020 7704 0740

Website: <http://www.asthma.org.uk>

National Back Pain Association
16 Elm Tree Road
Teddington
Middlesex TW11 8ST
Tel: 020 8977 5474
Fax 020 8943 5318
E-mail: back_pain@compuserve.com
Website: <http://www.backpain.org.uk>

National Eczema Society
163 Eversholt Street
London NW1 1BU
Tel: 020 7388 4097
Fax: 020 7388 5882
E-mail: info@eczema.org.uk
Website: <http://www.eczema.org.uk>

Sickle Cell Society
54 Station Road
London Nw10 4UA
Tel: 020 8961 7795
Fax: 020 8961 8346
E-mail: sicklecellsoc@btinternet.com
Website: www.sicklecellsociety.org

Terrence Higgins Trust
52-54 Grays Inn Road
London WC1X 8JU
Tel: 020 8831 0330
Fax: 020 8242 0121
Helpline: 020 8242 1010
E-mail: info@tht.org.uk
Website: <http://www.tht.ork.uk>

The National Association of Laryngectomee Clubs
Ground Floor
6, Rickett Street
Fulham
London SW6 1RU
Tel: 020 7381 9993
Fax: 020 7381 0025

UK Advisory Panel Secretariat
Room 724
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8UG
Tel: 020 7972 4378
Fax:

Mental Health

National Association for Mental Health (MIND)
Granta House
15-19 Broadway
London E15 4BQ
Tel: 020 8522 1728
Fax: 020 8522 1725
Infoline: 0345 660 163
Website: <http://www.mind.org.uk>

National Clubhouse Association
Old Fox House
1 Old Fox Yard
Ipswich Street
Stowmarket
Suffolk IP14 1AB
Tel: 01449 774966
Fax:
E-mail: members@oldfox.keme.co.uk
Website: <http://www.keme.co.uk/oldfox.htm>

NSF (previously the National Schizophrenia Society)
30 Tabernacle Street
London EC2A 4DD
Tel: 020 7330 9100
Fax: 020 7300 9102
E-mail: info@london.nsf.org.uk
Website: <http://www.msf.org.uk>

Physical Disabilities

Arthritis Care
18, Stephenson Way
London NW1 2HD
Tel: 020 7916 1500
Fax: 020 7916 1505
Website: <http://www.arthritiscare.org.uk>

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH)

ASBAH House

42 Park Road

Peterborough PE1 2UQ

Tel: 01733 555988

Fax: 01733 555 985

E-mail: postmastet@asbah.demon.co.uk

Website: <http://www.asbah.demon.co.uk>

British Polio Fellowship

Ground Floor Unit A

Eagle Office Centre

The Runway

South Ruislip HA4 6

Tel: 020 8842 4999

Fax: 020 8842 0555

Website: <http://www.healthworks.co.uk/hw/orgs/polio.html>

Brittle Bone Society

30 Guthrie Street

Dundee DD1 5BS

Tel: 01382 204446/7

Fax: 01382 206771

Changing Faces (representing people with facial disfigurements)

27 Cowper Street

London EC2A 4AP

Tel: 0171 251 4232

Fax:

E-mail:

Cystic Fibrosis Research Trust

11 London Road

Bromley

Kent BR1 3RS

Tel: 020 8464 7211

Fax: 020 8313 0472

Website: <http://www.cftrust.org.uk>

HEADWAY – National Head Injuries Association

4 King Edward Court

King Edward Street

Nottingham NG1 1EW

Tel: 0115 924 0800

Fax: 0115 9884466

E-mail: info@headway.ork.uk

Website: <http://www.headway.org.uk>

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
25 Effie Road
London SW6 1EE
Tel: 020 7610 7171
Fax: 020 7736 9861
Website: <http://www.mssociety.org.uk>

Muscular Dystrophy Campaign
7-11 Prescott Place
London SW4 6BS
Tel: 020 7720 8055
Fax: 020 7498 0670
Helpline: 01375 361013
E-mail: info@muscular-dystrophy.org.uk
Website: <http://www.muscular-dystrophy.org.uk>

The RSI Association
380-384 Harrow Road
London W9 2HU
Tel: 0171 266 2000
Helpline: 0800 018 5012

Scope (for people with cerebral palsy)
6-10 Market Road
London N7 9PW
Tel: 0171 636 5020
Fax: 0171 436 2601
Helpline: 0800 626216
E-mail: cphelpline@scope.org.uk
Website: <http://www.scope.org.uk>

Spinal Injuries Association (SIA)
76 St James's Lane
London N10 3DF
Tel: 0181 444 2121
Fax: 0181 444 3761
E-mail: sia@spinal.co.uk
Website: <http://www/spinal.co.uk>

Visual Impairments

Action for Blind People

14-16 Verney Road

London SE16 3DZ

Tel: 0171 732 8771

Fax: 0171 639 0948

Website: <http://www.demon.co.uk/afbp>

Association of Visually Impaired Office Staff (AVIOS)

BM AVIOS

London WC1N 3XX

AVIOS is a self-help organisation of visually impaired people, employed, training or having experience of an office-related occupation. It promotes the employment of blind and partially sighted people in all office-related occupations.

Blind in Business

Wingate Annexe

St Alphage House

2, Fore Street

London EC2Y 5DA

Tel: 0171 588 1885

Fax: 0171 588 1866

The Partially Sighted Society

62 Salisbury Road

London NW6 6RH

Tel: 0171 372 1551

Fax: 01302 368998

The Royal National Institute for the Blind

224 Great Portland Street

London W1N 6AA

Tel: 0171 388 1266

Fax: 0171 388 2034

Helpline: 0345 66 99 99

E-mail: Helpline@rnib.org.uk

Website: <http://www.rnib.org.uk>

Section 15: Further information

General

For information on the Disability Discrimination Act:

A range of leaflets about various aspects of the Act is available. To obtain copies telephone 0345 622 633, or textphone 0345 622 644. Copies are available in alternative formats and from the Internet (www.disability.gov.uk)

Code of Practice for the elimination of discrimination in the field of employment against disabled persons or persons who have had a disability. Priced publication, ISBN 011-270954-0, available from The Stationary Office Available free of charge, and in summary form, from <http://disability.gov.uk/dda/dlecop-elim.html>

Code of Practice on rights of access, goods, facilities, services and premises Priced publication, ISBN 010-143102-3, available from the Stationary Office Available free of charge from <http://disability.gov.uk/dda/dle/cop-accs.html>

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995: Guidance for Occupational Physicians, The Society of Occupational Medicine Available from the Society of Occupational Medicine, 6 St Andrews Place, Regents Park, London

There a number range of Employment service leaflets available. Contact your local Employment Service office for copies of “Access to Work” and “Becoming a Disability Symbol user”

From Exclusion to Inclusion – Report of the Disability Rights Taskforce Free Publication available from the DDA helpline 0345 622 644 or ddahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk .The Report is also available on the Government’s disability website at <http://www.disability.gov.uk>

Employment of Disabled people: Assessing the Extent of Participation Priced Publication, ISBN 085522 811, available from the Stationary Office. A summary is available free of charge from <http://www/dfee.gov.uk/research/report69.html>

NHS Specific

AIDS/HIV Infected Health Care Workers: Guidance on the Management of Infected Health Care Workers and Patient Notification: Recommendations of the Expert Advisory Group on AIDS; UK Health Departments HSC 1998/226 and HSC 1998/064, "Management of Health, Safety and Welfare Issues for NHS Staff" and "HIV Infected Health Care Workers Guidance on the Management of Infected Health Care Workers and Patient Notification"

Advance Letter (GC)2/98. Section 43 of the General Whitley Council Handbook: A national statement on the participation of NHS employers in the New Deal Welfare to Work programme

Disability Now is the leading newspaper for disabled people in the UK. Further details on subscribing to Disability Now can be found by visiting their website at: <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

The Directory for Disabled people, published by RADAR and the National Information Forum, is a guide to the full range of services, facilities and opportunities available to disabled people. Priced £17.95 it can be obtained from:

The National Information Forum
Post Point 10/11
BT Burne House
Bell Street
London NW1 5BZ
Tel: 020 7402 6681
Fax: 020 7402 1259

The Disability Rights Handbook, published by the Disability Alliance ERA is priced £11 and is available from:

CPAG
1-5 Bath Street
London EC1V 9PY

CANDO

Website: <http://cando.lancs.ac.uk>

The CANDO website exists to help university students and graduates find jobs. It also has several pages aimed at employers.

Disability Net

Website: <http://www.disabilitynet.co.uk>

A worldwide information and news service for disabled people and those interested in disability issues. Carries a wide range of disability information and links to other useful websites.

Disability on the Agenda

Website: <http://www.disability.gov.uk>

The official disability website providing information on disability legislation.

Workable

Website: <http://members.aol.com./workableuk>

Workable is a charity that aims to raise employer awareness of the skills that disabled people possess. It operates schemes, which enable employers to offer work experience to disabled candidates with a view to longer-term employment.



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Department of Health, PO Box 777,
London SE1 6XH.

Or you could call the NHS Response Line
on: 0541 555 455

It is also on our website on: www.doh.gov.uk/jointunit/jip.htm