

NO WRONG DOOR.



How to begin recruiting and retaining individuals from more diverse backgrounds

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON



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South London Partnership



The South London

Partnership (SLP) is a cross-party five borough sub-regional partnership of Croydon, Kingston-upon-Thames, Merton, Richmond-upon-Thames and Sutton.

It has a small core team working closely with politicians, chief executives, senior managers and subject specialists in each of the five boroughs, as well as London and local stakeholders and partners.

Together they have forged an ambitious programme of work that is securing



greater sub-regional collaboration and traction on areas including, health, economy, skills and transport.

The SLP boroughs collaborate sub-regionally when they can secure more together than individually.

The SLP team focuses on areas where collaboration leads to increased influence, increased powers and funding and better delivery of the services our residents need.

The South London Integration Hub is an exciting project, forming part of the Mayor's London Recovery Missions and the **'No Wrong Door'** approach to employment and skills support, to be delivered across the five SLP boroughs.

At present, the employment and skills landscape is complex, fragmented, and difficult for Londoners to navigate. This means that Londoners often struggle to access the support that could best meet their needs, and that services are not as coordinated as they could be.

The Integration Hub approach has been developed to address the information and communication failures and the structural and service deficiencies in the skills and employment system.

The Integration Hub will drive integration, boost partnership working, create high-quality referral pathways,



strengthen practitioner know-how and embed resident and service user voice into strategic planning and service delivery.

The overarching aim of the Integration Hub is to support key groups of Londoners who are jobless and disproportionately impacted by Covid-19 and/or are facing vulnerabilities or structural inequalities, to enable them to access good work.

It's 2025! - surely we've got recruitment and diverse talent all figured out - right?

Unemployment is at its lowest levels for decades, and individuals are making sure, now more than ever that they can find the right fit. This may be affecting your business because you can't recruit and are having to turn down orders or reduce your capacity.

So what if we told you that there is a workforce out there waiting to hear from you, one which is waiting for you to open your door?

A workforce of the most loyal and committed staff, because they want to work, not just for the money and independence, but for all the other stuff. Pride, friendships, learning new skills and a worthwhile career.

So where are they?

Well these individuals may face additional barriers to get in to the workplace, that impact their physical or mental health. They may need more flexibility in working hours, adaptations to the job role or work environment or some additional supervision.

We probably already know these individuals, either through family, friends or social groups and they are often not given any opportunity for meaningful employment, because the focus is always on the drain rather than the gain.

This guide is here to offer you information, resources and links to help you consider what you need to do to attract more diverse talent.

1

Understand some of the disabilities, mental health and long term conditions you may come across

2

Understand more clearly what the barriers are to your own workplace and how these can often be overcome

3

Find out more about the support available from organisations in the directory

Do you *know* how many people in your organisation have a disability or long term health condition?



UNDERSTANDING THE BARRIERS FOR INDIVIDUALS TO ENTER THE WORKPLACE

Well, unsurprisingly, there is still a lot to work on. Research conducted with a wide range of individuals from the Greater London Authority in 2022, by the Young Foundation concluded:

"People with a disability find it particularly challenging to find good work or enter training. When finding out about services that can support disabled people into good work, disabled respondents said they often have to self-advocate and seek out opportunities alone. Some they feel it will work against them and prevent them from getting a job."

The 3 key recommendations of this research were:

Bring employers and the community/voluntary sector together to work more closely

Schemes such as the [The Mayors Good Work Standard](#) and [The Disability Confident Scheme](#) offer support to employers and are a good introduction, but more needs to be done to support the connection of these sectors.

Strengthen equality, diversity and inclusion within the system

Service users with disabilities frequently spoke about encountering discrimination when trying to access jobs. Many individuals reported facing stigma and discrimination when trying to find and access jobs. This happened when seeking employment support as well as when in interviews or in employment.

Recognise that mental health and neurodiversity present additional challenges

For service users with **autism** and **neurodiversity**, there was even less understanding from employers on how it could present in interviews, and so they felt judged on behaviours directly linked to their disability. **The stigma that still surrounds mental health means the real barriers that it presents are not well understood, especially in relation to employment.**



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

How does it benefit the business?

Gain a market advantage

These individuals may have been out of your reach before and could have a significant impact on your services, products and turnover if you can embrace the adjustments needed to make it work.

"The total spending power of families with at least 1 disabled person is estimated at £274 billion a year."

(SCOPE, 2023)

Valuable skills

They may have some skills that are significantly more developed, such as empathy, concentration, interpersonal or digital which your business is lacking.

Recruitment

Recruitment shortages are everywhere but there are many more people with a disability or learning difficulty that are unemployed. In fact if you are disabled, you are 28% less likely to find employment. By adapting your recruitment strategy you can find new talent.



Workplace Culture

Your workplace culture may be out of date, or not inclusive. Bringing in diverse voices in roles across the business, including senior leadership, can create opportunities for transformation and change across the organisation.

Resilience and Commitment

Many individuals may have faced significant challenges, physical or mental to be in a position to take their steps towards employment. These challenges may still be occurring every day. This creates a level of commitment and resilience which may surprise other employees and create positive role models.

Find out more...

About different routes you can offer in your workplace through the employer case studies.

To connect with any of these organisations and many others that can support you to make your workplace more accessible and inclusive, take a look at the back few pages.



Croydon Mencap

Supporting volunteers in the workplace

Describe your involvement with the disability/long term health employment journey

We provide meaningful voluntary roles for adults with a learning disability. We work closely with local organisations offering voluntary positions to ensure both organisations and our members can have a positive experience. We help our members to prepare for their chosen role in line with their skills, interests and personalities. Providing a buddy or project coordinator for the first 4-6 weeks of the their volunteer placement.

How would you describe any support you offer to employers?

Whilst we do not specifically provide a route to employment, we provide both in person support and phone/email support for both our members and organisations that we partner with for the initial agreed placement period. Our members will attend placement initially with a buddy with a view for the volunteer and organisation to continue to work together for a fixed time. After a review both member and organisation can decide if they would like to continue. Croydon Mencap will continue to be background support for the organisation and Croydon Mencap member.

What are the most common barriers you find with employers when setting up this sort of opportunity?

Finding an organisation to commit to placement initially can be challenging especially if they have never worked with adults a learning disability. Organisations will often state that the do not have staff available to support a member or they have little or no understanding of what support would be involved.

Are there any resources you would recommend to employers to help them prepare or support in the workplace?

Safeguarding vulnerable adults, boundaries and equality and diversity all have free online courses.

How do you think we can encourage more employers to offer opportunities?

A buddy scheme works well for many organisations we partner with and is also helpful to our members to get them started. More organisations would benefit from training and I think would an incentive would be helpful.

Are there any other points you would like to make that would support an individuals journey to employment?

Finding something that suits your skills, personalities and interests is really important, followed ideally by a volunteer route or program with training to see if it really is the right fit.

Did you know?

There are 14.6 million disabled people in the UK. 21% are of working age, that's over 3 million people!

AND YET

Disabled people (aged 16 - 64) are 28.1% less likely to be in employment than non-disabled people...

WHAT IMPACT COULD YOU HAVE ON YOUR BUSINESS AND THE COMMUNITY?

Offering a job role or a work experience placement to someone who has a Learning Disability or other Long-Term Health condition, both physical and/or mental could help you to:

- » access a wider range of **talent** and create a more **diverse** workforce
- » engage your business with the local community by creating a workforce that reflects the range of customers you serve
- » add to your workforce development plans and encourage personal development within your current team
- » bring additional skills/lived experience to your business (such as the ability to communicate in British Sign Language)
- » promote the development of diversity of thought and fresh ideas
- » overcome recruitment shortages
- » create hybrid working opportunities
- » be more representative of society in general

All of which could also bring **economic and social benefits** to your business and local community!

Sutton Mencap Employer Case Study



Sutton Mencap is a local charity providing services to children and adults with a learning disability.

We have always sought to include people with a learning disability and autism in our workforce. We look to employ people as support workers, working directly with people who use our services and in back office functions such as administration and information technology.

As with any employer, we need to make sure that all staff make a valuable contribution to the work of the organisation. In terms of employing people with a learning disability, this means having a really strong understanding of skills and abilities and how we should respond to individual needs, so that we can get the best out of people.

It is not about treating everyone as if they are exactly the same. We've had to adapt recruitment and selection processes and redesign roles so that they match the

strengths of the individual staff member. We have also needed to put in place high quality support and supervision, tailor-made to meet individual needs.

We are the first to admit that we haven't always been successful. Sometimes, despite our efforts, we have found the role has been too challenging for the individual and too difficult to adapt to meet their specific needs. But in many cases we have made it work, and as a result we have been able to recruit some highly committed and motivated staff who bring their own skills and understanding to the work of the organisation.

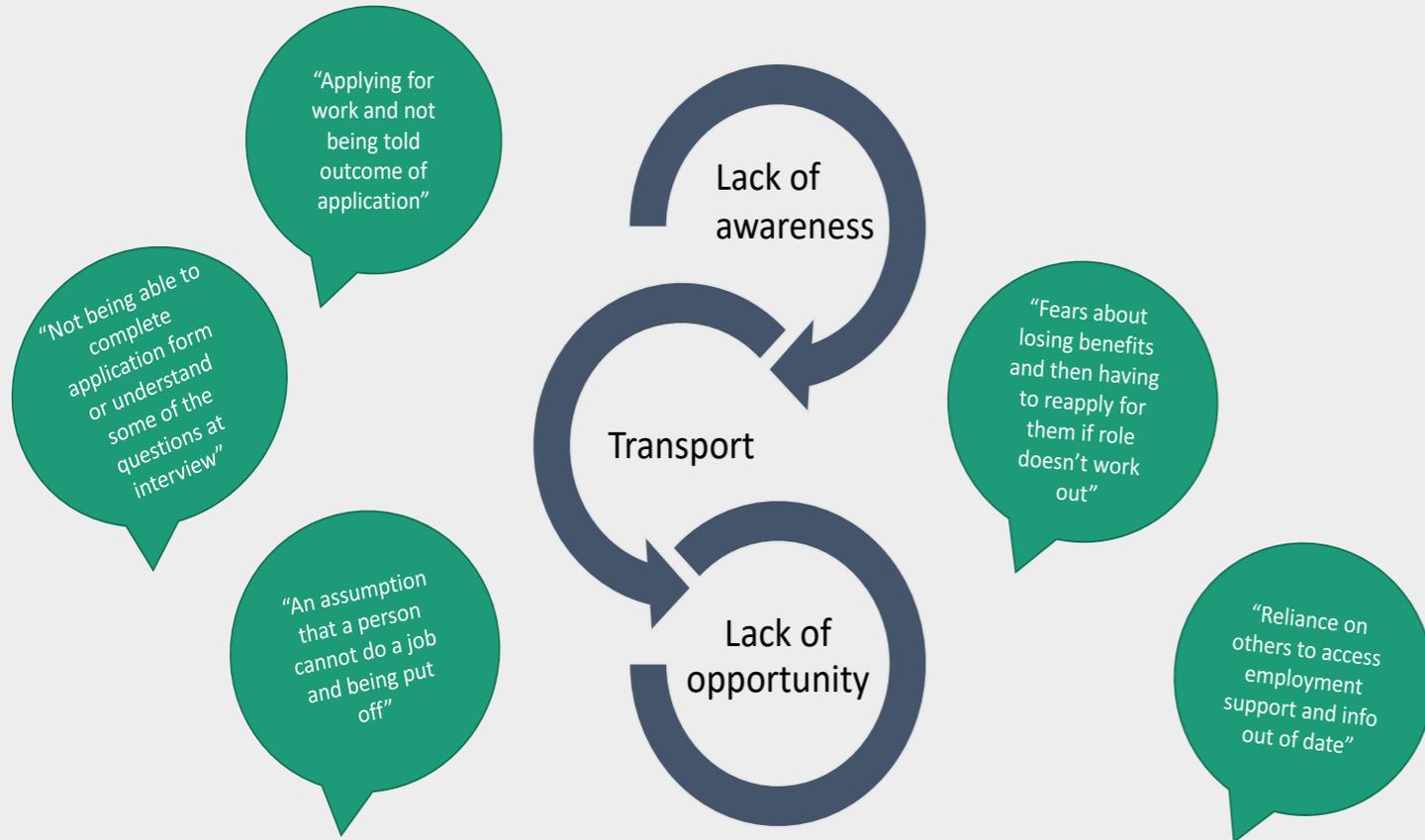
We know how important paid work is. It strengthens independence and helps people to be more involved in their local community. Being part of a staff team is important for social contact and avoiding isolation.

But it also makes sense for us as an employer, providing us with a wider pool for recruitment and some excellent, dedicated staff members.

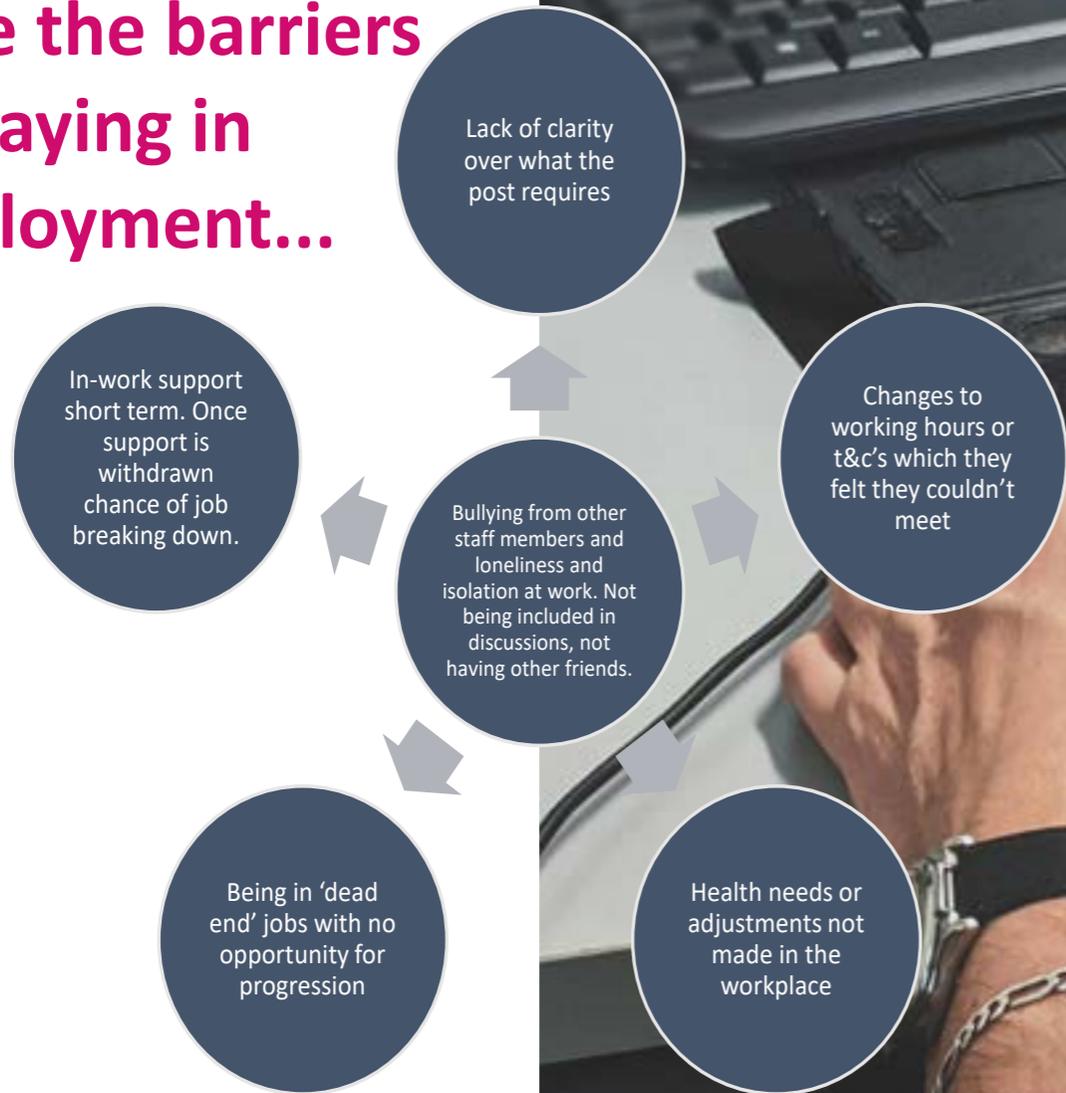


Barriers to finding Employment

In March 2023, Sutton Mencap facilitated a focus group on the barriers for individuals seeking employment and this is what they said...



... and once in work, these were the barriers to staying in Employment...



...from this focus group, they have produced an easy to read guide for employers which you can download here



Employment Gap: An easy read guide for employers and people with a learning disability

Introduction

 <p>Workshops</p>	This guide is all about employing people with a learning disability.
 <p>Sutton Mencap</p>	It was produced by Sutton Mencap for the South London Partnership.
	Sutton Mencap held a workshop with 11 people with a learning disability in February 2023.
	We asked people to tell us about their experiences of looking for work, and staying in work.

The Buddy Volunteering Project

T joined the Volunteering Buddy project in January 2022. She has mild learning disabilities and Rubinstein Taybi syndrome. T resides in assisted living and can travel independently but previously did not have many activities to take part in. She said she used to feel lonely and not have many things to look forward to. Her condition can restrict her mobility, and balance. Walking distances and standing for long periods can be challenging. She also told us she needs help with using money, new travel routes and understanding instructions.

Getting started

T was eager to start volunteering as soon as possible despite not yet having a buddy, and as she has a keen interest in gardening, she started in a volunteer role at Park Hill's walled garden. As we have other buddy support in regular attendance, we appointed a stand in buddy to help T with her route getting to the park.

Other Support

Sometimes T also needs support with managing her enthusiasm, as she will barely pause to break when given a task and can often try to push herself when a task is getting too much. At times T can be hasty to get things done quickly and not pay attention to surroundings and needs regular reminders to take breaks and drink water as this would often slip her



mind. Her stand in buddy supported her in these areas also.

Another role

T was matched to a buddy, 3 months ago and since then, she has increased the amount of volunteer gardening sessions she has attended and has told us she feels more positive. T and her buddy have also recently started a new role at a Sustainable Thornton Heath pop-up hub on the refreshment counter. Despite initially feeling hesitant, T thoroughly enjoyed getting involved with washing up, serving customers, and assisted her buddy with collecting payments. T and her buddy were a great team, and T was excited to put her name forward to volunteer at the next hub.

Now

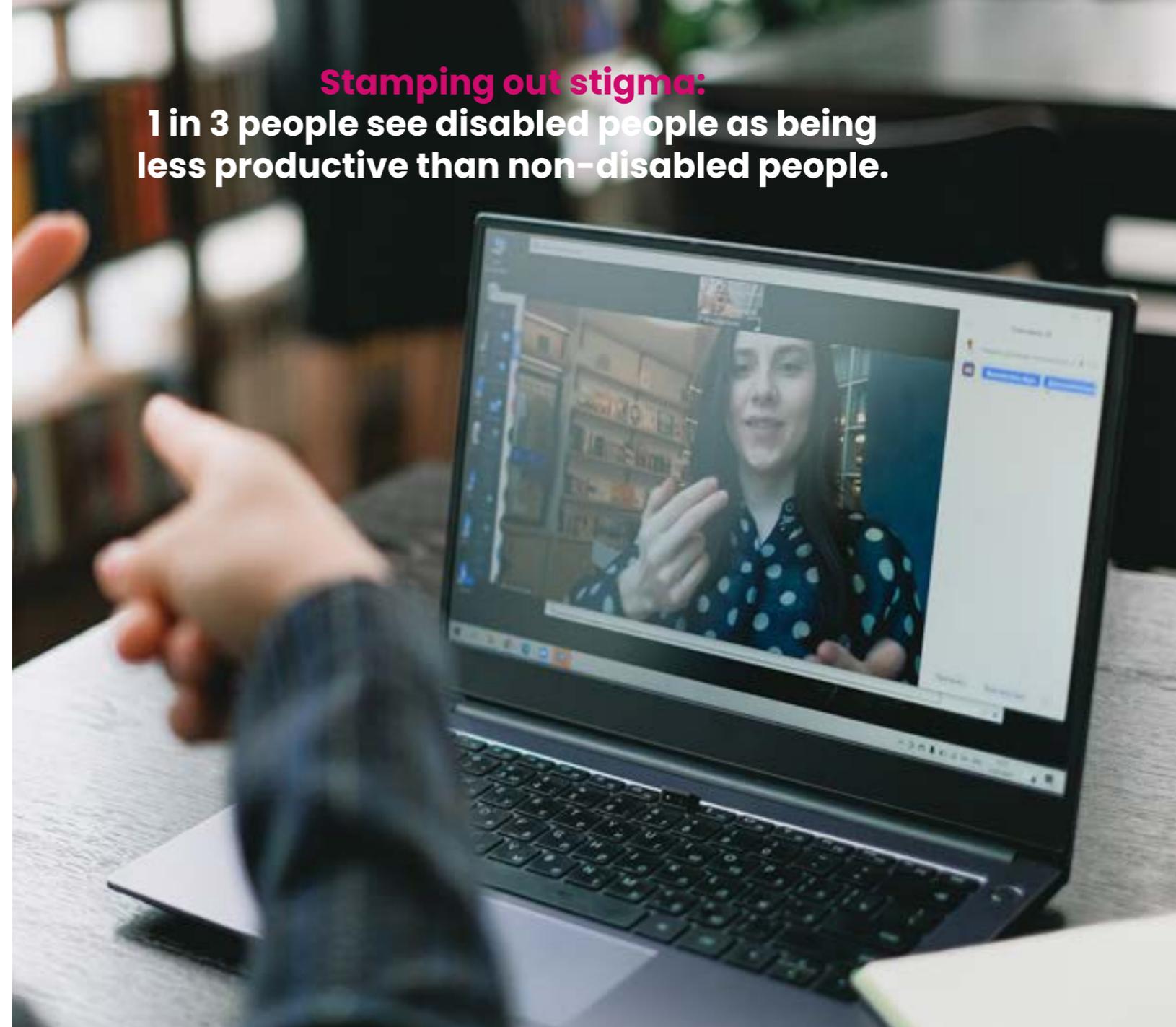
T's ability to listen and feed back to the garden volunteering host has greatly improved, she even suggested that gardening times should be reviewed during the hotter summer months to miss the hottest time of day. She tells us she is feeling better thanks to meeting new people, having things to do and feeling useful. T continues to grow and thrive and has recently joined Croydon Mencap's Out and About activity programme, which she is really enjoying.

Meet T! Buddy Volunteer

"Despite initially feeling hesitant, T thoroughly enjoyed getting involved with washing up, serving customers, and assisted her buddy with collecting payments."



Improve your understanding of common physical and mental barriers to employment.



Stamping out stigma:
1 in 3 people see disabled people as being less productive than non-disabled people.

Understanding Hidden Vs Visible disabilities



It is important to acknowledge that not all disabilities are visible. Often those with hidden disabilities can receive discrimination from others who think they are not disabled. Hidden disabilities can be physical, mental or neurological. Some examples of hidden disabilities are:



MENTAL HEALTH

ADHD

LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

ASTHMA

DIABETES

LONG COVID

CHRONIC FATIGUE

AUTISM

CHROHN'S DISEASE

VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

HEARING LOSS

inclusivesymbols.com

On the telly: [ITV's Invisible Disabilities campaign calling for Disability Allies with SCOPE](#)

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

A physical disability is defined as a “limitation on a person's physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina” that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on an individual’s ability to do normal daily activities. (Equality Act,2010).

Every person with a physical disability is unique. Physical disabilities can range from:

- degenerative conditions
- trauma (physical and birth)
- chromosome disorders
- musculoskeletal conditions
- limb differences
- complex medical needs

Making it easier for those with a physical disability to access the workplace is known as a 'reasonable adjustment'.

You can find out more about making 'reasonable adjustments' on page? There are also other options such as home working or hybrid working to consider.

Impairment types reported by disabled people 2020/21				
Impairment type	Children	Working age	State Pension age	All ages
Mobility	15%	42%	63%	46%
Stamina/breathing/fatigue	19%	32%	38%	33%
Mental health	21%	42%	9%	20%
Dexterity	9%	22%	29%	23%
Memory	6%	12%	11%	11%
Learning	20%	12%	5%	11%
Hearing*	5%	7%	17%	10%
Vision	5%	7%	13%	9%
Social/behavioural	37%	8%	1%	8%
Other	21%	23%	23%	23%

Note: Data for the 'Hearing' category should be treated with caution due to the possible sampling limitations of interviewing by telephone this survey year.
Source: DWP, Family Resources Survey, financial year 2020/21, disability table 4.6

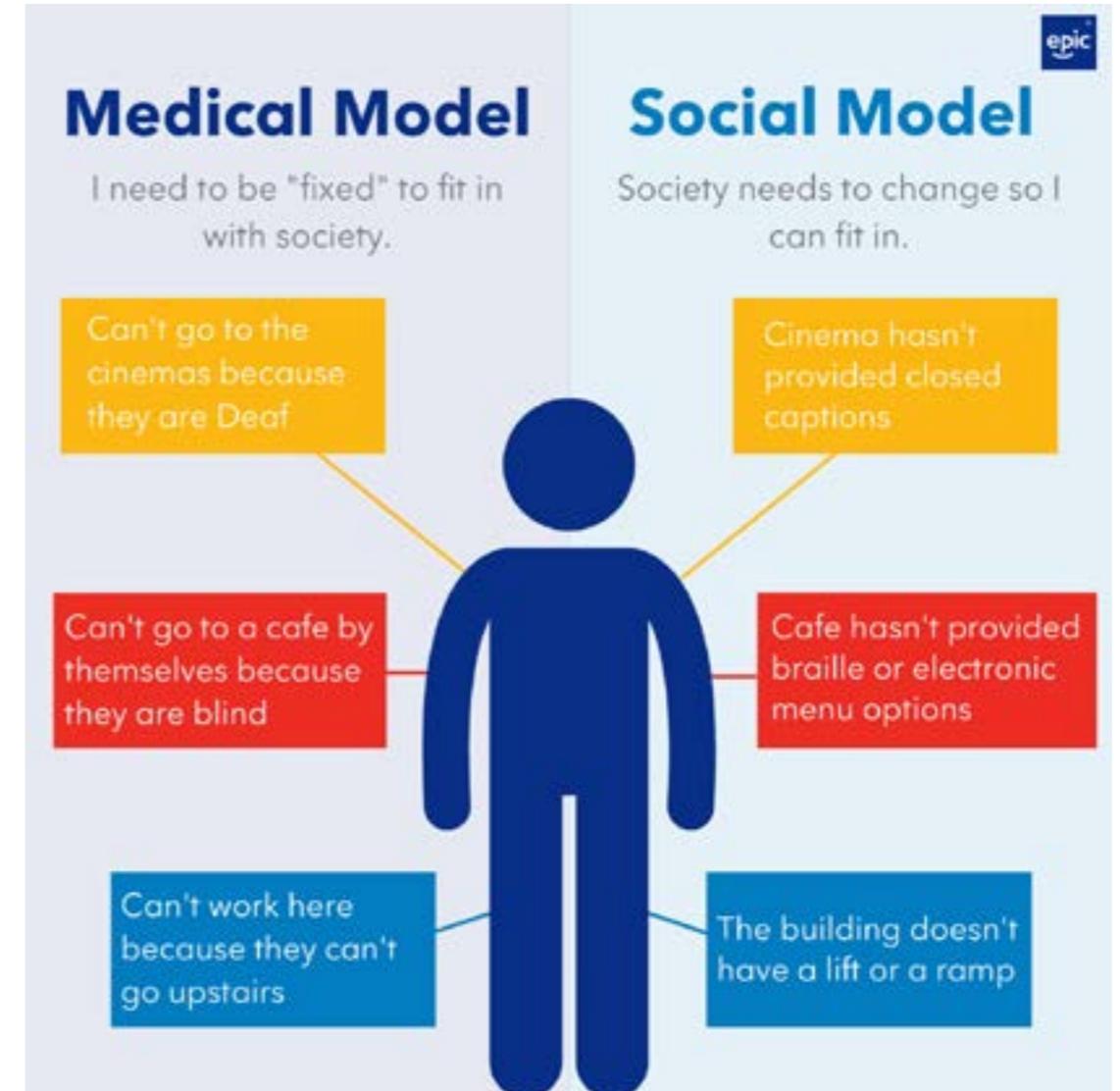


Image: epicassist.org

NEURODIVERSITY

The term 'Neurodiversity' was first used in the late 1990s with reference to people with Autism. These days, the definition of neurodiversity has morphed and grown to refer to anyone who is less neuro-typical. Between 10-20% of the world population is considered neurodivergent (World Economic Forum)

Neurodivergence can be defined as:

"...a word that describes someone who has a condition that affects how they think and process information and sensory input such as sound, light, and smell. It is a broad term, used to describe the many and varying ways in which human brains are wired."
(Leeds Autism AIM and Autistic UK, 2022).

This could include neurodiversities such as:

Autism ADHD Asperger's Syndrome Dyslexia
Dyscalculia Dyspraxia Epilepsy Tourette's Syndrome

Often individuals have a unique combination of difficulties, this can also be known as Specific Learning Difficulties or SpLDs.

[Genius Within CIC](#), a social enterprise that supports neurodivergent people explains that:

"Neurodiversity is the concept that all humans vary in terms of our neurocognitive ability. Everyone has both talents and things they struggle with. However, for some people the variation between those strengths and challenges is more pronounced, which can bring advantage but can also be disabling."



Illustration: Zoe Maxwell

UNDERSTANDING NEURODIVERGENCE

Taken from a recent article by the World Economic Forum, we explain some of the benefits that a neurodivergent individual can bring to the workplace.

Teams with neurodivergent professionals in some roles can be 30% more productive than those without them.

Inclusion and integration of neurodivergent professionals can also boost team morale, Deloitte reports.

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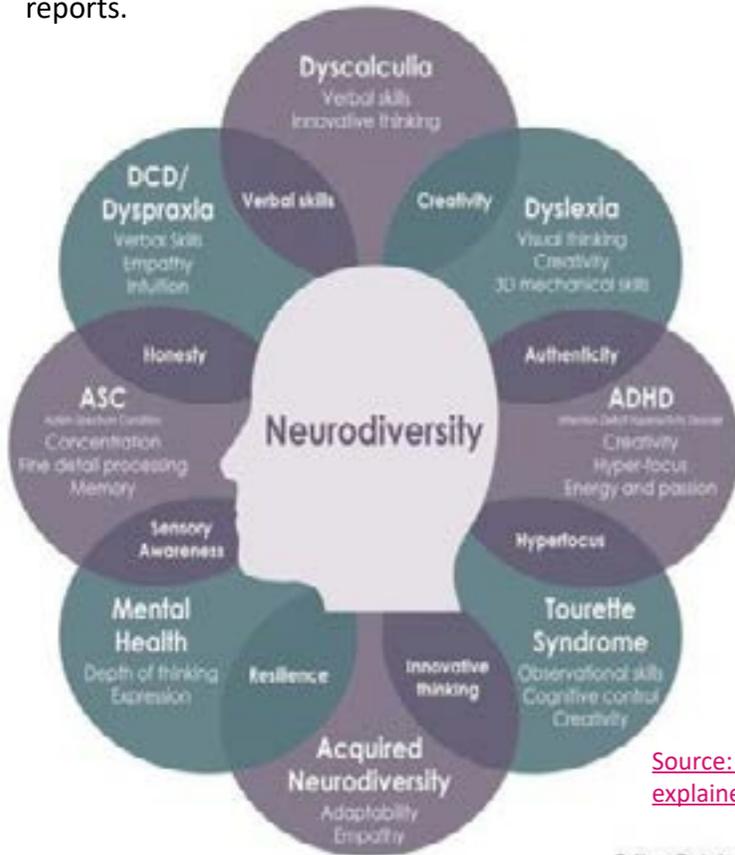
Inclusion and integration of neurodivergent professionals can also boost team morale, Deloitte reports.

Writing on neurodiversity and workplace opportunity for the World Economic Forum, Nahia Orduña, explains that:

- Autistic brains are said to be highly creative with exceptional concentration, logic, imagination and visual thought. They also tend to be systematic, meticulous and detailed and share unique insights and perspectives in problem-solving.
- People with ADHD have great imagination and score higher on creativity tests than non-ADHD people. ADHD people can hyperfocus, which means that while they generally have an attention deficit, they do have a high focus on their area of interest, reports CNN.
- Dyslexic people have demonstrated the ability to think outside the box: 84% of dyslexic people are above average in reasoning, understanding patterns, evaluating possibilities and making decisions, according to the charity Made by Dyslexia.

Source: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/10/explainer-neurodivergence-mental-health/>

Dr Nancy Doyle, based on the work of Mary Colley



Neurodiversity Terms to Know

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity refers to the natural diversity of human minds. It is a biological fact that we are diverse in our minds just like we are diverse in our ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc.

Neurodiversity acknowledges the whole spectrum of neurodiversity from neurodivergent individuals to neurotypical individuals.

created by Judy Singer

Neurodivergent

Neurodivergent is an umbrella term for individuals who have a mind or brain that diverges from what is typical. It can be acquired or genetic, an innate part of you or not.

Neurodivergence just means having a mind that functions differently to what is considered the norm including learning, processing, interpreting, feeling, etc.

created by Kassiane Asasumasu

Neurotypical

Neurotypical refers to having a mind or functioning that falls within the society standards of what is deemed "typical", "common" or "normal".

Neurotypical is the opposite of neurodivergent, someone who diverges, and it is not a negative word at all but a neutral word.

www.livedexperienceeducator.com

Neurodiverse

Neurodiverse is a term to describe a group of individuals who represent the spectrum of neurodiversity which includes neurotypical and neurodivergent individuals.

Remember, an individual cannot be neurodiverse. Individuals who aren't neurotypical would be neurodivergent.

@livedexperienceeducator

Words Matter
The neurodiversity movement promotes inclusive and non-judgmental language.

Many organisations prefer person-first language ("a person with autism", "a person with dyslexia").

However, some research suggests that the autistic community prefers the use of identify-first language ("an autistic person").

Rather than making assumptions, it is best to ask the individual about their preferred language.

Source: <https://therapyfocus.org.au/on-the-blog/understanding-neurodiversity/>

LEARNING DISABILITIES

The different types of learning difficulties and disabilities can include;

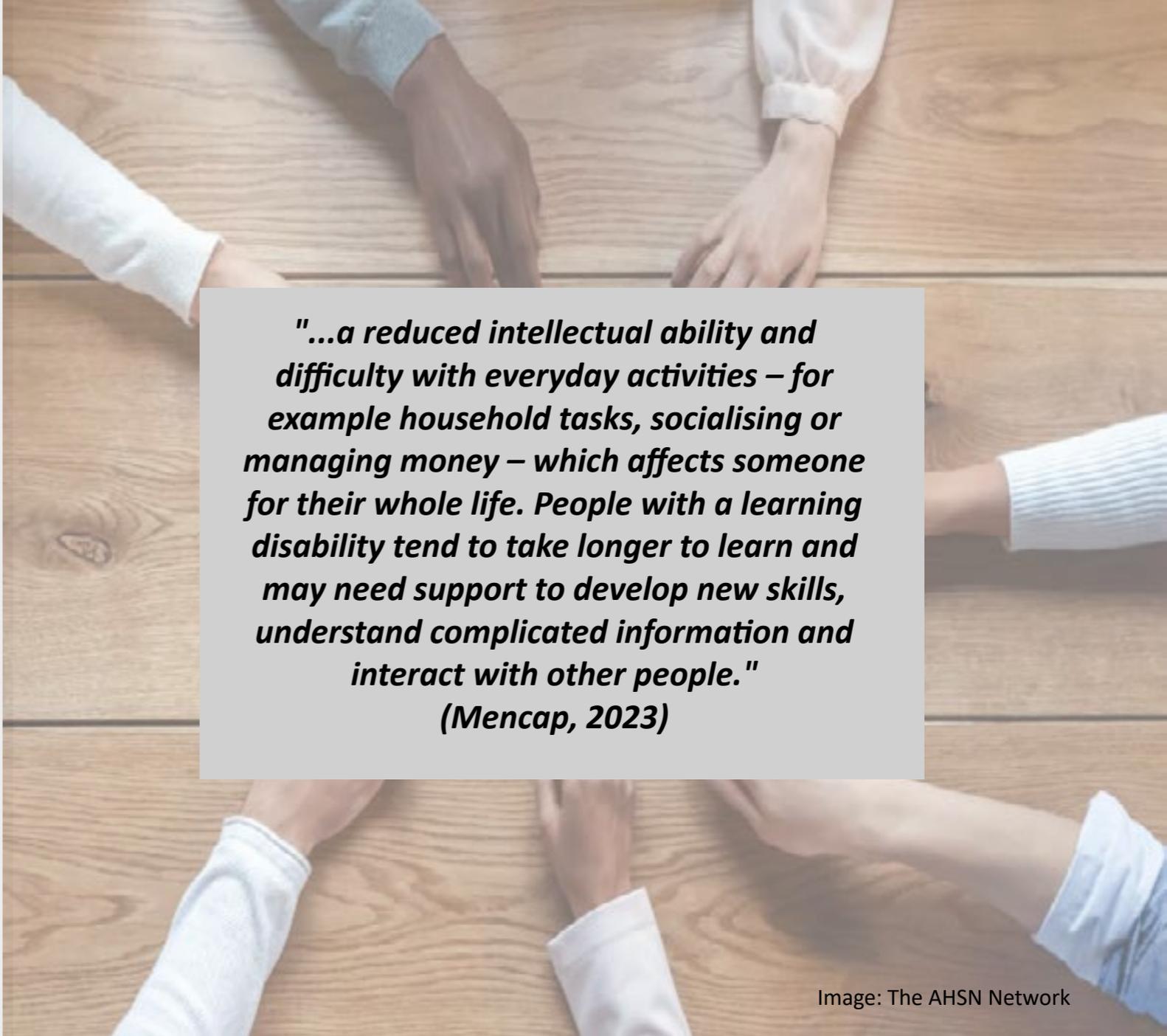
- cognitive and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- communication
- and/or physical and sensory difficulties

Within the education system learning disabilities are often referred to as SEND or Special Educational Needs or Disabilities. Children and young people in education with SEND often have an Education, Health and Care Plan, (EHCP).

An EHCP is a legal document that describes the child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It outlines the extra help that will be given and how it will support the child or young person to achieve what they want in life. The EHCP is for children and young people up to the age of 25. The plan will come to an end if the child or young person leaves education before they are 25, the plan is no longer needed or they reach the age of 25.

Many adults (18+) with SEND, if they are no longer eligible for an EHCP or they are part of Adult Services, may struggle to enter the world of work as they may not have been offered the same opportunities that those in education have now.

Many of these adults have had very limited support and access to further education and employment. [See BBC2's "Silenced: The Hidden Story of Disabled Britain"](#)



***"...a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities – for example household tasks, socialising or managing money – which affects someone for their whole life. People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn and may need support to develop new skills, understand complicated information and interact with other people."
(Mencap, 2023)***

Image: The AHSN Network

MENTAL HEALTH

Everyone has Mental Health.

It refers to emotional, psychological, and/or social well-being and it can affect how a person can think, feel and act. Poor mental health can impact on decision making, how a person relates to others and how they handle stress.

"1 in 4 adults experience a mental health problem in their life"
(<https://www.ccn.ac.uk/inclusive-toolkit/story.html>)

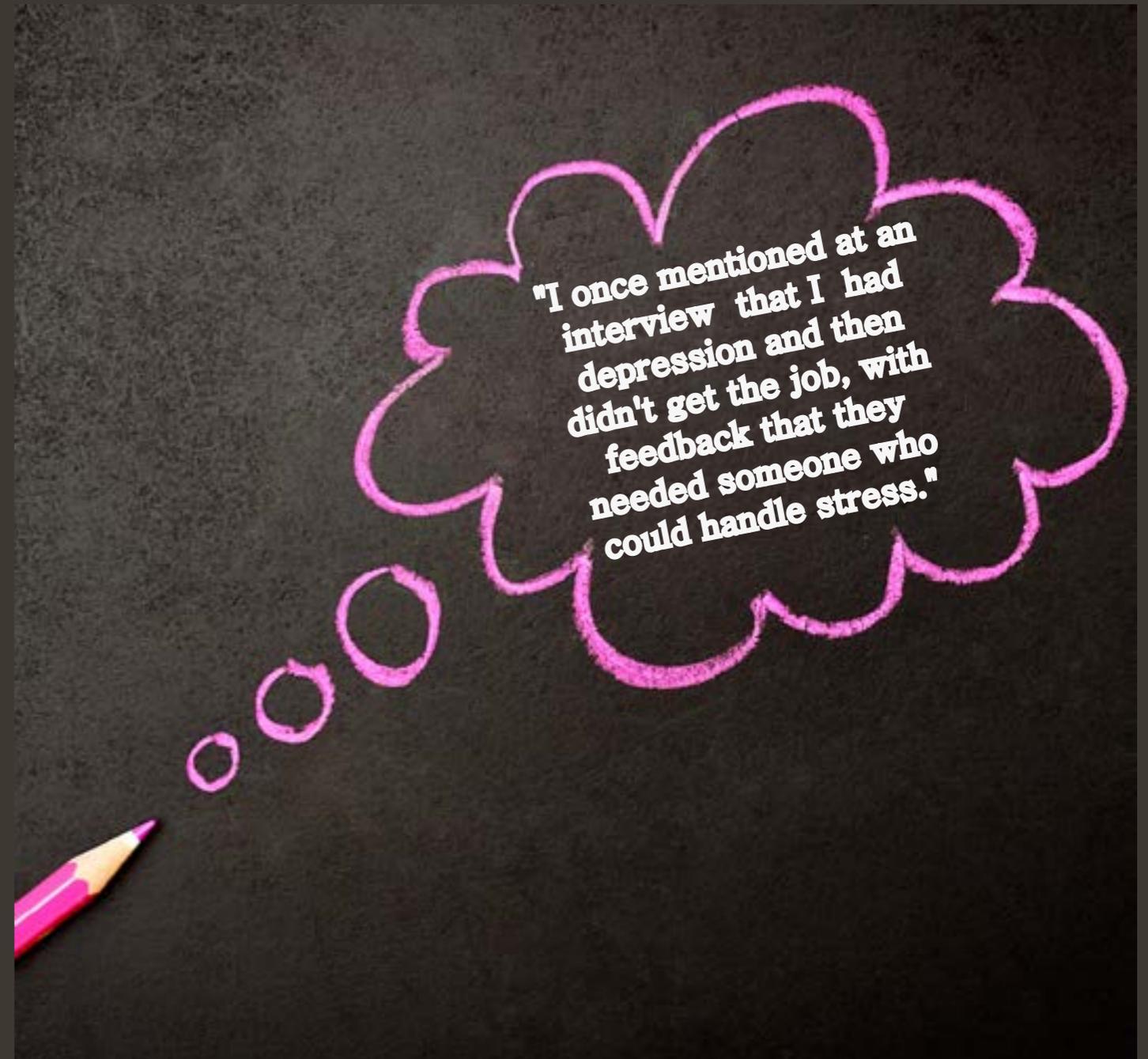
Mental Health conditions can be short or long-term. They can be one-off, acute episodes lasting a few weeks or months or they can be chronic, life-long conditions.

Some examples of mental health conditions are:

- anxiety;
- depression;
- bipolar disorder and
- personality disorder

Like most health conditions, individuals can often get better and recover, there are treatment plans, medications and a range of therapies. For some though, the battle with their mental health is every day.

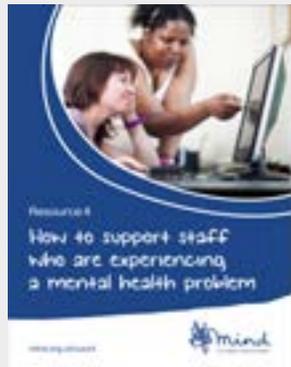
For many, work and employment can be a source of positivity, connection and independence if matched to their health needs.



WAYS TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

There can be fear about what it can involve supporting someone in the workplace who has a mental health condition.

The charity MIND has a great resource on "**How to support staff that are experiencing a mental health problem**" and includes 4 key areas:



1. How to create a culture that supports staff to be open about their mental health
2. How to have a conversation with someone about their mental health
3. How to support someone experiencing a mental health problem
4. How to manage an employee's time off sick and their return to work

<https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/4661/resource4.pdf>

Workplace stress if not tackled can trigger or aggravate an existing mental health condition.

You may need to make **reasonable adjustments** to reduce and manage stress for an individual to ensure they can work at their best.

The "Thriving at Work" report commissioned by the [Health & Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#), sets out a framework of actions, that employers of all sizes should put in to place, including:

- A mental health at work plan
- Developing mental health awareness
- Encouraging open conversations about mental health
- Providing good working conditions for work/life balance
- Training and support of line managers
- Routine monitoring

Info and Support

Champions for Change want Kingston to be a place where everyone who has mental ill health can thrive at work and feel they can openly talk about how they are feeling.

They have developed an Employers Framework which is a self assessment toolkit which is filled with actionable steps to progress your business to an anti-stigma workplace.

Find out more [here](#).



May 25 was Mental Health Awareness Week, which this year celebrated the power and importance of community. Take a look at their [information and resources](#) about mental health, including anxiety and parenting.

"For people with mental health conditions, decent work can contribute to recovery and inclusion, improve confidence and social functioning."
[\(World Health Organisation, 2022\)](#)

CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS (AND OTHER HIDDEN ILLNESSES)

"I was so sure they would just think it was an excuse that I didn't mention it..."

Long-term health conditions are ongoing physical or mental health issues that last a year or more, such as diabetes, arthritis, asthma, or depression. They can vary in severity and may have periods of improvement and flare-ups. For employees, these conditions can sometimes affect energy levels, concentration, or the ability to carry out certain tasks. With the right support and reasonable adjustments in the workplace, many people with long-term conditions continue to work successfully and thrive in their roles.

Chronic (long-term) health conditions could include:

- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) or ME
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and other Gastrointestinal Conditions
- Fibromyalgia,
- Diabetes,
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Arthritis
- Long COVID

How do we create a culture where it is OK to leave a meeting because you must use the toilet NOW or need to take some medicine?



AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

People who identify as having a disability often feel overlooked for work related experiences or employment due to employers assuming they are not capable.



The best thing an employer can do is have an **open and honest conversation** with the person involved. However, there are some things to be aware of...

Employers can ask if a person needs **reasonable adjustments** for any part of the recruitment process, but by law, they must wait until they have made a job offer before asking about adjustments needed for the job itself.

Employers can ask health-related questions for the following reasons:

- to find out if someone can do an 'intrinsic' (essential) part of the job. **For example, can they climb ladders and scaffolding.**
- to do health checks after offering someone a job, if it's a legal requirement for the job. **For example, an eye test to be a driver.**
- to take **positive action** to help a disadvantaged or under-represented group
- to meet an **occupational requirement**, if having a specific disability is essential for the job

When a person tells their employer or potential employer they're disabled, the employer has a **legal responsibility** to:

support them, including making reasonable adjustments

protect them from discrimination, harassment and victimisation

When discussing with an employee about their disability, the employer should take the lead from the employee.

It's up to them how much they choose to share.

Ask how they would like their disability referred to

Listen to the person and be patient

Understand the person's own coping strategies

Try to understand their individual needs

Speak to the person the same way you would anyone else*

Ask before helping. Some people don't want or need help

When a person tells their employer or potential employer they're disabled, the employer has a **legal responsibility** to:

support them, including making reasonable adjustments

protect them from discrimination, harassment and victimisation

*Unless they've asked for you to communicate with them in a specific way.

Becoming an employer of choice...

The Disability Confident Scheme



The Disability Confident Employer Scheme has 3 levels of commitment – designed to support your business in its journey to becoming a Disability Confident Leader.

For more information about the scheme and how to pledge your support go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employing-disabled-people-and-people-with-health-conditions/employing-disabled-people-and-people-with-health-conditions>

If you're a forward thinking employer looking to increase diversity and accessibility within your business then the Disability Confident Employer Scheme could be for you.

Become a change maker for local inclusivity and take a new approach to recruitment and staff retention by supporting the development of disabled employees.

Regardless of the size of your organisation, committing to the scheme will enable you to shine a light on the value that these talented individuals bring to the local community and could ultimately result in improved diversity within your business.

You can follow updates and find out more about the Global Disability Innovation Hub www.disabilityinnovation.com



Building Your Employer Journey

Become **Disability Aware**
Take part in Awareness Training
(Mental Health/Neurodiversity/
Learning Disability etc)

Identify any disabilities or health
conditions in current workforce

Work with HR team to create
accessible job advert and
inclusive recruitment process

Commit to change in the
workforce and work with organisation
to **bust myths** surrounding
disability/long term health conditions

Make any **Reasonable
Adjustments** for the interview
process and for the individual
employed

Signpost and
support employee
to apply for
**Access to
Work** Funding

Offer the
employee any
extra **training**
and put processes
in place to
support them.

Become a **Disability
Confident** Employer.
Sign the **Mindful
Employment
Charter**

Be an **inspirational** and
exemplary employer!
Demonstrating the benefits
to employing a more
diverse workforce.

Could you commit to offering a
volunteering opportunity, being
a disability confident employer
or sharing employment
opportunities with both us and
our partners?

If so we'd love to hear from you:
[admin@
southlondonpartnership.co.uk](mailto:admin@southlondonpartnership.co.uk)

REVIEWING HOW YOU RECRUIT... YOUR JOB ADVERTS AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Make sure that your adverts are accessible to all who are applying for the job or placement, whether or not they are disabled. There are lots of resources available online to check that your colours and fonts are accessible such as:

- **Use clear, easy to read font.** The top most accessible fonts are: Tahoma, Calibri, Helvetica, Arial, Verdana, and Times New Roman.
- Use concise language and avoid jargon.
- Clearly state that you welcome applications from all sections of the community and that you have an equal opportunities policy.
- Only include skills/experience/criteria that are vital to the job to avoid excluding anyone. For example, do not request a driving licence if there is no requirement for travel.
- Provide contact details for someone in your organisation that can discuss **reasonable adjustments** with the applicant.
- Always offer alternative formats for applications, for example, if using an online application, provide paper based as an alternative.
- Avoid time constrained assessments or tests as part of the interview process.
- State in your adverts that you are keen to hear from specific groups of residents and they will be guaranteed an interview if they meet the minimum requirement of the application.



The importance of line managers in the experiences of disabled employees – when line managers simply “don't get it” this can derail things. Line managers need to understand what they need to do but also why they need to do it.



ADJUSTING YOUR WORKPLACE...

WHAT ARE REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS?

Just the smallest change at little to no cost to you, could mean the difference between someone gaining meaningful employment or not.

Some reasonable adjustments you could put in place...

Before the interview:

- Use premises that are fully accessible
- Adjusting the lighting (dimming lights/switching certain lights on or off)
- Changing the layout of the room
- Offer a different style of interview from the standard or allow extra time
- Give the applicant the option to use technology for any written sections of the interview

During the interview:

- Speak to the applicant directly, not to a support worker if they have one
- Explain any flexible working patterns you could offer
- Be consistent. Ask the same questions regardless of any disability disclosed

In the role:

- Allow flexible working patterns
- Offer more breaks (if appropriate)
- Phased return to work and/or part-time hours
- Provide training or mentoring
- Ensure all information is in accessible formats
- Modify or acquire equipment to support with the employee's disability
- Allow extra time

Better Working Futures

Support for Employers

- A **free professional recruitment** service tailored to your needs. We will source the people with the skills you need.
- **Access to a pool of participants** local to your business.
- Support from our **Recruitment Manager and Employment Support Officer** to facilitate your recruitment needs. This will reduce your administration and costs.
- **Free use of our offices** for interviews or screenings.
- New and innovative ways to **recruit the right person for you**.
- Support your business to:
 - ✓ **Be more inclusive** and take advantage of the Purple Pound.
 - ✓ **Become a positive force** in the local community.
 - ✓ Become a recognised **Disability Confident Employer**.
- Our Employment Support Officer is able to **provide ongoing support to both the participant and employer** through induction training and any other concerns that may arise in the first 6 months.



- **Disability awareness presentations** to your staff if required.
- **Support to gain Access to Work grants** for Employees and equipment.
- **Support in making reasonable adjustments** that can improve the working environment for all your employees.
- **Support to carve job roles** where it would add value or improve the working environment and productivity.
- **Ongoing in-work support** with timely interventions to meet your business needs and shift patterns.
- Build a mutually beneficial **on-going relationship**.



Funding for Employers...

The Access to Work Fund

Access to Work is a publicly funded employment support grant scheme that aims to support disabled people to start or stay in work. You can find further information [here](#)

Access to Work can support you to:

- hire disabled people with the skills you need
- retain an employee who develops a disability or long term condition (keeping their valuable skills and saving both time and money recruiting a replacement)
- show that you value and will support your employees by having good employment policies and practices

As the employer, you may have to share the cost with Access to Work if the person has been working for you for more than 6 weeks when they apply for Access to Work. You will only have to share the cost for special aids and equipment and/or adaptations to premises or equipment.

When cost sharing applies, Access to Work will refund **up to 80%** of the approved costs between a threshold and £10,000. The amount of the threshold is determined by the number of employees you have. Your employee will need to apply for the Access to Work Fund. They can do this online, by phone, RELAY UK (for hearing impairments) or by British Sign Language Video Relay Service.

Your employee will need to apply for the **Access to Work Fund**. They can do this online, by phone, RELAY UK (for hearing impairments) or by British Sign Language Video Relay Service.

Number of Employees	Amount of Threshold
0 to 49 employees	nil
50 to 249 employees	£500
Over 250 employees	£1,000

To be eligible for support, a person must:

-  have a disability or long term health condition that means they need an aid, adaptation or financial or human support to do their job
-  have a mental health condition and need support in work
-  be 16 or over
-  be in, or about to start, paid employment (including self-employment)
-  normally resident in, and working in, England, Scotland or Wales – there is a different system in Northern Ireland
-  not be claiming Incapacity Benefit or Employment Support Allowance once they are in work

Free support from Charitable and Community organisations...

Status Employment: Employment Services Charity

"The perception of people needing to be job ready is outdated and needs addressing. For many people with additional needs work motivation and self-efficacy are better indicators of employability. The focus needs to be on what matters to people and not what is perceived to be the matter with people"

Describe your involvement with the disability/ long term health employment journey

We work with individuals with SEND, complex needs and long-term health conditions to gain and retain employment.

How would you describe the support you offer to employers?

We provide hands-on practical help and support to induct people into the workplace. We also offer information and guidance to help upskill employers in supporting people

and their specific needs. Our bespoke support is agreed with the employee and employer.

We physically support people in the workplace and assist employers to gain **Access To Work** funding if appropriate.

We offer a gradually reducing level of support whilst building up the employer's knowledge and confidence. We also offer (at a cost) **Mental Health Awareness training** and can train people to become qualified **Mental Health First Aiders**.



Are there any resources you would recommend to employers to help them overcome these barriers in the workplace?

We support employees and employers to create individual, in-work, support plans. It's important to choose a format that is fit for the individual involved. The website **Mindful Employer** has key resources aimed at employers supporting mental health at work, as does the national charity **Mind**.

ACAS have free e-learning and downloadable resources on a number of key topics. We would encourage employers to become **Disability Confident** and to undergo equality and unconscious bias training. Most importantly we conduct evaluations with employers to understand their needs, aspirations and current competence and support them to create their own business case and action plans.

Do you offer any support or services for individuals to help them secure a work related opportunity or employment?

Status provides 1-2-1 support through an employment advisor who assists the client through the full employment cycle, from initial assessment and engagement, vocational profiling, job searching/matching and in-work support. Our advisors work with a small number of people at any one time so that we can provide regular and consistent support that enables people to obtain and retain employment.



RESOURCES & INFORMATION

Mindful Employer is a national initiative supporting employers to take a positive approach towards mental health at work. By signing the Mindful Employer charter employers can make a public declaration of their ambition to support the mental wellbeing of their staff.

<https://mindfulemployertensteps.co.uk>

Disability Confident organisations play a leading role in changing attitudes for the better. The Disability Confident scheme helps employers recruit and retain people in a diverse workforce. It also helps identify those employers who are committed to inclusion and diversity in the workplace.

<https://disabilityconfident.campaign.gov.uk>

Mind provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

<https://www.mind.org.uk>

Genius Within want to promote systemic change, right across our world, in our governments, in our social systems, and throughout organisations.

<https://geniuswithin.org>

[Resources and information on a range of health conditions and disabilities and how these may impact on an individual entering the workplace](https://www.ccn.ac.uk/inclusive-toolkit/story.html)

<https://www.ccn.ac.uk/inclusive-toolkit/story.html>

Do you or could you offer any of these? Would you like training or further information?

If so we'd love to hear from you:
admin@southlondonpartnership.co.uk

8 WAYS TO IDENTIFY & FIND TALENT



SCHOOL WORK PLACEMENTS

Aged 14-16. 1-2 weeks linked to full-time education. Experience of workplace.



ADULT CAREER OR WORK TASTERS

Adults trying a new career or work place 1-5 days.



CAREERS TALKS & MOCK INTERVIEWS

Aged 14+ providing a way to practice interview skills and discuss careers



BUSINESS OR PERSONAL MENTORING

Age 16+, work 1:1 or with small groups, personal or business focussed. 3-5 weeks.



COLLEGE OR 6TH FORM PLACEMENT

Aged 16-19 may be linked to education program or to build CV - Flexible.



EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT

Age 16+, work 1:1 or with small groups, personal or business focussed. 3-5 weeks.



SUPPORTED INTERNSHIPS

Aged 19+ graduate for 3 to 12 months, subsidised costs.



VOLUNTEERING

of part-time or full-time work on a trial basis.

A-Z OF LOCAL SUPPORT & ADVICE

NAME OF ORGANISATION	COMPANY WEBSITE	EMAIL	TELEPHONE	OFFICE ADDRESS
AUTUS - The Hao2.eu Foundation	www.autus.org.uk	info@autus.org.uk	07432 300287	Autus, 24 George Street, Croydon CRO 1PB
Better Working Futures (Reed In Partnership)	https://connectedkingston.uk/services/better-working-futures	Ursula.Johnston@reed.com	0330 175 5077	Reed in Partnership 2nd Floor, Norfolk House Wellesley Road Croydon CRO 1LH
CareTrade	http://www.care-trade.org/	info@caretradeuk.org	020 3375 6288	The Clarence Centre 6 St. Georges Circus London, SE1 6FE
Choice Support	https://www.choicesupport.org.uk/find-support/find-support-near-you/richmond-wandsworth		01622 722400	84 Holland Road Maidstone Kent ME14 1UT
Connected Kingston	https://www.connectedkingston.uk/	info@connectedkingston.uk	020 8255 3335	50 Canbury Park Road, Kingston Upon Thames KT2 6LX
Croydon People First	https://www.croydonpeoplefirst.org.uk/	info@croydonpeoplefirst.org.uk	020 3946 3697	Croydon People First Portland House 678 London Road Thornton Heath CR7 7HU

NAME OF ORGANISATION	COMPANY WEBSITE	EMAIL	TELEPHONE	OFFICE ADDRESS
Disability Croydon	https://www.disabilitycroydon.org.uk/	dcsupport@disabilitycroydon.org.uk	020 8688 3622	50 High Street Croydon CRO 1YB
Fair Shot	https://www.fairshot.co.uk/	hello@fairshot.co.uk		3 Slingsby Place, LONDON, WC2E 9AB
Kingston Mencap	http://www.kingstonmencap.org.uk/	vincenzo.cirillo@kingstonmencap.org.uk	07936 359 260	The Searchlight Community Centre Kingston Road New Malden KT3 3RX
Local Offer Croydon	https://localoffer.croydon.gov.uk/kb5/croydon/directory/home.page	SENEnquiries@croydon.gov.uk	020 8726 6400	SEND Department, 2nd Floor, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon, CRO 1EA
Local Offer Merton	https://directories.merton.gov.uk/kb5/merton/directory/home	localoffer@merton.gov.uk	020 8274 4901	Merton Civic Centre London Road Morden SM4 5DX
Local Offer Richmond and Kingston	https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/local_offer/	afcinfo@achievingforchildren.org.uk		Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham, TW1 3BZ

NAME OF ORGANISATION	COMPANY WEBSITE	EMAIL	TELEPHONE	OFFICE ADDRESS
Local Offer Sutton	https://www.sutton.gov.uk/sutton-s-local-offer	localoffer@sutton.gov.uk	07508 985274	Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, SM1 1EA
London Learning Consortium	https://www.londonlc.org.uk/	info@londonlc.org.uk	020 8774 4040	Christopher Wren Yard, 119 High Street, Croydon, CR0 1QG
Merton Mencap	https://www.mertonmencap.org.uk/for-adults/	info.merton@mertonmencap.org.uk	07592 042 432	The Chaucer Centre Canterbury Rd Morden SM4 6PX
Mind Croydon	https://www.mindincroydon.org.uk/	admin@mindincroydon.org.uk	020 8668 2210	Mind in Croydon 26 Pampisford Road Purley, CR8 2NE
Mind in Kingston	https://www.mindinkingston.org.uk/	info@mindinkingston.org.uk	0208 255 3939	Mind in Kingston Siddeley House 50 Canbury Park Road Kingston Upon Thames Surrey KT2 6LX
Mind Richmond	https://www.rbmind.org/	info@rbmind.org	020 3137 9590	1st Floor Rear UK House 82 Heath Road Twickenham TW1 4BW

NAME OF ORGANISATION	COMPANY WEBSITE	EMAIL	TELEPHONE	OFFICE ADDRESS
National Development Team for Inclusion	http://preparingforadulthood.org.uk/resources/all-resources/employment-is-everyones-business-resources	office@ndti.org.uk	01225 255 268	National Development Team for Inclusion 4 Queen Street Bath BA1 1HE
Nickel Support Community Interest Company	https://www.nickel.org.uk/	info@nickel.org.uk	020 3154 8916	NICKEL SUPPORT CHEAM 38 Upper Mulgrave Road, Cheam Surrey, SM2 7AZ
Orchard Hill College	https://orchardhill.ac.uk/	enquiries@orchardhill.ac.uk	0345 402 0453	Orchard Hill College, Quadrant House, 8th Floor – The Quadrant, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5AS
Richmond Mencap	http://richmondmencap.org.uk/	office@richmondmencap.org.uk / laura@richmondmencap.org.uk	020 8744 1923	Richmond Mencap 342 Richmond Road East Twickenham TW1 2DU

NAME OF ORGANISATION	COMPANY WEBSITE	EMAIL	TELEPHONE	OFFICE ADDRESS
Scope: Career Pathways	https://suttoninformationhub.org.uk/services/scope-career-pathways	helpline@scope.org.uk	0808 800 3333	East Press Centre, 14 East Bay Lane, London E15 2GW
South Thames Colleges Group	https://stcg.ac.uk/employers	Info.SouthThames@stcg.ac.uk	020 8918 7777	London Road, Morden SM4 5QX
Status Employment	https://www.statusemployment.org.uk/	Info@statusemployment.org.uk	020 8655 3344	Status Employment 6 West Way Gardens Shirley Croydon CR0 8RA
Sutton Mencap	https://www.suttonmencap.org.uk/	info@suttonmencap.org.uk	020 8647 8600	8 Stanley Park Road Wallington SM6 0EU
The People Hive	https://thepeoplehive.org/employability/	info@thepeoplehive.org	0333 1212 30	8 Heath Road, Twickenham, TW1 4BZ
Workfit	https://www.dsworkfit.org.uk/i-want-to-work/	dsworkfit@downs-syndrome.org.uk	0333 1212 30	Hannah's at Seale Hayne Howton Lane Newton Abbott TQ12 6NQ

NAME OF ORGANISATION	COMPANY WEBSITE	EMAIL	TELEPHONE	OFFICE ADDRESS
Working Well Trust	https://workingwelltrust.org/services/back-to-work/kingston-supported-employment-services/	info@wwtrust.co.uk	020 7613 7096	Head Office First Floor Office, Pritchard's Road Centre Marian Place E2 9AX
Workstart	http://workstart.me.uk/	enquiries@orchardhill.ac.uk	0345 402 0453	Robin Hood Centre, Robin Hood Lane, Sutton, SM1 2SW



Do you or could you offer any of these? Would you like training or further information?

If so we'd love to hear from you:
admin@southlondonpartnership.co.uk

WITH THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS:



For further support and more Information, please contact:

E: ADMIN@SOUTHLONDONPARTNERSHIP.CO.UK

W: SOUTHLONDONPARTNERSHIP.CO.UK

Find us on:

