Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust recognises that engaging in good equality and diversity practice leads to the retention of valuable skills and a reduction in staff turnover, which assists in the provision of a more stable and representative workforce.

The Trust takes pride in serving a diverse population and is fully committed to promoting and championing a culture embracing diversity and equality of opportunity, access, dignity and fairness, both in the services it provides and in its range of holistic and progressive employment practices.

We will do this by valuing and celebrating individual difference and acknowledging potential contribution to the continued development of the organisation. This will in turn improve the services we provide.

CONTACT:

Catherine Conchar, Trustwide Head of Equality and Diversity
Email: catherine.conchar@nottshc.nhs.uk  Tel: 0115 9934543

Dave Wight, Chair of the Disability Equality Steering Group/Disability Equality Champion
Email: david.wight@nottshc.nhs.uk   Tel: 01777 248321

Richard Whitehead, MBE, Athlete

A Guide to
Reasonable Adjustments

“Competing as Equals”

You are not disabled by the disabilities you have, you are able by the abilities you have.
A GUIDE TO REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Valuing Others

Valuing diversity and supporting equality of opportunity is not only a legal and moral duty, but makes good business sense, therefore disabled individuals should be seen in terms of the skills, knowledge and experience they bring. Many adjustments are without financial cost and are mainly an adjustment of thinking. A great many disabilities are hidden and therefore the most important skill for managers is in engaging with disabled staff to identify the barriers they face and ways in which these can be overcome.

Reasonable Adjustments: The Legal Duty

As part of a drive to eradicate discrimination of people with disabilities in employment and promote equality of opportunity, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) introduced the concept of “reasonable adjustments”. This was later strengthened by the Equality Act 2010.

A reasonable adjustment is defined as a reasonable step which employers can take to make changes to help disabled people, who have a disability as defined by the DDA Act, at work and keep them well at work. These can include:

- Making changes to the building or premises where the person works;
- Changing the way in which work is done;
- Providing equipment and/or specialist support that will help the person do their job;
- Allowing time off for medical appointments, specialist training or assessments as outlined in the Special Leave Policy.

It is a statutory requirement that the Trust always considers reasonable adjustments for disabled employees on a case by case basis.

Useful Contacts/Further Guidance

More detailed information can be found on the Trust Intranet Site including links to additional support websites and information on disabilities. Some of these key sites are listed below.

- [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk) - up to date information and advice for employers and employees, with a particular focus on employment relations
- [www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk](http://www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk) - Business Disability Forum
- [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com) - Equality and Human Rights Commission
- [www.Health4work.nhs.uk/about](http://www.Health4work.nhs.uk/about) - Workplace Health Advice
- [www.reploy.org.uk](http://www.reploy.org.uk) - Workplace Mental Health Support Service

Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust Bullying & Harassment Line: 01777 880533; Wathwood & Arnold Lodge (free call) 8296533.

For advice and Support on working with dyslexia in the Trust, contact the Skills for Life Work Advisers:

- Tel: 0115 9691300 x 11269 (Corporate, Forensic, Local Services)
- Tel: 01623 673588 (Health Partnerships)
Detailed routines and structure to enable individuals to plan their work and function effectively;
Workplace Individual Support Plan - detailing emergency requirements e.g. medication, emergency contacts etc.;
Project work and/or working from home, where applicable;
Quiet space – for day to day working and also removal from stressful environment;
Temporary reduction in workload;
Adaptations to environment e.g. air conditioning, automatic door, physical environment etc. where possible;
Specialist software e.g. Dragon, Texthelp Read & Write, Thesaurus, Spellcheckers;
Adaptations to equipment e.g. rise and fall desks;
Identified alternative workplace point of contact in absence of line manager;
Specialist equipment e.g. reader pens, ear phones, large keyboard, calculator etc.;
Training on specialist equipment including updates;
Safe and appropriate place for medication/equipment storage;
Additional support, as and when required, e.g. 1-2-1s, counselling, mentoring, training, telephone support;
Accessible Parking;
Close proximity to welfare facilities e.g. toilets, refreshments, washing etc.;
Consider alternative role where no other adjustment is achievable.

Leaving the Trust
The Disability Equality Steering Group and the Equality and Diversity Sub Committee of the Trust Board monitor employment data with regard to disability. This is important because if individuals do not have reasonable adjustments made to retain them in employment there is a loss of vital and valuable skills from the Trust. The longer an individual has been employed the greater the investment that has been made.

Further Support
Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust is committed to providing a working environment where people are fully supported and able to be themselves at work. If you need further advice please contact a representative from HR, Equality and Diversity Adviser or the Occupational Health Service.

Determining the most appropriate reasonable adjustment is a two-way process involving both the individual and their manager. Key to this is the creation of a safe environment where the needs of both the individual and the service can be explored and developed.

Reasonability criteria as defined by the DDA is as follows:-
- Are the adjustments fit for purpose, i.e. do they help the individual overcome the disadvantage they face?;
- The practicability of making the adjustment;
- The cost involved;
- The effect on Trust Business.

Pre-Employment Considerations
The Trust actively encourages applications from people with disabilities and we strive to remove any associated barriers to employment that they may face. We are signed up to the Two Ticks for Disabled People Scheme and the Mindful Employer Charter, and accordingly people with disabilities who meet the minimal essential criteria in the job specification are guaranteed an interview. Our application forms can be completed and submitted in different formats e.g. online, paper.

Key Considerations During the Interview Process
- Ensure an accessible and welcoming environment e.g. appropriate signage, accessible venue etc.;
- Ensure that you are aware of individual requirements e.g. is there a need for a hearing loop, adequate lighting, clear, concise and unambiguous questions in interviews etc.?
- Ensure that individuals shortlisted for interview are given a clear outline of the interview process, clearly detailing any requirements e.g. written tests, presentation etc.
- Ensure all candidates receive clear instructions on timings, venues etc.;
- Ensure a balanced and representative interview panel;
- Take advice from someone who knows about disability and employment, e.g. Human Resources (HR) or your Equality and Diversity Advisor.
On Appointment

- Meet with the individual to discuss and plan any reasonable adjustments that may be required prior to commencing employment e.g. adjustable chairs, rise and fall desks, specialist IT software, changes to office environment and layout, adjustment of furniture, mechanical aids, etc.;
- Identify a named contact should the individual have any questions or concerns e.g. Ward Manager, Team Leader.

Access to Work

The Access to Work programme is a government funded scheme run by Jobcentre Plus. In some circumstances it provides financial assistance towards the extra costs of employing someone with a disability and can apply to any job, full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary. For more information go to: www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/Employmentsupport/WorkSchemesAndProgrammes/DG_4000347

Working for the Trust

The Trust aims to ensure that all individuals are adequately supported, supervised and valued and that their workload is monitored and effectively managed to reduce work related stress and anxieties.

The use of the Performance, Appraisal and Development (PAD) process is important to identify development needs and any barriers to development. In addition line-managers should, as a minimum, meet annually with each staff member and ensure regular supervision and support.

Workplace Individual Support Plans (WISPs) are an invaluable way of clearly setting out support and adjustment packages for staff with disabilities. They are also important in meeting Health and Safety requirements. These should be developed with all employees with a disability, on commencing work with the Trust and reviewed annually as a minimum at the PAD. A template is available on the Trust intranet site: http://inottshc/%5Cdepartments%5CLearning%20and%20Development%5Cdata%5C7B4BF05F3A-0643-4BAB-BA12-F7FFCE127C66%

Reasonable Adjustments

As per the Trust’s ‘Evacuation and Shelter Policy’ (2.05) Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) should be completed by Managers for all staff with disabilities where assistance and/or specialist support is required. These should be logged with the General Manager/ Head of Service as part of the service’s Evacuation and Shelter Plan.

The Trust Disability Equality Steering Group meets quarterly and champions disability equality within the organisation. In addition the Group supports staff with disabilities. (Contact details on page 8).

Other internal support mechanisms for staff include:
- The Staff Counselling Service;
- The Spiritual and Pastoral Care Service;
- The Bullying and Harassment Support Line;
- Staffside.

Examples

- Clear signage;
- Alterations to working times/flexi-time;
- Re-allocation of duties;
- Shift pattern changes e.g. to prevent information overload in a busy environment;
- Disability Leave, e.g. pre-planned arrangements for additional breaks if required;
- Written summary of key points from handover;