**DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION AWARENESS - SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

I hope that you found completing the Disability Discrimination Awareness Questionnaire (DDAQ) ? and Disability Discrimination Practice Checklist (DDPCs) informative. As no doubt evident. the higher the score the more awareness on the DDAQ and the more practice is in line with the Equality Act on the DDPCs. The provisional target score for the DDAQ is 27-30. However, until this is completed in large numbers, there is no representative baseline to compare with. However, pilot group findings for first 100 healthcare staff are reported at: <https://equitynotjustequality.co.uk/ddaq>

Given the lack of detailed training on the EqA with respect to disability, it would be surprising if some awareness gaps have not been highlighted. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) statutory code on employment code is 81,000 words and on services 60,000. Identified gaps in awareness might be general, related to a specific activity (e.g. services, employment, education/training) or to pitfall policy areas (e.g. recruitment or duty to make reasonable adjustments (e.g. flexibility in working hours).

You are encouraged to address proactively any identified training needs to reduce the risk of inadvertently acting unlawfully as a result of lack of awareness of the disability requirements of the EqA. Providing reasonable adjustments for persons with disability will also likely optimise the benefit of services, development of knowledge and skills in training and work performance in employment. However, in practice, adjustments are often time-consuming and fatiguing for persons with disability to implement, many of whom are already experiencing debilitating fatigue. As such, part-time options in training and employment are a key adjustment to prevent discrimination and exclusion.

In the event of a complaint or grievance, addressing disadvantage through provision of reasonable adjustment will often offer a resolution to the matter. In contrast, questioning the diagnosis, the degree of disability and/or disputing what adjustments are needed and reasonable to make will very likely lead to escalation and potentially a legal claim. ***In the event of concern about discrimination, you are advised to take professional and/or management advice about the need for legal advice. Equally, if a client reports discrimination, you should consider advising them to take legal advice.***

In conclusion, in order to reduce the risk of disability discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for persons with disability, in line with the UNCRPD, the EqA and the WHO (2022) call for urgent action to reduce health inequities, it is recommended that you consider taking some of the suggested actions below.

**Suggested actionS FOR PRACTITIONERS**

1. Having completed the DDAQ, move on to a Disability Discrimination Practice Checklists (DDCPs) – there is one DDCP each for health professionals, service managers, training course tutors, vocational/employment specialists and assistants.

 The link to the DDAQ is at: [www.equitynotjustequality.co.uk/ddaq](http://www.equitynotjustequality.co.uk/ddaq)

 The link to the DDPCs is at: [www.equitynotjustequality.co.uk/ddpcs](http://www.equitynotjusyequality.co.uk/ddpcs)

1. If the DDPC has highlighted specific concerns about practice, you are encouraged to read the paragraphs from the relevant EHRC statutory codes and technical guidance as only key paragraphs are extracted. These are listed along with the questions in the different DDPCs, drawing on the specific guidance for education, employment and services: <https://equitynotjustequality.co.uk/ddpc>s
2. If the DDPC has highlighted broader areas of concern you are advised to read the chapters of the EHRC guidance relevant to your work role. Tribunals and courts must take into account the statutory codes and evidence of whether the technical guidance was followed is relevant to demonstrating Public Sector Equality Duty compliance. Whilst much of the content is common across guidance, the examples are tailored to the context (i,e. services, employment, education):
* The ‘services, public functions & associations’ statutory code has a summary of the bodies affected (Chap.3) and their obligations (EHRC, 2011b, Chaps.11-12).
* The employment code has sections on good practice to avoid discrimination and 18 examples of reasonable adjustments (EHRC, 2011a, para 6.32-6.35).
* The further & higher education technical guidance has an overview (Chap.3) and summary of education provider responsibilities (EHRC, 2014, Chapters 10-11).

4. The UNCRPD (2006) is a key read. On the website is an article prompted by the WHO call for action and highlights concerns about limited implementation of the UNCRPD and the Equality Act, duties of health professionals and examples of disability discrimination (Tyerman, 2023). Also included on the website are related talks (e.g. ‘*The Equality Act in vocational rehabilitation’*, ‘*Resources to support VR practice in reducing disability discrimination’, &* ‘*Developing an inclusive working environment for people with disabilities.* See ***www.equitynotjustequality.co.uk***’.

5. Review your employer’s policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and any specific disability policies (e.g. on reasonable adjustments). (Individual NHS Trusts and NHS England also report an annual Workplace Disability Equality Standard [WDES]).

6. Make yourself aware of the range of guidance on the specific issues relevant to your work role (e.g. eligibility, recruitment, adjustments, disability leave) to consult, as and when needed. Recommended reading is listed in a separate document in four sections: 1. general reading (i.e. for everyone); 2. for service providers and users; 3. for employers and employees; and 4. for training courses and students/trainees.

The above actions focus on individual practitioners, managers and tutors. It is also suggested that courses, professional organisations and service providers strengthen training on disability discrimination in line with the UNCRPD and EqA

It is also suggested that professional bodies consult practitioners with disability about the need for examples to illustrate how adjustments enable effective practice in order to challenge negative assumptions. There is also a pressing need for research on the nature and extent of discrimination experienced by health and other practitioners with disability, as well as the client groups that we see, to inform further action.

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