Workplace Academy

Everyone has a part to play: creating inclusive workplaces

In partnership with SCOPE

Educating line managers on workplace health and wellbeing



Business health is building a team where everyone belongs

An inclusive workplace is where everyone can reach their full potential. Bupa created this toolkit in partnership with Scope to provide practical advice to help you support your disabled employees.

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If you require this document in a different format please email **TheBupaAcademy@bupa.com**

Read Watch **Look out for helpful tools and resources.**



Open communication and training are essential, as they will help you to understand the importance of inclusion and the role you play in creating a supportive environment.

Inclusivity in the workplace

“Inclusion should be a given and seen as something for everyone, not an afterthought.”



“Embedding inclusion in your organisation’s ethos avoids the need to retrofit adjustments into the workplace and helps to build a healthier and happier workplace and culture for everyone.”

Mark Hodgkinson,
Chief Executive, Scope

Creating a supportive environment

An inclusive culture boosts employee satisfaction and productivity. At the same time, it improves business performance by incorporating diverse perspectives.



of disabled employees would like to see improved attitudes towards disability in the workplace



believe accessibility barriers have hurt their career growth[1]

Cultivating a diverse and inclusive working environment is beneficial for everyone.

Read the inclusivity article

Connecting young disabled people to the world of work

At Bupa we collaborate with Career Ready, Scope, ParalympicsGB, and our corporate clients to provide young disabled people with work experience opportunities. These partnerships between education and employment specialists provide exciting opportunities for the next generation.

Speak to your Bupa Account Manager to find out how your business can get involved.



Inclusion benefits everyone

An inclusive culture boosts employee satisfaction and productivity. At the same time, it improves business performance by incorporating diverse perspectives. According to Scope research commissioned by Bupa...

Two-thirds of working disabled people feel supported by their manager

55% believe disability is discussed positively in their workplace[1]

However...

52% feel that their workplace lacks clear guidelines to support disabled staff

68% say their mental health has been negatively impacted by inadequate support[1]

This shows that further improvement is required so that every employee feels supported, respected and empowered.

Our Workplace Academy provides resources to help you address key health and wellbeing issues in the workplace.

Visit Bupa's Workplace Academy >



Understanding disability

Disabilities take many forms, as they can be physical, cognitive, sensory or developmental. Some employees may need to adapt their approach to carrying out certain tasks. Meanwhile, others may not identify as disabled even though they qualify as such. A patient, understanding and empathetic attitude allows managers to better support their employees.

Social model of disability

The social model of disability is a way of viewing the world, developed by disabled people. The model says that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference. It helps us to recognise barriers that make life harder for disabled people. Removing these barriers creates equality and offers disabled people more independence, choice and control.

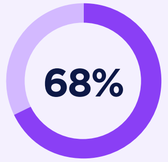
Read about the social model of disability

Understanding non-visible disabilities

It's important to remember that some disabilities aren't as visible as others. Some conditions that cause symptoms such as pain, fatigue or memory problems can go unnoticed by the employer. Despite this, the effect they have on the employee is still significant. We call these non-visible disabilities. They also include sensory impairments, such as hearing loss, and mental health conditions.

The impact on mental health

Inadequate workplace support can also have a large impact on on the mental health of your disabled employees. An employee who is struggling in their role could experience mental health disorders. Examples include stress, anxiety, depression and helplessness. In fact...



of working disabled people experience worsened mental health due to inadequate workplace support[1]

This highlights the need for both reasonable adjustments and mental health care for employees with disabilities.

Access our free online resources for more information

Visit the mental health hub

Read the mental health manager's guide

Read about supporting employees with work related stress

Access expert advice on mental health



Tips for line managers

Our research shows that 73% of managers want to be more aware of how to support disabled team members.[3] To help with this, here are a few tips for creating an inclusive work environment.

Are your resources up to date?

Other key insights uncovered by our research show that...

Only 50% of disabled employees feel that their manager had enough knowledge to support them at work and a similar number say they didn't have enough resources[1]

Over 25% of line managers said that they have never received training to support disabled employees[3]

These figures clearly show the need for tailored resources and support. To help your teams identify and address the needs of employees with disabilities, we've created these practical guides:

Read the disability inclusion manager's guide

Watch the disability inclusion bitesize video

Communication and training

All employees must understand the importance of inclusion and how to support co-workers. Provide regular training on disability awareness and inclusion practices.

Read Scope's advice on using disability inclusive language

Regular reviews and feedback

Conduct regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of adjustments and support provided. Gather feedback from disabled employees to understand their experiences and find improvement areas. This will help you to make necessary changes and enhance your inclusion efforts.

Lead by example

As a line manager, set the tone by demonstrating inclusive behaviour. Show empathy, understanding and respect towards all employees. Encourage your team to do the same. A disability employee network is an excellent way to support your teams. It gives employees the opportunity to ask questions, discuss topics and learn about disabilities. In addition, it provides a platform for all staff to work collaboratively and deliver positive change.

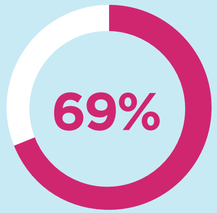


Addressing disability in the workplace

Do you have the right knowledge?

Employers must make reasonable adjustments to ensure all employees receive equal treatment. This could include providing assistive technologies or flexible working arrangements. Actions like this will show a commitment to equality and inclusion.

Our research showed that...



of disabled employees say their manager offered to discuss adjustments



But only 50% feel their manager had enough knowledge to support them

33% of managers say they have comprehensive resources[3]

25% have never received training on supporting disabled employees[3]

26% of managers have received advice on how to start a conversation on disability[3]

These figures highlight the need for better training and resources that are made available to all employees.

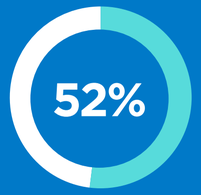
Read Scope's articles about disability inclusion

Watch the Tackling the Disability Employment Gap event



Helping everyone thrive at work

All employees should be given the same resources, support and opportunities for them to thrive in their roles. However...



of disabled employees would like to see improved attitudes towards disability in workplaces[1]

This is why we're dedicated to helping managers to understand their duties and access the resources available to them.

Did you know that your language and actions can be abelist?

Read our tips for avoiding ableism

Ableism

When a disabled person experiences any kind of discrimination or prejudice in favour of non-disabled people, this is called ableism. Our research shows that...



37% of working disabled people feel they can't progress due to negative attitudes towards their disability in the workplace[1]

Ableism can be both intentional and unintentional. It's important to recognise all forms of ableism and challenge it. This applies to both your own behaviour and that of people around you.

How to address ableism in the workplace

Read our article to understand how ableism can occur in the workplace, and what you can do to address it.

Read the abelism in the workplace article

Celebrating neurodiversity

You may not realise this, but around **1 in 7 people are neurodivergent**.[2]

Everybody's brain develops and works in a different way. Somebody who identifies as neurodivergent might think, behave and communicate in a different way to most 'neurotypical' people.

Traditional workplace practices are often designed with neurotypical society in mind. This means your neurodivergent employees might need extra support to help them thrive.

Check out the guides below to understand the value of neurodiversity in the workplace, and how you can support neurodivergent employees at work.

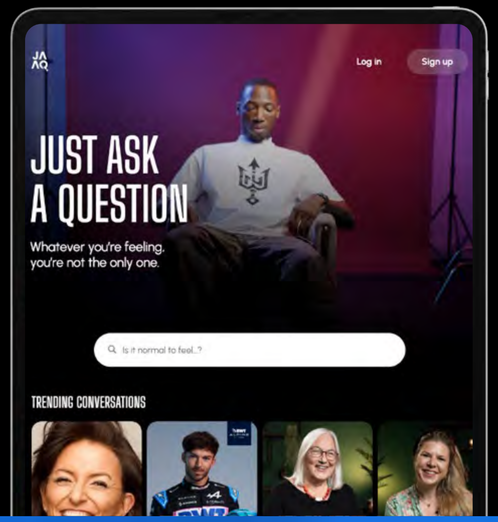
Read the neurodiversity manager's guide

Watch the neurodiversity bitesize video



Content for you and your team

Check out the unique advice from celebrities, doctors, and athletes on disability, mental health and neurodiverse conditions at **JAAQ.org.**

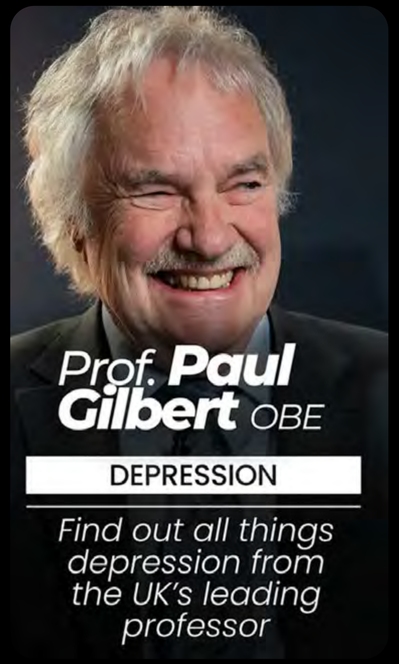




Watch now



Watch now



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Latest Bupa Academy bitesize videos

Our bitesize Academy videos provide an on-demand experience, designed to help line managers support their team's health and wellbeing.

Disability

Hear firsthand from two Bupa colleagues who discuss their lived experience, as both an employee and line manager, of disability in the workplace, and their practical advice for others in a similar situation.

Watch now



Neurodiversity

Watch this video to discover how you can better support neurodiverse employees – with practical insights from both the employee and manager perspective.

Watch now



Find out more

Advice on supporting disabled employees at work from Scope.

Government guidance on the rights of disabled employees.

Information about the UK government Access to Work scheme.

Visit Bupa's Workplace Academy

In partnership with SCOPE



Sources

1 Workplace Experiences: 2024. Scope, Commissioned by Bupa.

2 Neurodiversity in Business (NiB): 2022. British Dyslexia Association. [https://neurodiversityinbusiness.org/wp-content/uploads/20221110-Neurodiversity-in-Business-Introduction.pdf]

3 Bupa Research: 2024 commissioned by Censuswide with 513 middle managers and above. The research took place between 31.05.2024 - 04.06.2024. Censuswide abides by and employs members of the Market Research Society which is based on the ESOMAR principles.

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