

Disability Confident Britain

The Disability and Health
Employment Strategy - One year on



Department
for Work &
Pensions





Minister of State for Employment

Last December, in the 'Disability and Health Employment Strategy', I set out my ambition to increase employment opportunities for disabled people. One year on, we are reporting on our progress and plans. Work can boost wellbeing, confidence and independence, so I am very pleased that there are 259,000 more disabled people in employment than one year ago, over 3 million in total.

In particular, I am keen to inspire young disabled people to aim high. Attainment levels for pupils with special educational needs have increased at both GCSE and A-level, and the number of disabled students gaining a degree each year has increased by nearly 50% over the last five years to over 38,000.

Disabled people should be able to use their educational achievements to obtain fulfilling jobs. Many of the initiatives outlined in this paper help them to do just that. The numbers of disabled people helped into work through each of our main employment programmes has increased in the past year.

In the future we want to continue to help growing numbers of people with disabilities and health conditions to be able to work. For 2015/16 there is an overall budget of £350m for disability and health employment support, including around £120m for Work Choice, over £100m for Access to Work and around £50m for Employment Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefit customers on the Work Programme. We will build on the successes of the past year so that Britain continues to be a place where disabled people can achieve their ambitions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Esther McVey'.

Esther McVey



Minister of State for Disabled People

I believe strongly that employment for disabled people should be the norm, not the exception. Since I became Minister for Disabled People it has been my priority to change perceptions and help businesses understand that employing disabled people is the right thing to do – for everyone.

Disability Confident, launched in July 2013, has involved 1,100 employers in the important task of breaking down the barriers and challenging negative attitudes towards employing disabled people. We are also working to improve accessibility. For example, by January 2017, all buses will be accessible to disabled people. Our Accessible Britain Challenge is generating new ideas to make our communities more inclusive. Attitudes are changing too: around 90% of disabled people now say that work colleagues attitudes towards disabled people are supportive. All of this is helping to create the right climate for disabled people to work and play a full part in society.

The UK is a world leader in disability rights and we spend £50bn each year on programmes and support for disabled people. I am delighted to say that, since this time last year, the disability employment rate has increased by 2.5 percentage points, the largest recorded yearly increase in the past decade. This is not only good news for disabled people, but also for businesses and for Britain.

In the future, I hope that even more British employers become Disability Confident, so we can all reap the benefits of a truly diverse workforce.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Harper'.

Mark Harper

More disabled people in work since 2013

There are nearly 11.5 million working age people in Great Britain with a disability or health condition. Our vision is one of empowering disabled people to realise their aspirations and fulfil their potential. In the past, it was often assumed that people with disabilities or health conditions could not work, but now we know that employment has a wide range of health benefits, and that Britain cannot afford to lose out on the contribution that disabled people can make.



In 2013, we published 'Disability and Health Employment Strategy: The Discussion So Far'. This paper sets out the progress that has been made in the past year.

Through our **Disability Confident** campaign, we have been working with employers to remove barriers that might prevent disabled people from fulfilling their aspirations. **Work Choice**, **Work Programme** and **Jobcentre Plus** have also been helping increasing numbers of disabled people to prepare for work and find jobs. Once disabled people secure work, they can use our world-leading **Access to Work** Programme to help with workplace adjustments. We constantly aim to improve our services, trialling innovative ideas and introducing new services such as **Fit for Work**.

Employee story

Lizzie Baily has congenital muscular dystrophy so she uses an electric wheelchair. She has worked at Medmerry School since 2005 when she graduated from the University of Chichester with a BA Honours in Childhood Studies, Early Years.

Lizzie thinks it's really important for children to see that you can achieve anything, whatever your needs might be.

Lizzie's advice for young people starting out is to be really confident about what you want. "Remember that you're a person who happens to have a disability, so don't let anybody else's preconceptions put you off."

Lizzie says

"My advice to employers is to talk to the person who's looking for a job. If you think they're suitable then discuss their needs on how you can best support them to achieve an outcome that works for you both."

The latest figures show that there are 259,000 more disabled people in employment in GB than one year ago (3.07m in Q3 2014 up from 2.81m in Q3 2013) – with the largest recorded Q3 year on year employment rate increase in the last decade.

Since 2013 ...

- 259,000 More disabled people in work
- 38,610 Job outcomes for disabled people via Work Programme (2013/14)
- 19,910 Disabled people helped into Work via Work Choice and Remploy
- 1,100 Employers signed up to Disability Confident
- 35,500 Disabled people supported by Access to Work (2013/14)



Building disability confidence

This government believes employment is a key tool for building self-worth and enabling individuals to achieve their full potential.

The award winning **Disability Confident** campaign was [launched](#) by the Prime Minister in July 2013 to challenge negative attitudes to disability employment and promote equal opportunities for all individuals who can work. We are working in partnership with employers to remove barriers, increase understanding and ensure that disabled people have opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

Through the national employer event and a series of seven regional events, the campaign reached over 1,100 employers across Britain, who have made over 200 pledges to be Disability Confident. In July 2014 we launched an expanded and updated [employer portal](#) with advice and information for employers on obligations and support available to employ disabled people.

Also in July 2014, we launched a toolkit and supplementary information to support MPs and other individuals/organisations who wish to hold a Disability Confident event.

Disability Confident is going global: [#disabilityconfident](#) has been trending around the world in countries including Australia, Germany and the USA. The campaign has also inspired similar programmes abroad. The UK is leading the way in building positive attitudes towards disability employment.

“We must recognise that being disability confident isn’t a problem to be overcome - it’s an opportunity not to be missed.”

Ashok Vaswani - Chief Executive, Barclays Retail & Business Banking



David Cameron at the Disability Confident launch event

“What hope do we have... if we lose out on the talent and skills of one-fifth of our population? It would be like competing with one hand tied behind our back.”

David Cameron - at the Disability Confident launch

Disability Confident in Numbers

- Nearly 11.5 million people of working age people in Great Britain are disabled or have a health condition.
- For the average business, 20% of customers are likely to be disabled people.
- The spending power of households that include a disabled person, the ‘Purple Pound’ is currently valued at £212 billion a year. Employing disabled people creates better connections with disabled customers which allow businesses to tap into this spending power.



If you’d like to make your organisation disability confident, visit the [employer portal](#)



Case Study: Disability Confident

Chris Kew is a training co-ordinator at Hands Free Computing Ltd. Following an accident when Chris was eighteen, he was left with life-threatening injuries as a result of a brain haemorrhage.

Chris has now recovered from his accident but is left with lasting cognitive damage, including short-term memory problems and epilepsy triggered by stress and lighting. He found that his condition was seen as a barrier in previous job roles but has been delighted at the help and support he has received since joining Hands Free Computing two years ago.

Disability Confident encourages employers to become more confident about employing disabled people:

- By breaking down the barriers and challenging negative attitudes towards employing disabled people;
- Through increasing awareness of the business benefits of employing disabled people; and
- Through building a better understanding of the support available to employers as they recruit and retain disabled employees.

The business benefits of employing disabled people are substantial:

- Around a sixth of working aged people in the UK are disabled. Being open to employing disabled people will therefore increase the talent, experience and diversity of the workforce.
- A workforce including disabled people will help businesses to respond to the needs of the third of disabled people who still have difficulty accessing goods and services.



Raising aspirations

Disabled people should be able to aim high. We have introduced a range of initiatives to inspire disabled people to pursue **fulfilling careers** and overcome the barriers that they face.

For example, we have recently **extended Access to Work** to cover a variety of opportunities that help disabled people to prepare for employment, including Supported Internships, Traineeships and self-directed work experience. These opportunities can help disabled people to raise their aspirations and succeed.

The recently launched [Young People's Portal](#) provides guidance and signposting to help young disabled people make the transition from education to employment. It is aimed at young disabled people, their parents and the professionals who work with them. This portal will make it easier for young disabled people to navigate the health and education system and avoid unnecessary barriers to progression.

In 2012, we launched our **Role Models** initiative. We filmed over 50 role models from a wide range of backgrounds telling their stories to young disabled people, describing their aspirations and explaining how they've overcome barriers that they've faced. They were nominated by organisations such as National Children's Bureau, Whizz-Kidz, Apasenth, Essex Unite, Include Me Too and Disability Rights UK.



[Hear from the role models on YouTube.](#)

We have recently introduced a new **Job Shadowing initiative**, which is aimed at providing opportunities for young people to gain valuable insights into the world of work. This initiative is being managed by Community Services Volunteers (CSV), and was launched on 3 December 2014, the International Day of Disabled People. It offers 100 exciting Job shadowing opportunities in public and private sector organisations.



DWP Young Ambassadors

“I used to think I was a capable employee, but being depressed and anxious made me feel otherwise. In my role with The Clear Company I feel supported and my self-esteem has soared.”

Maz Lopez - Marketing Manager, Clear Company

Innovation spotlight

Since 2013, we have invested in groups that face particularly high barriers to employment.

- We have developed the **Hidden Impairment National Group (HING)** which is helping to improve services for people with Autism and associated Hidden Impairments including: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia and Speech and Language impairments together we have produced the [Hidden Impairment Toolkit](#), which can support employers to identify appropriate reasonable adjustment solutions for their employees.
- The £1.2 million **Autism Innovation Fund** is funding 42 projects which will test new ways of supporting people with autism in getting advice and information, in gaining and growing skills for independence, on crisis and anxiety prevention and with finding work and apprenticeships. These exciting projects are spread across the whole country and include employment-focused projects that will make it easier for people with autism to find, keep and succeed in employment and work experience. The projects will be evaluated and the outcomes shared to encourage replication in other parts of the country.
- We have focused on mental health and launched an enhanced **Employment and Wellbeing toolkit** in Jobcentres, which helps advisers work with claimants with mental health issues, by enabling them to reflect on their interviews and to consider other supportive employment and wellbeing opportunities.
- The Prime Minister’s new Special Education Needs Tsar, Lee Scott MP, will focus on helping people with special educational needs make the transition from education into employment.

In Numbers

In the past year, the disability employment rate has risen by 2.5 percentage points, the largest increase in the past decade. The groups with the lowest employment rates have shared in this record-breaking performance:

- There has been a 2.8 percentage point increase in the employment rate of people with mental health conditions.
- There has been a 4.2 percentage point increase in the employment rate of people with learning difficulties.

Preparing for Work

It is a priority for this government to help disabled people get into mainstream jobs, and to ensure that everyone has the support they need to make this happen. One way that we achieve this is through the **Work Choice** programme, a voluntary disability employment programme that helps disabled people who face the most complex barriers to employment find and stay in work.

Work Choice can help the most vulnerable disabled people to find the support they need, get into work and stay in work: in 2012/13, 16,597 Work Choice and Remploy customers found jobs, this increased to 19,913 in 2013/14.

We have also extended the contracts with **Residential Training Colleges** until September 2015 to help some of the most disadvantaged disabled people into work. Options for subsequent provision for this group are being explored.

“Shaw Trust have been most helpful and supported me on my time on courses. Since starting work at Asda it has made a real impact on me as a person. I love the fact that every one gets a chance to express and excel as an individual and still encourage and support each other as a team. I would recommend Shaw Trust to anyone ”

Clare, Work Choice customer with Shaw Trust



Innovation spotlight

We always want to make it easier for disabled people to get into work. These are some of the new approaches we have been trialling this year:

The **Psychological Wellbeing and Work feasibility pilots** are exploring the most promising and evidence-based approaches to improving the employment and health prospects of people with mental health problems. These include embedding Individual Placement and Support (IPS) in NHS England's Improving Access to Psychological Therapy services; using group work in employment services, testing online assessments and support and telephone-based combined psychological and employment-related support.

We have also been running a variety of pilots to offer more intensive support to **ESA claimants** from Jobcentres, health professionals and the Work Programme.

In 2015, we will be launching the **Personalisation Pathfinders** to trial an enhanced specialist advisor role. Initially working with 18,000 people, specialist advisors will take a wider view of disabled people's needs beyond unemployment. The pathfinders will also improve cross-agency working and the use of local specialist services to increase choice and control. The pathfinder will run for two years with a budget of £6.5 million.

Case Study: Work Choice

Samantha Hale was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and has been on long term incapacity benefit for over 20 years. On Work Choice, Sam attended weekly session with her job coach and began to use a computer, although at first she was unable to use a mouse. Her job coach created an email address for Sam and registered her for a Universal Jobmatch account.

Sam's advisor set up a voluntary placement at The British Red Cross Shop in Haverford West. This placement was designed to give Sam some

structure and get her building her working hours up to 16 per week. It was also an excellent opportunity for Sam to gain retail experience and have up to date experience of working as part of a team in a busy charity shop. The advisor then arranged an additional work placement at a local care home in Milford Haven for Sam to gain some cleaning experience with the view to making this paid employment for 16 hours per week.

Sam's advisor negotiated with the owners of the home and turned the placement into 16 hours paid employment for Sam in December 2013.

Finding Work

For disabled people who are ready to start looking for a job, DWP provides support through a network of trained advisers in Jobcentres. Where someone faces a complex employment situation, arising from health or disability, our **Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs)** and Work Psychologists offer more in-depth support. This starts with an assessment by the Work Psychologist of the individual's employment situation (employment assessment) and includes access to specialist disability programmes like Work Choice. DEAs also engage with employers and advocate for people.

DWP continues to refresh Disability Employment Advisers' skills. Recently, staff were alerted to the list of **Disabled People's User Led Organisations** and the services they provide which may assist customers. A recent re-launch of the [Hidden](#)

[Impairment Toolkit](#) will help staff to focus on how they can provide better support to people with autism and associated hidden impairment conditions by putting in place appropriate reasonable adjustment solutions at the earliest stage to help individuals find and keep a job.

Our main employment programme - **Work Programme** is designed to support a wide variety of individuals into employment, including those with disabilities. Today, around 2,700 disabled people every month get jobs through Work Programme. Work Programme providers have been given complete flexibility to innovate and design support tailored to individual and local needs, with the particular type of support offered to participants determined by the providers' assessment of what would best help an individual move closer to and stay in employment.



Minister for Employment celebrating with a successful disabled jobseeker



Disability Confident Event in Gloucester

“I think when an employer is looking for a good accountant; they should find a good accountant. And if that accountant happens to be a wheelchair user or has an arm missing or a speech impediment, if he is a good accountant then why will it matter?”

Dave Hawkins, Managing Director, Cyclone Technologies

Innovation spotlight

We are developing a new **Gateway**: an innovative, evidence-based, employment-focused self-assessment tool which will sit at the core of DWP’s specialist disability and health strategy. The Gateway Questions help claimants to review their ability to search for jobs independently. All claimants are asked about employment,

disability and health and this informs choices about the support that they need to maximise their employment prospects. The questions also encourage claimants to look ahead to employment, job retention and progression.

Succeeding in Work

“The good thing about having a job is I earn my own money. I have bought a new carpet for my flat and I pay my own bills. I am always busy and never get bored. I feel happy when I go to work because I see my colleagues and we work as a team”

Sue Baker

It is important that we **continue to support disabled people once they are in employment**. Although employers are required to make reasonable adjustments, some people may require additional support.

Access to Work is a world-leading initiative: probably the largest workplace adjustment programme in the OECD. Last year we invested over £100 million to support more than 35,000 people

to start work or remain in work. The programme is flexible and customer focused and can fund such things as special equipment, extra travel costs, and support worker assistance.

The Government wants Access to Work to help more people, and both spending and numbers have increased since 2012: annual spending has increased by £15m and the number of people we help each year has risen by over 4,000. Access to Work's Mental Health Support Service has also had an almost threefold increase in the volumes supported over the last 4 years.

We have extended the programme so that it can support people in Supported Internships, Traineeships and certain work experience. Budding disabled entrepreneurs can now also get extra support to start up their own businesses using the **New Enterprise Allowance**.





Case Study: Access to Work

Pennie Hastings is employed as a Medical Technical Officer at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. She has all the necessary qualifications to carry out her duties but was unable to communicate with her colleagues and managers easily as she has Aspergers Syndrome. Her position within the company was under threat.

Pennie Hastings made an application to Access to Work, who asked Prospects, an organisation with a great deal of experience in dealing with people who have Autistic Spectrum Disorders, to recommend a support package. Prospects recommended 2 hours of support once a month to assist Ms Hastings. They also recommended

that they carry out three awareness workshops to help her colleagues and staff to understand Aspergers Syndrome and help with communication issues. The employer agreed to fund the three workshops in London as a voluntary contribution towards Pennie Hastings' support. Access to Work funded the additional support.

Prospects reported that Pennie Hastings was coping much better in the work place following even the initial support, especially the Disability Awareness training for her colleagues.

Leading improvements

We are always working to **improve** the prospects of the people we support. In 2011, DWP established a fund to support **Disabled People's user led organisations (DPULOs)**, unique organisations run by disabled people for disabled people to build capacity and independence in communities. As a result of the success of this programme, it has been extended into Scotland and Wales in July 2012, and Northern Ireland in June 2013. To date, nearly £3 million has been awarded to DPULOs for projects that create a sustainable legacy of greater inclusion for disabled people. Visit the [DPULOs](#) on Facebook or search for #dpulo on Twitter.

Similarly, we have implemented the Sayce Review recommendation to focus support on individuals through services like Access to Work, and away from specific workplaces or facilities like Remploy.

This has enabled former employees like Nigel, whose story is featured opposite, to aspire to more fulfilling careers, and has saved money for other programmes to help disabled people into work. Our records show that over 80 per cent of former Remploy employees who were made redundant and have been supported by a Personal Case Worker are currently in work and/or have accessed Work Choice support. The Sayce Review also acknowledged the valuable work undertaken by Remploy Employment Services, a leading national provider of disability employment services and recommended that Employment Services should be given the opportunity to leave Government ownership. In July 2014, the Minister of State for Employment confirmed that the Department was launching a commercial process to exit Remploy Employment Services by March 2015, an excellent opportunity for a Partner/Investor to support an existing successful business and help it develop to its full potential supporting and increasing the number of disabled people supported into work.

Case Study: Former Remploy Factory Employee

Nigel Samuel, who has a hearing impairment, is enjoying his new career as a production technician at Fashion Enter, having completed a comprehensive retraining programme.



The 51-year-old from Hackney worked for 17 years as an operative at Remploy's Haringey factory and admitted to feeling sad when it closed.

But his future is now looking brighter than ever. "I enjoyed the training I received and going back to the place where I worked for so long to do a new job with new colleagues - and some familiar faces - has been a fantastic experience," he said.

Eni-Ola Oluwatuminu, Nigel's trainer at Fashion Enter, added: "Initially, I was concerned about his lack of experience but watching Nigel learn and gain confidence has been very rewarding for me."

Fit for Work

Fit for Work

Fit for Work will deliver both a supportive occupational health assessment and

general health and work advice to employees, employers and GPs to help individuals stay in, or return to work. There is a strong correlation between staying in work and wellbeing: Fit for Work will protect people from the negative health effects of falling out of work and onto benefits. It will also help employers to save £65-80 million a year.

Inclusive Technology Prize

Through the **Inclusive Technology Prize**, we will help develop innovative products, technologies and systems that enable disabled people, their families, carers and communities to have equal access to life's opportunities. Innovations can relate to any aspect of life including, but not limited to, education, home, leisure, transport and work. [Enter](#) by Friday 16 January.

The Accessible Britain Challenge



Disability touches us all – 1 in 4 people will have a disability at

some point in their life. We launched the **Accessible Britain Challenge** to bring together the energy and creativity of the public, private and voluntary sectors to make our communities more inclusive and accessible. We want businesses up and down our high streets to take small steps that can make them more accessible to the 12.2 million disabled people in the UK. This in turn increases employment opportunities for disabled people. We've seen all sorts of innovative ideas, from Dorset police's hate crime reporting app to the upgraded Autism connect social network. Would you like to [nominate](#) an organisation for the Accessible Britain awards?

Equality Challenge Unit

We have also worked with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to develop improved support for disabled students. The **Equality Challenge Unit** has launched new guidance for careers advisers working in Higher Education institutions on "What works in supporting disabled students' transitions from higher education into employment".



"We all have unique talents and deserve the opportunity to fulfil our true potential."

Sophie Christiansen
Five times Paralympic gold medalist



Department
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