

# Customer Service Staff Practical Support



# Focus on Barriers

Safe, accessible travel should be a right for every passenger.

.....

Historical infrastructure barriers have prevented some people from travelling.

.....

As this changes, it's crucial that attitudes, policies and environments are inclusive.

.....

A focus on barriers, removing them and providing information and assistance to reduce any residual difficulties should create a positive culture where the right to travel is clearly respected.

**Specific challenges linked to particular conditions:**  
How much do you know about providing support?

# Mental Health

**About 25% of us experience symptoms of mental ill health every year. That's why it's important to remember mental health when responding to passengers.**

**People experiencing symptoms may:**

- Have no visible impairment but still require patience and assistance
- Feel extremely anxious about bus and coach travel
- Behave in ways that are difficult for the driver and/or other passengers to understand
- Find it difficult to ask for the help they need

# Anxiety

How do you feel when things happen that are outside your control? Do you ever feel anxious?

.....

Experiencing delays, cancellations and changes to timetables and routes can cause passengers to feel anxious or can add to existing feelings of anxiety.

.....

How confident do you feel about supporting people who need additional reassurance, for example about undertaking a journey, or whether they're on the right coach or at the right bus stop?

# Autism-spectrum conditions

Do you feel confident about recognising possible challenges a passenger with an autism-spectrum condition may be experiencing?

.....

Do you think you could respond effectively?

.....

What practical support could help?



# Dementia

How confident do you feel about supporting people who need additional reassurance, for example about undertaking a journey, or whether they're on the right coach or at the right bus stop?

.....

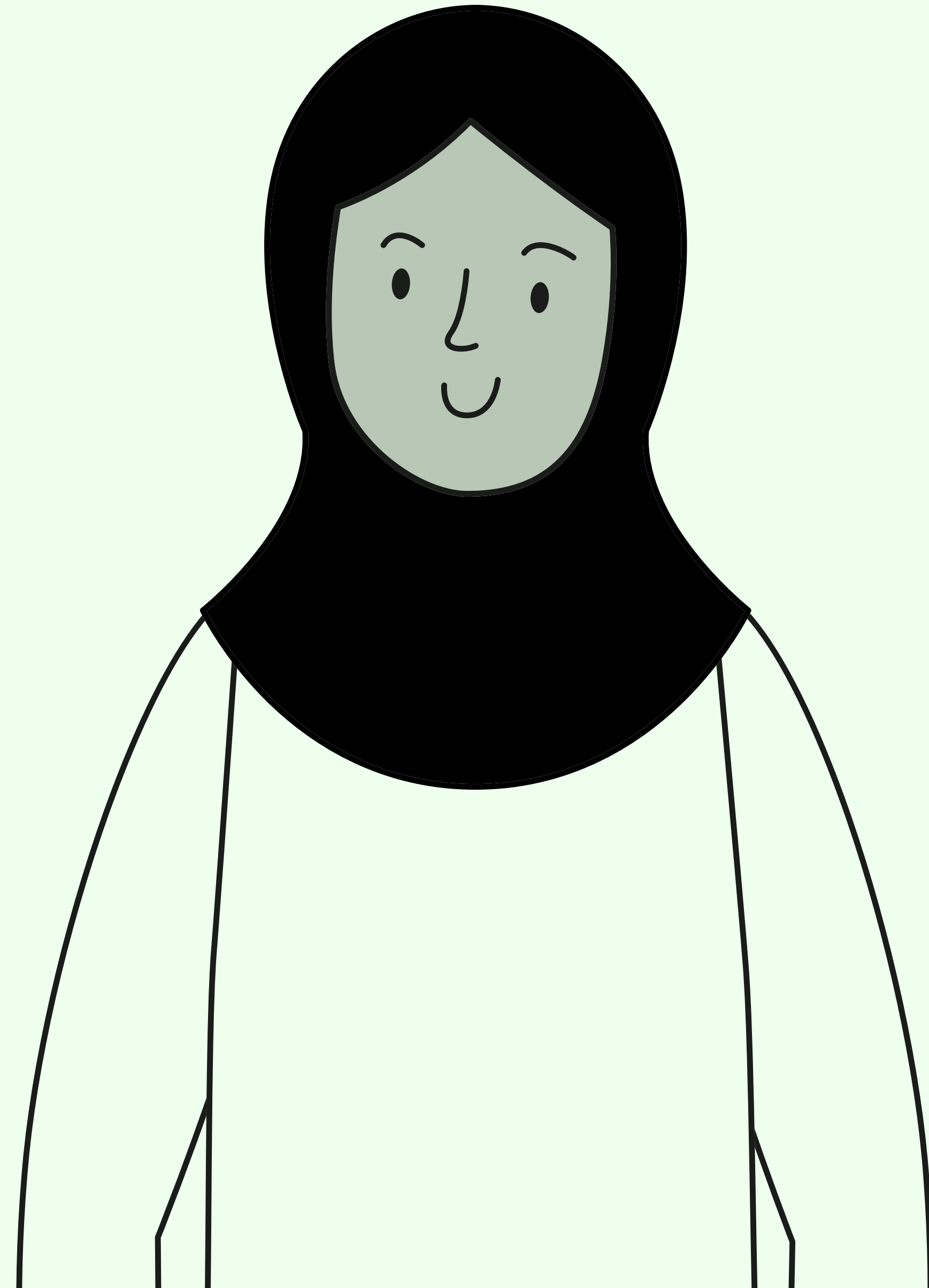
What would you do if you came across a person with dementia that you didn't think should be travelling alone?

.....

What sort of things could help someone with dementia to travel safely?

# Mobility Impairments

Do you understand and know how to respond to people who may have physical impairments, including stiffness, fatigue and pain, but may not use a mobility aid such as a wheelchair, scooter or stick?





# Providing Practical Assistance

You may need to guide or support passengers with a variety of travel challenges.

.....

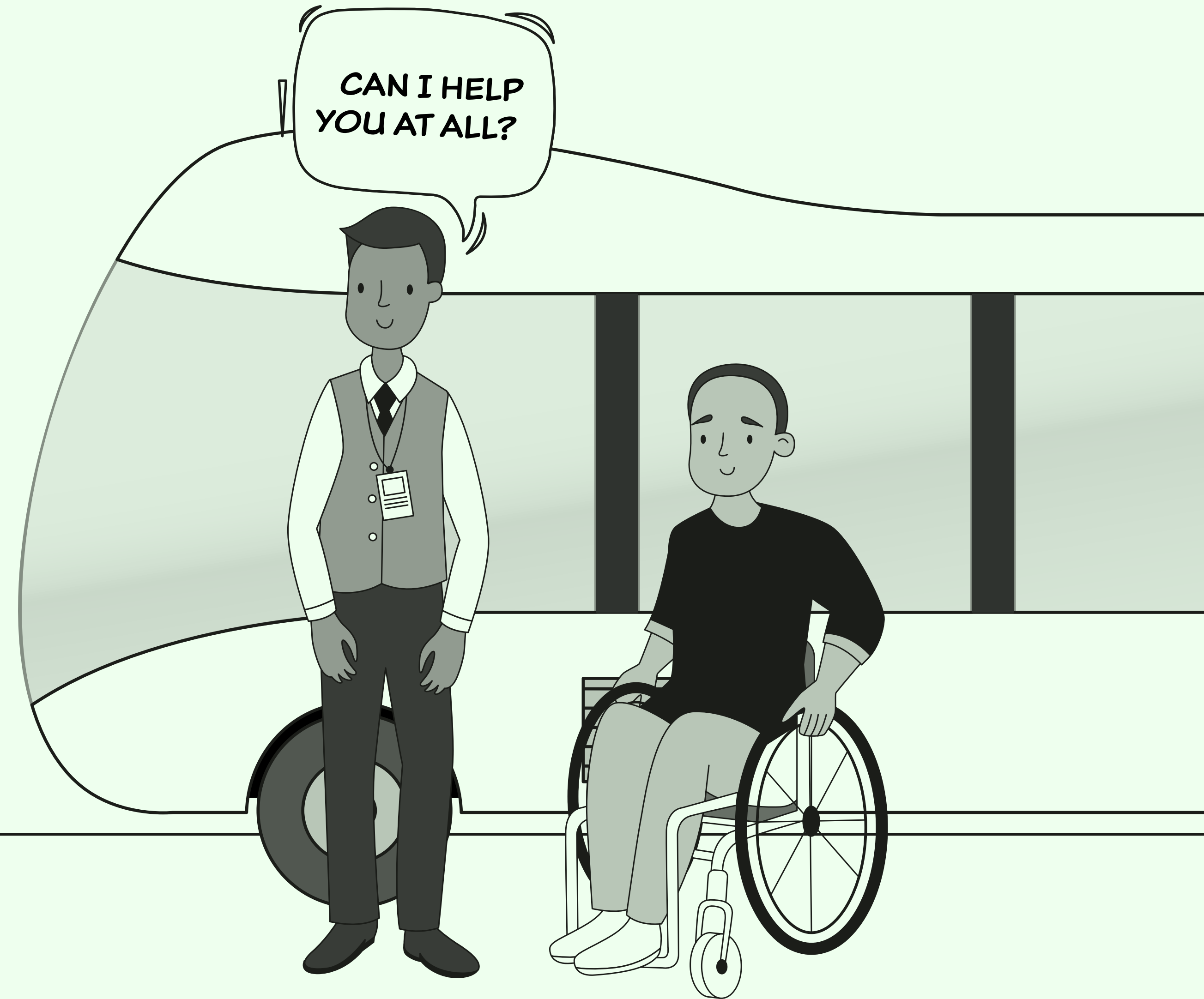
What questions do you have about particular impairments or health conditions?

.....

What tips do you have to share?

# How to Push a Wheelchair

## Ask first!



Continued

- 1. **Speak directly** to the wheelchair user.  
.....
- 2. **Don't make assumptions** about the kind of help someone might need.  
.....
- 3. **Remember** you don't need a full medical history, you just need to ask what practical help they need.  
.....
- 4. **Ask for permission** before touching someone's wheelchair.  
.....
- 5. **There's no need to bend down** to speak to someone in a wheelchair.

# How to Guide a Visually Impaired Passenger

- Introduce yourself and **talk directly** to the person you are guiding.  
.....
- If you are going to guide them, **ask** them how they like to be guided.  
.....
- Tell them** about kerbs and steps as you approach them and say whether they go up or down.  
.....
- Mention any potential hazards before you reach them** and say where they are.  
.....
- If you are guiding someone to a seat, place their hand on the back of the seat before they sit down, so they can orientate themselves.  
.....
- Don't walk away** without saying you are leaving.  
.....
- And remember that **most people who are registered as blind have some degree of vision**. Don't assume that they see nothing.

# Role Play

**In pairs, act out one of the following scenarios:**

Someone with a visual impairment has misunderstood which stop their bus or coach was going to leave from and has missed it. They have a long wait until the next one. They are angry and distressed.



# Role Play

**In pairs, act out one of the following scenarios:**

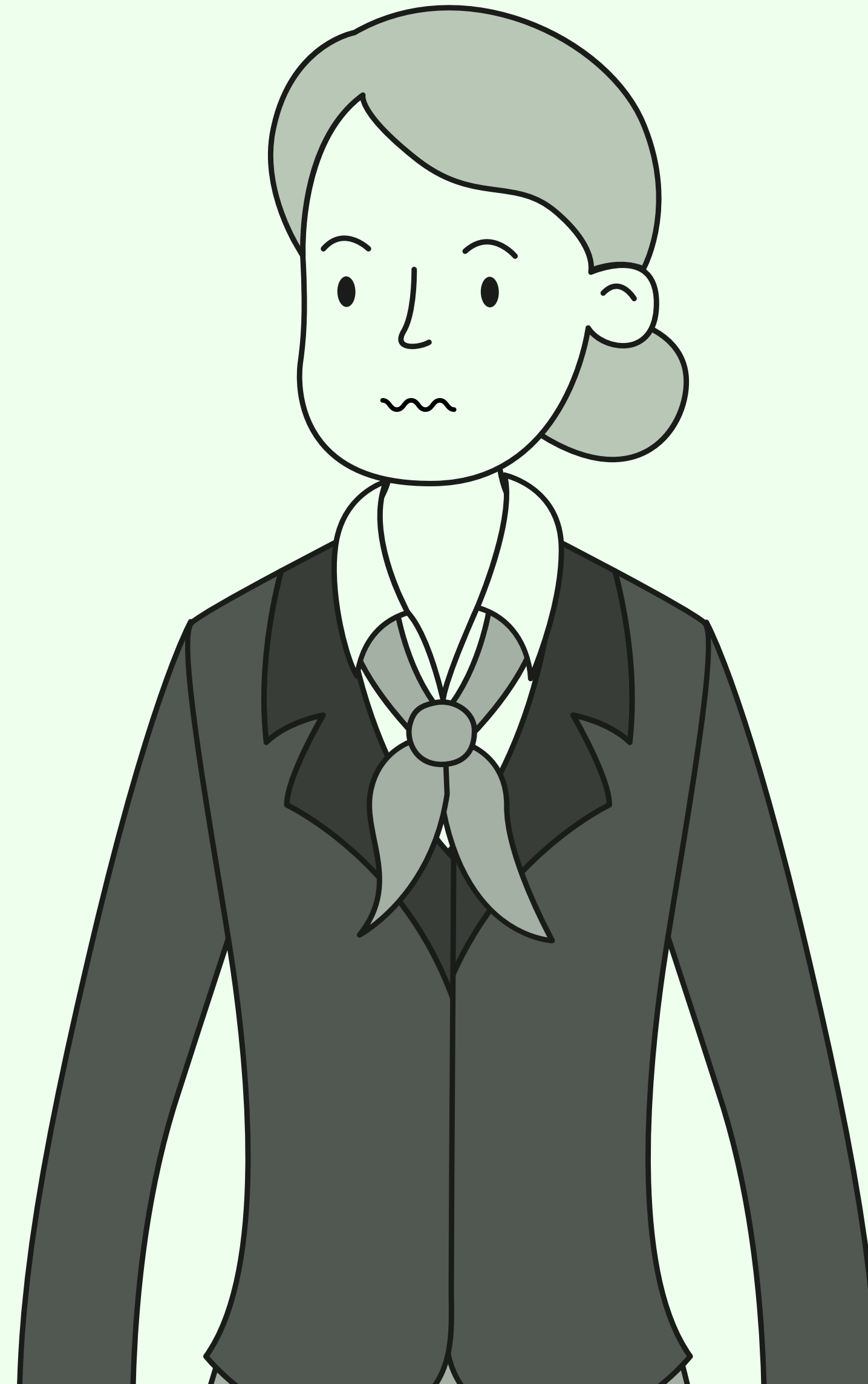
A wheelchair user is travelling alone for the first time and wants to know what to expect.



# Role Play

**In pairs, act out one of the following scenarios:**

A passenger who is profoundly Deaf and uses British Sign Language wants something. You aren't sure what.





# Your Role

You have a key role in making it possible for many older and disabled people to travel with confidence.

.....

Remember that disabled people have rights to use transport services under the Equality Act 2010. You must be aware of these.

.....

Without your knowledge and understanding, many would simply not be using the bus or coach.



# Discuss

What changes will I make to the way I work to ensure that my service anticipates adjustments for disabled passengers?

.....

Where should I go for advice on how to help disabled passengers?

REAL

Respect

REAL

Empathise

REAL

Ask

REAL

Listen

REAL Passenger REAL Person



Department  
for Transport