Portside Staff Practical Support

Train the Trainer Maritime Modules

REAL

REAL Passenger **REAL** Person

Department for Transport

Portside Staff

Practical Support

This module is specifically for **portside customer-facing staff** and relates to recognising and providing support to passengers who need assistance. It is best used alongside other modules in the package to address specific issues for this group of staff. These modules include the core modules **What is Disability?**, **Inclusive Communication** and **Customer Service Face to Face**.

Suggested timings are given below. Depending on delivery and delegate numbers, the content in this module could be delivered in 115–160 minutes.

Learning Objectives

1. Understanding the practical implications of supporting disabled people and people with reduced mobility (PRMs)

2. Sharing good practice with colleagues and the trainer about providing practical assistance

3. Developing empathy and understanding for disabled people and PRMs

Guidance to Accompany Slides

Discussion

Suggested timings: 20–30 minutes

Purpose: To **ensure that delegates understand that many impairments and health conditions won't be immediately obvious**, and that people face different types of barriers to travel.

Use the animated videos to encourage empathy and understanding of the challenges that disabled people and PRMs face.

Allow around 10 minutes for pairs to discuss, a total of 10 minutes for feedback from each pair and then 10 minutes for whole-group discussion.

Invisible disabilities can include sight or hearing loss, arthritis and other painful conditions and a wide range of mental health issues.

Passengers may have temporary impairments that don't mean they are 'disabled' in the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, but they still have rights to assistance under other maritime regulations. For example, someone might have a broken limb or be heavily pregnant.

Remind staff that they need to be vigilant and watch out for people who might need assistance. Encourage empathy and understanding about how a poor travel experience can damage confidence and upset someone who may also face a range of other challenges and barriers in their everyday life.

Anxiety

Suggested timings: 5–10 minutes

Purpose: To **ensure that delegates understand good practice** in interacting with, and providing practical assistance to people who experience acute and/or chronic anxiety.

Use the questions on these two slides to facilitate discussion. Depending on numbers, you may wish to divide the group into pairs or threes to answer the questions initially, followed by feedback and whole-group discussion.

It is crucial that staff recognise that many people experience anxiety during travel and staff should be patient when faced with repeated questions that may well be linked to anxiety.

Disruption and delays are a particular problem and some people need face-to-face reassurance beyond the audio-visual announcements.

You can thank anyone who shares with colleagues insight from lived experience, either professional or personal, or that of family or friends.

Autism-spectrum conditions

Suggested timings: 15 minutes

Purpose: To **ensure that delegates understand good practice** in interacting with, and providing practical assistance to people with Autism-spectrum conditions.

Use the questions on the slide to facilitate discussion. Depending on numbers, you may wish to ask delegates to divide into pairs or threes to answer the questions initially, followed by feedback and whole-group discussion.

You can thank anyone who shares with colleagues insight from lived experience, either professional or personal, or that of family or friends.

Dementia

Suggested timings: 15 minutes

Purpose: To **ensure that delegates understand good practice** in interacting with, and providing practical assistance to someone with dementia.

Use the questions on these three slides to facilitate discussion.

You can thank anyone who shares with colleagues insight from lived experience, either professional or personal, or that of family or friends.

Practical things that can help include good signage, timetables in different formats, promoting the assistance available, a coin recognition chart and ensuring toilets are dementia-friendly.

Dementia Friends' advice for interacting with people who have forgotten where they are going, are on the wrong ferry or are wandering up and down, perhaps looking for the toilet, but not recognising the door is: Be Calm, Be Kind, Be Patient.

Mobility Impairments

Suggested timings: 10 minutes

Purpose: To **ensure that delegates understand good practice** in interacting with, and providing practical assistance to someone with a mobility impairment.

Facilitate a whole-group discussion using these two slides, then ask people for any insights to share with colleagues, either from professional or personal experience, such as interacting with family or friends.

Prompts include:

- Do you feel confident about supporting someone with a condition such as rheumatoid arthritis that causes significant pain and sometimes a lack of mobility in the hands? If you are providing assistance you need to be aware that holding someone's arm may cause acute pain.
- Remember that someone with arthritic hands may struggle with fine motor movements.

Asking the Right Questions

Suggested timings: 5–10 minutes

Purpose: To **ensure that delegates understand good practice** in interacting with, and providing practical assistance to disabled people and PRMs.

Providing Safe Assistance

Suggested timings: 10 minutes

Purpose: To **ensure that delegates understand good practice** in interacting with, and providing practical assistance to disabled people and PRMs.

Allow delegates to discuss the challenges of providing safe assistance (particularly if current social distancing rules are in place) and what they have learned about what works.

You could introduce some of the REAL theme — Respect, Empathise, Ask, Listen — at this stage.

How to Push a Wheelchair

Suggested timings: 10–15 minutes

Purpose: To **ensure that delegates understand good practice** in interacting with, and providing practical assistance to someone who uses a manual wheelchair.

Ask delegates if they know anyone who uses a manual wheelchair. Have they ever provided assistance to someone who does? What sort of things should they think about?

You can prompt with good practice guidance:

1. **Don't assume.** Many, if not most, wheelchair users are not paralysed and can get up and walk a few steps if they need to. Don't assume the person can't understand you, can't hear you or needs your help. Try to view wheelchair users as what they are — regular people who happen to be using a different tool to get around.
2. **Speak directly to the wheelchair user.** Don't disrespect a wheelchair user by speaking to someone who is with them instead of them — especially not about them.
3. **Don't ask intrusive questions.** You don't need a full medical history. You just need to know what practical help they need. Ask.

Continued

4. **Don't touch someone's wheelchair until given permission to do so.** Most wheelchair users consider their wheelchair an extension of their own body, so avoid leaning on, pushing or otherwise handling their chair without their explicit permission.
5. **Don't bend down to speak to them.** Bending down to speak to a wheelchair user as you might to a child could be understood as patronising. If possible, step back so you can make eye contact and so the person doesn't need to look upwards, as that can be uncomfortable or impossible.

You could show a video on this topic, such as: **10 Things You Must KnowBefore Pushing a Wheelchair**.

How to Guide a Visually Impaired Passenger

Suggested timings: 5–10 minutes

Purpose: To **ensure that delegates understand good practice** in interacting with, and providing practical assistance to someone with a visual impairment.

Present the material on this slide, then ask people for any insights to share with colleagues, either from professional or personal experience, such as interacting with family or friends.

You could show a video on this topic, such as:
Guiding blind and partially sighted people - Giles or
Guiding blind and partially sighted people - Dolly.

Challenging Behaviour

Suggested timings: 5 minutes

Purpose: To **build empathy and understanding** about how access barriers, pain, fatigue, distress and sensory overload can create challenging behaviours.

Ask delegates how they behave under extreme stress.

Remind them that what many people take for granted — travelling around — may create huge barriers and huge stresses for disabled passengers.

Remind them that people have different levels of tolerance for stress, noise, crowds and new situations.

Encourage discussion of de-escalation techniques and how to reassure passengers.

Your Role

Suggested timings: 5 minutes

Purpose: To **summarise key messages**, with an emphasis on the role of customer service staff; or to generate discussion.

Discuss

Suggested timings: 5 minutes

Purpose: To **generate concrete changes** and actions among delegates.

REAL

Suggested timings: 5–20 minutes

Purpose: Depending on the time available, use this slide to **summarise key messages**, and remind people about the Respect, Empathise, Ask, Listen theme of the training.

You can use the train the trainer notes on REAL here and/or in other sections of the training.

REAL

Respect

REAL

Empathise

REAL

Ask

REAL

Listen

REAL Passenger **REAL** Person

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