

Disability Awareness

A disability is “a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.”
(Equality Act 2010)

Types of Disability

A visible disability is one that you can see e.g. the use of a wheelchair or an amputation

A hidden disability is not immediately obvious e.g. chronic illnesses or mental health conditions

Disabilities may affect people in different ways, but everyone deserves equal opportunities and support.

Recognising and diagnosing a disability

- ❖ Of those in the UK adult population with a disability, 80% have a hidden disability. (BMA 2024)
- ❖ Recognising most disabilities is challenging without visual cues.
- ❖ Common signs of a hidden disability to look out for:
 - Persistent fatigue or ongoing pain
 - Difficulty concentrating or remembering things
 - Excessive stress or consistent low mood
 - Sensitivity to noise, light, or busy environments
- ❖ If you think you might have a disability, talk to your GP, they will help you see a specialist, if necessary, who can give a diagnosis.

Disability Rights

- ❖ It's important to have legislation that gives everyone equal access to opportunities.

Examples include:

Care Act (2014)

It makes sure that adults with disabilities receive care and support to maintain their wellbeing, independence, and choice.

Equality Act (2010)

Employers must make ‘reasonable adjustments’ which are changes to help someone with a disability do their job effectively.

An important government support scheme for disabled people:

Access to Work (1994)

It helps cover the cost of support or equipment needed to help someone with a disability do their job. E.g. assistive software, support workers, travelling costs

Disclosing a disability (Scope UK 2025)

- ❖ You can mention disability to your employer at any point.
- ❖ It is entirely your choice whether to mention your disability.
- ❖ You might consider disclosing when:
 - You receive a diagnosis
 - You need adjustments to do your job
 - Your condition/role at work changes
- ❖ Sharing this information may help you access support such as:
 - Reasonable adjustments
 - Access to Work grants

Support and adjustments at work

- ❖ There are many different strategies that can be used to offer effective support.
- ❖ Some general examples of adjustments that can be made are:
 - Flexible working: adjust hours, work from home
 - Assistive technology: screen readers, voice recognition software
 - Physical adjustments: ergonomic chairs, accessible restrooms
 - Role modifications: adjusted workload, restructured tasks (AbilityNet 2025)

References

[Equality Act \(2010\)](#)

[BMA \(2024\)](#)

[Access to Work \(1994\)](#)

[Care Act \(2014\)](#)

[Scope UK](#)

[AbilityNet](#)