



Summary

Disabled people – getting on and staying on

About the DRILL Programme

DRILL (Disability Research on Independent Living and Learning) was an innovative 5 year, UK wide programme led by disabled people, for disabled people and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Launched in 2015, the programme was managed by a partnership of Disability Action Northern Ireland, Disability Rights UK, Disability Wales and Inclusion Scotland.

The aim of the programme was to build better evidence about approaches which enable disabled people to achieve independent living. The findings from the projects it funded can be used to inform future provision across a wide range of policy areas, and give a greater voice to disabled people in decisions which affect them.

This is one of a series of summaries of the project supported by DRILL. Final reports, toolkits and summaries of all the projects are available from the DRILL website at www.drilluk.org.uk.

Overview of the project

This project explored the general lack of awareness from employers on the issues disabled people face when trying to keep their employment status.

Approach

The project employed disabled people or those with long-term health conditions with limited job experience. They were provided with training to help them carry out the research project.

They carried out six pilot interviews to prepare for the main research interviews. Twenty-nine in depth interviews were then carried out with various organisations and companies.

Findings

Lots of the organisations wanted to understand more about reasonable adjustments and best practice. They wanted one place where there was key information and guidance for both employers and employees.

Around 45% of the companies interviewed were signed up to the Disability Confident scheme, designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with long term health conditions.

Over 80% of companies felt that previous experience of disability in the workplace influenced the way they approached employing or working alongside disabled people.

Most interviewees agreed that meeting disabled people would help to quell some of the nervousness around recruiting and retaining disabled people.

Time and other management pressures were potential barriers to making adjustments for disabled people.

Many organisations noted experiencing, but overcoming, the barriers to recruiting and retaining disabled people.

There was discussion as to who is obliged to make reasonable adjustments when an organisation rents an office space.

Findings (continued)

There was a general lack of awareness around reasonable adjustments. Respondents were aware of legislation, but not sure how it applied.

Interviewees thought that some disabled people may have confidence issues in regard to employment, but might be successful if they applied for jobs.

Some employers found it hard to differentiate between people struggling because they were not coping with their job, and those who were struggling due to their impairment or health condition.

Recommendations

The project outlined many recommendations, some of which are listed here. All recommendations are included in the full report, which is linked below.

- Introduce a workplace adjustment passport which stays with employees if they move jobs within an organisation, or start a new job
- Set up a forum for employers to discuss and share practice around employing disabled people
- Introduce good practice guidelines for employers around inclusive recruitment
- Review the Disability Confident scheme in Sheffield
- Create a discussion with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on the issues raised by employers on the difficulties they have found in the accessing the service
- Create an information point for employers which includes a telephone helpline and advisors to identify resources and good practice on disability and employment issues.

Final report

[Getting on keeping on: finding the barriers faced by employers when employing and retaining disabled people](#)

Please click on report name to read the full report.

Project partners

**Sheffield Occupational
Health Advisory Service**



Sheffield City Council



Disability Sheffield

