

Department for Employment and Learning

Disability Action Plan April 2009-March 2011

July 2010

Under section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), Public Authorities are required, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

Public Authorities are also under a duty to submit Disability Action Plans to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland explaining how they propose to fulfil these 'disability duties' in relation to their functions and to consult with stakeholders and relevant individuals on their Plan.

The period for consultation runs from 14th July until 6th October and the Department welcomes your comments during this period.

On the advice of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the Plan contains only new actions being undertaken, or to be undertaken by the Department for the given period in relation to its disability duties. It does not therefore reflect all of the ongoing work undertaken by the Department in this area.

If you require the Plan in an alternative format, (such as large print, in braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc) and/ or in an alternative language, please contact the Department either in writing, by telephone or by e-mail using the contact details below.

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Department for Employment and Learning

Disability Action Plan 1st April 2009 – 31st March 2011

Measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

Section 1: Training

Measures	Timescale Indicators/Target	Performance/ Measurement	Outcomes	Responsibility
Disablement Advisory Service (DAS): <ul style="list-style-type: none">Disability Awareness training for Pathways Teams in Jobs and Benefits Offices / JobCentres	From April 2009	All Pathways team leaders and advisors trained in disability awareness when taking up post. All staff, across the entire network trained on taking up post	Improved awareness of disabilities and their employment related impacts, Improved level of service provided to customers on health related benefits who	HR – Operational Learning and Development Team and Disablement Advisory Service (DAS)

		<p>in this area,</p> <p>Staff satisfaction levels gained through feedback on completion of training.</p>	<p>are disabled or who are undertaking the Pathways programme.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on Motivational Interviewing. 	<p>April 2010 – June 2010</p>	<p>Occupational Psychologists and Pathways staff trained.</p> <p>Staff trained from across entire network.</p> <p>Staff satisfaction levels gained through feedback on completion of training.</p>	<p>To enable staff to provide a better service to customers on health related benefits who are disabled or who are undertaking the Pathways programme</p>	<p>HR - Learning and Development Team</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Awareness briefing sessions delivered to all staff in Jobs and Benefits Offices /JobCentres by the Pathways Team leaders 	<p>By November 2009</p>	<p>All Jobseekers allowances staff trained from all offices across the network.</p> <p>Staff satisfaction levels gained through feedback on completion of training.</p>	<p>Increased confidence of JobSeekers Allowance(JSA) Advisers who may encounter mild to moderate disabled clients</p>	<p>Regional Operations Support Branch</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RNID sessions delivered to Jobs and Benefits Offices /JobCentre staff delivering services to deaf clients, to help them provide a service to clients with hearing impairments 	<p>January 2010 – Sept 2010</p>	<p>All staff are trained from all Jobs and Benefits offices and JobCentres</p> <p>Interactive training sessions.</p>	<p>Improved level of service and advice received by client base when they come into the Jobs and Benefits Offices /JobCentres</p>	<p>Employment Services Division</p>

		Staff satisfaction levels gained through feedback on completion of training.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with specialist disability organisations to determine the range of training and support the organisations can provide to the department when specific training is required for either an individual with a disability or the colleagues of the individual with the disability. 	Identify and liaise with relevant organisations by May 2010	To have developed a departmental resource which sets out the available support and training, a named organisational contact, and an agreed timeframe for delivering support for relevant	Increased awareness of specific disability issues, provision of additional support where needed within organisation. Targeted, timely and appropriate support for the department's	Human Resources

		<p>disability organisations.</p> <p>When a specific training or support need is identified, the training or support will be delivered within the timeframe agreed with the organisation.</p>	<p>staff.</p>	
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Section 2: Communications

Measures	Timescale Indicators/Target	Performance/ Measurement	Outcomes	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathways support Model sessions facilitated by Disability Programme Managers and Case Conferences facilitated by Occupational Psychologists for Pathways Teams 	<p>April 2009 and ongoing.</p>	<p>Approximately once per month across the Jobs and Benefits Office /JobCentre network</p>	<p>Provision of Case conferencing on individual clients to help personal advisors assist customers to progress towards and into employment.</p> <p>Improved service to customers on health related benefits who are disabled or who are</p>	<p>Disablement Advisory Service</p>

			undertaking the Pathways programme	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing of best practice in supporting people with disabilities through PathwaysTeam Leader forums. 	April 2010 -2011	Quarterly meetings to share best practice and discuss issues that are common across the Jobcentre and Jobs and Benefits Office network.	<p>Improved service delivery to customers on health related benefits who are disabled or who are undertaking the Pathways programme.</p> <p>Encouraging positive attitudes and increased</p>	Disablement Advisory Service

			awareness of issues.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Networking and “buddy” system between the Occupational Psychology Service in DAS and their counterparts in the Department for Work and Pensions to share best practice 	April 2010 onwards	Meetings with Department for Work and Pensions officials to share best practice and for Disablement Advisory Service (DAS) to learn what is happening in Great Britain with the Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) client base and what is organised for	Enhanced experience for people with a disability	Disablement Advisory Service

<p>Consult with people with a disability through the Department's Disability Liaison Group Forum meetings to consult on production of Departmental marketing materials</p>	<p>April 2009 onwards</p>	<p>customers on health related benefits who are disabled or who are undertaking the Pathways programme.</p> <p>Meet every six months to consult.</p> <p>Samples of departmental marketing material circulated to Disability liaison Group members for</p>	<p>Marketing materials that meet the needs of and promote positive images of disabled people.</p>	<p>Disablement Advisory Service and Communications Branch.</p>
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		<p>their quality assurance.</p> <p>Das feedback to DEL's communications Branch.</p>		
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Section 3: Consultation and Engagement

Measures	Timescale Indicators/Target	Performance/ Measurement	Outcomes	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Liaison Group Forum meetings 	<p>April 2009 onwards</p> <p>The Department meets with its Disability Liaison Group 3 times per year</p>	<p>Keep Disability Sector informed on employment related issues that impact on customers with disabilities and also consult</p>	<p>Better exchange of information between the Department and the disability sector.</p>	<p>Disablement Advisory Service</p>

		with them on programme changes/developments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Speakers from the Disability Sector to be invited to the Pathways Team leader Forum meetings 	April 2010 onwards	Quarterly meetings	Improved understanding of the barriers that people with disabilities encounter when finding and keeping work	Disablement Advisory Service

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disablement Advisory Service participation on Vision Strategy Group and Employment sub-group (led by RNIB) 	<p>April 2009 – March 2011</p> <p>Quarterly meetings</p>	<p>Identification of barriers to inclusion and services, including employment services.</p> <p>Barriers addressed where possible</p>	<p>Improved service for people with sight impairment.</p>	<p>Disablement Advisory Service</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation on Southern Health Disability Action Planning Group (led by SHSCT) Which was set up further to the production of a Disability Action Plan by SHSCT and the establishment of particular working groups. 	<p>Throughout the life of the plan</p>	<p>Participation by DAS in the Employment Workstream Working Group.</p>	<p>Employment opportunities and subsequent support requirements for people with disabilities identified</p>	<p>Disablement Advisory Service</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department is leading on the development and implementation of a Northern Ireland Regional Strategy for Widening Participation in Higher Education by students from disadvantaged backgrounds including students with learning difficulties and disabilities. This will involve a stakeholder consultation exercise which will include disability organisations and students with a disability 	<p>Consultation will take place during 2010/11</p>	<p>Consultation completed. Regional Strategy developed.</p>		<p>Widening Participation Branch</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department is currently finalising proposals to enhance course provision for trainee British and Irish Sign Language tutors and interpreters in Northern Ireland. The Department has, and continues to have, regular consultation with organisations representing the deaf sector. 	Ongoing.	Project objectives agreed with sector.	Course provision should meet the needs and expectations of the deaf sector.	Higher Education Policy Branch.
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Section 4: Public Appointments

Measures	Timescale Indicators/Target	Performance/ Measurement	Outcomes	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify barriers to the Public appointments process, DEL is 	By March 2010	Questionnaire produced Identification of barriers that	Greater awareness of barriers to applying for public	Central Management Branch

<p>developing a questionnaire which will issue to everyone who requests an application form for a Public Appointment. This may identify and allow us to address any barriers which exist to applying for a position.</p>		<p>exist to applying for public positions Where issues are raised, these will be incorporated into DEL Public Appointment procedures, where Appropriate.</p>	<p>appointments.</p>	
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