

ELFT Ability Newsletter

24 February 2020 - Issue 6



Welcome to ELFT Ability's newsletter.

ELFT Ability is about staff uniting to take the 'dis' out of disability. Staff from across the Trust can share their experiences of disability in the workplace for mutual support and to influence ELFT's culture around disabled staff.



ELFT Ability Meeting

It was nice to see familiar and new faces at our recent Network meeting. We had a lively chat over the social lunch about navigating health services, Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and disabled toilets. In the meeting we recapped on the 2019 activities and discussed how we will take some of the conversations from the Building Ability conference forward. There was an interesting discussion on identity and how we use (or opt not to use) our lived experience at work.



New Executive Sponsor

Welcome to Mohit Venkataram, who is ELFT Ability's new executive sponsor. He takes over from Mason Fitzgerald, who has moved to become Deputy CEO at Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust. Mohit is a keen supporter of ELFT Ability and has spoken at our previous conferences; he is also one of the many faces in the [See the Ability Campaign](#). We look



forward to seeing him champion our cause on the Board.



Personal Emergency

Evacuation Plans

Would you need assistance to evacuate your workplace in an emergency? If so, you need to have an up to date [Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan \(PEEP\)](#). This is a bespoke 'escape plan' for individuals who may not be able raise the alarm or quickly reach a place of safety unaided in case of an emergency. A template of this can be found on Shared Depts K: drive under Fire Safety\Disability documentation. Contact your building's Risk Officer for more information.



Accessible Toilets

There is often an assumption that accessible toilets (also known as disabled toilets) are only for wheelchair users. There are many other people who might need to use an accessible toilet, including those with other mobility impairments and hidden disabilities. It's for staff to judge their own needs as it can be embarrassing when questioned. For safety reasons the red cord in accessible toilets needs to be untied and reaching the ground so it can be pulled in an emergency. The Trust will be promoting this via



Euan's Guide
#RedCordCampaign.
Watch this space!



#PurpleLightUp

Winner

On the International Day of Persons with Disabilities we have carried out a range of 'bright purple' activities to celebrate the power of disabled people. Congratulations to Becky Derham, People Participation Lead, who came first place in the PurpleLightUp quiz and wins a hamper of goodies for her team. Here's her winning picture.



Disability Champion of the Month

Congratulations to Betsy Scott, who was awarded Disability Champion of the Month January 2020. Betsy is a valued and long-standing member of staff with lots of experience across ELFT and has always been supportive of ELFT Ability events. Most recently she showed how important it is for a manager to quickly identify disabled staff and introduce them to staff networks for mutual support. Disabled staff can often feel isolated and so it is good to make people feel welcomed from the beginning and enable them to connect with others' experiences. Each month we celebrate one member of staff who has improved the working lives of disabled staff. If you'd like to nominate a future Disability Champion in recognition of their contribution towards promoting a disability positive culture at ELFT, please email [Shannon O'Neil](mailto:Shannon.O'Neil@elft.org.uk)



Network Lead Roles

Would you like to be one of the next Equality Network Leads for the Trust? Network Lead roles are now open for ELFT Ability, BAME Network, LGBTQ+ Network and Women's Network.

These roles are for one day a week, protected time from your existing position, in addition to your current role, for two years. This is a great opportunity for staff who are passionate about equality, diversity and inclusion and want to help support the Trust in its journey of shaping and implementing the equality agenda.

For more information see how you can [help us shape the Trust equalities agenda](#).

Expressions of interest should be submitted to [Olga Osokina](#), People and Culture Manager, by Sunday, 8 March 2020.



Pando

We are going to trial a chat group on Pando for disabled staff to connect with each other, ask questions and get mutual support. If you would like to sign up to this please email [Shannon O'Neill](mailto:Shannon.O'Neill).



We're on Twitter

ELFT Ability are very active on Twitter, raising awareness of disability and employment issues and much much more. Join us for the conversation at [@ELFTAbility](https://twitter.com/ELFTAbility). There are now over 60 ELFT team accounts on Twitter. We've compiled these together into one [Twitter list](#) so that you can see what's happening in the #ELFTFamily without having to follow every account. Join our [#ELFTAbility tweet chat](#) on Monday, 2 March 2020. We'll be online throughout the day discussing how to make posters and leaflets accessible. Come and share your experiences and top tips and encourage your colleagues to take part and ask questions.



Facebook

ELFT Ability have a closed Facebook group exclusively for disabled staff to come together for peer support. Contact [Stuart Crawford](#) for more information.



Business Disability Forum

The Trust is a member of the [Business Disability Forum](#), a membership organisation that makes it easier and more rewarding to do business with and employ disabled people. They have some great online resources about disability in the workplace that would be ideal for HR staff to have at their fingertips. Please contact [Lucy Ingle](#) for a login password.



ELFT Ability Membership

If you didn't not receive this email from the ELFT Communications then you are not on ELFT Ability's updated membership list. To subscribe, contact elft.ability@nhs.net



If you have any queries, suggestions or news for ELFT Ability, contact [Shannon O'Neill](#), Network Equality Lead (Disability) or [check out the ELFT Ability Intranet page](#).

[Unsubscribe from this newsletter](#)