

View your email [online](#)

# ELFT Ability Newsletter



7 December 2018 - Issue 1

## Introduction

Welcome to ELFT Ability's first newsletter - we hope you like our new logo and new look!

On Monday, 3 December 2018, International Day of Persons with Disabilities we launched ELFT Ability, the staff network formerly known as the Disabled Staff Network as part of our #PurpleLightUp campaign.

ELFT Ability is staff uniting to take the 'dis' out of disability. By bringing staff together from across the Trust to share experiences for disability in the workplace we can influence organisation's culture to improve the working conditions of disabled staff.



### #PurpleLightUp

#PurpleLightUp is a global movement led by disabled employees to re-balance the narrative around disability, deficit and work. You can view Purple Watch, Channel 4's brilliant video that highlights the campaign [here](#)

As part of ELFT's celebrations Mason Fitzgerald, Director of Planning and Performance made an organisational pledge, saying:

*"It is a vital that we recognise and value the contribution of disabled staff in East London NHS Foundation Trust. The Trust has been working closely with our disabled staff network, ELFT Ability, to hear the voice of disabled staff and use this to shift our culture. Over the next year we are committed to continuing our work to remove the barriers to enable disabled staff to fulfil their potential."*

We had fun on Monday and turned the Corporate Induction Day purple and launched ELFT Ability. Lots of staff took to Twitter with photos, selfies and pledge and we had a 24 hour jukebox.

Check out #ELFTAbility @ELFTAbility and #PurpleJukebox #DrWheelz and #PurpleLightUp to see the action.



### Last Chance to Complete the Staff Survey - Deadline TODAY!

The ELFT Ability Network Development Group have reviewed the results from disabled staff with HR and directors for a number of years now. The disparity in experience between the experiences between disabled staff and the whole workforce has influenced our priorities and from the Board that we need a culture shift in disability in the workplace. Your views really do make a difference



### Next ELFT Ability Meeting - Tuesday 11 December 2018 from 12.00

The first ELFT Ability meeting is on Tuesday 11 December 2018, at Trust HQ, Robert Dolan House, 9 Alie Street. London, E1 8DE.

From 12 – 1pm, we will be celebrating ELFT Ability and the power of networking. We will mark our rebrand with words from Marie Gabriel and Mason Fitzgerald. Our guest speaker is Walter Scott, Founder and Co-chair of the Defence Stammering Network. You can check him out [here](#) on Tedx Talks on You Tube to whet your appetite.

A light lunch will be provided. We are hoping to record the meeting for those unable to attend.

From 1.00pm-3.00pm **Workshops**

- Designing an awareness campaign
- Reasonable adjustment request pathway
- Planning activities for 2019

All staff are welcome to the meeting and/or workshops.

Please contact [Alex Smith](#) to reserve your place, including any access or dietary requirements.



### Disability Champion of the Month

All ELFT staff have a role in creating a positive culture towards disability in the workplace. ELFT Ability will celebrate a Disability Champion of the month to highlight the positive steps that our colleagues are taking to improve the working lives of disabled staff.

Our first Disability Champion for November 2018 is Faheem Iqbal, Senior Support Technician from the IT services department. Faheem has been proactively working with the Network's Development Group to troubleshoot a backlog of IT accessibility issues. **Read Faheem's story here**

If you'd like to nominate a future Disability Champion in recognition of their contribution towards promoting a disability positive culture at ELFT, [email here](#)



### Improving Working Lives

Members of ELFT Ability have been working together and with the Trust to improve working lives.

**Reasonable adjustments:** Streamlining the process of reasonable adjustments was identified as the key priority by the Network Development Group. [link to the Network Development group page]. It's was a key theme discussed on our Away Day in July 2018 attended by 40 disabled staff and managers. Work continues to make this process easier. Please join us at our meeting on Tuesday 11 December 2018 if you'd like to part of taking that work forward.

**Sick absence:** Many disabled staff report difficulties with the sickness absence policy not adequately taking on board the nature of their disability, and we can working with HR to address this. If you have any comments from the perspective of being a disabled staff member please contact [Asha and Fiorella]

**Disability leave:** We are scoping the idea of Trustwide disability leave policy. If you any suggestions, particularly if you have previously worked for an organisation that had disability leave or have negotiated an individual reasonable adjust, please get in touch with [Shannon O'Neill](#).

**Disability passport:** We are scoping the idea of Trustwide disability passport, which may have benefits when there is a change in management, team or location. If you any suggestions, particularly if you have previously worked for an organisation that uses disability passports please contact [Tracy Kitto](#)



## Workforce Disability Equality Standards (WDES)

After much delay, NHS England will be launching Workforce Disability Equality Standards. Staff who attended the 'Disability as an Asset at ELFT' conference in November 2017 may remember Christine Rivers from NHS England, speaking about the preparation work.

Olga Osokina, Organisation Development Manager, is the organisation lead on this. If you are a disabled member of staff and would like to actively help with the Trust's action plan, please contact [Shannon O'Neill](#)



## Are Your Details Up to Date?

The number of staff identifying on the staff survey in comparison to ESR is substantial. This is a trend across all NHS trusts. We are aware that many people may not wish to disclose their disability to HR when they start a new job. We are pleased that staff felt able to disclose in the 2017 staff survey and ask that if it's a simple case of forgetting to update your details on ESR, that you take a few moments to do so.



## The Purple Space

PurpleSpace is a networking and professional development hub for disabled employees, a network of disabled staff networks. ELFT recently joined giving ELFT Ability the chance to network with hundreds of organisations who are doing fab work about disability in the workplace. They have lots of great resources - blogs, news and events. We can have 20 accounts to get direct access to their

resources. If you would like to trial one of these accounts for 6 months and help work out how to get the more out of this membership please contact [Norbert Lieckfeldt](mailto:Norbert.Lieckfeldt@www.purplespace.org) <https://www.purplespace.org>



### Twitter Handle

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. Please note the is a new account handle @ELFT\_DSN is not long active.



### Quiz - Win a Luxury Hamper

We have developed a Quiz for teams to get them thinking about disability with the incentive of a luxury hamper for the winning team. [Download the quiz here.](#) Closing date for the online quiz is Tuesday, 11 December 2018 at 10am.

If you have any queries, suggestions or news for ELFT Ability, contact [Shannon O'Neill](#)

