

ELFT Ability Newsletter



7 June 2019 - Issue 2

Welcome to ELFT Ability's second 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.



Save the date!

ELFT Ability
conference



NHS
East London
NHS Foundation Trust



ELFT Ability On Tour

ELFT Ability network staff and pop-up stand has been visiting all sorts of places! So far we've been to ELFT's corporate induction days, Beaumont House (Tower Hamlets Community Health Services), Vicarage Lane Health Centre (Newham Community Health Services), the LGBTQ Network conference and Women's Network conference.

It has been really useful to talk to staff, hear their first hand experiences and build a picture of the culture around disability in the workplace here at ELFT. We aim to use these discussions to understand what is going well, where the Trust needs to improve and, if needed, signpost staff to the right people. If you would like to host us at your service or an event,

please email [Shannon O'Neill](#).



The Workforce Disability Equality Standard

NHS England's [Workforce Disability Equality Standard \(WDES\)](#) came into force on 1 April 2019 and it is a mandatory part of the NHS Standard Contract. WDES is a set of 10 measures that will enable NHS trusts to compare the experience of disabled and non-disabled staff.

ELFT can use this information to demonstrate progress in improving disability equality in the workplace. We are keen to involve members of ELFT Ability Network in the development of the WDES action plan and engagement events. If you would like to help with the work, please contact [Olga Osokina](#).



Are Your Records Up To Date?

It is important to make sure that your ESR information is up to date. The diversity monitoring information enables the Trust to make sure we are meeting the needs of staff and compares the experiences of different staff groups to minimise the variation in their experience.

The staff survey continues to show there is a large disparity between staff who identify as disabled on ESR and those who identify on the staff survey. This disparity is not uncommon in organisations and especially in NHS Trusts and we understand that there are numerous reasons why people disclose or do not disclose a disability in different situations.

As part of our WDES monitoring, it would be helpful to have more reliable data on the numbers of disabled staff. There is no pressure to declare, but if you do identify as disabled or get adjustments at work, please take a moment to update your personal information via ESR Self-Service.



Your Chance To Star!

We are producing an awareness campaign tackling preconceived ideas of disabled staff. We are looking for six people to star alongside, Mohit Venkataram, Executive Director of Commercial Development.

If you're out about your disability or long term health condition, and are confident to have your photo on posters around the Trust, then we'd love for you to be one of the faces in the campaign. Please get in touch with [Taiye Aro](#), if you are interested.



Reasonable Adjustment Pathway

Following discussions at Operations Group, Petra Nittel, Deputy Director Tower Hamlets CHS, is leading a working group on making the reasonable adjustment pathway more efficient and less confusing.

She is joined by Faheem Iqbal, Lucy Ingle, Shannon O'Neill, Stephen Sandford and Olga Osokina to make a streamlined process based on the feedback we've had from disabled staff, managers, HR and IT services.



ELFT Ability Conference Planning

We are planning the next ELFT Ability Conference, which is taking place in October 2019. It will be a chance for members of the Network to come together and we hope that there will be lots of interesting sessions around disability in the workplace. If you have ideas for sessions or speakers please fill in [ELFT Ability Conference Planning Form](#), by noon on **Wednesday, 12 June 2019**.

We are looking for people to join a conference planning group to help ensure that this is a successful event that meets the needs of a wide range of disabled staff and managers from across the Trust. There will be regular meetings by phone, video conference and a couple of face-to-face meetings. If you would like to help out in any way, please email [Shannon O'Neill](#).



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.



PurpleSpace

We are members of [PurpleSpace](#), a national network of disability employee networks. Our membership gives 20 spaces with direct access to information, resources and events. Please let [Norbert Lieckfeldt](#) know if you would like to have one of these accounts.



Disability Champion Of The Month

Each month we celebrate one member of staff who has improved the working lives of disabled staff. Congratulations to:

Taiye Aro, Marketing Manager, Communications Team, Disability Champion of the Month for December 2018. Taiye did an amazing job managing our branding at very short notice after having just joined the Communications Team. He worked with designers on very tight timescales and got us some great deals on merchandise.

Jennifer Vital, Senior Executive Assistant, Community Health Services, Disability Champion of the Month for January 2019. Jennifer hosted our first roadshow event and organised our attendance at our first DMT meeting while being super efficient, organised and welcoming.

Stephanie Tanner, Commercial Bid Manager, Business Development Unit, Disability Champion of the Month for February 2019. Stephanie was nominated by a disabled member of staff in her team for supportive management. As a manager, she quickly got to grips with the needs of this member of staff, allowing them to take on new opportunities in training and personal development.

Andy Cruickshank, Director of Nursing for Mental Health, Disability Champion of the Month for March 2019. Like Stephanie, Andy was also nominated by a disabled colleague in his team. Andy has continued to offer

supportive management, always taking time to listen and being understanding of a fluctuating illness.

Naomi Miller, Occupational Therapist, Disability Champion May 2019. Naomi has been a key member of the ELFT Ability Network development group shaping our re-brand and has been a catalyst for the Trust's work to improve the reasonable adjustment process. She has used her own experiences of dyslexia with her Occupational Therapist to constructively challenge the Trust to improve processes for all disabled staff.

Naomi is leaving the Trust in July, and the ELFT Ability team will greatly miss her. Before she leaves she will be filmed for an NHS England film about making adjustments for disabled staff. We will let you know when it goes live.

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'Neill](mailto:Shannon.O'Neill)



Enjoying Work

A Trust-wide Enjoying Work learning system for about 25 teams is starting in September 2019. It will run for 6 months with monthly 2-hour learning sets. [Registration](#) is now open and closes on 14 June 2019.



Through My Eyes

Following Empathy Museum's exhibition that is dedicated to helping people look at the world through other people's eyes, we are holding a number of sessions/workshops called [Through My Eyes](#).

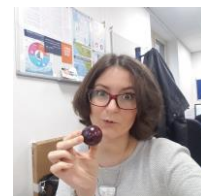
Sessions are designed to capture our staff own stories, be it in a slightly different format: an external facilitator will capture anonymous stories from our staff shared during the sessions that are confidential and anonymous.

Hearing and understanding staff stories will contribute to the Trust 'Respect and Dignity @Work' campaign - an attempt to develop the Trust's strategy that related to improving the experience of all staff in a new and innovative way. We encourage disabled staff to take part and tell their stories about working in the NHS.



Purple Light Up Quiz Winner

Congratulations to Olga Osokina who won a luxury hamper for her and her team at ELFT's quiz celebrating International Day of Disabled Persons in December. Here's her winning 'Go purple' (see image).



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 50 [ELFT team accounts on Twitter](#). Staff and the public can subscribe to this list to see what's happening in various teams at ELFT with having to follow them all individually. We hope this is easy to follow and helps with those

who want to keep tighter work-life balance on social media.



Facebook

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



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, or if you have any question about ELFT Ability contact [Shannon O'Neill](#), Network Equality Lead (Disability).



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