

Dear [CCG Clinical Lead / AO, NHS provider HR directors / CEOs],



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To:

NHS England:
CCG Clinical Lead and AO
NHS Provider HR Directors/ CEO

Copy to:

NHS England:

24th June, 2015

Employing more people with learning disabilities in the NHS – join our leading network

As you may be aware, during Learning Disabilities Awareness Week (15th to the 21st of June) we announced a challenge to healthcare employers to increase employment for people with learning disabilities in their organisations. We are writing to you now to encourage you to get involved in this programme of work.

Employment rates for people with learning disabilities are among the lowest, and lower than for all people with disabilities. There are around 142,000 working-age adults with learning disabilities known to Councils with Adult and Social Services responsibilities. Of this group, only 6.7% are in paid employment in England. This compares to the employment rate for all people in the UK at around 79%, and for people with all disabilities at between 41% and 48%¹. Mencap² estimates that around 65% of people with learning disabilities want to be in paid employment.

The NHS family is the largest employer in the UK. It is our responsibility to lead the way on creating an inclusive and diverse workforce that is representative of the patients we serve. We have reflected on our own practices, and have piloted an

¹ ONS Labour Market Statistics, May 2015 release, Q4 2014/15, Table A08.

² <https://www.mencap.org.uk/about-learning-disability/about-learning-disability/facts-about-learning-disability>

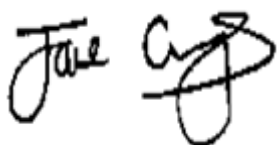
accessible approach to recruitment. As a result, NHS England's new Learning disability Engagement team has employed four people with a learning disability. Over the next few months, we will be supporting NHS employers by:

- Understanding how we can remove barriers to accelerate recruitment and employment of people with learning disabilities;
- Using real-life examples, facilitate local networks and peer-to-peer learning to show where others have been successful;
- Developing practical tools that can be used locally;
- Providing central support to help organisations understand and use these tools;
- Ensuring that we make progress across the NHS, including national bodies.

We need to work together to drive this change across our workforce, so we're writing to encourage you to get involved. If this is new for your organisation, we'll help you to make rapid progress with approaches that have worked elsewhere and access to expertise. If you already have good practice in your organisations, please get in touch with our programme team to share your experience and help us recruit other leading employers to the programme.

Please email england.LDNHSEmployment@nhs.net to express your interest in joining our leading network and making a practical difference for people with learning difficulties.

Best wishes



Jane Cummings
Chief Nursing Officer
NHS England



Danny Mortimer
Chief Executive
NHS Employers