



MOORE THAN ARTHRITIS | FREE RESOURCE

Talking to Your Employer About Arthritis

Prepare a clear, confident and practical workplace conversation.



WORKPLACE INCLUSION Practical, respectful and evidence-informed guidance for sustainable work.

Supporting People | Raising Awareness | Building Community | Living Beyond the Diagnosis

Stronger together. Beyond limits.

General workplace information - not individual medical or legal advice | Version 1.0 | August 2026



Talking to Your Employer About Arthritis

Prepare a clear, confident and practical workplace conversation.

KEY MESSAGE Focus on the effect at work, the barrier and the change that could help - you do not need to disclose every medical detail.

Choose the right person This may be a manager, HR contact, union representative or another trusted route.	Describe function Explain what is harder, slower, unpredictable or unsafe at work.	Give examples Use recent tasks, times of day or flare patterns.
Name priorities Start with the two or three barriers that matter most.	Suggest options Bring ideas while remaining open to alternatives.	Agree follow-up Record actions, owners and a review date.

Scope This resource offers general workplace information. It cannot determine whether a person is legally disabled or what is reasonable in a specific case.



What can make workplace inclusion harder

Look beyond diagnosis labels to the interaction between the person, the role, the environment and workplace systems.

Fear of judgement Worry about career impact can delay useful support.	Too much detail A long diagnosis history can hide the workplace issue.	Invisible symptoms Pain and fatigue may not be obvious to others.
Fluctuation Ability can vary across the day or during a flare.	No clear request A manager may understand the problem but not the next step.	One-off meeting Needs can change and require review.

AVOID ASSUMPTIONS Individual experience, role demands and effective support vary.



Actions that may reduce disadvantage

Use a person-centred discussion and competent advice where needed. Adjustments should be effective, proportionate and reviewable.

Prepare notes Write one sentence each for condition effect, barrier and possible adjustment.	Ask for privacy Choose a suitable confidential setting.	Use plain language Explain impact without minimising or apologising.
Discuss confidentiality Agree what may be shared, with whom and why.	Explore adjustments Consider hours, tasks, equipment, location, breaks and access.	Confirm in writing Send a short summary after the meeting.

Confidentiality Agree what information may be shared, with whom and for what practical purpose. Health information requires particular protection.



From first conversation to review

A consistent process improves trust, accountability and the chance that support works in practice.

1. Request a confidential conversation
2. Explain the work impact and pattern
3. Identify the priority barrier
4. Explore possible adjustments together
5. Agree a trial, owner and review date
6. Keep a written record

Questions for the conversation

- What work outcome matters most?
- Which task, practice or environment creates the barrier?
- What has helped or made things harder before?
- Which options should be tried or assessed?
- Who will act, by when, and when will we review?

Keep it practical Record the decision, reason, action owner, target date, confidentiality agreement and review point.



Use this page to prepare or record action

Complete only the fields that are relevant. Keep personal health information secure and share it only through appropriate routes.

1. My main workplace barrier is:

2. The task or situation affected is:

3. The impact on safety, quality, time or attendance is:

4. An adjustment that may help is:

5. Information I consent to share is:

6. The review date should be:

Action record Decision: _____ Owner: _____ Target date: _____

Review date: _____ Measure of success: _____



Use the right route for the issue

Workplace inclusion can involve equality law, employment rights, health and safety, data protection, HR policy and medical care. One conversation may not resolve every part.

Important If you feel unsafe, discriminated against or pressured to disclose unnecessary information, seek advice from HR, a union, Acas or an appropriate independent adviser.

Appropriate next steps may include

- Review the adjustment or work plan with the employee and manager
- Use HR, occupational health, health and safety or Access to Work where appropriate
- Seek medical advice for new, severe or worsening health symptoms
- Use a union, Acas, Citizens Advice or independent legal advice for employment concerns
- Call 999 for a life-threatening emergency or use NHS 111 for urgent medical help that is not an emergency

Jurisdiction Equality Act 2010 information in this resource applies to England, Scotland and Wales. Northern Ireland has separate disability-discrimination legislation and support routes.



Trusted workplace information

Use current primary guidance and obtain professional advice for the facts of an individual case.

[1] **Acas - Supporting disabled people at work.** Inclusive conversations, language and confidentiality. [Open source](#)

[2] **Acas - Reasonable adjustments.** Making, discussing, recording and reviewing adjustments. [Open source](#)

[3] **GOV.UK - Reasonable adjustments.** Duties and practical examples for disabled workers. [Open source](#)

[4] **ICO - Workers health information.** Protecting special-category health data. [Open source](#)

[5] **NICE NG197 - Shared decision making.** Person-centred decisions and clear information. [Open source](#)

Evidence checked: 21 August 2026. Review sooner if UK employment, equality, health or data-protection guidance changes.

Related Moore Than Arthritis workplace resources

- Talking to Your Employer About Arthritis
- Reasonable Adjustments in Practice
- Managing Pain, Fatigue and Flare-Ups at Work
- Line Manager Support Toolkit
- Workplace Accessibility Self-Assessment Toolkit

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Disclaimer This resource provides general educational information and is not medical, occupational-health, employment or legal advice. Moore Than Arthritis does not determine disability status, employment rights or the reasonableness of an adjustment. Obtain advice from an appropriately qualified professional about individual circumstances.

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