



MOORE THAN ARTHRITIS | DETAILED GUIDE

Invisible Disability and Disability Confidence

Replace assumptions with respectful, barrier-focused practice.



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



Invisible Disability and Disability Confidence

Replace assumptions with respectful, barrier-focused practice.

KEY MESSAGE Disability confidence means creating systems where people can request access without repeatedly proving private experiences.

Invisible effects Pain, fatigue, cognition and stamina may not be seen.	Fluctuation Need can vary without becoming invalid.	Language Use respectful terms and follow individual preference.
Disclosure choice People decide what they share, subject to limited safety needs.	Inclusive design Remove common barriers before requests arise.	Accountability Challenge ableism and review outcomes.

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.

Appearance tests People are judged by how well they look.	Proof culture Repeated evidence requests erode trust.	Banter Jokes create exclusion and risk discrimination.
Access stigma Adjustments are framed as advantage.	Private curiosity Colleagues ask intrusive medical questions.	Static design Policies assume constant ability.

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.

Ask about barriers Do not ask someone to defend their identity.	Normalise adjustments Publish access options for everyone.	Train with examples Use role-relevant scenarios.
Protect confidentiality Agree what is shared and why.	Review language Remove deficit and “special needs” framing.	Measure inclusion Track response time, retention and employee experience.

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. Identify assumptions in the workplace
2. Replace them with barrier-focused questions
3. Improve access and request routes
4. Build manager and colleague confidence
5. Respond to inappropriate behaviour
6. Review inclusion evidence

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. An assumption we need to remove is:

2. A barrier we can remove proactively is:

3. Our confidential request route is:

4. A phrase we should replace is:

5. A behaviour we will challenge is:

6. An inclusion measure is:

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 Disability status is a legal question that depends on individual facts. Do not make workplace decisions from stereotypes or appearance.

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] **GOV.UK - Definition of disability.** The Equality Act 2010 definition and long-term effects. [Open source](#)

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

[3] **GOV.UK - Disability rights: employment.** Protection across recruitment and employment. [Open source](#)

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

[5] **GOV.UK - Reasonable adjustments.** Duties and practical examples for disabled workers. [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

CONNECT WITH MOORE THAN ARTHRITIS

Website: www.moorethanarthritis.co.uk

Email: info@moorethanarthritis.co.uk

Facebook: Moore Than Arthritis

LinkedIn: Moore Than Arthritis

X: @mta_community

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.

Stronger together. Beyond limits.