**VOLUNTARY REPORTING ON DISABILITY, MENTAL HEALTH, AND WELLBEING**

**Introduction**

As part of the government’s framework to encourage businesses to report how many of their staff have a disability or health condition, and also to report on the health and wellbeing of staff, AbilityNet is committed to providing this information on an annual basis.

**Voluntary Reporting on Disability**

AbilityNet as a disability charity seeks to promote a culture that values difference and recognises that diversity enriches the economy and society. To support this work AbilityNet aims to recruit, develop, and retain a diverse workforce in a working environment that is seen as an inclusive and supportive place to work.

Support for applicants and colleagues with a disability and disability awareness raising are key parts of our diversity and inclusion agenda.

With 20% of the working population having a disability in the UK we do all we can at AbilityNet to ensure we make the recruitment process a positive experience. We ask each applicant to complete a [Clear Talents profile](https://cleartalents.com/apply) which takes them through a simple process of identifying any adjustments or additional support we can provide during the recruitment process.

Once they join the Charity, individuals are asked to complete a ClearTalents@Work questionnaire (this is then updated annually or as their circumstances change). The tool provides an opportunity for both employers and employees to focus on well-being at work. With the tool, employees can quickly create and share a diversity profile with their Line Manager/HR. They also have access to self-help guides and practical suggestions to enable them to perform at their best. Our in-house workplace assessors undertake a workplace assessment following any recommendations from the Clear Talent tool and recommended workplace adjustments are implemented with no barriers in place around funding.

* All staff have annual (mandatory) Diversity & Equality Training. This training is also offered to our volunteers (450) and subcontractors (50+).
* AbilityNet was re-awarded their Disability Confident Leader, Level 3 status in August 2023

**Voluntary Reporting on Mental Health and Wellbeing**

AbilityNet wants to support any of its employees who are experiencing poor mental health to cope and recover. This support includes early intervention to help prevent the need for sickness absence and the condition from worsening. Absence from work should not be the only trigger for such intervention. We want AbilityNet to be an organisation where our employees:

* Feel comfortable speaking about mental health as part of their overall health.
* Feel comfortable to share when they may be going through a period of poor mental health.
* Feel supported when they are experiencing poor mental health.
* Know that they are not being judged or alienated in any way should they have poor mental health.

AbilityNet wants its managers to be equipped to:

* Have an increased understanding of mental health issues that they may have to deal with.
* Understand what they need to do to support their member of staff through a difficult phase in their mental wellbeing.
* Know where to get help, should they need it, when supporting a member of staff with poor mental health.

AbilityNet continues to create a culture that supports its employees to be open about their mental health and helps them to stay mentally healthy. This can also help their overall well-being, which in turn will mean a happier workforce that knows they are valued and improved employee engagement and productivity.

We provide many areas of mental health support and training, including guidance and training on recognising and dealing with poor mental health. These are all accessible via our Intranet which also details articles by employees talking about their own experiences and activities to maintain their mental health.

The Employee Assistance Programme provides a confidential 24/7 helpline, 365 days a year, giving practical and emotional support, advice, and information to callers and counselling if needed.

We have 6% who have been trained in Mental Health First Aider and this will increase to 7% during 2023. They can help to spot the early signs and help someone experiencing poor mental health and offer guidance on the right support for the individual.

All staff can access mental health awareness training. This training explores what well-being is and identifies the steps each can take of us can take to make a positive difference to all staff in their lives at work and beyond.

**The latest data**

* Overall sickness absence for 2023 is an average of 4.7 days per person.
* 47% of our staff work flexibly and 24% of staff have a disability
* The most notable ways we measure well-being in AbilityNet is through our monthly employee engagement staff survey (Peakon) and our [Clear Talents](https://cleartalentsatwork.com/) statistics.

Our survey question ‘Freedom of Opinion’ – reflects the extent to which employees feel they can express their opinions without fear of retributions at 8.4/10 (0.4 above the True Benchmark) putting us in the top 25% of the non-profit.

Our Clear Talents at Work Statistics: Overall organisational health indicating the number of user reports that require different levels of adjustments:



**What we’ve been doing**

Achieved the renewal of our Disability Confident Leader status from 2023 to 2026.

Employees have written articles for our intranet on mental health awareness day and other times throughout the year, speaking of their own experiences which makes employees realise it is ok to speak about their mental health.

Running internal and external webinars on being having an inclusive workplace.

Employee stories on our website: working with a disability in an inclusive workplace.

Actions already underway for 2024 include:

* Training:
	+ How to build a disability-inclusive workplace: 18 January 2024
	+ Creating accessible documents and presentations: 25 January 2024
	+ Inclusive recruitment and onboarding: 28 March 2024
* Mental Health Awareness Week 13th to 19th May: staff training at monthly All Staff meeting with break out rooms looking at this year’s theme of ‘Movement: Moving more for our mental health’
* We will train an additional employee to be Mental Health First Aider.
* Reminding staff via our monthly All Staff meetings (and via Intranet articles) of the benefits available: Employee Assistance Programme, mybenefits site (helps with financial wellbeing); Wellbeing action plan
* Making staff aware of Access to Work (ATW) support
* Encouraging staff to complete their Clear Talents at Work questionnaire
* We will raise awareness of mental health issues by promoting World Mental Health Awareness Day on 10th October 2024.
* Continual monitoring of stats: Diversity, Clear Talent, and Employee Survey

If you have any comments on the data or suggestions for action for measurement, do let us know.

We will next report in January/February 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mairéad Comerford (HR Director, AbilityNet)