



Freaney Williams

Freaney Williams Ltd.

<http://www.freaneywilliams.com>

The Disability and Equality Agenda e-bulletin – March 2010

For information about how Freaney Williams Ltd can help your organisation achieve the disability and equality agenda please contact

enquiries@freaneywilliams.com

Please forward this bulletin to a colleague so they can subscribe.

In this month:

1. [Disability hate crime](#)
2. [Autism news](#)
3. [An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in the UK](#)
4. [Mental ill health – workers don't want to talk about it!](#)
5. [Fit notes](#)
6. [Disabled people's travel needs not well catered for](#)
7. [Equality Bill to ban pre-employment health questionnaires](#)
8. [Levels of compliance with web accessibility guidelines remain very low](#)
9. [Over two thirds claiming disability benefits "fit to work"](#)
10. [Business links key to getting disabled into jobs](#)
11. [Many unaware of support offered through Access to Work](#)
12. [Impact of Recession on Disabled People](#)
13. [Disabled customer legislation introduced on Northern Ireland transport](#)
14. [Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

[Back to top](#)

1. Disability hate crime

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is to conduct a Formal Inquiry into disability related harassment in England, Scotland and Wales and how public authorities are protecting disabled people's human rights to live free from violence and abuse. For more information click;

<http://tinyurl.com/yg5uwge>

2. Autism news

There have been a few news items about autism recently, particularly about the Government's new Adult Autism Strategy – here are a few:

The Department of Health is launching a new strategy to help improve public services for autism that will include employment support.

For more information click: <http://autisticdisorderinfo.awarenessindex.com/?p=2795>

Adults with autism should have the same access to jobs, education and healthcare as everybody else, says the Government in its new Adult Autism Strategy.

More information at: <http://cli.gs/DYn1Ae>

The 2009 Autism Act promised much but putting it into action is a whole different ball game, even though some improvements can be delivered at very little cost.

Read more at: <http://tinyurl.com/ybf5lj5>

[Back to top](#)

3. An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in the UK

This report looks at inequality in the UK. In relation to disability, they call for a stronger focus on policies affecting the employment of disabled people, recognising that working age disabled people meeting the Disability Discrimination Act's definition of Disability have an average income 30% below that of other working age adults.

They state that the disability employment 'penalty' has increased over the past 25 years, especially for those disabled people with no qualifications. For example, employment rates for disabled men with no qualifications have halved in the past quarter of a century. The full report is available from the National Equality Panel and can

be read by clicking:

http://www.equalities.gov.uk/national_equality_panel/publications.aspx>

Thanks to Disability Forward for this article.

[Back to top](#)

4. Mental ill health – workers don't want to talk about it!

Scores of British adults avoid talking to their boss about mental health problems out of fear of losing their job or being considered 'mad', new findings reveal. A survey, published by mental health charity Rethink, shows nearly six in 10 British workers (59%) admit they would feel uncomfortable talking to their line manager if they had a mental health condition such as depression, anxiety or bipolar disorder.

For more information click:

<http://cli.gs/bWGa9t>

[Back to top](#)

5. Fit notes

The new fit note will not give doctors the option to deem a patient "fit for work", only whether they may be fit for some work, it has emerged. Under the new system, due to come into force this April, GPs will replace the hand-written sick note with a computer-generated medical fit note explaining what a patient is able to do. Read more at:

<http://tinyurl.com/yg5brto>

More information, published by the Department for Work and Pensions can be accessed on-line at www.dwp.gov.uk/fitnote

[Back to top](#)

6. Disabled people's travel needs not well catered for

There is a belief among many disabled people that high street travel agents do not cater for their needs, according to new research from Co-operative Travel which found that 78 per cent of those polled were of this belief. In addition, 84 per cent claimed that such firms did not understand the requirements of disabled people, while 93 percent found their choice of vacation to be restricted. Read more at:

<http://tinyurl.com/yzbxuof>

[Back to top](#)

7. Equality Bill to ban pre-employment health questionnaires

Pre-employment health questionnaires will become illegal under new proposals outlined in the Equality Bill. The House of Lords have introduced a ground-breaking clause into the Bill that for the first time will see the prohibition of healthcare screening before candidates are offered a job. Until now, employers have been able to ask job applicants whether they have a disability, are taking medication or have a medical condition. For more information click:

<http://www.personneltoday.com/articles/2010/01/20/53757/equality-bill-to-ban-pre-employment-health-questionnaires.html>

[Back to top](#)

8. Levels of compliance with web accessibility guidelines remain very low

Levels of compliance with web accessibility guidelines "remain very low" in EU member states, a new study published by the European Commission has found. However it is hard to accurately track what progress is being made, the report found, since assessment against international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) often employs a basic 'pass/fail' system based on full compliance: Read more at: <http://bit.ly/4U4kve>

[Back to top](#)

9. Over two thirds claiming disability benefits “fit to work”

More than two thirds of people claiming disability benefits have been declared fit to work in tough new tests aimed at saving the Government £500 million. Figures show that of almost 300,000 people who applied for sick benefits, 200,000 failed the test and were told to get a job. For more information click: <http://tinyurl.com/ybffswb>

[Back to top](#)

10. Business links key to getting disabled into jobs

Ofsted has urged employment support providers for disabled people to forge close links with businesses and use clearer long-term planning to help their clients into jobs, in a report today. The report found the best Workstep programmes had clear expectations for their clients' route into employment. The best schemes also engaged local businesses and matched people's skills to available jobs
Read more at: <http://tinyurl.com/ycd76fj>

[Back to top](#)

11. Many unaware of support offered through Access to Work

Many employers and employees are unaware of the support that is offered through the government's Access to Work (AtW) funding scheme. These were the findings of a recent Department for Work and Pensions evaluation of AtW. This evaluation of the core elements of AtW found that, although people who received its support were generally positive, many employers and disabled people were still unaware of the scheme and the assistance it can provide towards any additional costs of recruiting and retaining disabled people. The Core Evaluation Report can be found at: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep619.pdf>

[Back to top](#)

12. Impact of Recession on Disabled People

A report from Leonard Cheshire, 'Disability and the Downturn', looks at the impact of the recession on disabled people, drawing on evidence from a range of sources. 1,253 disabled people took part in a survey for their 2009 Disability Review. Findings include:

- Over half (52%) of respondents had experienced discrimination in the workplace in the past year, an increase of 11% since 2007.
- 43% of respondents also reported they have been turned down for a job or jobs because of their impairment, an increase of 7% since 2008.

The full details can be found at: <http://www.lcdisability.org/?lid=11293>

[Back to top](#)

13. Disabled customer legislation introduced on Northern Ireland transport

New legislation being introduced in Northern Ireland means that transport operators will be prevented from discriminating against disabled customers. Under the terms of the law, businesses in the sector must now provide the same services to those with disabilities as those without.

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/4qBTsT>

[Back to top](#)

14. Americans with Disabilities Act

For an interesting insight into the legislation around making reasonable 'accommodations' in the United States, click: <http://tinyurl.com/ye3j8a2>

[Back to top](#)

To subscribe or unsubscribe click

<http://www.freeneywilliams.com/dea-e-bulletin.asp>

© Freeney Williams Ltd 2009
37 Buckingham Road
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 3RP

T 01273 327715

F 01273 327715

<mailto:enquiries@freeneywilliams.com>

[Back to top](#)