



AAAconsult Newsletter – March '05

Welcome to the latest edition of AAAconsult's monthly e-zine. Here we keep you up to date with legislative issues and important dates to be aware of, give you the low down on disability stories making the national news, plus we take an in-depth look at a different discrimination issue every month and its impact on people in society and the workplace. This month's topic is dyslexia, a condition that wasn't widely recognised in the past. Sadly, some children and adults affected were labelled as lazy, stupid or lacking in concentration. Dyslexia isn't a sign of low intelligence - people of all academic abilities have been dyslexic and they may not have difficulties in any other area.

I hope you find our newsletter interesting and informative, and would appreciate your feedback on the issues covered.

Best wishes

Elspeth Grant

grante@3aconsult.co.uk

www.3aconsult.co.uk

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Issue of the month – Dyslexia

The DDA defines a disabled person as someone with "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

Dyslexia does not always affect a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Dyslexic people can often reduce the effect of their disability if they are able to do things their way. However, if they cannot do this for any reason the effects can be disabling. When the Bill was being debated in parliament, the government made it clear that they thought severe dyslexia was covered under this law.



Up to 10 per cent of the UK population has dyslexia, with around 2 million people in the UK severely affected. Dyslexia tends to run in families and it's estimated that three to four times as many boys as girls have the condition.

For people who are severely affected, dyslexia can present a serious obstacle to finding a job. A bad experience of education may result in a lack of confidence and self-esteem. Problems with reading and writing can make it difficult to apply for jobs. It may also be difficult to do some aspects of a job without the employer making some adjustments.

The British Dyslexia association suggests five guiding principles for workplace support:

- 1) Understand what dyslexia is
- 2) Ensure access to information
- 3) Identify the issues in your workplace
- 4) Develop specialist knowledge and support
- 5) Create a culture of confidence

Simple, practical steps include: using plain English, checking the readability of documents, using titles, bullet points, short paragraphs, Arial font size 12, and cream paper. When possible, other methods of communicating written information should be used, such as websites and PowerPoint, but keep them uncluttered.

In meetings, information should be supplied verbally and visually as well as in writing. Wherever possible, enable dyslexic people to communicate verbally rather than in writing if they prefer to do so.

Becoming a dyslexia-wise employer will help you to make 'reasonable adjustments' and meet the requirements of disability law. By supporting your dyslexic colleagues you will benefit all staff in your organisation. The best employers recognise that everybody is different, and that putting in the right support will bring out the best performance.

For more information see:

www.drc-gb.org

www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk

Legislative News

Factual information keeping you abreast of the latest issues.



Important Changes in employment law

The Government will be introducing new employment legislation on 6th April 2005. Set out below are some of the changes you can expect to see.

- The Information and Consultation of Employee Regulations 2004 will come into effect for 150 employees or more
- The standard rate of statutory maternity, paternity and adoption pay will rise
- Part 1 of the Employment Relations Act 2004, which deals with the statutory procedure for the recognition and de-regulation of trade unions for collective bargaining purposes, will be brought into force.
- The transfer of Employment (Pension Protection) Regulations will be implemented
- Home workers will see further improvements in their wages.

Employment law timetable

23 March 2005

Working time limits for transport workers come into force

These control the number of hours that drivers are allowed to work

6 April 2005

Information and consultation laws come into force

These establish a general framework for informing and consulting employees

6 April 2005

New tribunal claim and response forms become mandatory

The use of the new forms, introduced on 1 October, becomes mandatory

Making the headlines

Cabbie refused 'blind' fare's dog



A private hire driver has admitted failing to pick up a partially-sighted customer because he had a guide dog.

[Link](#)

Signing facilities at surgeries

GPs will be told today to make sign language translation available in every practice in England to improve mental health services for deaf people, particularly children.

[Link](#)

Court of Appeal strengthens guidelines on the Burden of Proof in discrimination claims

The judgment makes it clear that if an individual has established that there could be a valid case of discrimination, employers are expected to provide detailed evidence to prove that they did not discriminate.

[Link](#)