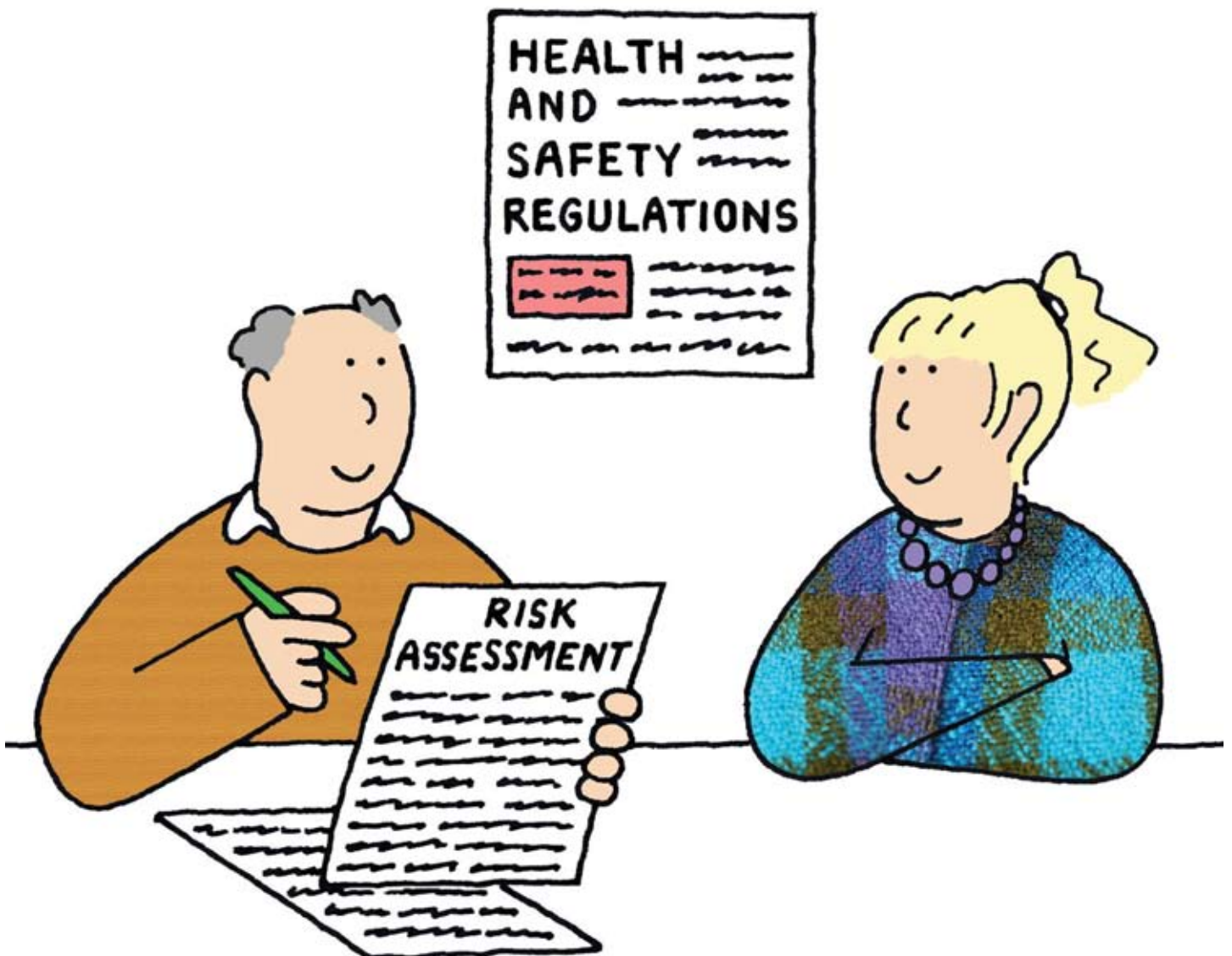


Health and safety for disabled workers and people who work with them: An easy read guide



What is the Equality and Human Rights Commission?

The Equality and Human Rights Commission wants to stop **discrimination** against disabled people.

Discrimination

This means treating someone worse than other people for some reason.

We tell people about the law. The Disability Discrimination Act is a law that says disabled people must be treated fairly.

We work with disabled people to help them stand up for their rights.

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Who we are

We are the Health and Safety Executive. We make sure that:

- people at work are kept safe;
- the work people do does not make them ill;
- workers and employers follow the law to keep everyone at work safe.

We call all these things health and safety.

The Health and Safety Executive and the Equality and Human Rights Commission worked together on this report.

Lots of people helped us.

We want to say thank you to the disabled people who helped us and the Health and Safety Executive in Northern Ireland.

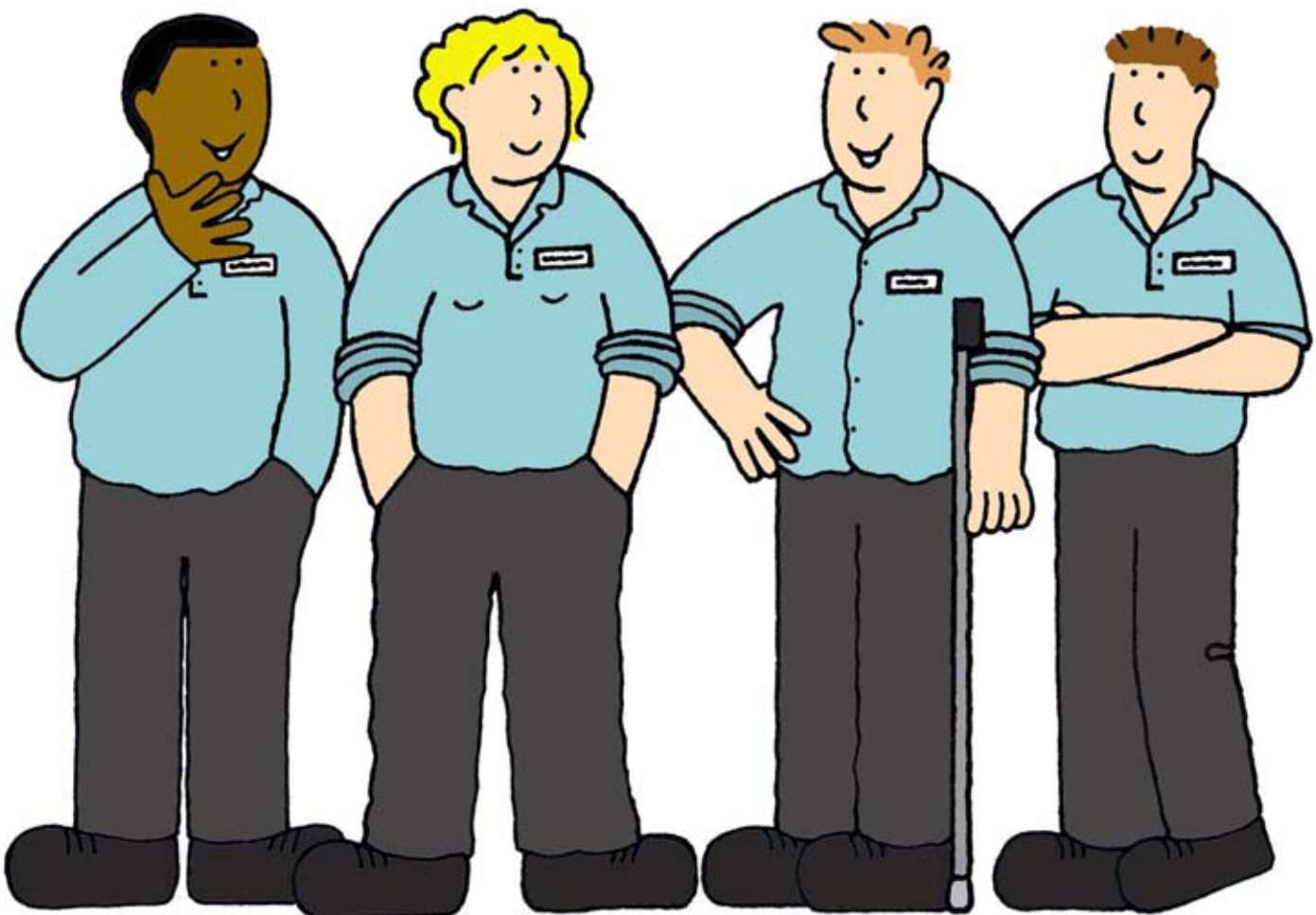
What this report is about

This report is about health and safety at work for disabled people and people who work with them.

It shows how **employers** and disabled workers can work together to make everyone safer.

Employer

An employer is the person or group you work for or who controls or directs your work. When we talk about employers here, we are including people who manage you.



Health and safety for disabled workers

The law says that employers and workers must make sure that people are safe at work.

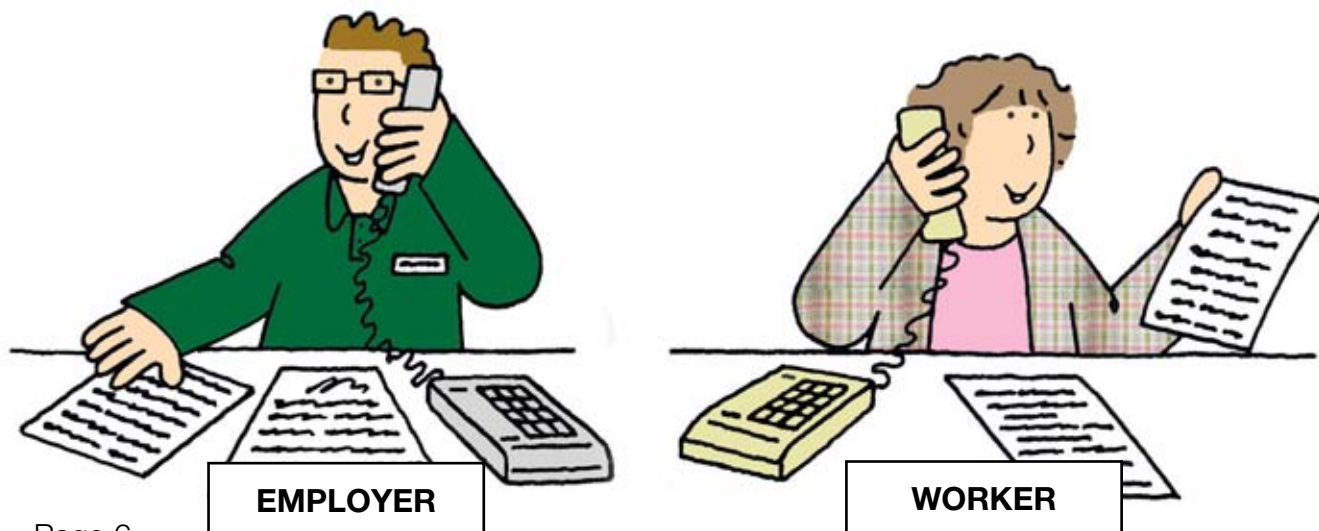
Workers must:

- take care of their own health and safety;
- make sure their work does not hurt other workers;
- do what their employer says to keep people at work safe;
- tell their employer if they see or know something that might hurt people at work.

If you are disabled you might need to tell your employer. You should tell your employer if your disability affects the way you do your job.

Then you and your employer can make changes to help you do your job safely. Sometimes it can be hard to talk about a disability. Your employer should make it easier for you.

Your employer might ask to speak to your doctor. This can help them make the right changes. But your employer can only speak to your doctor if you say they can.



Disabled workers and risk assessments

Employers might need to make changes to keep disabled workers and other workers safe.

Example

- A deaf person cannot hear the fire alarm. They **can** see flashing lights that go off when there is a fire.

Employers can find out the best way to make changes by doing a **risk assessment**.

Risk assessment

A risk assessment is when employers look at how people could be hurt at work. Then they can decide how to make things safer.



How to do a risk assessment

There are 5 things an employer should do in a risk assessment.

- 1 Find out what could hurt people.
- 2 Think about **who** might be hurt. Think about **how** they might be hurt.
- 3 Think about how to make work safer.
- 4 Make changes to make work safer.
- 5 Go back to the risk assessment later. There might be new people at work. There might be new machines. The employer might need to make more changes.

Employers should write down the risk assessment. Then people know what they need to do.



What employers should do in a risk assessment

- Speak to the disabled person about the changes they need.
- Speak to other workers if their work might change too.
- Think about what changes should be made so workers are safer.
- Make the changes as soon as they can.
- Speak to other people and groups who know about disability and work. This could be doctors, other healthcare workers or disability groups. We tell you about some groups at the end of this guide.



What employers must not do

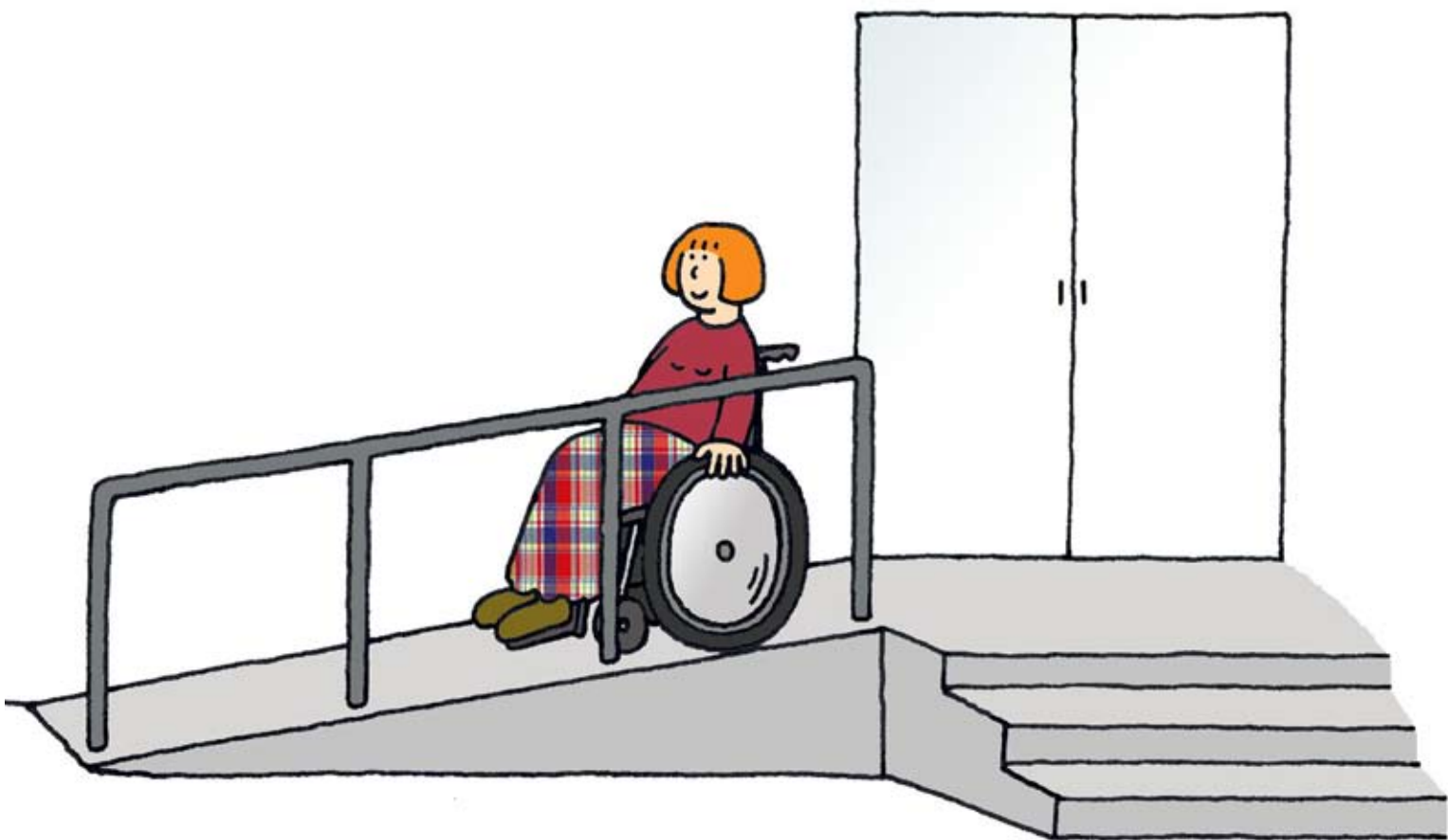
Employers cannot assume that disabled people must not do certain jobs. Employers have to look at each disabled person and see what they can or cannot do.

Employers cannot make workers tell them they are disabled. Workers only have to say they are disabled if their disability affects their job.

Employers should only do a risk assessment if the person's disability changes the way they work. They should not do a risk assessment just because a person is disabled.

Changes employers can make

- Changing access to a building to make it easier for wheelchair users
- Giving some of a disabled person's work to another worker
- Moving a disabled person into a different job
- Changing the working hours of a disabled person
- Giving a disabled person time off for appointments with doctors and other healthcare workers
- Training for a disabled person and people who work with them



Examples

Here are some examples of changes to make work safer for disabled people. We have changed the people's names but they are true stories.

Jane, a factory worker with epilepsy

Jane works on a machine. She sometimes has fits. Jane's employer was worried that she might have a fit at work. This could mean Jane or someone she works with got hurt.

Jane's employer spoke to Jane and her doctor. Jane and the doctor said Jane had more fits if she could not sleep properly. Jane's employer changed Jane's working hours so she did not have to work at night.

Sam, a computer worker with mental health problems

Sam was off work with mental health problems. She wanted to come back. Sam's employer helped her by making changes:

- the employer spoke to Sam to ask her what changes she needed;
- Sam was allowed to work 3 days a week until she felt better;
- people who work with Sam had training so they could understand mental health problems.

Mark, a firefighter with diabetes

Mark was off work because he had an illness called diabetes. He wanted to come back. Mark showed the doctor that he could stay healthy by taking his medicine. He did some tests to show he could do his job. Mark was able to come back to work with some changes.

The changes were:

- Mark cannot drive all the fire engines;
- he has to keep having checks with the doctor;
- Mark's employer will buy a fridge where Mark can keep his medicine.



Do you want to tell us your story?

Maybe you or someone you work with is disabled and you have made changes to make everyone safer. We will tell your story in reports and on our website. We will not use real names.

You can contact us at

diversity@hse.gsi.gov.uk

Or you can phone 0151 951 4000 and ask for the External Diversity Team



Contact us

If you want to know more about health and safety at work you can call our Helpline. We will answer your questions and you do not have to give us your name.

Telephone 0845 345 0055

Fax 0845 408 9566

e-mail **hse.infoline@natbrit.com**

Website **www.hse.gov.uk**

Post HSE Information Services
Caerphilly Business Park
Caerphilly
CF83 3GG

The Helpline is open from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday, except for Bank Holidays.

We can speak to people who are hearing impaired on a textphone: 0845 408 9577.

People who do not speak English can call the Helpline. We can speak to them in their own language. We can also write to them in their own language.

Information

These pages have lists of websites. The websites tell you about health and safety and disabled people. Some of them tell employers about how to get money to make changes at work.

If you cannot find the information you need you can call our Helpline on 0845 345 0055.

Disabled people at work

Access to Work

<http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Customers/Helpfordisabledpeople/index.html>

Help for disabled people.

<http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/Customers/Helpfordisabledpeople/Accessstowork/index.html>

Money for businesses to make changes so they can give a disabled person a job.

Job Introduction Scheme

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/Employmentsupport/WorkSchemesAndProgrammes/DG_4001960

Help for disabled people who are looking for work or about to start a job.

It tells employers of disabled people how to get money for their first six weeks in work. You can get money for other reasons too.

Disability Employment Advisers

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/Employmentsupport/LookingForWork/DG_4000324

Support for working people with a disability.

Disability Discrimination Act code of practice on employment and occupation: www.drc-gb.org/Docs/Employment_Occupation.doc

This explains disability discrimination law and gives case studies.

Equality and Human Rights Commission and employment

<http://www.drc-gb.org/employment.aspx>

This gives advice about disabled people and work.

RADAR

<http://www.radar.org.uk/radarwebsite/tabid/58/default.aspx>

This website is run by and for disabled people. It gives information about disability and employment. It gives advice on risk assessment for different disabilities.

Health and safety at work

Website pages for workers

www.hse.gov.uk/workers/index.htm

Five steps to risk assessment

www.hse.gov.uk/risk/fivesteps.htm

Example risk assessments

www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/index.htm

Managing sickness absence and return to work

www.hse.gov.uk/sicknessabsence/index.htm

This says what to do if you have been sick and not at work. It says what should happen when you go back to work.

This is about making sure each disabled person is treated fairly.

Workplace Health Connect

www.hse.gov.uk/workplacehealth/index.htm

This service gives advice on health and safety at work to small businesses in England and Wales. You do not have to give your name.

Scotland's Health at Work

http://www.shaw.uk.com/about_scheme.asp

This is about a group in Scotland that supports disabled people at work. They work with the employer and the worker to give them what they need.

IOSH Occupational Health Toolkit

<http://www.ohtoolkit.co.uk/>

This gives you information on dealing with health problems at work.

Working together

Acas

<http://www.acas.co.uk/>

Acas give advice on how employers and workers can sort out problems and work together better.

Fire safety

Advice from the government

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/firesafetyassessmentmeans>

SupplementaryGuideMeansofescapefordisabled people_id1509004.pdf

This explains how disabled people can leave buildings safely if there is a fire. It explains how some people might need their own plan for how to get out.

Words list

These are some of the words we use in this book.

Employer

An employer is the person or group you work for or who controls or directs your work. When we talk about employers here, we are including people who manage you.

Risk assessment

A risk assessment is when employers look at how people could be hurt at work. Then they can decide how to make things safer.

Talk to us

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has written this and many other leaflets and books. You can tell us what you think about this book and the other things that we are doing by using the **Equality and Human Rights Commission Helpline**.

Telephone 08457 622 633

Textphone 08457 622 644

Fax 08457 778 878



Website www.equalityhumanrights.com



Post **Equality and Human Rights Commission Helpline**
FREEPOST
MID 02164
Stratford upon Avon
CV37 9BR



The Helpline is open Monday to Friday 8.00 am-8.00 pm

This guide can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/disability/easyread.pdf

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