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Welcome to our quarterly newsletter reporting on news items of interest for UCU disabled members, activists and allies.

The Social Model of Disability - why it's important

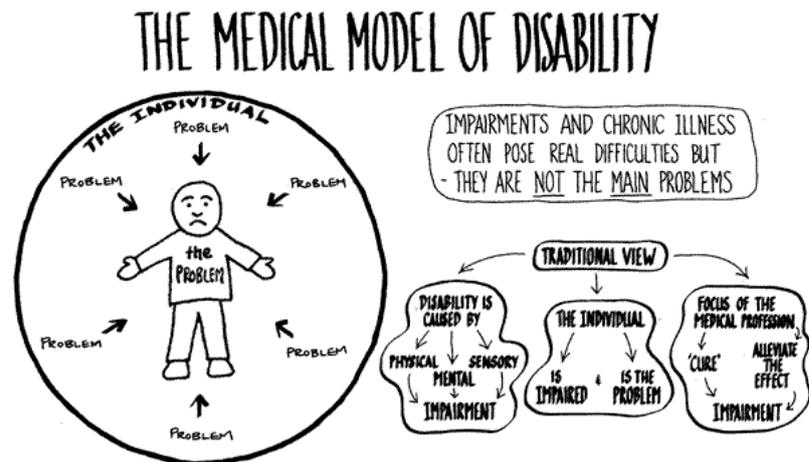
As a trade union, one of our concerns is to campaign and fight for greater equality at work, we also strive to campaign against injustices members face in other areas of their lives, whether on the grounds of age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation which can lead to discrimination.

The social model of disability is a proactive way in which we can push for full inclusion at work and wider society for disabled people.

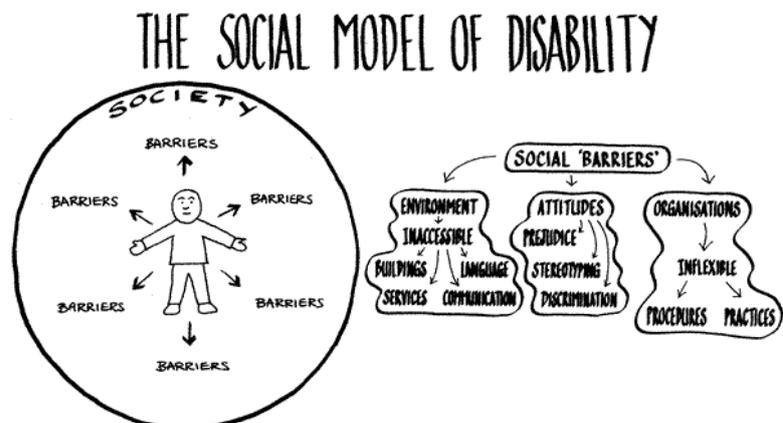
The Models

There are a number of models on disability, the two most talked about are the social and medical models.

The **medical model** looks at how the medical or health issue as the problem with the person, not what the person needs for the issue not to be a problem.



The **Social Model** sees the whole person first and argues that the barriers they face, in combination with their impairments are what disables them.



An example of the two models on a wheelchair user and access to a building. The medical model will say that the issue of access is due to the wheelchair whereas the social model will say that a ramp would aid access for the wheelchair user.

Barriers, including attitudes and perceptions around disabilities can make it impossible or very difficult for disabled people to access jobs, buildings or services. Removing those barriers is the best way to include millions of disabled people in our society.

UCU strongly supports the social model of disability that looks at the ways in which society is organised and the social and institutional barriers that restrict disabled people's opportunities and encourages all branches to adopt the social model of disability.

Disabled Members Standing Committee

The Disabled Members' Standing Committee (DMSC) like the other Equality Standing Committees serves to ensure that UCU disabled members' issues are fed into the decision making processes within UCU.

Members' of the committee are elected to vacant seats each year at the annual equality conference through branch nominations or in the event of no nominations being received, members can be co-opted to the committee for a period of one year.

The DMSC needs your input to ensure that the needs of UCU disabled members are taken forward – you can do this by attending the annual equality

conference, if you are an equality officer, raise issues at the equality reps conference and put forward motions for Congress and Sector conferences from your branch.

Disabled members' standing committee 2018-2019

- Elane Heffernan (Hackney Community College) (Chair)
- Marian Mayer (Bournemouth University) (Co-Vice Chair)
- Themasa Neckles (University of Sheffield) (Co-Vice Chair)
- Ciara Doyle (Greenwich University)
- Marcia Grant-che (South Thames College)
- Jan Hutton (Novus Prison Branch)
- Emma-Jane Phillips (Northumbria University)
- Andy Shaw (Warwickshire College)
- Keith Simpson (City University - London)
- Neal Terry (Newcastle College)
- Jim Thakoordin (Bedfordshire ACE)
- Chiara Vassell (Croydon College)

The work of the DMSC currently includes (but is not limited to) progressing Congress and sector conference resolutions in the following areas:

- Development and launch of a Reasonable Adjustment Passport
- Neurodiversity at Work toolkit
- Continuing to work with our sister unions on campaigning on our Day of Action for Disability Equality

We will keep you posted on developments

Day of Action for Disability Equality in Education - update



During Disability History Month 2018 (22 November - 22 December), UCU held its first day of action for disability equality in education, on 21 November 2018, which kicked off our action for Disability History Month 2018.

Initiated by UCU's Disabled Members' Standing Committee, the day of action is all about organising against discrimination and focuses on the challenges and barriers faced by disabled people in education.

We joined forces with sister unions UNISON, UNITE, NEU, NUS, TUC, NASWUT and with disability campaign organisations Disable People against the Cuts (DPAC) and Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE). Our day saw UCU branches all over the UK to take action to highlight issues facing disabled workers in further and higher education.

The day culminated with a cross-party parliamentary meeting on improving equality for disabled staff in education. Hosted by Shadow Disability MP, Marsha de Cordova and chaired by Elane Heffernan, UCU NEC and Chair of Disabled Members' Standing Committee, who presented and demanded our four campaign 'asks':

<p>1. Time limits for the implementation of reasonable adjustments</p>	<p>2. A review of building regulations to ensure they meet the accessibility needs of disabled people</p>
<p>3. A statutory right to disability leave</p>	<p>4. The right for disabled people to access mainstream education and a reversal of cuts to SEND provision</p>

The meeting was attended by over 100 students, trade union activists and MP's alike and heard the many challenges facing disabled people and the changes they wished to see. A parliamentary briefing was also shared that set out our demands in further detail. We have continued to work with these partners pushing forward our demands for our educational establishments to achieve disability equality. We will keep you posted on developments in this area.

Speaking at the Parliamentary event about the impact of the cuts for disabled staff and students in education, Elane Heffernan said ***"We cannot have this silent massacre of workers in education and students who cannot even get in through the door in the first place."***

Action taken by branches and all our day of action resources including our parliamentary briefing can be accessed here <https://www.ucu.org.uk/disabilityequality>. Use the hashtag #includeus when tweeting to raise awareness of issues facing disabled staff! Your branch can still raise aware of issues facing disabled people in any current or future branch action or event – please use our resources!

Events



TUC Disabled Workers Conference: 21-22 May 2019

TUC Disabled Workers Conference will take place at the Bournemouth International Conference Centre on Tuesday 21 – Wednesday 22 May. The Disabled Members' Standing Committee will represent UCU on raising issues of importance for disabled workers. The conference will be debating a range of motions from affiliated unions including, mental health, austerity and the impact on disabled people and reasonable adjustments and will vote for one motion to go the annual TUC Congress in September.

UCU Congress: 25 – 27 May 2019

UCU Congress will be held Saturday 25 May - Monday 27 May at the Harrogate Conference Centre. Further details are available here <http://www.ucu.org.uk/Congress2019>

Get involved



A great way of raising equality issues is to use the many awareness days, weeks and months.

The awareness events that we use will generally fall in line with UCU policy. For the majority of the days outlined below, we have guidance or other material to support your event.

Mental Health Awareness Week 13–19 May 2019

Neurodiversity Celebration Week 13–17 May 2019

Carers Week 10–16 June 2019

World Suicide Prevention Day 10 September 2019

Dyslexia and Dyspraxia Awareness Week 07–11 October 2019

World Mental Health Day 10 October 2019

International Stress Awareness Week 04– 08 November 2019

Carers Rights Day 30 November 2019

For resources to download or order, visit <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/1940/Equality-advice-and-guidance#Disability> or <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/4766/Equality-events>.

We want to hear from you

Have you negotiated a procedure or policy that supports disabled people in your university or college? Do you have examples of good practice that can be shared with other branches? If the answer is yes, then please do get in touch! With your permission, we can share these examples with others to improve the support across the sectors. Please contact Sharon Russell (srussell@ucu.org.uk) with your examples.

Disability Resources: UCU has produced a range of disability equality resources both available on request or can be downloaded from the UCU web site at <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/1940/Equality-advice-and-guidance#Disability>

Factsheet: Neurodiversity at work: Neurodiversity is a hidden disability and refers to the diversities of the human brain and its cognitive functioning, and can be defined as an individual who might be on the autistic spectrum.

HIV in the workplace - a UCU guide for awareness and action: This resource presents information (as of 2018) about HIV and AIDS. It contains advice to UCU reps about HIV and how conditions in the workplace can best support people concerned about and/or living or working with HIV.

David's story - a disability awareness toolkit: A disability awareness toolkit for branch equality officers.

Disabled members' toolkit - campaigning for accessible and inclusive workplace: UCU campaigns for a better future for all. UCU has produced this campaigning tool based on the TUC's Manifesto for Disability Equality which sets out policies to achieve real equality for disabled people.

Shared space: This briefing looks at the issues that disabled, young and older people have in using shared space.

Performance management and sickness absence for disabled workers: This briefing for branches is about sickness absence and performance management of disabled workers. The briefing outlines main issues facing disabled workers.

Enabling not Disabling: This briefing is designed as a guide to UCU branches and local associations on the rights of UCU's disabled members. This guide was updated in November 2015 and includes legislation from Equality Act 2010

Guidance on reasonable adjustments: UCU has produced guidance for members on reasonable adjustments. This was developed with the UCU disabled members' standing committee, and provides information, examples and resources on your right to reasonable adjustments and how to negotiate for them in your branch. You can download the guidance below.

Disability Leave: UCU briefing on disability leave. Institutions should have a separate policy for disability leave, and this brief guide provides some useful definitions, guidance and links around what disability leave is and how it differs to regular sick leave.

Guidebook on the social model of disability: The TUC has published a guidebook on the social model of disability to help unions and their members improve equality for disabled people within unions and in the workplace

Disclosing a disability: This guide outlines some of the advantages that **disclosure** can trigger when related to current equality and employment law, when you are obliged to disclose a disability and when you are not, and some of the wider issues around creating a culture and a working environment where people feel able to disclose.

One in Four - a briefing on mental health at work and Supporting members with mental health conditions and issues: UCU has produced a briefing on mental health at work entitled One in Four, reflecting the one in four people who will experience some kind of mental health condition in the course of a year. It is intended to assist branches in supporting members who may need mental health support and seeks to offer practical advice and guidance for branch representatives, including health and safety representatives.

Display our Disability Wall Chart in your Office!

