

BIRMINGHAM DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE (BDRC)



Opening up a world of opportunity for disabled people

Research Questionnaire For Disabled People Who Are Seeking Employment

This project is co-financed by
the European Social Fund and Birmingham City Council



Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire. The information you give us in the questionnaire will help to inform an Action Research project being run by Birmingham Disability Resource Centre into the barriers and perceptions experienced by disabled people on the journey between benefits and employment.

Birmingham Disability Resource Centre (BDRC) is a forward thinking Birmingham based charitable company, leading on disability issues and providing a wide range of resources for disabled people, carers, families, employers and professionals.

The research project is being funded by the European Social Fund and Birmingham City Council. The objectives of the project are to explore the barriers and perceptions faced by disabled people in Birmingham when they are looking for work and to find out what type of support there is from local agencies in overcoming these barriers. The aim is to publish a report that will offer these agencies some ideas on good practice so that they can support disabled people in getting fulfilling and sustainable employment.

Please take time to read our *Data Protection, Confidentiality and Disclosure* statement below. You will be asked to sign the form at the end to show that you agree with the statement and to give your consent to us using some of

your answers in our published research report. It is important to add that you will not be personally identified in the final report.

In the second phase of our research project we will focus on a smaller group of 25 disabled people who will be asked to take an Action Research approach to changing some of the barriers and perceptions identified in this questionnaire. If you would like to find out more about phase 2 of the project, please let us know in section 5 of this form.

If you need some extra support to fill out this questionnaire, please contact us at the following address. The form is available in large print and audio formats, we can provide a one-to-one meeting with an interpreter if required, we can telephone you to go through the form over the telephone or we can communicate with you through information and communication technology where it is available.

Please return this form to us no later than 31st October 2006 to:

**Peter Millington,
Birmingham Disability Resource Centre,
Bierton Road,
Yardley,
Birmingham B25 8PQ.**

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Our Data Protection and Disclosure Policy

Birmingham Disability Resource Centre is a not for profit Limited Liability Company (registration no. 2897250) and a registered charity (no.1034581).

The organisation has a Data Protection and Disclosure Policy which gives rights to all of our Directors, staff, volunteers and clients about how personal information is obtained and used. The Policy informs you of your rights under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Our Policy recognises that the organisation needs to collect information about individuals, such as the information we ask you to give us in this form, in order for us to carry out our work on behalf of disabled people, their families, carers and professionals. But the organisation also respects people's rights to privacy and confidentiality. Our Policy therefore adheres to the principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.

In respect to this questionnaire our Policy assures you that:

- All personal information you provide will be treated as confidential
- The questionnaire will only record the minimum amount of information that is relevant to the research project
- The completed questionnaires will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and any information transferred from the hard copy to computer will be kept in a password protected system
- Your personal information will not be passed on to other members of staff at our Centre who are not directly connected with this research project, unless it is with your expressed consent so that we can offer you additional help and support
- You will not be personally identified by name or by any other specifically identifiable information in any part of the final research report, although many of the details and responses to our questions from Part 2 onwards may be subject to analysis, interpretation and publication. We therefore assure you that our researcher(s) will treat all other details you disclose with additional sensitivity and integrity in order to protect your rights and other people's rights to confidentiality, privacy and protection from substantial damage or distress
- At all times during this research project you have the right to see the information in the questionnaire and to contact us if you feel retrospectively unhappy or uncomfortable about any of the answers you have given to us

- You have the right to withdraw all or parts of your questionnaire at any time during the research project before the final writing-up stage is commenced in August 2007

For a full copy of the BDRC Data Protection, Confidentiality and Disclosure Policy (March 2006), please contact:

Louise Simmons, Chief Executive, Birmingham Disability Resource Centre,
Bierton Road, Yardley, Birmingham B25 8PQ

The Data Protection Commissioner

If you wish to know more about your rights in respect of protection of personal data, you should write to:

Data Protection Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Section One Personal Details

Please provide us with basic contact details. Your personal details will not be published in the research report and will be kept private and confidential. We also ask you for some additional information about your age, gender and your ethnicity which will help us to ensure that our research covers a wide range of people from different backgrounds and communities and may help us to highlight barriers and perceptions that are common to particular groups of disabled people. This data will not be used to identify individuals and will be kept confidential.

Name

Address

Post Code

Telephone number

Mobile number

Text phone or Minicom number

Email address

Current employment status (please write yes or no):

I am in receipt of a benefit and not working

I am in receipt of a benefit and taking part in voluntary work, permitted earnings or something similar (please indicate which)

I am on a training scheme or a course (yes / no)

I am in employment (yes / no)

Age

Gender

Please describe your ethnic group

I identify myself as a disabled person (yes / no)

I have the following access needs which must be considered should I participate in the future activities of this research project (e.g. large print, loop system, ramped access, BSL interpreter, etc):

Section Two

Your past experience of training, job searching and employment

In the next three sections of this form, please feel free to expand your answers on separate sheets of paper with your name on each sheet. If you are filling out this form in Word format on your personal computer, please type into the boxes which will expand if you need more space for your answers.

2.1 Have you worked in the past 3 years? (Yes / No)

2.2 Tell us about the work or jobs you have done in the past:

2.3 Why did you stop doing this work?

2.4 Have you been out of work in the past 3 years? (yes / no)

If so, how long for?

2.5 Do you believe your period of not working was directly related to being a disabled person? (yes / no)

If so, can you tell us why? For example were you unable to work because of your medical condition, or negative past experiences of being employed, or an experience of discrimination in the past, or the fear of losing your benefits, or concerns about access barriers and support issues in the workplace, or something else?

2.6 Have you been in receipt of Incapacity Benefit (or a similar benefit) in the past three to five years?

2.7 Did you find benefits adequate to live on? (yes / no)

2.8 What were your feelings about being on Incapacity Benefit?

2.9 Did you feel that the description of being 'incapable of work' was an accurate description of your circumstances and your abilities? (yes / no / expand if you want to say more)

2.10 Whilst you were in receipt of Incapacity Benefit (or another similar benefit) did you ever believe that you could do some work with the right support or changes to the system? (yes / no)

2.11 Give some examples of the work you wanted to do and the support or changes which could have helped you?

2.12 Which of these issues are the most important things for you in deciding to come off benefits and trying to find work:

Please make a mark (e.g. X or Yes) in the box which indicates your choice

	Very Important	Quite Important	Not Important
I want to have more money			
I want to have a rewarding career			
I need something to do with my time			
Pressure from my family or friends			
Pressure from government agencies			
Encouragement from agencies			
Fear of loosing benefits			
Stereotypes in the media			
My condition has Changed			
A new opportunity has arisen			

2.13 Tell us about any training courses or employment support you have attended or received in the past 5 years

Which of these was the most useful and why?

Section 3 Your current situation and future plans

3.1 Tell us about your plans and ambitions in the next 2 years?

3.2 Are you getting support from a local employment or training support agency in achieving your goals? (yes / no)

Please tell us the name and contact details of the employment or training support agency

3.3 Do you think that the employment or training support agency understands your disability? (Fully / partly / not at all)

3.4 Are your access and support needs being met or considered by the support agency ? (Fully / partly / not at all)

3.5 Do you feel the support agency is pointing you in the direction that you want to go in? (Fully / partly / not at all)

3.6 Overall, how do you feel about the support you are getting? (Very happy / satisfied / not satisfied)

Please add any further comments about the support you are receiving from an employment or training support agency. If you have ticked that you are not satisfied with any of the things in questions 3.3 – 3.6, please give some specific examples of why you aren't satisfied or suggestions on how things could be better:

3.7 Can you give us an example of good practice from a support agency, perhaps how someone has supported you with an access barrier or has impressed you with a positive perception?

3.8 Can you think of an example of poor practice from a support agency, perhaps when someone has overlooked your access needs or made assumptions about you?

3.9 Which of these access issues will influence whether you are successful in finding a job?

Please make a mark (e.g. X or Yes) in the box which indicates your choice

	Very important	Quite important	Not important
Physical access			
Communication and or sensory support			
Personal support / assistance			
Accessible equipment			
Support to access and use ICT			
An understanding support worker			

Flexibility in what sort of job I can do			
Supportive colleagues			
Positive procedures that support my rights			
Other people's perceptions			
My own perceptions			

3.8 Do any of the following wider / external issues affect your ability to find employment or access training support?

Please make a mark (e.g. X or Yes) in the box which indicates your choice

	Big impact	Some impact	No impact
Language			
Housing			
Transport & mobility			
Childcare and / or caring			
Migration and asylum issues			
Independent living needs			
Income considerations			

Other (please tell us):

Section 4 Identifying specific barriers and perceptions

4.1 Identify three main barriers that have stopped you from finding sustainable work in the past and may prevent you in the future?

(a)
(b)
(c)

4.2 What could or should be done to change these barriers?

(a)
(b)
(c)

4.3 Overall, do you believe that the support agencies who are helping you to find work have your best interests at heart?
(Yes / partly / no)

If not, can you explain why you have suspicion, distrust, cynicism or doubt?

4.4 Do you think that the training agency has a positive perception of you?
(Yes / no / don't know)

If you think they have a negative perception, please tell us what you think their perception is and how you feel as a consequence?

Do you wish to add any further comments, suggestions or observations about the barriers and perceptions that you have experienced or are experiencing in your search for work and in the support you receive?

4.5 Which of the following barriers and / or perceptions do you most commonly experience as a disabled person?

Please make a mark (e.g. X or Yes) in the box which indicates your choice

	Frequent barrier	Occasional issue	Not relevant to me
Many every day objects are not designed for my use			
People do not listen or try to understand what I am saying			
People do not treat me as an equal			
People do not respect me			
People do not understand the impact of my impairment			
People talk down to me or treat me like a child			
I would get on more in life if I had an advocate or mentor			
Most information is written in jargon I don't understand			

Other people are afraid or intolerant of my impairment			
I often have problems gaining access into buildings			
Public transport is frequently inaccessible to me			
It is difficult to get information in my chosen format			
Other people do not accept that I am a disabled person			
I feel that I am treated like a medical condition not a person			

If there are things that you experience which are not on this list, please explain the barrier or perception and how it affects you on a daily basis

Section 5 Issues for Action Research

Would you consider taking part in:

a) A six month Action Research project exploring some of the barriers and perceptions which you have identified?

(Yes / no)

b) A follow up to this questionnaire next year (yes / no)

If you are interested in taking part in either or both of the future phases of this research project, please tell us one main barrier and one main perception that you would be interested in exploring further and also think about what can be done to make a change to each issue:

a) Tell us about a barrier you would like to change:

Tell us who should do something to change this barrier and what they should do:

Tell us what you could do yourself to change this barrier:

b) Tell us about a perception you would like to change:

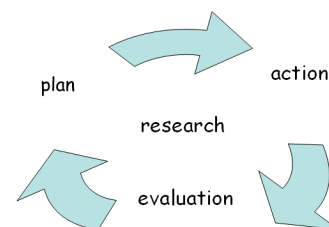
Tell us who should do something to change this perception and what they should do:

Tell us what you could do yourself to change this perception:

If you would like to take part in the follow-up questionnaire next year but do not have time to commit to the more in-depth Action Research phase, it would still be useful to our research project if you kept some brief personal notes or recordings about the issues that you have identified above. This way we can measure whether individuals have been able to influence or change current practice amongst employment support agencies between now and the next questionnaire.

Things you might make notes about:

- Identify a perception or a barrier
- Think about how the perception or barrier can be changed
- Try out a simple strategy to bring about a constructive change
- Does anyone else support your strategy?
- Are there cost or other factors to be considered?
- Do things happen within a reasonable time frame?
- Do you experience opposition to the change and why?
- After the change has taken place, has it improved the problem?
- What do others think about the change?
- Do you need to change your strategy or design a new one?



Section 6 Statement of Consent

Name

I have read the Data Protection, Confidentiality and Disclosure Policy at the start of this Questionnaire and I understand that some or all of the information I have given on this form will be published in an Action Research report written by Birmingham Disability Resource Centre.

I understand that I will not be personally identified in the report next to the information I have provided but, if I choose, I will be acknowledged for my participation in a separate section of the report.

I agree with the Data Protection, Confidentiality and Disclosure Policy and subject to it's conditions I give my consent for Birmingham Disability Resource Centre to use the information in my Questionnaire for the purposes of producing the Action Research report on barriers and perceptions facing disabled people who are seeking employment:

Signature or Identification mark

Date

Please indicate whether you want to be personally acknowledged in the published report (yes/no):

If you want some help to fill in this form, get in contact with us and we will make arrangements to complete it over the telephone or in person with you. Pease return the completed form to:

Peter Millington
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Bierton Road
Yardley
Birmingham B25 8PQ.

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