



Neurodiversity:

Supporting neurodivergent members and creating inclusive workplaces



About this resource

This resource is for RCN learning reps, safety reps and stewards to help them to support neurodivergent members through individual support/representation and by taking steps to create a more inclusive workplace culture.

The guidance draws on the real experiences of members, reps and staff and is intended to sit alongside the neurodiversity guidance which is available on the RCN website and in print.

To keep focused on the role of the representative, we have only provided an overview of some of the neurodivergent conditions reps are likely to encounter in the workplace but have included links to where more detailed information can be found.

This document has been designed in collaboration with our members to ensure it meets most accessibility standards. However, if this does not fit your requirements, please contact:

corporate.communications@rcn.org.uk

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Neurodiversity: an overview

Neurodiversity is a term often used to describe neurological differences in people. However the correct form is to describe the majority of people as neurotypical and those who are different as neuroatypical or neurodivergent. Neurodiversity actually describes our society as it stands with both typical and atypical/divergent people.

There is also often strong preference for whether we use ‘person first’ or ‘identity first’ language. Some may prefer person first terms “a member with a neurodivergent trait/condition” and some may prefer identity first “a neurodivergent member”.

Does it matter if we describe people as neurodiverse or use the wrong term? While some people may not feel strongly about how these terms are used, asking a member, or group of members if there is a preferred term demonstrates your understanding and builds trust and confidence from the outset. It signals that we understand and can advocate for our members.

For the purposes of this guidance we have chosen to use “neurodivergent member(s).” We have not used neuroatypical as, when spoken, the “a” can be clearly emphasised, but in print it can be difficult to spot.



Specific learning differences (SpLDs)

Some neurological differences are often described as Specific Learning Differences (SpLDs) as they relate to a difference or difficulty in how we learn. This is not just about learning in the traditional sense, it's about how we take on board information, process what is happening in the world and respond. You are most likely to encounter the following:

Dyslexia

Effects/difficulties

- Difficulties with spelling and fluent word reading.
- Slower verbal processing speed.
- Slower reading.
- Reduced verbal memory and working memory.

Strengths

- Can view things from a different perspective.
- Problem-solving skills.
- Empathy.

- Creativity.
- Visual/good pattern recognition.

Dyspraxia/developmental co-ordination disorder (DCD)

Effects/difficulties

- Poor motor control/co-ordination.
- Clumsiness.
- Poor time management/organisation.
- Difficulty finding the right words (Kirby et al, 2010).
- Difficulties with left/right orientation.

Strengths

- Can view things from a different perspective.
- Problem-solving skills.

Dyscalculia

Effects/difficulties

- Difficulty understanding numbers.
- Poor sense of estimate of numbers.
- Slow to perform calculations.
- Forget mathematical procedures/maths facts.
- Difficulty counting backwards.

Strengths

- Can view things from a different perspective.
- Problem-solving skills.
- Strategic thinking.
- Empathy.

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

Effects/difficulties

- Poor attention to detail on some tasks, but hyperfocus on others.
- Hyperactivity, restlessness or distractedness/daydreaming due to a restless mind.
- Poor time management/prioritisation.
- Impulsiveness.
- Overworking, difficulty relaxing.
- Forgetfulness.
- Excessive talking or being unusually shy so as to prevent impulsive comments.
- Poor internal organisational skills which can lead to excessive externalised organisation an structure to compensate (e.g visual reminders, colour codes etc.).

Strengths

- Can hyperfocus on tasks and be extremely productive.
- Can be very creative and entrepreneurial.
- Can view things from a different perspective.
- Problem-solving skills.
- Empathy.
- Energetic.
- Enthusiastic.
- Hard working.
- Interested in new things.
- Sensitive.

Austism

An autistic person has a different way of relating to and communicating with people and the world around them.

Primarily, you will notice that an autistic person may communicate or interact differently. One of the best ways this has been described comes from Janine Booth, writing for the Trades Union Congress:

“ You can think of this as being like how people learn languages. Most people learn their first language by ‘picking it up’ from the people they live with. They may then learn another language by studying it, for example at school. So, neurotypical people learn ‘social skills’ through social interaction, like you learned your first language. People on the autistic spectrum may not do so and may have to study to learn ‘social skills’ – like you might have learned an additional language at school. Many social ‘rules’ are not written down or explained – it is assumed that people will know them. But how is an autistic person supposed to know what s/he is supposed to say or do? ”



“It’s a bloody nightmare”

Meaning: Something is proving a mild inconvenience; typically used to describe situations such as slightly heavy traffic or the internet not working.

“It’s not ideal”

Meaning: Something terrible has happened. Life is ruined.

1,310 Retweets 69 Quote Tweets 9,949 Likes

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Autistic people may think more literally and therefore misunderstand neurotypical people who rarely say what they mean! While that sounds ridiculous, think of all the times we say things we feel are expected of us or use sarcasm or figures of speech.

As well as differences in social interaction, autistic people may experience sensory sensitivity (light, noise, smells and touch) and become “overloaded” at times which may affect their mood or cause distress.

A combination of all of this, as well as reduced executive function (the mental skills that help us to process information and plan, organise and manage our behaviour) may mean that an autistic person craves

structure and routine as a way of managing all of these challenges.

Effects/difficulties

- Difficulty 'reading' other people (interpreting verbal and non-verbal language, for example, tone of voice and facial expressions).
- Literal in understanding of language.
- Sensory sensitivities.
- Repetitive/routine behaviours.
- Anxiety (National Autistic Society, 2016).

Strengths

- Logical thinking.
- Attention to detail.
- Good at following and developing protocols and guidelines.
- Can view things from a different perspective.
- Problem-solving skills.



Navigating the neurotypical world

Neurodivergence is experienced differently by different people which is why we couldn't create a definitive list of challenges. These conditions often co-occur, for example dyslexic people or those with ADHD will often also have dyspraxia. Experiences are also influenced by other factors such as race, cultural background and gender (this interplay of factors is referred to as intersectionality).

The British Dyslexia Association estimates that between 15 and 20% of the population are neurodivergent and it is thought this might be higher in health care organisations. Life, workplaces and services are mainly designed to suit the 90% of the

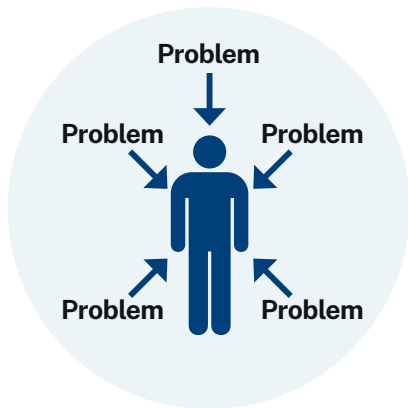
population who are neurotypical. It might be helpful to consider the medical and social models of disability.

The medical model of disability focuses on the person's impairment or divergence. It is seen as a problem or weakness that needs to be fixed or overcome in order to participate fully in the neurotypical world. If the individual can't do this, then they will encounter challenges.

In a neurodiverse society, built on the social model, it is not individual differences that create disadvantage but rather neurotypical barriers. By removing these barriers, we build a more inclusive society that values individual strengths and differences.

Growing up in a society built for neurotypical people will have meant that neurodivergent people will have undoubtedly developed strong and successful strategies to help them

The Medical Model



The Social Model

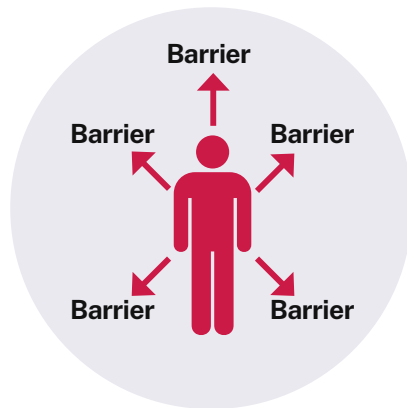


Image credit: taken from: rcn.org.uk/get-help/member-support-services/peer-support-services/health-ability-passport

navigate their way and tackle the barriers. That might be extra time spent record keeping after a shift if you are dyslexic or wearing headphones in an open office to manage the noise without drawing attention to it. This is sometimes known as ‘masking’ and can be emotionally and physically tiring. It’s a kind of hidden labour that most will not see.

Neurodivergent members tell us that growing up they received negative messaging which labelled them as difficult, lazy or not capable. Rationally, as adults with a diagnosis, they know that they just think differently but they struggle to shake that heavy feeling of not being good enough.

While neurodivergent people face a lot of barriers, their different view of the world brings a richness to the workplace.

Any changes or support required to create an inclusive workforce should be looked at in terms of the impact of losing the talent, dedication and resilience of neurodivergent staff if we don’t.

A diverse workforce helps us better reflect and serve our communities and those with lived experience of neurodiversity can better appreciate the patient perspective.



How reps can support neurodivergent members

Information, advice and guidance

You may be approached by members who are not experiencing any particular problems or issues, but know that things could be better for themselves, or colleagues and that the RCN offers guidance and support.

Our neurodiversity resources are available online and in print and contain information that is based on the lived experience of our members. They can find:

- information on neurodivergent conditions and case studies from nursing
- advice about requesting reasonable adjustments and suggestions that we know have been successfully implemented
- advice about applying for jobs and strategies for interviews

- access to the RCN Peer Support Network
- recordings from a number of events exploring neurodiversity in nursing.

Go to www.rcn.org.uk/neurodiversity

Disability legislation

Neurodivergence is included in legislative definitions of disability. This is because – in legal terms – a person is disabled when they have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

- England, Scotland and Wales - Equalities Act (2010)
- Northern Ireland - Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the Special Educational Needs & Disability (NI) Order 2005
- Channel Islands - Discrimination (Jersey) Law 2013. Legislation in Guernsey is expected to come into force in 2023/4

Many neurodivergent individuals do not make this known to their employer, however, are still protected by the legislation should they ever need it.

You do not have to have a medical diagnosis to ask for reasonable adjustments and the lack of a diagnosis should not be an excuse to say no.

We would encourage and support our members to disclose their disability status in a safe and confidential way as it helps to facilitate the negotiation of reasonable adjustments.

Employers need to understand more about the disability and how adjustments can remove barriers and improve the working life of the member. They may ask for an occupational health assessment and most members tell us that this can be a supportive and positive intervention.

Disability is also legally determined by what life is like without medication or treatments, rather than with. If

the treatment delays or prevents an impairment but it would come back if the treatment was stopped, then it must not be seen as a 'cure'. For example, medication for ADHD may help to improve focus, but the disability is still there and the medication must not be seen as grounds for ignoring requests for reasonable adjustments or support that would improve the working life of that person.

Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are anything that removes barriers to allow disabled people the best opportunity to do their jobs.

The adjustments themselves are not always physical and can fall into the following areas:

- **Equipment** - such as: tools for taking notes like smart pens or speech to text or software; noise-cancelling headphones; coloured overlays or lenses in glasses to reduce eye stress and improve ability to read and process information.

- **Changes to working patterns** - such as: different shifts; time away from your workstation; working from or nearer home; flexible working to add variety and reduce boredom.
- **Changes to the workplace** - such as: consideration regarding the decor and lighting to create calmer spaces; making quiet spaces available; removing physical barriers, obstacles and clutter.
- **Protect breaks** - Ensuring regular breaks are taken and introducing prompts to remind staff who might struggle to prioritise their wellbeing.



- **Training** - Consider whether training is inclusive and accessible. Ensure e-learning meets accessibility standards and, where possible, provide off-line ways to access any dense text (i.e. printed workbooks). If training is face-to-face, consider the learning environment and make participants aware that you are open to reasonable adjustments that would improve their learning experience.
- **Redeployment** - This means moving to another more suitable role that becomes available when the employee can't continue in their current role. Consider roles that the individual has an interest in and are dynamic so as not to lose interest too quickly. Consider short-term contracts as apposed to permanent post to reduce need for changing jobs frequently.
- **Employer policy** - Organisations could consider implementing a disability leave policy or strengthening existing leave/ sickness policies to support staff with a disability to manage their condition and treatments/ appointments without pressure of triggering sickness reviews.

Under legislation, employers should facilitate reasonable adjustments that will help neurodivergent members manage their role in the workplace. The conversations around reasonable adjustments will all be very different as they will encompass, on the one hand, the challenges and difference the individual feels and faces and, on the other, what is reasonable in terms of the fundamentals of the role, ways of working for the team and cost.

Discrimination

Disability is a protected characteristic in law and therefore treating a disabled person less favourably than other employees is discrimination. This can be direct discrimination (obviously treating someone differently and unfairly) or indirect discrimination (policy and practice that puts a person at a disadvantage). Not giving consideration to reasonable adjustments can be challenged as being discriminatory and creating policy or practice that disadvantages neurodivergent staff could be seen as indirect discrimination.

How neurodivergence can underly workplace employment issues

When you are supporting a member, a neurodivergence may not be immediately disclosed. The member may choose not to, or they may not identify or even know they are neurodivergent. In the next section we'll look at how we can sensitively approach disclosure, but first we will look at how neurodivergence can underly employment issues and how you might become more aware.

Mistakes and questions of capability

Neurodivergent members will have a number of strategies to meet the demands of a role designed for neurotypical staff. While this can work incredibly successfully for a long time, things might start to unravel when there are staffing pressures, changes to ways of working or the management of a team. Members often tell us that stress, tiredness and changes to practice can make neurodivergent

conditions worse. Mistakes are made and this can lead to a spiral where the member struggles to pause, re-establish strategies and feel back in control.

Most employers have capability procedures which, if conducted correctly, will identify positive support that the employer can provide. With the right support in place, issues such as stress and fatigue can be mitigated or even eliminated.

Grievance, conduct, bullying and harassment

Although autism is probably most associated with communication challenges, many neurodivergent conditions are about how we absorb and process information and then respond. Fitting in with the team often means mirroring communication styles and the pace of work. We find neurodivergent members can come to us on either 'side' of this issue. We have had some cases where the member is being accused of bullying or challenging behaviour due to their abrupt

communication style, bossiness or perceived sense of superiority to others. We have also had members seeking support who feel they are treated differently or are bullied by colleagues who say they don't fit in.

As with mistakes and errors, the ability to communicate and follow the social conventions of a team can be hugely affected by stress, tiredness and change in routine and practice.

New starters, new workplaces, new ways of working

Neurodivergent members may have had strategies that have worked successfully for years. These might be known only to them, or could be agreed reasonable adjustments. These might not always work when starting a new job or if there is a change to ways of working or clinical procedure. Most neurodivergent conditions will require a bit of extra time to process and assimilate. There might also be a need to recognise and accept that old strategies aren't working and this can be stressful, which will exacerbate the condition.

Probation periods can be challenging, and you may be approached for support if the member feels they are failing or have failed probation unfairly. Newly qualified nurses can find that the support and adjustments they received while studying are not there or are no longer working and they find it hard to establish their confidence in the workplace.

Sickness absence

There is, unfortunately, a link between poor mental health and neurodivergence. The pressure and added mental expenditure to assimilate into a workplace that is designed for neurotypical workers can take its toll. We hear from many members that they feel they can meet the clinical and social demands of nursing, but it comes at a cost which can lead to burnout and ill health. While not all stress-related ill health is attributed to neurodivergence, be aware of the potential for this to be a factor.

If a member discloses or considers they may be neurodivergent, return to work plans should include

discussions about assessments and reasonable adjustments. Stress and ill health related to a neurodivergent condition will need long-term adjustments that support the member through the rest of their career, not just in the weeks after their absence.

Flexible working and the application of reasonable adjustments

Employers are legally required to implement recommended reasonable adjustments including flexible working hours if a member has a disability. Members may require support in cases where established



reasonable adjustments are threatened or removed. This can happen when line management changes or in times of re-organisation. Members may also come to you if they have been denied an occupational health assessment. Some line managers can be evasive or avoid involvement from occupational health professionals because they are unsure of or unwilling to implement any recommendations.

A Health Ability Passport is a document that details the reasonable adjustments a staff member with health or disability issues needs at work. Working together, a member and their line manager can negotiate and capture any adjustments as well as anything that can trigger or exacerbate their condition. The passport can document regular reviews and can become a vital tool in ensuring that the adjustments are recognised by new managers and taken into consideration during any discussions about changes in ways of working.

The RCN online guide outlines all the information you will need, including practical steps to negotiating

adjustments. See <https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/member-support-services/peer-support-services/health-ability-passport>

Have you helped to negotiate a successful reasonable adjustment or know of any good practice around supporting neurodivergent members in your workplace? Please consider adding your experience to the RCN's Workplace Adjustments Database.

Evidence and case studies help us to challenge negative perceptions and provide positive practical examples of how reasonable adjustments can work in a wide variety of workplaces. To be included, please let the peer support service know by completing the database form.

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/member-support-services/peer-support-services/workplace-adjustments-database>

You can also share your experience as part of the RCN peer support Member Stories at <https://www.rcn.org.uk/Get-Help/Member-support-services/Peer-support-services/Member-Stories>

Career progression and recruitment

Recruitment and selection processes are designed around neurotypical ways of thinking. Job descriptions can be rambling, endless wish lists that include very vague terms with few clues as to what is essential and desirable. Some job descriptions don't seem to match the role very well and this can be hard to ignore for someone who has a more literal interpretation of what are incredibly aspirational phrases.

You would have to search hard for someone that told you they liked interviews and assessments. We all have experienced the pressure, scrutiny and fear of the unknown. Our neurodivergent members particularly struggle with questions that have an overwhelmingly vast range of answers. (Can you tell us about a time when you have.....?) or are rambling questions that are in fact several questions. (What do you think makes a good leader, how might people challenge your leadership and what would you do to overcome it?)

Neurodivergent members tell us they often get feedback that they didn't perform well at interview and need to improve and so they may come to you for guidance or resources from the RCN. Consider asking them if reasonable adjustments might be considered. We have evidence of successful adjustments for interviews and assessments which include the setup of the room to limit sensory overload, extra time for assessments and having questions sent in advance. The surprising feedback from recruitment where all candidates are sent the questions ahead of time is that the interview experience is more relaxed for everyone. The conversations are richer and all candidates shine more brightly.

You may find that a member who is constantly denied reasonable adjustments during recruitment will ask you for support to take forward a formal grievance. As with adjustments to working practice, it is illegal for employers to not implement reasonable adjustments for someone who is disabled.

Inclusive representation through formal processes

Disclosure

Most neurodivergent members will have had a lifetime of negative messaging and feel guarded or unwilling to disclose their condition or the strategies they have developed to navigate the workplace. They also may feel that their difference is not a factor in whatever issue has surfaced. The advice we get from our members is that they will not be offended by you asking the question – even if you get the language wrong or they don't want to disclose anything. Don't be so afraid of causing offence that you don't offer inclusive representation or miss vital interventions that may entirely shift an outcome. Ask the question and accept their answer.

Reasonable adjustments to the process

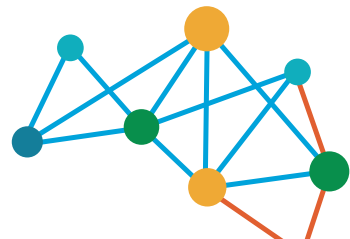
Formal employment processes are information heavy, time sensitive and involve high pressured meetings and hearings. Consideration of

neurodivergence and reasonable adjustments in the way a case is managed can make a big difference to the experience and outcome for that member. Explaining this to a member, along with assurances of confidentiality, can start your inclusive representation on the right note.

Adjustments could include flexibility around timescales, how materials are made available (accessible formats as per the member's preference) and how meetings are conducted. Remember, not considering reasonable adjustments can be challenged as being discriminatory.

Tips for formal representation

This resource provides you with a top line overview of neurodivergent conditions and how we can break down some of the neurotypically built barriers, however everyone is different and the only way to provide truly inclusive representation is



to ask members how they would prefer to be communicated with and reasonably adjust our styles and processes to accommodate them.

There are, however, some common themes to consider:

Communicating with the member

Since the pandemic, we have more virtual options for meeting and there is no hard and fast rule for what style suits what neurodivergence. Phone calls may be problematic for some who struggle to navigate social cues but be vastly preferable for those that find email difficult to process or organise. We know that face-to-face meetings often need to be in a confidential space but consider those with sensory sensitivities and whether the meeting space is going to help or hinder the processing of information. Tiredness exacerbates all neurodivergent conditions and so, for a successful meeting, try to avoid times where the member knows they will not be at their best.

Outline the formal process and timelines

Explain how the member will be receiving information and when they

will need to provide information or respond. Stress can exacerbate conditions so processing information, keeping organised and making decisions could be more challenging. Outline the process and ask the member if they can consider where stress points might surface and how you can support them through it.

Ask clear, concise questions

It is worth taking extra time to consider how you are going to structure your meetings and the questions you will be asking your member. Be clear about the purpose of the meeting and ask direct and concise questions. Allow time for the member to process what you have told them or asked and, if you find you are struggling to get the information you need, be brave enough to ask if your communication style is causing a barrier.

Expect the unexpected

Experienced reps know that curveballs can be thrown into formal cases. Short-notice meeting invites, presentation of new unseen information during a meeting and expecting immediate decisions are par for the course, however neurodivergent members will

struggle more than others when this happens. When outlining the case process, talk about what might happen and how you will ensure that unexpected developments are given time and space for consideration.

Reasonable and sustainable

As a rep, you are trying to balance your work, trade union and personal responsibilities. Any adjustments you make need to be reasonable for you and, as with all representation, managing expectations is key. If you are aware that a member could benefit from adjustments you don't feel able to make, contact your supervising officer for support.

Review your adjustments

It is worth checking in regularly with the member if any adjustments you have made are working well or need review. If the member needs more support, or support that you don't feel confident to provide, contact your supervising officer.

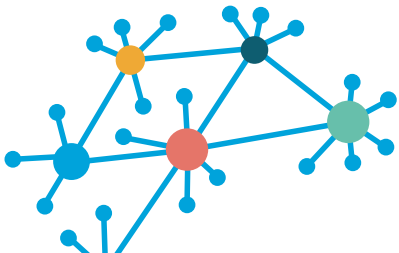
Creating an inclusive workplace

Policy reviews

Most employers have a collection of policies that set out the agreed employment practice and procedures. A policy will tell you (an employee) what you can expect in relation to an aspect of your employment. It will also explain what your employer expects from you and the processes that both are expected to adhere to. Most employers will offer to review policies in partnership with staff and those reviews offer a clear route to influence for better workplace practice.

When policies are up for review, it is a perfect opportunity to look through a neurodivergent lens and ask:

- Have neurodivergent members been consulted? Do you have a staff disability network and have they been consulted? How can you seek the views of RCN members who are neurodivergent? Perhaps

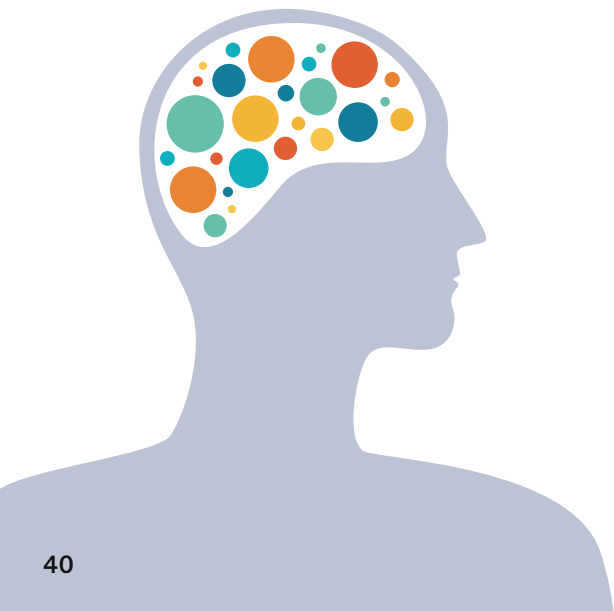


you could link with your branch or the RCN's Peer Support Network.

- Does this policy directly or indirectly impact neurodivergent members?
- Is there an opportunity to make policy changes that would make the workplace more inclusive?

In terms of disseminating the policy

- Is it well presented, easily read and understood, and jargon free?
- Where will it be published and in what format(s)?



Recruitment

In our section exploring how neurodivergence can underly employment issues, we saw examples of negative experiences around recruitment and career progression.

There is a different, inclusive and arguably more successful way for an organisation to recruit staff that will benefit everyone, but particularly neurodivergent and disabled members. Consider how you can work in partnership with other union reps and your employer to change the culture and practice around recruitment.

Visit <https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/member-support-services/peer-support-services/neurodiversity-guidance/nd-recruitment>

Raising awareness and challenging negative perceptions

Neurodivergent members face many barriers while pursuing their nursing career. One nurse shared that they had been dismissed several times over their career but had also won awards!

Working with your employer to develop and deliver awareness training can be a positive experience for colleagues who have little to no understanding of the neurodivergence. There are lots of good 'in general' sessions employers can tailor but members are often happy to lead their own "how my condition manifests for me" style sessions for their immediate colleagues.

The RCN is working hard to challenge perceptions by capturing evidence and case studies that show how valuable difference is in nursing and how successful reasonable adjustments can be.

If you meet neurodivergent members who are thriving, encourage them to share their experience. If they are in a leadership position, all the better. Events like the national Neurodiversity Celebration Week provide a great opportunity to work in partnership with employers to organise events and materials that showcase best practice.

See <https://www.neurodiversityweek.com/>

When raising awareness and planning events, consider how neurodiversity is represented. There is a tendency to fall back on stereotypes. Autistic people are not always white men who are good at IT! Thoughtful and diverse case studies help to tackle the added barriers that exist with the intersection of neurodivergence and other protected characteristics.

Creating peer support networks

Masking and strategies to fit in are tiring and often developed in isolation over years. Our neurodivergent members tell us of the loneliness that comes from being in a workplace that feels overwhelmingly neurotypical. There are, however, likely to be many colleagues in your workplace who have a neurodivergent condition and, when they are supported to find each other, it comes as a huge relief.

Every neurodivergent person is different but being able to connect with others will combat isolation and can lead to more ideas and strategies for reasonable adjustments and being your best at work.

Find out if your organisation already has a network for neurodivergent staff and promote it regularly to members and colleagues. If there isn't one, consider how you can work in partnership with other unions to create one.

The RCN Peer Support Network is for members who consider themselves to be disabled, have a disability or long-term condition or are neurodivergent. When you join, you are asked to outline what you want to talk about so that you can be sent details of others who have a similar interest to you. Your contact details are kept on file and shared with others who join and wish to connect on that topic.

See <https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/member-support-services/peer-support-services/join>



Being a neurodivergent rep

Being an RCN learning rep, safety rep or steward will always require extra juggling of work, union and personal life. Securing facilities time is crucial to being able to organise your activity and ensuring you meet the expectations of the role.

The rep role is subject to its own stereotyping. Reps are often characterised as outgoing, charismatic and possibly even aggressive or obstructive. Negotiations are thought to be a

bit like a game of poker or a staring competition with lots of 'behind closed doors' activity. This couldn't be further from the real work and will be off-putting to many neurodivergent members who have different ways of processing information and communicating.

The reality is that the rep role can be shaped to work with your strengths and passions, and we can provide support and work in partnership in areas where you feel less confident.

Formal representation, whether on an individual or collective basis, requires us to work with processes that are often information and



correspondence heavy. They may have strict timeframes that must be adhered to and you will need to be organised and keep on top of things. We recognise that this is a challenge for all reps and there are tools, resources and support to help you.

When reps are accredited, they undertake their Learning and Development Pathway and will have the support of a Learning and Development Facilitator and a supervising Officer. Reps are encouraged to discuss neurodivergence and learning preferences from the outset so that we can support you to complete your learning, but also to consider how you will work and what support you will need when you are in the workplace.

We have many reps who have a neurodivergent condition. As you connect with reps in your area and beyond at learning events and online, you will find the rep community to be a diverse and accepting space.

Further resources

- ✓ RCN Neurodiversity Guidance <https://www.rcn.org.uk/neurodiversity>
- ✓ Neurodiversity Celebration Week <https://www.neurodiversityweek.com/>
- ✓ Autism in the workplace written for the TUC by Janine Booth <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/autism-workplace>
- ✓ Reps Hub <https://www.rcn.org.uk/reps-hub>

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