



# Disability inclusion

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She/her

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# Definitions

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“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.” - Equality Act (2010)

- Invisible or hidden disabilities:
  - Mental: schizophrenia or chronic depression
  - Cognitive: learning disabilities, autism, or dyslexia
  - Physical: sickle cell anaemia, diabetes, cancer, or HIV/AIDS

Ableism: practices and dominant attitudes in society that assume there is an ideal body and mind that is better than all others

# Medical vs social models of disability

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## Medical model:

- Disability is caused by the health condition a person has
- The nature of this condition determines what they can and can't do
- Disability can be fixed or ameliorated with medical treatment

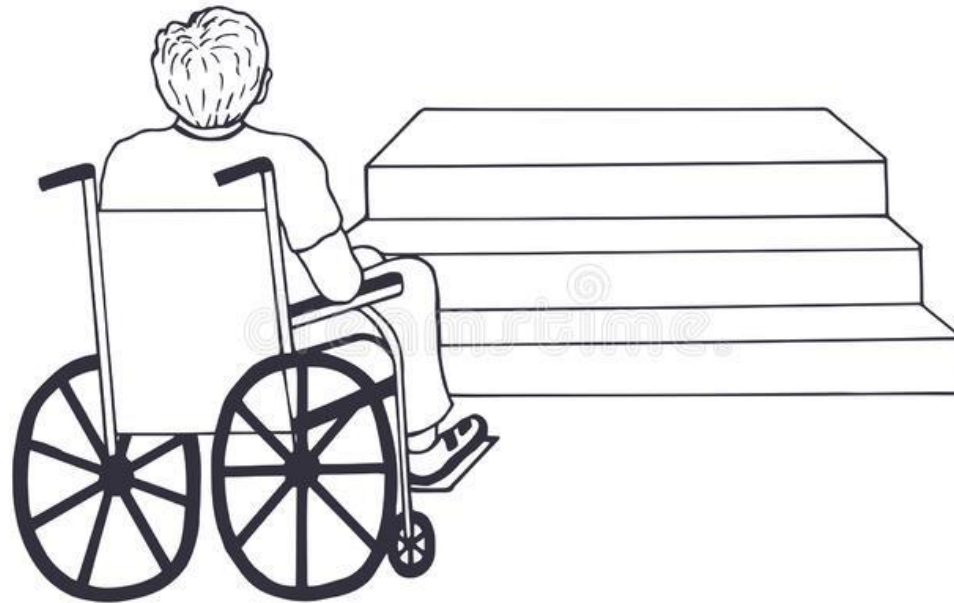
## Social model:

- Distinguishes between an impairment and a disability
- Disability is not caused by a medical condition, but the structures and attitudes of society
- Disability can be fixed or ameliorated with changes to society

# Medical vs social models of disability

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The impairment is the problem. The person isn't able to walk up the stairs.



The stairs are the problem. Only certain people are able to use them.

## Medical vs social models of disability

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“Doing disability all day long can be an exhausting process. I don’t mean having an impairment, in my own case not being able to walk. Like most disabled people I can deal with this. I mean having to spend a significant part of each day dealing with a physical world which is historically designed to exclude me and, even more tiring, dealing with other people’s preconceptions and misconceptions about me.”

– Lois Keith, civil rights activist

# Definitions

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“The loss or limitation of opportunities for people with impairments to take part in society on an equal level with others due to social and environmental barriers.” – Disability Wales

# Identifying barriers to accessibility

- **Environmental:** no lifts or ramps, no accessible toilets, poor lighting



Disabled Access Denied



# Identifying barriers to accessibility

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- **Attitudinal:** stigma, discrimination, perceptions, assumptions

## PERSONAL SPACE



## SPECTATORS





# Identifying barriers to accessibility

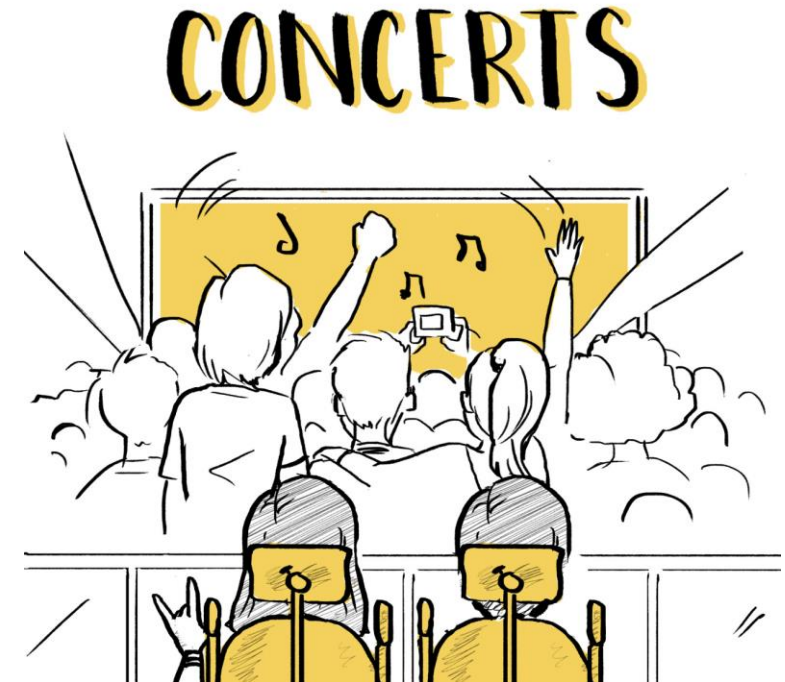
- **Environmental:** no lifts or ramps, no accessible toilets, poor lighting
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- **Communication:** complicated language or jargon, no 'alt text' description of images, lack of sign language interpreter



Marvel comics

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The Disabled Life

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None of these barriers are inevitable, so neither is exclusion.

# Removing barriers

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- **Environmental**

- Consider the accessibility of places you plan events.
- Think about adaptations, e.g. lighting or ramps.
- Advocate for accessible spaces.

- **Attitudinal**

- Do not make assumptions about what people with disabilities can or cannot do. Ask them.
- Don't touch a person's mobility aid or distract a service dog.
- Do not view people with disabilities as objects of pity, charity, or inspiration.

# Removing barriers

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- **Communication**

- Learn about accessible design, e.g. font choice, website design, graphic design.
- Use clear and uncomplicated language.
- Make sure electronic documents are accessible to people who use screen readers.

- **Organisational**

- Advocate for organisations to consider people with disabilities, e.g. review policies to ensure accessibility.
- Encourage conferences to have inclusive practices, like captioning on talks and a quiet space.

# Inclusive language guidelines

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- Say *people with disabilities* or *disabled people* as opposed to *the disabled*.
- Avoid phrases that suggest victimhood e.g. *afflicted by*, *victim of*, or *suffers from*. Instead, say *person with [condition]*.
- Avoid euphemisms like *differently abled* or *special needs*.
- Don't use phrases or terms that make light of disabilities like *blind/deaf to [something]*, *lame*, or *crazy*. Mental health diagnoses like bipolar or OCD are conditions with serious impacts so don't use them to describe everyday behaviours.



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Any questions?

# Links

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- [Rethinking disability: the social model of disability and chronic disease](#)
- [Scope: Social model of disability](#)
- [Promoting Inclusion: A British Council guide to disability equality](#)
- [Disability Etiquette, part 1 – the basics](#)
- [Barriers and Solutions](#)
- [10 ways to make society more inclusive for people with disabilities](#)
- [Dos and don'ts on designing for accessibility](#)
- [Inclusive language and imagery](#)