



Spinal cord injury

Reasonable Adjustments

The spinal cord is a bundle of nerves and other tissue which extends from the brain's base at the top of your neck down the length of your back.



If you damage or break your spinal cord close to your neck, this will cause paralysis in a larger part of the body than damage to your spinal cord lower down your back.

50,000 are living with a spinal cord injury in the UK. Each year approximately 2,500 people are newly injured.

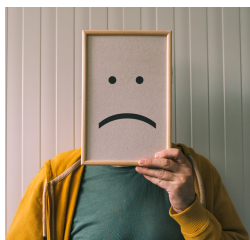
Most injuries cause loss of movement and feeling in the parts of the body below the level of the injury.

Spinal cord injury affects people both physically and emotionally and most people will experience some of the following, partially or completely:

- loss of movement in the legs, affecting your ability to walk;
- possible loss of movement in the chest, trunk, hands or arms;
- loss of feeling in parts of the body;
- loss of bladder and bowel control;
- pain or stinging sensations, spasms;
- changes in sexual function, sexual sensitivity and fertility.



Depression and anxiety are not uncommon in those affected by spinal cord injury - both the individuals and their families. Many people feel that the things most important to them in life may never be the same.



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Work Place Reasonable Adjustments: what you and your colleagues can do at your workplace



1. Bear in mind that every injury is different.



2. Understand that, with the right knowledge and support, people with a spinal cord injury can still live life to the full.



3. Consider mobility needs e.g. wheelchair access or ease of travel with walking aids.



4. Factor in possible pain and fatigue into appointment times, length of appointments or meetings or work session.



5. Schedule breaks that allow time to access refreshments and toilet facilities.



6. Allow flexibility in schedules or work shifts to allow for unforeseen breaks, pain, fatigue, medical appointments or concentration span due to pain, disturbed sleep or travel complexities.



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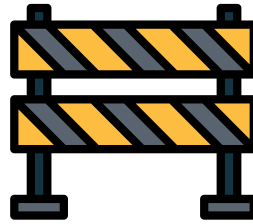
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7. Consider physical adaptations to workspace and common areas including allowing space for personal assistance where appropriate.



8. Consider duties and roles and look to remove barriers to individual's full participation in the team's activities.



9. Provide awareness training in partnership with individual for staff so that individual has support and understanding of colleagues.



10. Social care staff should consider an individual's view of suitable personal care assistants.



11. Resist being overly helpful allowing a person time to carry out an action independently e.g. don't pick up their dropped fork unless they ask you to.



Get to know what they find helpful and what they prefer to do themselves.