



# Disability and Long-term Conditions Staff Network

[hdft.disabilitystaffnetwork@nhs.net](mailto:hdft.disabilitystaffnetwork@nhs.net)

**Executive Sponsor: Matt Graham**  
Director of Strategy

Hi, my name is Matt. I'm the Director of Strategy at Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust and the executive sponsor for the Disability and Long Term Conditions Network. I wanted to be the sponsor because I'm passionate about ensuring that people with disabilities and long term conditions can access work and contribute to the success of the Trust.

The statistics around employment for people with disabilities in England are shocking – the 2021 Census showed that only 57% of people with a disability are in employment, compared to 87% of non-disabled people, and for people with a learning disability the figure is only 4.8% (this figure has been steadily falling since 2012 too). At the same time we have an employment crisis in the NHS and in the economy generally, and yet we are not supporting people with disabilities to gain and retain employment enough. We are losing out on a huge number of talented, dedicated and motivated employees. We also know that people who are in employment are happier, healthier, more independent and live longer. So enabling people with disabilities to gain and stay in employment is good for the individual and good for the Trust!

The Disability and Long Term Conditions Network is a key part of how the Trust can enable, encourage, retain and develop colleagues with disabilities and long term conditions. My role as sponsor is to advocate for the Network, raise awareness of disability and long term conditions in the workplace, help unblock issues and improvements, and generally support the aims and objectives of the Network. I'm looking forward to helping the Network thrive!

