

# **SERVICE PROVIDERS AND DIABETES ADVOCACY PACK**

## **YOUR RIGHTS WHEN ACCESSING SERVICES**

Service providers are organisations and individuals that offer services to the public. Unfortunately, people with diabetes sometimes face discrimination when accessing services.

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is illegal for service providers to discriminate against people because of their disability.

This pack gives you information about how service providers should treat people with diabetes, the rules on discrimination, and what you can do if you think you have been discriminated against.

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## Who counts as a service provider?

Most businesses, organisations and individuals that offer services to the public are 'service providers' for the purposes of the Equality Act. It makes no difference whether people pay for the service or not. Nor does it matter whether the service provider is a big organisation or a small one. Examples of service providers include:

- hotels, restaurants, cafés, bars
- banks, shops, gyms
- hairdressers, barbers, beauty salons
- theatres, music venues, museums,
- football team supporter clubs
- estate agents, letting agents, property management companies
- builders, other trades people and companies
- local authorities
- charities
- medical services offered by GP's, dentists, hospitals and clinics (there is a separate pack for complaining about healthcare – please see [www.diabetes.org.uk/How\\_we\\_help/Advocacy/](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/How_we_help/Advocacy/))

## What counts as an association?

Some organisations are not classed as service providers under the Equality Act, but are what are known as 'associations'. There are some differences between the discrimination rules for service providers and those for associations, but for the purposes of disability discrimination the only significant difference is that associations can limit who can become a member if this is part of the purpose of the association. Apart from this the same rules apply to associations and service providers.

Private members clubs including sports clubs, some youth clubs such as the Scouts, clubs for ex-service personnel and clubs for people with particular interests, such as fishing or gardening, are a few examples of organisations that count as associations. An organisation counts as an association if it has more than 25 members, and if there are rules restricting who can become a member.

The Equality Act not only applies to members of an association, but also covers former members, guests of members, associate members and prospective members. Former members are those who have left an association and no longer have membership. Guests of an association are those who have been invited by a member to participate or enjoy some of the benefits of the association. An associate member

is someone who is not a member but who, according to the association's rules, has some or all of the rights as a member because they are a member of another association. A prospective member is anyone who is not currently a member of an association but who may be eligible to be a member or is actively seeking to become one.

It may not be unlawful discrimination if an association is set up for a particular group of people. The group would not have to change the rules on who can become a member. An association is not required to take any steps that would fundamentally alter the nature of the association.

### Example

A wine tasting club would not have to offer a non- alcoholic alternative.

If a club has fewer than 25 members or does not have any formal rules regarding membership criteria then they are not considered to be an association under the Equality Act 2010 and the Act does not therefore apply.

### Example

A book club with six members run by friends.

Organisations that require people to take out membership to use their facilities or services or to belong to a group but where there is no form of selection are not associations in equality law – even if they are called 'club', 'society' or 'association'. Usually in such a case a fee is paid either at the time of joining or on an on-going basis to use the services. These organisations are still covered by the Act, but are Service Providers rather than associations.

## What is the Equality Act 2010?

The Equality Act says 2010 contains the principles that service providers should follow in their treatment of people with disabilities. You may need to refer to these principles in discussions with the service provider concerned. Disability discrimination law does not work on the principle of treating everyone the same, but rather on the understanding that because of the difficulties many people with a disability face, they have to be treated more favourably to ensure equal treatment.

The Equality Act 2010 brings together all previous UK discrimination law and adds some new protections. The majority of the provisions of the Equality Act

came into force on 1 October 2010. The Act replaced previous discrimination legislation, such as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The Equality Act applies in England, Scotland, and Wales, but not in Northern Ireland, where the Disability Discrimination Act still applies. Most of the information in this pack is not applicable to Northern Ireland. For further information on disability discrimination law in Northern Ireland contact the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (see 'Sources of support and information' at the end of this pack for details).

## What is a disability under the Equality Act?

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial long-term negative effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Substantial disadvantage is defined in the Act as any disadvantage that is more than minor or trivial. An impairment is long-term if it has lasted for twelve months or is expected to last for twelve months or longer.

Each part of this definition must be satisfied in order for someone to be disabled within the meaning of the Act. What matters is the effect that the impairment or health condition has, rather than what the condition or diagnosis is.

If a person is taking medication to treat an impairment, the decision on whether they have a disability is based on how the impairment would affect that person if they were not taking that medication. Therefore, when asking whether diabetes fits the definition it is the effect of untreated diabetes that should be considered. This applies when considering other treatments or aids, but not to glasses or contact lenses.

## Is diabetes considered a disability under the Equality Act?

The definition of disability in the Equality Act treats each person as an individual, so ultimately only a court or tribunal can decide if a person is covered by the definition. Many people with diabetes do not think of themselves as having a disability, but in many cases people with diabetes will be covered by this definition of disability. This is because diabetes is a life-long condition, and it can seriously affect a person's ability to do normal day-to-day things. When you are considering whether you are covered by the definition you must think about the effect of your diabetes on your day-to-day life. If your diabetes, left untreated without the use of diet,

medication or insulin, makes it more difficult for you to do day-to-day things then you are likely to be covered.

## What types of discrimination are unlawful under the Equality Act?

There are several types of discrimination under the Equality Act. Service providers must not discriminate by refusing to offer a service, by discontinuing a service, or by offering it on worse terms.

### Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination happens when a person with a disability is treated less favourably, because of his or her disability, than a person who does not have a disability. Direct discrimination can never be legally justified. In order to show that you have been directly discriminated against you must show that the way you were treated was less favourable compared with the way that a person who did not have diabetes would have been treated in the same situation.

#### Example

A travel agent refuses to sell a holiday to a person because that person has diabetes. This is direct discrimination.

### Direct discrimination by Association or Perception

Direct discrimination can also happen when someone without a disability is treated less favourably because that person is associated with a person with a disability. It can also happen because that person is perceived to have a disability or is perceived to be associated with a person with a disability. This is known as direct discrimination because of association or perception. To prove this kind of discrimination you must show that your treatment was less favourable compared with the treatment of a person who was not associated with a person with a disability (or perceived to have a disability, or perceived to be associated with someone who has a disability).

### Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination happens when a service provider applies a provision, criterion or practice that applies to people with a disability and to those without, but which puts people with a disability at a substantial disadvantage compared with those without.

Provision, criterion or practice is a deliberately broad term. It includes written and unwritten policies and the way a particular service provider generally gets things done.

### Example

A museum has a policy that visitors are not allowed to eat or drink in the building. A visitor with diabetes realises that she is becoming hypoglycaemic and starts to drink something to treat the hypo, but a member of staff tells her that she must stop. The woman explains that she needs the drink because of her diabetes, but the member of staff won't make an exception to the food and drink policy. By refusing to make an exception to the policy, the member of staff has put the woman at a disadvantage. This policy would disadvantage other visitors with diabetes in the same situation, so this is likely to be a case of indirect discrimination.

A policy that has not been applied yet could still be an example of indirect discrimination. The policy is still discriminatory if it would put you and other people with diabetes at a disadvantage if it was applied, **and** you have been prevented from doing something because of this.

### Example

A man with diabetes hears about the way the food and drink policy was enforced at the museum from the previous example. The man would like to visit the museum, but he is put off by the way the museum staff enforce the policy. By failing to adjust the policy the museum is probably indirectly discriminating against the man.

A policy that puts people with diabetes at a disadvantage is not indirect discrimination and can be justified if the service provider can show that the policy or practice is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.'

### Example

There is a policy put in place by a nightclub that sharp objects are not permitted and should be confiscated on the door. The doorman confiscates a person with diabetes' insulin pen due to this policy. The nightclub would not only have to prove that the health and safety concern of not allowing sharps was a legitimate aim, but also that they had acted proportionately in achieving this aim.

See page 7 for a more detailed definition of a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

### Discrimination arising from disability

Discrimination arising from disability happens when a person with a disability is treated unfavourably not because of his or her disability but because of something caused by his or her disability. This only applies if the service provider knows or could **reasonably** have been expected to know that the person is a disabled person. Discrimination arising from disability was not included in previous discrimination law, but was brought into the Equality Act to strengthen protections for people with disabilities.

To prove discrimination arising from disability you must show that you have been treated unfavourably and that this unfavourable treatment was because of something that was a consequence of your diabetes. You do not have to compare your treatment to the treatment of someone who does not have diabetes.

It will not be discrimination arising from a disability if the service provider can show that what they have done is objectively justified. This means that they will have to show that their actions are 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.'

### Example

A youth sports club refuses to accept a boy with diabetes. The club claims that the boy cannot participate safely because of the risk of hypos. The boy is already a member of several other sports clubs and he is very good at controlling his blood glucose when he plays sport. The club's aim of keeping players safe is legitimate, but unless the club can show that its decision is also proportionate, its actions could be discrimination arising from disability.

### Failure to make reasonable adjustments

A service provider discriminates if it fails in its duty to make reasonable adjustments. The Equality Act does not define 'reasonable'. What is reasonable will vary according to the type of services being provided. When a court or tribunal decides whether an adjustment is reasonable it will take a number of factors into account. These factors will usually include:

- the need to maintain standards of service
- the financial resources of the service provider
- the cost of making an adjustment

- the practicality of making the adjustment
- the need to ensure the health and safety of employees and service users.

### Example

The owner of a shop realises that it is difficult for customers with impaired mobility to enter her shop, so she makes adjustments. It would not be reasonable for her to build a permanent access ramp because this would obstruct the pavement outside. Instead the owner buys a portable access ramp and installs a doorbell that customers with mobility impairments can use to alert shop staff when they need to use the ramp. The shop owner makes sure that there is a clear sign next to the doorbell that tells customers about this service, and that staff know how to set up the ramp.

For a detailed description of this duty see pages below.

### Harassment

Harassment happens when the behaviour of a person or organisation in relation to diabetes violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for someone with diabetes. It is illegal for service providers to harass service users.

### Victimisation

Victimisation happens if a service provider penalises a person because he or she has complained about previous discrimination by the provider or has helped someone else to complain (for example by giving evidence to a court). It is illegal for service providers to victimise service users.

### What is the duty to make reasonable adjustments?

Service providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to prevent people with disabilities being placed at a substantial disadvantage. A substantial disadvantage is one that is more than minor or trivial. There are three parts to this duty:

- If a service provider has a provision, criteria, or practice that puts a person with a disability at a substantial disadvantage, that provider has a duty to make reasonable adjustments in order to avoid causing the disadvantage.
- If a physical feature of the building that the service provider uses puts people with disabilities at a

disadvantage, the service provider must make reasonable adjustments to the building or make alternative arrangements to avoid causing the disadvantage.

- Extra equipment or a greater level of service – the service provider must provide these things so long as it is reasonable to do so. This is known as the duty to provide auxiliary aids and services.

Reasonable adjustments can take many different forms and there is no set list of what adjustments might be appropriate because every situation will be different. For many people, a few minor adjustments are all that is needed.

The duty is 'anticipatory' which means that service providers should not wait until a disabled person wants to use the service, but must think in advance (and on an on going basis) about what disabled people with a range of impairments may need.

Below are some common examples of adjustments that service providers would normally need to make in order to fulfil their duty to make reasonable adjustments.

### Altering provisions, criteria, and practices

- Service providers should be prepared to make exceptions to policies that prohibit eating and drinking in certain areas, so that people with diabetes can avoid and treat hypos more easily.
- Service providers should make exceptions to policies that ban dogs, in order to allow customers with assistance dogs to use the service.
- It would usually be reasonable to allow people with diabetes to take their medical equipment through security checks, for example at a nightclub or music venue.

### Altering buildings

- Service providers should make sure that their buildings are accessible to people who have impaired mobility as a result of complications of their diabetes. This may involve building access ramps. If this isn't practical there are other things service providers can do, for instance having a portable access ramp available. Service users should also ensure that people with impaired mobility can park their car close to the building.
- If it is impossible to make a building completely accessible it might be reasonable for a service provider to offer the service in an accessible part of the building, for instance by meeting a customer with a mobility impairment in a ground floor office, rather than the one upstairs.

## **Auxiliary aids and services**

- Making sure that staff are on hand to help customers with impaired eyesight find items in a shop would usually be a reasonable auxiliary service.

An essential part of meeting the duty is for service providers to make it clear to service users that they have made a reasonable adjustment. If the adjustment is not immediately apparent to disabled people, they may still think that they cannot use the service.

## **What is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim?**

A policy or practice is proportionate if it is necessary for achieving a legitimate aim, and if a court thinks that it is appropriate. Ultimately only a court can decide whether an aim is legitimate or whether a policy is a proportionate means of achieving the aim.

In general a legitimate aim is one that is relevant to a service provider's ability to carry out its functions. For a service provider, legitimate aims might include:

- maintaining the quality of the service on offer
- making sure that service users and employees are safe.

Cutting costs is not likely to be considered a legitimate reason for a discriminatory policy, unless there are other legitimate reasons for the policy.

A court is unlikely to think that a discriminatory policy or practice is proportionate if a service provider has not tried to make reasonable adjustments to the policy (see above).

## **What can you do if you think you have been discriminated against by a service provider?**

Before taking a claim for disability discrimination to court there is a pre-action protocol that should be followed. This section describes the actions you should take.

### **Informal discussion**

The first thing you can do is to explain to the service provider why you think you have not been treated fairly. Many cases of discrimination will simply be the result of a lack of thought on the part of members of staff, and service providers will often be willing to correct the problem by making reasonable adjustments once it has been pointed out.

## **Formal complaint**

If an informal discussion does not solve the problem you may wish to make a formal complaint using the organisations complaints procedure, if it has one, or by putting your complaint in writing.

### **Getting more information from the service provider**

Before you take a claim to court, you may wish to get more information from the service provider about the act of discrimination.

It is good practice for anyone who thinks that they may have experienced unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation under equality law to seek relevant information before issuing a formal claim.

Issues of discrimination can be complex and a written question and answer process can therefore be particularly helpful in preventing misunderstandings and establishing the facts of what has happened. It can help in trying to resolve concerns, allowing service providers to respond to questions and avoiding claims and disputes. The Government Equalities Office has produced a good practice guide on asking and responding to questions about discrimination in the provision of services and public functions:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/asking-and-responding-to-questions-of-discrimination-in-the-provision-of-goods-and-services-and-public-functions](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asking-and-responding-to-questions-of-discrimination-in-the-provision-of-goods-and-services-and-public-functions)

The questions and answers can form part of the evidence in a case brought under the Equality Act 2010 and the guidance makes it clear that the service provider should respond promptly and must not ignore the questions or take them lightly. Additionally, the service provider must not treat the service user badly for asking the questions, for example by refusing to provide them with a service. To do so could amount to victimisation under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

For help or advice on using the good practice guide to ask questions, you can contact the Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS). For contact details for the EASS see 'Sources of support and information' at the end of this pack.

### **Alternative dispute resolution and court action**

If these steps do not work you have two options. You can either try to address the problem through an alternative dispute resolution service (ADR), or you can take your discrimination claim to a court. ADR Services include services such as mediation or arbitration.

In some cases these services may have advantages over going to court. For details of organisations that can tell you more about ADR see Sources of support and information at the end of this pack.

If you decide to take your claim to a court you will need to get legal representation. In England and Wales your case will be dealt with by a County Court, and in Scotland by a Sheriff Court. There is a six-month time limit for bringing a claim in a court. The six months start from the act of discrimination, or if the discrimination happened over a period of time the six months start from the last act of discrimination. Taking a claim to court can be a long and potentially expensive process. So before you decide to take it to court, you need to consider the fact that should your claim be unsuccessful, you may be required to pay the other side's costs.

## Frequently asked questions

### **Are service providers allowed to use health and safety as a reason for discrimination?**

Service providers have a duty to take reasonable steps to make sure that their employees and people using the service are safe. Preventing unacceptable risks is a legitimate aim, so service providers can legitimately treat people with disabilities less favourably if this is the only reasonable way of preventing unacceptable risk. However, service providers must make sure that their actions are proportionate.

A court is unlikely to consider the actions of a service provider to be proportionate unless the service provider has tried to make reasonable adjustments to reduce the risk in ways that allow people with disabilities to use the service. Current guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission says that service providers should strike a balance between reducing risk and allowing people with disabilities to use the service.

Risk assessments must be based on good information. This means that service providers should not make assumptions about how your diabetes affects you, but should consult you about your individual circumstances before making a decision. In some cases it might be reasonable for the service provider to ask for a letter from your GP to explain any medical risks that might be associated with you using the service on offer. Some GP practices may charge a fee to write a letter. Service providers should not make decisions based on generalisations or stereotypes about people with diabetes.

### **Example 1**

A beautician refuses to offer electrolysis to people with diabetes because the beautician has heard that this might be dangerous for people with neuropathy. A customer with diabetes who does not have neuropathy wants electrolysis. Despite being told that the customer doesn't have neuropathy the beautician refuses to adjust the policy for this customer. The beautician has failed to make a reasonable adjustment and has acted on the basis of a generalisation so is unlikely to have acted proportionately.

### **Example 2**

It is the policy of a gym that members cannot use the machines if they have a serious medical condition. This is part of the gym's health and safety policy. Tom has diabetes and wants to use the machines so he asks the manager of the gym about this. The manager decides that it would be reasonable to let Tom use the machines if Tom's GP thinks that it would be safe for him to do so. Tom's GP writes to the manager explaining that it is safe for Tom to use the machines, so the manager allows Tom to use them. The manager has made a reasonable adjustment to the health and safety policy and has considered the facts of Tom's individual situation so has acted proportionately.

### **Are insurance providers allowed to treat people with diabetes differently?**

If an insurer has relevant information from a reliable source that there is a greater risk involved in insuring a person with a disability, the insurer can act in a way that is not usually allowed by the Equality Act.

People with diabetes are at greater risk of the medical complications of diabetes and this can create an insurance risk, so in some situations insurers can offer different policies, charge higher premiums, or refuse to offer policies to people with diabetes. Insurers must still act in a reasonable way even if they decide to offer different or more expensive policies to people with diabetes.

This means it is important for providers of insurance to rely on relevant information from a reliable source that it is reasonable for them to rely on when making decisions about offering insurance services to a disabled person.

Diabetes UK have produced an insurance leaflet which can be found here:

<https://shop.diabetes.org.uk/usr/downloads/InsuranceandDiabetes%20PDF.pdf>

### **Are service providers responsible for the actions of their employees?**

Service providers are normally responsible for the actions of their employees, so if an employee had discriminated against a person with a disability, that person could make a claim against the employee and the employer. Employers are not responsible for acts of discrimination by their employees if they have taken all reasonable steps to prevent that discrimination from happening.

### **Do public sector service providers have a duty to promote equality for people with disabilities?**

Public bodies and organisations that deliver services for them or carry out public functions on their behalf must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also have obligations under human rights law. Public sector service providers include services such as library or leisure facilities provided by a local authority. Public sector service providers may also have equality policies or codes of practice that go beyond their legal duties. These can also be used when making a complaint about discrimination.

The Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 requires these providers to promote equality of opportunity, prevent harassment and discrimination, promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities, and enable them to participate fully. The duty does not create rights for individuals, but it does create a set of general equality aims that these providers have to work towards.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is responsible for ensuring that public bodies and organisations carry out their duty. The EHRC has certain powers to require compliance and can take organisations to court if they do not comply with the duty.

## **Sources of support and information**

### **Diabetes UK Helpline**

The Helpline supports people to take action by providing information on rights and discussing possible action that can be taken.

**Telephone:** 0345 123 2399\*

**Opening hours:** Monday – Friday 9am–5pm

**Email:** [helpline@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:helpline@diabetes.org.uk)

**Web:** [www.diabetes.org.uk/How\\_we\\_help/Helpline/Your-rights](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/How_we_help/Helpline/Your-rights)

### **Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)**

The EHRC is the independent statutory body established to help eliminate discrimination, reduce inequality and protect human rights. It provides information and guidance on discrimination and human rights issues, and has produced a series of guides on your rights to equality. The EHRC does not take on case work unless it is a test case. The Government has replaced the EHRC Helpline with the Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS).

**Web:** [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

### **The Statutory Code of Practice for Services, Public Functions and Associations**

**Web:** [www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/services-public-functions-and-associations-statutory-code-practice](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/services-public-functions-and-associations-statutory-code-practice)

### **Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS)**

The EASS provides information, advice and support on discrimination and human rights issues to individuals in England, Scotland and Wales, recognising the constitutional, legal, social and policy differences.

**Freepost address:** FREEPOST EQUALITY ADVISORY SUPPORT SERVICE FPN4431.

**Advice Line: Telephone:** 0808 800 0082

**Textphone:** 0808 800 0084

**Opening hours:** Monday – Friday 9am–8pm and Saturday 10am–2pm

**Email:** Using online enquiry form at [www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/app/ask](http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/app/ask)

**Web:** [www.equalityadvisoryservice.com](http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com)

## Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland is an independent public body established to promote equality of opportunity and challenge discrimination. They provide free, confidential advice and assistance on discrimination and human rights issues.

**Address:** Equality House, 7–9 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast BT2 7DP.

**Enquiry line:** 028 90 500 600

**Web:** [www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org)

**Email:** [information@equalityni.org](mailto:information@equalityni.org)

## Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

The Citizens Advice Bureau offers free, confidential, impartial and independent advice. Advisers can help fill out forms, write letters and negotiate with third parties. Some bureaux are able to represent clients at tribunal. The number of your local CAB will be in the phone book or you can also find your local CAB on their website.

**Web:** [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk) (online advice)

## Citizens Advice Bureau Consumer Helpline

The CAB also has a consumer helpline (formally known as Consumer Direct), which is available in England, Wales and Scotland. The Helpline can give practical and impartial advice on how to resolve your consumer problem, tell you the law that applies to your situation, and pass information about complaints onto Trading Standards. The helpline cannot make a complaint for you or take legal action on your behalf.

**Telephone:** 0345 600 9527

**Opening hours:** Monday – Friday 9am–5pm

## Consumerline (Northern Ireland)

Offers free help and advice to Northern Ireland consumers. Consumerline helps you avoid scams, dodgy deals, make a complaint and stay informed with consumer law.

**Telephone:** 0300 123 6262

**Opening hours:** Monday – Friday 9am–4pm

**Web:** [www.nidirect.gov.uk/consumerline](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/consumerline)

**Email:** [consumerline@economy-ni.gov.uk](mailto:consumerline@economy-ni.gov.uk)

## Civil Legal Advice (CLA)

In England and Wales the CLA can provide legal advice if you are eligible for legal aid. You can find out more about legal aid and whether you might be entitled to financial help with your case.

**Telephone:** 0345 345 4345

**Minicom:** 0345 609 6677

**Opening hours:** Monday – Friday 9am–8pm, Saturday 9am–12.30pm

**Web:** [www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice](http://www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice)

## Law Centres Federation

The Law Centres Federation is the national co-ordinating organisation for a network of community-based law centres covering England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Law centres provide free and independent specialist legal advice and representation to people who live or work in their catchment areas. The Federation are unable to give advice directly to the public but their site will help you find law centres near you for free advice and representation.

**Telephone:** 020 3637 1330

**Web:** [www.lawcentres.org.uk](http://www.lawcentres.org.uk)

**Email:** Using online enquiry form at [www.lawcentres.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.lawcentres.org.uk/contact-us)

## Scottish Association of Law Centres

The Scottish Association of Law Centres is the national body for a network of community based law centres covering Scotland only. They are unable to give advice directly to the public but their site will help you find law centres near you for free advice and representation.

**Address:** SALC Secretary, Renfrewshire Law Centre, 65–71 George Street, Paisley PA1 2JY.

**Telephone:** 0141 561 7266

**Web:** [www.govanlc.com/salc](http://www.govanlc.com/salc)

## The Law Society

To find a solicitor who specialises in certain areas of law you can look up the 'Find a Solicitor' section on the Law Society's website.

**England and Wales:** [www.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk)

**Scotland:** [www.lawscot.org.uk](http://www.lawscot.org.uk)

**Northern Ireland:** [www.lawsoc-ni.org](http://www.lawsoc-ni.org)

## Disability Law Service (DLS)

The Disability Law Service provides specialist legal advice and information to disabled people, their family and carers. It offers advice and information on cases involving further and higher education.

**Address:** Disability Law Service, The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London SE11 5RR.

**Telephone:** 020 7791 9800 Monday – Friday, 10am–1pm and 2pm–5pm

**Web:** [www.dls.org.uk](http://www.dls.org.uk)

## Disability Information and Advice Helpline (Scope about Disability)

Scope's disability helpline can provide details of local Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) which can give help and advice.

**Telephone:** 0808 800 3333

**Opening hours:** Monday – Friday, 9am–5pm

**Web:** [www.scope.org.uk/dial](http://www.scope.org.uk/dial)

### Services directory for finding local services:

[www.scope.org.uk/Support/services-directory?Type%20of%20service=information](http://www.scope.org.uk/Support/services-directory?Type%20of%20service=information)

**Email:** [response@scope.org.uk](mailto:response@scope.org.uk)

## The Government Equalities Office

The Government Equalities Office (GEO) publishes information about current government equalities policy, including current equalities regulations. GEO does not provide advice.

**Telephone:** 0370 000 2288

**Opening hours:** Monday to Friday (Department for Culture, Media and Sport)

**Web:** [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/government-equalities-office](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/government-equalities-office)

**Email:** [form.education.gov.uk/fillform.php?self=1&form\\_id=cCCNJ1xSfBE&noLoginPrompt=1](http://form.education.gov.uk/fillform.php?self=1&form_id=cCCNJ1xSfBE&noLoginPrompt=1)

## Advice Services Alliance

Advice Services Alliance has produced 2 guides on alternative dispute resolution. Their website is no longer running, but these guides can be accessed at

**Web:** <http://asauk.org.uk/archive/alternative-dispute-resolution>

## The Equality Act 2010

The full text of the Act is available to view and download from [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

**Please note that the inclusion of named agencies does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by Diabetes UK. Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, Diabetes UK cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions.**

**This information should not be considered a complete guide to the law, which also changes from time to time. It is provided for informative purposes and should not be treated as professional advice. Legal advice should always be taken if in doubt. Diabetes UK is unable to give legal advice.**

## About Diabetes UK

Diabetes UK is the leading UK charity that cares for, connects with and campaigns on behalf of all people affected by and at risk of diabetes. Diabetes UK is the charity for people with diabetes, their family, friends and carers.

Our advocacy service helps people to access information, understand their options and know their rights and entitlements about all aspects of living with diabetes. As well as providing advocacy for people with diabetes, the service is also available to friends, family and carers and prioritises those most vulnerable.

## Useful contacts

**Advocacy Service:** 0345 123 2399\*  
[advocacy@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@diabetes.org.uk)

**Diabetes UK website:** [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

**Diabetes UK Helpline is here to help. For support on any aspect of diabetes please call 0345 123 2399\*, Monday – Friday, 9am–6pm. Email [helpline@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:helpline@diabetes.org.uk)**

\*The cost of calling 0345 numbers is always the same as calling a local or national landline number.