



Imperial College Healthcare
NHS Trust



Toolkit:

Being an ally

Equality
Diversity
Inclusion

In this toolkit

This toolkit aims to explain what an ally is and how you can be one.

There are also some suggestions on how to be an ally to particular groups.



If you have any questions, please contact the equality, diversity and inclusion Team at imperial.inclusion@nhs.net

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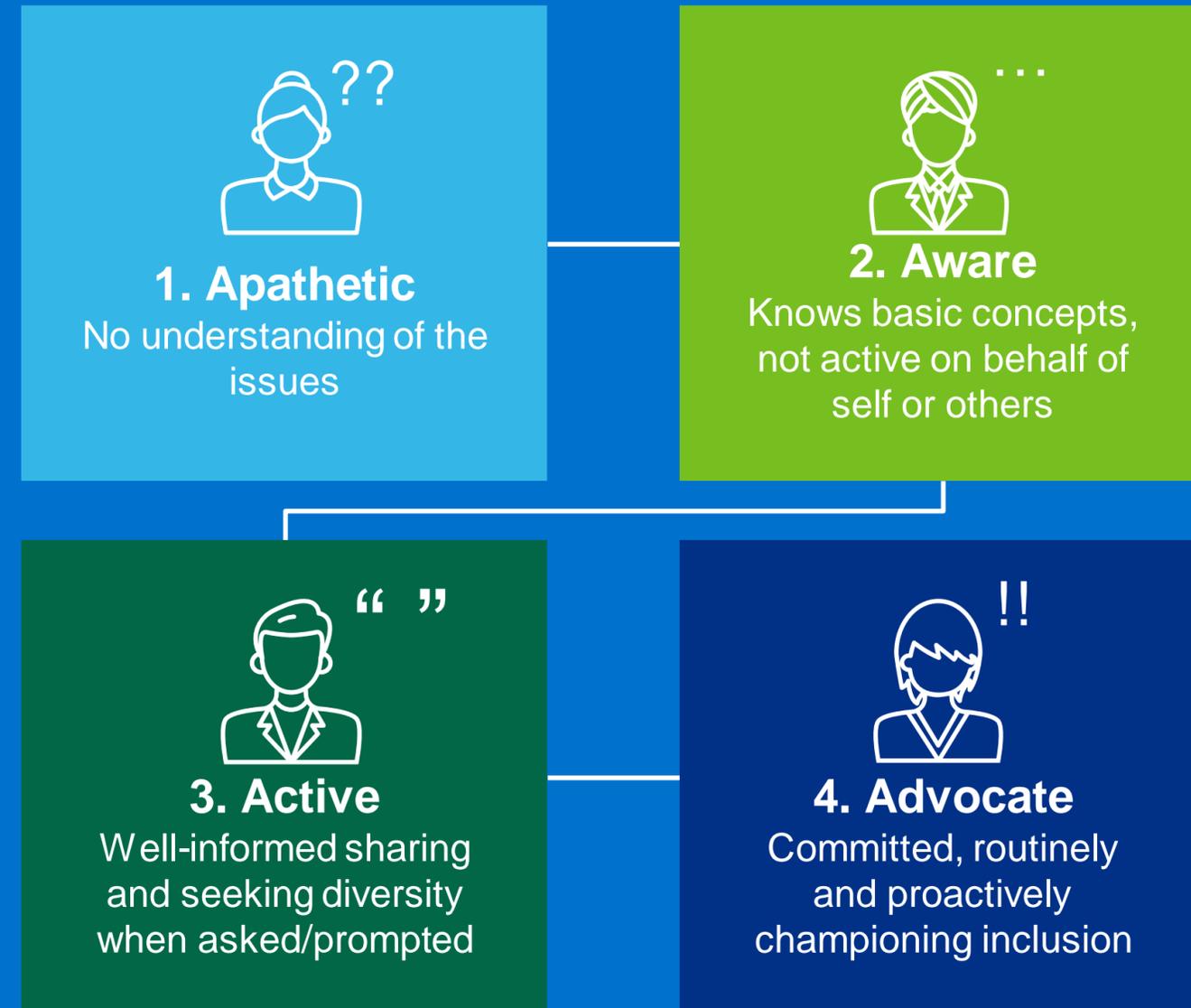
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Activity: Where do you lie on the ally continuum?

If you have never heard of allyship and the ally continuum, that is ok! This toolkit has been devised to help you understand what allyship is, and how you can become a great ally for your colleagues at the Trust.

Take a look at the continuum on the right-hand side and make a note of where you lie.

As you read the toolkit, you will learn more about the topic, and perhaps (hopefully!) be ready and able to progress a little further along the continuum.



What is an ally?

An ally is someone who champions underrepresented groups whilst not being a member of the group that they are defending.

For example, a white lesbian woman might stand up for Black colleagues. The white lesbian woman is using her membership of the white racial group to advocate for people from marginalised racial groups.

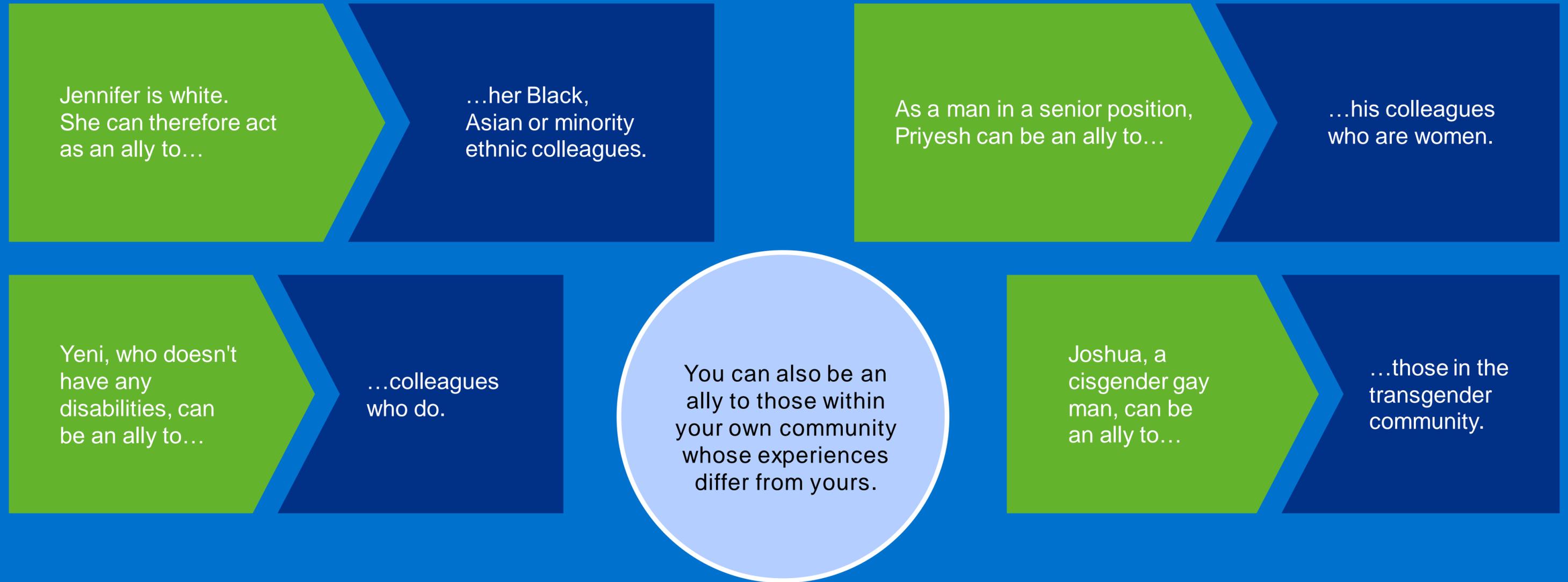
There's no set way to be an ally, but this toolkit will give you some ideas of how to become an effective ally.



You can be an ally to all groups, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues, women, the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities. By being an ally, you bring your backing and voice to the movement towards equality for all.

What is an ally?

Examples



Five tips for being an ally



Watch '5 tips for being an ally' by Franchesca 'Chescaleigh' Ramsey for more information.

 **Click on the play button to watch the video**



How can I be an ally?

Yvonne Coghill CBE has devised the **8As of authentic allyship**. The focus here is on race, but the approach can be applied to all marginalised groups.

Appreciate

To be an effective ally, you must first fully appreciate and value the benefits diversity and difference can bring, then genuinely and demonstrably work towards making the workplace more equitable and fair.

Appetite

Do you have the appetite to immerse yourself in the complex, emotive world of race equality?

Ask

Ask questions about race, be curious, read, learn and educate yourself.

Accept

Accept there is a problem; more data isn't needed.

Acknowledge

Openly acknowledge that the problem needs to be dealt with.

Apologise

Express sympathy that racism is affecting people of certain races.

Assume

Don't. Instead, develop informed views by seeking to understand individuals.

Action

Take demonstrable steps to establish equality and be accountable.

How can I be an ally?

Be quick to listen, slow to speak...

One of the most important aspects of allyship is listening to the lived experiences of members of the group to whom you're an ally. Don't speak over them or diminish their experiences. By listening, you will gain an understanding of the issues and struggles they are facing.



How can I be an ally?



Do

Attend staff network meetings and events, and listen to what is being discussed.

Actively listen to your colleagues, should they choose to share their experiences.

Believe others' experiences. Don't assume something couldn't happen just because you haven't personally experienced it.



Don't

Centre yourself in the conversation.

Ask people intrusive questions about their experiences or expect them to share.

Tell your colleagues how they should feel about matters relating to the group.

How can I be an ally?

Example:

Liam is in a team meeting. His colleague, Nadia, keeps trying to contribute but the others in the meeting are talking over her. Because Liam realises people have previously been listening to him in the meeting, he catches everyone's attention and says, "I believe Nadia has a point to make."



Afterwards, Liam suggests to the Chair that guidelines are implemented in these meetings to ensure everyone who wishes to speak can have the opportunity, rather than it being whoever shouts the loudest.

What is an active bystander?

Bystander

A bystander is someone who has witnessed something negative happen.

Passive bystanders

Passive bystanders are those people who choose, for whatever reason, to ignore the situation, or to do nothing about it.

Active bystanders

Active bystanders are people who do something to try and improve the situation.

Being an **active bystander** means being aware of when someone's behaviour is inappropriate or threatening and choosing to challenge it. If you do not feel comfortable doing this directly, then you can get someone else to help you (a senior manager, line manager or even another colleague or friend).

How can I be an ally?

Our active bystander training aims to empower staff across the Trust to challenge poor behaviours by reinforcing messages that define the boundaries of unacceptable behaviour.

Dates and times for sessions can be found on the intranet by following the link.



 Click this link to learn more: [“Business in the Community – racism and inappropriate behaviours - 5 actions for allies”](#)

How can I be an ally?

Learn about what's going on...

Don't rely on your colleagues to share all of their experiences with you (as this can also be a burden on them, because repeating it can mean reliving what could have been traumatic experiences).



Be proactive

Seek out resources and information (such as books or documentaries), so that you can be informed on the issues that are important to the communities you want to support.



Find resources and more at Imperial College London's [White ally](#) page

How can I be an ally?



Activity

Complete the five minute LEARN module on Managing your unconscious biases.



Click here to
access via
[LEARN](#)

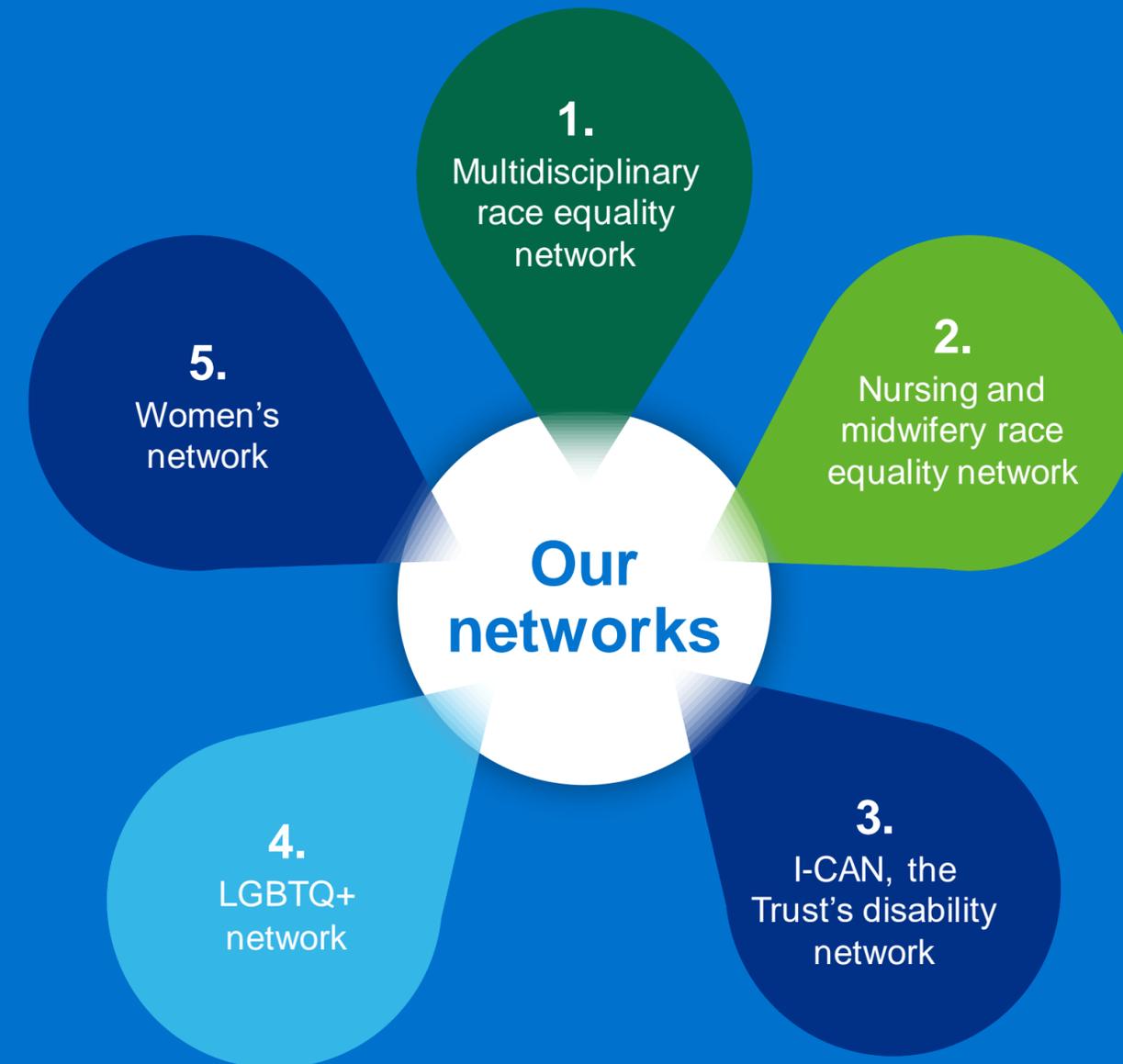
...and learn from your mistakes

Everyone has some degree of unconscious bias, and nobody's perfect – you may make mistakes as an ally. It's important to take responsibility if you inadvertently cause harm, and to examine what happened so that it doesn't happen again.

How can I be an ally?

Our staff networks welcome allies to join, so consider becoming a member if you'd like to learn more about allyship.

Our networks include the following:



How can I be an ally to...

The next slides are to illustrate how you can be an ally to specific groups of people.

Some of these tips may also apply to all groups.



If you have any ideas for further slides or if you feel a group is missing, please get in touch with us by emailing imperial.inclusion@nhs.net



How can I be an ally to... those in the Black, Asian and minority ethnic community?

Avoid microaggressions

Microaggressions are often less obvious and more unintentional than overt acts of racism, but have the cumulative effect of creating an environment that is more challenging and draining. For more details on what microaggressions are and how to avoid them, please see our toolkit on microaggressions.

Talk to others – both allies and those with different views

Talk with other allies about how you can pool your efforts and help, but also be prepared to have difficult conversations with friends or families who have different views and ask them to rethink.

Call out racism

Our Black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues have been disproportionately exposed to acts of racism both small and large, intentional and unintentional. Calling these acts out as an ally will assist in preventing inadvertent acts and make intentional acts even less acceptable.

How can I be an ally to... LGBTQ+ people?

LGBTQ+ stands for

- L** lesbian
- G** gay
- B** bisexual
- T** transgender
- Q** queer (or questioning)
- +** The plus symbol represents other identities that may not fully identify with any of these phrases.

Confidentiality and "outing"

If someone comes out to you as being part of the LGBTQ+ community, don't share this information with other people without consent. Do not assume that because they have told you, they have told everybody.

Be aware of your language

Not everyone is straight, cisgender or both. Instead of saying "ladies and gentlemen", consider saying "everybody"; instead of asking about someone's husband/wife, ask about their partner.

How can I be an ally to... trans people?

There are some ways you can be an ally to trans or nonbinary people specifically.

Respect their name and pronouns

If you're not sure what pronouns to use for someone, ask – but consider sharing your own pronouns too. If you make a mistake, you should apologise, correct yourself and move on. Don't ask trans people what their "real" name is – the name you should use is the name they have asked you to use.

Avoid making assumptions

You do not have to look a particular way to be a particular gender. Don't make assumptions about someone's gender because of the way they dress, talk or act.

Misgendering

Using the wrong name and pronouns for a trans person may happen by accident, but repeated and deliberate misgendering is a form of transphobia. If you witness this, stop the individual and ask them to use the correct name and pronouns.



Not sure what any of these terms mean? See our [resources page](#) on the Intranet for a glossary of LGBTQ+ terms.

How can I be an ally to... disabled people?

Understand hidden disabilities

It's not always immediately obvious that someone has a disability – just because someone doesn't use a cane doesn't mean they're not visually impaired, and some people may require mobility aids on some days and not on others.

Respect their bodily autonomy

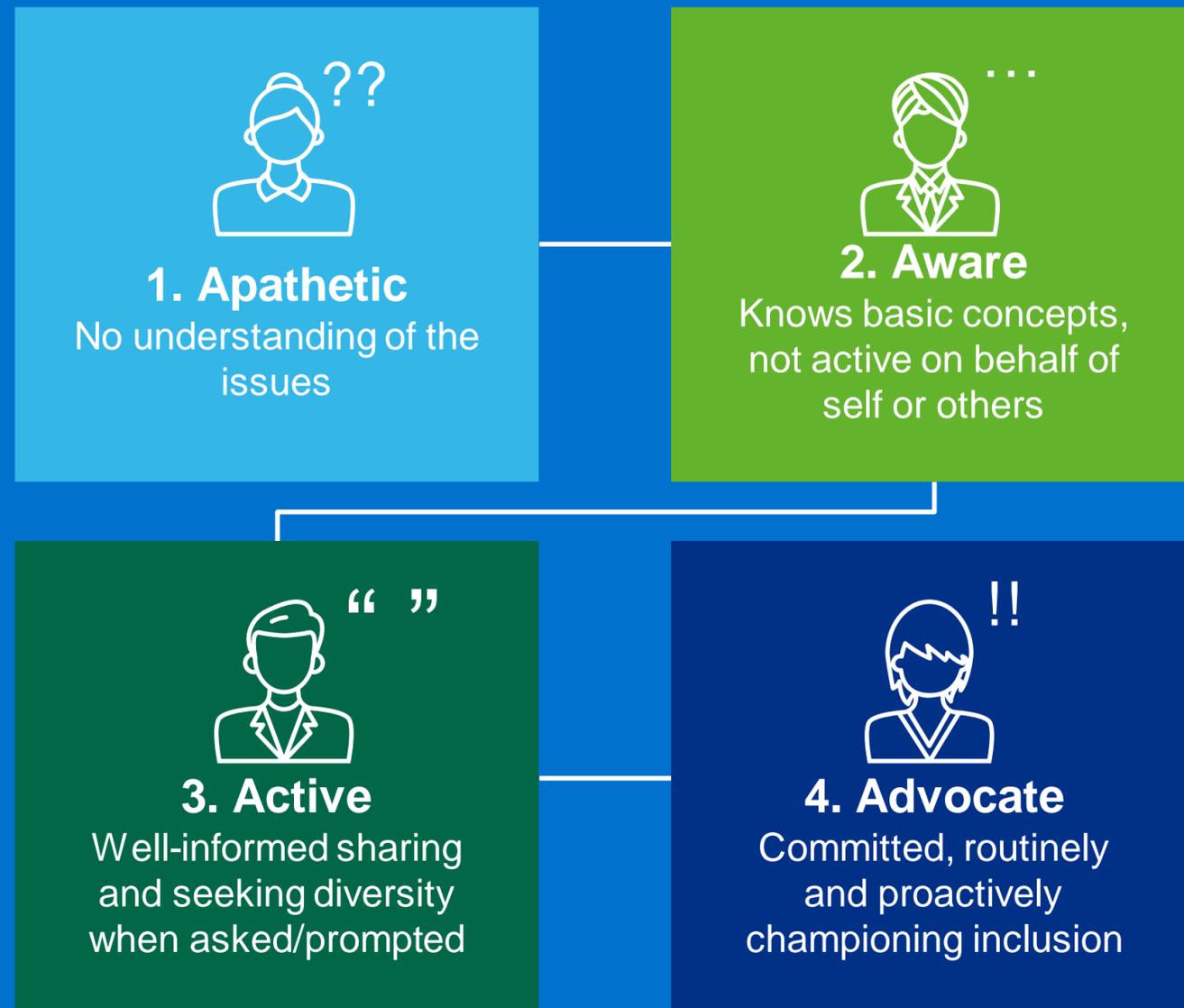
People who use wheelchairs may see it as an extension of their body. Just as you wouldn't touch someone's hair without asking, don't attempt to interact with someone's mobility aid or wheelchair without permission.

Avoid patronising behaviour

Before you congratulate a disabled person on something, think – would you do the same for a colleague without a disability? What is the reason you are congratulating them? A colleague may be an inspiration for the work they do – but not just for coming to work.

Moving up the ally continuum from awareness to advocate

So where do you now feel you are on the allyship continuum? Are you apathetic, aware, active, or an advocate?



Watch 'How diversity and inclusion will drive workplaces' by Jennifer Brown for more information.

Click on the play button to watch the video



Allyship in summary



Check out our resources section for further reading:



[Click on the link button to access the link](#)

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