

MSP says disability does not mean inability

Jeremy Balfour, Scottish Conservative MSP addressed the Scottish Parliament recently to outline his ongoing concern for the continuing lack of employment opportunities for disabled people and the shockingly wide gap between 42% of disabled people in employment versus the overall figures of 73.4%.

The statistics are even worse if you have a learning disability. According to research undertaken by the Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities, the employment rate for people with a learning disability sits between 7-25%.



Jeremy Balfour
– Conservative
– Lothian

Photo – Andrew
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Parliament

Jeremy said : “I want to highlight the persistent lack of employment opportunities for people with a learning disability as part of Down’s Syndrome Awareness Week. I welcome Down’s Syndrome Scotland’s aim to encourage employers to see a person’s abilities rather than an inability.”

In his speech to Parliament, Jeremy went on to say : “Young

disabled people are often presented with few options on leaving school. Many are directed to day centres or courses at further education colleges. I have grave concerns that many colleges see disabled people as a cash cow, placing them on a conveyor belt of courses, with little regard for the individual's long term prospects."

Even with a college qualification under their belt, many disabled people still find it hard to find their place in the workforce.

Jeremy commented : "I have met with a number of employers who tell me that there is still a fear amongst many employees to disclose that they have a disability. Employers tell me that disabled people are not applying for jobs whilst many disabled people tell me they have given up trying to find employment after repeated attempts to seek employment have proved unsuccessful.

"Disabilities are diverse, but this diversity is not an excuse to ignore disability in employment. Disability does not mean inability. Disabled people have much to offer."