



MY EPILEPSY STORY - MARIA'S ACCESS-ABILITY EXPERIENCE



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Late last year, the Motor Accident Insurance Commission hosted jobseeker, Maria Rawson (pictured), for a day as part of the AccessAbility initiative, which connects people with disability and employers, so they can experience what each other has to offer.

Maria, who has epilepsy, explained that she was interested in connecting with Treasury because she wanted to play her part in helping the community.

“I really enjoy working with people in the community, particularly those in need. So, having the opportunity to come in to Treasury was great, and everyone was really friendly and inclusive,” she explained.

“My epilepsy doesn't affect my intelligence or my ability to work. However, I do worry about how others are affected when I have a seizure, as it tends to upset other people more than me.

“There's still a lot of stigma associated with disability in the workforce. Employers are fearful about health and safety issues, how much time off work I'll need, whether I'll need modifications in the workplace and whether my colleagues will accept me.

“I put it down to fear of the unknown.

“My seizures can happen at any time, any day, so I get on with living my life; I keep going.”

Claims Specialist Krystal Grace was Maria's mentor for the day.

“We put our hand up for the AccessAbility initiative because, as a team, we felt it was something we could do to contribute to and encourage diversity in Treasury and MAIC,” she explained.

“Meeting Maria highlighted that recruitment and ‘team fit’ should be about the person, their experience, qualifications and skills, not their disability.

“There are steps we can all take – as managers or co-workers – to ensure that Treasury is accessible and inclusive to people with disability. The first being to educate ourselves.

“I would encourage as many teams as possible to participate in the AccessAbility initiative.

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The Queensland Government is committed to increasing employment opportunities for Queenslanders with disability and has set a foundational target that people with disability will make up at least eight percent of the Queensland Public Sector workforce by 2022.

International Day of People with Disability

Every year on 3 December, people around the world come together to celebrate the understanding and acceptance in the community.

Now is the time to break down barriers and build awareness and understanding of the people with disability. Learn more and build your confidence in your interactions with people with disability by completing Treasury's Disability Awareness eLearning.

The commission is part of Queensland Treasury, and Treasury shared Maria's story with its employees through their online newsletter.