Supplementary Table 1: COVID related opportunities/challenges for neurodivergent employees.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Reference, Country, Document type** | **Theme (sub-theme)** | **Description of COVID related opportunity and/or challenge for neurodivergent persons in the workplace.** |
| (62) AustraliaNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - access to Employee Resource Groups ERGs) | An ERG can support the mental health of employees. |
| (61) AustraliaNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - access to ERGs) | ERGs endeavour to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. |
| (48) AustraliaNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working) | COVID requirements to social distance have shown that remote working can be conducted in the field of pharmacy with small or no ill effects to operations. |
| (65) EnglandNews article | Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | Recognising that remote working will be far more prevalent post-COVID, only 13 percent of businesses have hybrid working management teams in place. |
| (56) United StatesNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - acceptance) | The Ultranauts organisation continued to expand its revenue (up 50 percent) during the pandemic with autistic persons in the leadership team. |
| (51) AustraliaNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - access) | Due to COVID, hundreds of healthcare workers attended virtual sessions of the 2020 Pharmaceutical Care Manufacturer’s Association annual meeting. |
| (53) United StatesNews article | Challenge (diversity and inclusion - acceptance) | The U.S. Mental Health Index for workers reports that risk of depression for men is up by 69 percent and general anxiety by 55 percent. |
| (37) AustraliaNews article | Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | Some employees might experience micromanagement when working from home. |
| (38) EnglandNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - access)Opportunity (accommodating - recruitment)Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - access to ERGs)Challenge (accommodating - remote working)Challenge (diversity and inclusion - empathy) | UK broadcaster suggests that virtual events promote greater inclusion.Video interviews will help to mute biases with less focus placed on first impressions.ERGs can assist understanding of the needs of diverse communities.Some neurodivergent employees can find video conferencing to be challenging.COVID imposed costs risk seeing diversity and inclusion dropping down or being removed from company agendas. |
| (45) United StatesNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - advancement)Opportunity (accommodating - retainment)Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | COVID highlights employers’ accommodation responsibilities for neurodivergent employees (e.g., PTSD, depression, anxiety, autism). These accommodations can help to prevent legal action while boosting productivity and morale. Opportunities for employers to discuss with neurodivergent staff about their individual needs. Working at home can be distracting for some neurodivergent employees. Neurodivergent staff might require accommodations (e.g., to address chaotic Zoom meetings) when working remotely, and particularly if they are working in this mode on a permanent basis. |
| (31) AustraliaNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - self empathy)Challenge (diversity and inclusion - retainment) | Organisation supports diversity and inclusion through creating an inclusive culture where people can be their true selves.For employees with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), the workplace might be more frightening than normal due to the uncertainty that is generated by COVID. |
| (66) AustraliaNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - access to ERGs) | An organisation’s Employee Assistance and Wellness Works Programs are providing physical as well as behavioural health supports.  |
| (67) IndiaNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working) | COVID has shown that talent can be employed from remote settings.  |
| (39) United StatesNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - access)Challenge (accommodating - access)Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | Opportunities exist to keep online access available as an option to face-to-face contacts.For many persons, COVID has helped work and social activities to be more accessible.Academic conferences are now online (for the moment). Persons with disabilities are uncertain as to whether remote working accommodations will continue. |
| (6) EnglandJournal article | Opportunities (accommodating - retainment)Opportunities (diversity and inclusion -empathy) | For some neurodivergent persons (e.g., ADHD), their challenges were removed or reduced as a result of COVID based environmental adjustments. The pandemic lockdown has promoted awareness of issues involving a world that is not designed for inclusion. |
| (57) CanadaNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - acceptance) | It is important for good leaders in today’s world to view diversity in its many forms.  |
| (16) United StatesJournal article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working) | Allow communication options (e.g., allow people who might be uncomfortable with real time interactions to make contributions in advance). All meetings to include a remote access option.  |
| (68) CanadaNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - empathy) | A workshop is educating employers about developing empathy and how COVID impacts upon employees with disabilities.  |
| (40) EnglandNews article  | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - empathy)Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | The COVID lockdown is giving many neurotypical persons a taste of feeling uncomfortable. Some neurodivergent persons might struggle to adapt to COVID lockdown while others embrace social distancing.  |
| (32) EnglandNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - ERGs) | COVID has encouraged workplace inclusion initiatives in areas such as neurodivergence to support individual difference. |
| (63) EnglandNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - ERGs) | A senior employee describes their office as having diversity groups including one for neurodivergence.  |
| (60) IndiaNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - ERGs) | With COVID promoting a need for responsive systems, organisations should create settings that are supportive of conversations about neurodivergence. |
| (54) EnglandNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - acceptance) | Despite training being closed due to COVID, MetLife proceeded to promote diversity via recruitment and retention strategies.  |
| (43) United StatesNews article  | Opportunity (accommodating - retainment)Challenge (accommodating - retainment)Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | COVID has redressed the formal excuses for refusing to provide flexible and inclusive workplaces.There is a risk of accommodations being removed post-COVID.People with autism, attention deficit disorder and sensory processing challenges can experience fatigue from Zoom sessions.  |
| (58) United StatesNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - empathy) | Communication with staff about the adjustments that can assist them during COVID might encourage empathy more generally. |
| (69) EnglandNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working) | Autistic workers have *not* expressed that they are worse off than their neurotypical colleagues in terms of working from home. |
| (59) United StatesNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - empathy) | There is overlap reported between the anxiety that autistic persons can feel in public environments and the anxiety that everyone is feeling in these same locations due to COVID. |
| (70) United StatesNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - empathy) | Many employees with an intellectual disability are as impacted by COVID modifications as neurotypical workers are. |
| (49) United StatesNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working) | COVID has supported digital work to reach a high standard. |
| (41) EnglandJournal article (preprint) | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working)Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | Working from home has released a neurodivergent employee from the social expectations that exist in the physical office.An autistic academic found remote meetings with many participants to be especially challenging.  |
| (44) EnglandJournal article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working)Challenge (accommodating - remote working)Opportunity (accommodating - access) | Following the prevalence of virtual interactions, some autistic persons might appreciate a break from the challenges experienced when socialising.Closures of workplaces will likely disrupt routines and negatively affect the mental wellbeing of many autistic persons.Virtual interactions mean that some autistic persons might enjoy a break from socialising. |
| (71) EnglandGuide | Challenge (accommodating - retainment) | Employees’ concerns (including neurodivergence-related challenges) are of a personal nature.  |
| (20, 27, 55) United States; Australia; EnglandJournal articles | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - acceptance) | Following COVID-related uncertainty, there is a timely opportunity to set new benchmarks for inclusion and global justice in the workplace.  |
| (72) CanadaGuide (Workbook) | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working) | Movement of a theatre production online has been inclusive of a neurodivergent performer who primarily communicates through song.  |
| (52) AustraliaReport | Opportunity (accommodating - retainment) | In light of the pandemic (and supporting access to accommodations) some employees with disabilities need to disclose to their employers. |
| (42) BelgiumNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working)Challenge (accommodating -remote working) | Consider allowing neurodivergent employees who are anxious about any part of returning to the workplace to continue working from home where practical.Maintaining mental wellness while working from home long-term due to COVID (while affecting everyone) might be particularly challenging for neurodivergent employees. |
| (50) EnglandGuide | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working) Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - acceptance) | Workplaces might need to think about increased work from home settings, particularly should these arrangements boost productivity and lower mental strain. The management of employees should be built around their neuro-types so as to improve efficiency, inclusiveness and wellbeing. |
| (26) United StatesNews article  | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working)Challenge (accommodating - remote working)Challenge (diversity and inclusion - acceptance) | COVID has normalised working from home and some neurodivergent persons have benefited from this - many autistic persons are hypersensitive to pressure and frequently find mask wearing to be challenging.Autistic persons not desiring social contact is a myth. Physical distancing is a setback for persons who have made efforts to create social connections in the workplace.During COVID and the associated economic disruption, autistic persons are frequently the first released and the last to be employed.  |
| (2) EnglandNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working)Opportunity (accommodating - (advancement)Opportunity (accommodating - recruitment)Opportunity (accommodating - advancement) | COVID is changing social perspectives with working from home quickly becoming the “new normal”. People are becoming more welcoming of differing communication desires.The success of online interviews means that this option might become more commonplace. Opportunities for people (who were usually off the chain of command radar) who prefer online communications. |
| (28) AustraliaNews article | Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - empathy)Challenge (diversity and inclusion - empathy)Challenge (accommodating - remote working)Challenge (diversity and inclusion - acceptance)Challenge (accommodating - retainment) | Neurodivergent people have established strategies that are helpful in challenging times and these might be shared with others who are having their first experience with anxiety or depression.While COVID has improved views about mental health, a concern exists that this might change post-pandemic. Also, empathy should not hinge upon this big issue that concerns us all.Autistic people can overwork when working from home (e.g., missing meals and breaks).Fears of redundancy can stop people from honestly talking about their depression with colleagues.It is suggested that daily email updates about the virus from an employer were unhelpful for a neurodivergent employee. |
| (1) England News article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working)Opportunity (accommodating - remote workingOpportunity (accommodating -access)Challenge (accommodating - retainment)Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | Auticon has supported social connections through virtual events and newsletter emails. Remote working success at Passio supports its continuation into the immediate future.Access to social contacts can be maintained through virtual social events.The receipt of accommodations for neurodivergent employees can be drawn out and some adjustments that are reasonable are rejected.Autistic employees can feel the negative impacts from a loss of social contact.  |
| (46) EnglandNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working)Opportunity (accommodating - retainment)Challenge (accommodating - remote working)Opportunity (accommodating - retainment) | Neurodivergent staff are frequently more productive without commuting, workplace sensory overloads, and social contacts that are not essential. Open communication is needed with neurodivergent employees in designing their supports otherwise these ‘supports’ might end up being harmful.The challenges of sensory overload for neurodivergent persons coming back to the office should not be undervalued (e.g., a hastened return could worsen OCD symptoms and rituals).Resist the requirement to return to open plan offices. |
| (4) EnglandGuide | Opportunity (accommodating - retainment)Opportunity (accommodating - remote working)Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | Supervisors should talk to neurodivergent staff about their challenges as this can help with providing appropriate assistance.Remote work practices might mean less tension for neurodivergent persons from sensory overload. Video calls can become especially challenging for neurodivergent employees with many participants wanting to talk at once. Neurodivergent employees can find it particularly difficult when they lose access to their accepted routines. For neurodivergent employees with pre-COVID accommodations, it is appropriate to see whether these are still helpful in different settings (e.g., working at home). |
| (47) AustraliaNews article | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working)Opportunity (accommodating - advancement)Opportunity (diversity and inclusion - self empathy) | Neurodivergent employees can prefer Zoom interactions.Text-based communication will gain importance and some neurodivergent employees will have attributes that, all of a sudden, are desirable.The “new normal” might let employees be their true selves. |
| (33) United StatesGuide | Opportunity (accommodating -remote working) | Workplace designs need to be widely accessible and be able to blend remote and traditional environments.  |
| (73) AustraliaGuide | Opportunity (accommodating - remote working) | Autistic staff can be involved with online social events and schedule in down time for restful activities (e.g., walks, meditation). |
| (36) United StatesNews article | Challenge (accommodating - remote working)Opportunity (accommodating - remote working) | The world is undertaking an enormous, unexpected experiment involving working from home.COVID means that some will be hyperaware about being in close physical distance of their colleagues. |
| (12) United StatesNews article  | Challenge (accommodating - remote working) | Stay at home requirements can be particularly challenging for neurodivergent employees who often flourish with routines in place. |

Supplementary Table 2: Coding rules

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Theme – subthemes | Coding rule |
| Challenge* accommodating
* diversity and inclusion
 | Text describes COVID-related factor(s) that challenge the accommodation and/or inclusion of neurodivergent employees.Text describes challenges surrounding pandemic inspired accommodations involving remote working, employee recruitment, retainment and advancement, and/or accessibility.Text describes pandemic-related challenges as related to the greater inclusion of neurodivergent persons in the workplace across areas of acceptance, empathy, and/or ERGs. |
| Opportunity* accommodating
* diversity and inclusion
 | Text describes a COVID-related factor(s) that support the accommodation and/or inclusion of neurodivergent employees.Text describes opportunities surrounding pandemic inspired accommodations involving remote working, employee recruitment, retainment and advancement, and/or accessibility.Text describes pandemic-related opportunities as related to the greater inclusion of neurodivergent persons in the workplace across areas of acceptance, empathy, and/or ERGs. |