neuro spectrum

Support after diagnosis:

Neurodivergence and a protected disability

A diagnosis of a neurodivergent condition meets the legal definition of disability.

You may not consider yourself or your child to be disabled but it is important to consider the following before telling any teachers or employers that you are not disabled.

Neurodivergence is considered a disability because living as a neurodivergent person in a neurotypical world can be disabling.

The Equality Act 2010 states that 'a disability can arise from a wide range of impairments which can be… developmental such as autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), dyslexia and dyspraxia'.

Under this act, a 'disability' must:

- Be long term (neurodivergent conditions are lifelong)

- Have a 'substantial effect' (this is down to the individual, but there are usually multiple areas of difficulty as well as the cumulative effect)

- Affect 'day to day activities' (this includes working, transport etc).

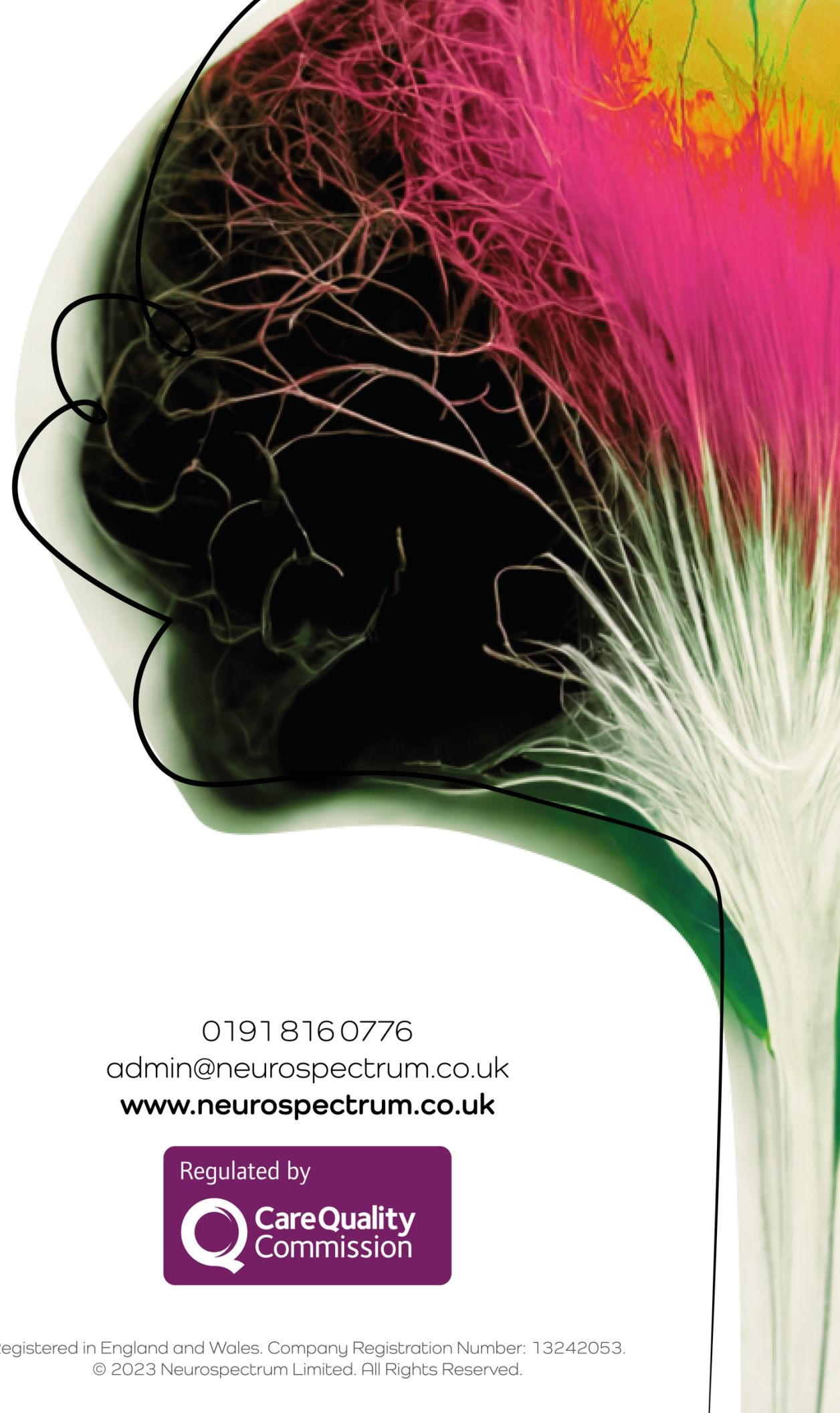
A diagnosis of a disabling condition means that schools and employers have legal obligations to support you with your areas of difficulty. In declaring you are not disabled; you are absolving them of these responsibilities to give you the adjustments and support you may well need.

For many adults who receive a late diagnosis, it can feel hugely difficult to acknowledge how hard things have been after a lifetime of pretending that things are fine and desperately trying to prove we are managing.

Therefore, identifying and communicating the areas that we struggle with can be a difficult process. We can often feel very vulnerable and even a bit ashamed when first learning to advocate for ourselves and considering what we need to help us function well and be happy**.**

Asking for allowances or adaptations isn't about 'making an excuse': it's about levelling the playing field and getting what we need.

Hopefully your experience at Neurospectrum will help you feel empowered and enabled to communicate your needs and get the support you and your family deserve.



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