

Our current disability employment services

Part A: Current services available to support disabled people who have the most complex issues to finding, entering or staying in employment and **which are included in this consultation:**

Job Introduction Scheme

The Job Introduction Scheme can pay a wage subsidy of £75 per week to an employer for the first six or thirteen weeks that they employ a disabled person.

To qualify under the Job Introduction Scheme rules, the job can be full or part-time, but must be expected to last for at least six months. Disability Employment Advisers decide on eligibility for the Job Introduction Scheme and manage the scheme.

In 2006/07 around half a million pounds was spent on the Job Introduction Scheme to support around 750 disabled people during their first six or thirteen weeks of employment.¹⁸

Work Preparation

Work Preparation helps disabled people to address employment-related issues associated with their disability and prepare to enter work. This might include confidence-building, identification of suitable types of work and work experience.

Participation in the programme is dependant on the individual's needs and can last for a matter of hours, on an increasing hours basis, or full time for a number of weeks. The average length of participation is six weeks and does not usually exceed thirteen weeks. Most Work Preparation courses involve a period of unpaid work experience with an employer.

In 2006/07 Work Preparation had a budget of £12m and had 8,000 programme starts supporting nearly 7,500 disabled individuals (some individuals accessed the programme more than once).

¹⁸ Job Introduction Scheme figures are estimated from an total annual expenditure and an assumption of nine weeks average duration.

WORKSTEP

WORKSTEP provides support for disabled people who face complex issues in finding and/or keeping a paid job, but who, with the right support for them and their employer (such as mentoring or job coaching) can develop a successful career. The programme aims to help people develop their skills and abilities whilst on the programme and to help people progress off the support wherever this is appropriate for the individual.

WORKSTEP is open to all disabled people, as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, who can demonstrate they require additional support in order to work effectively in a job and who could not do so without this support.

The Department for Work and Pensions contracts with WORKSTEP providers from the private, public and voluntary sectors to prepare participants for supported employment and supporting individuals in that employment.

In 2006/07 WORKSTEP had a budget of £66m which supported over 17,000 people during the year – at any one time there are approximately 14,000 people on the programme.

The WORKSTEP Factory Support Grant is a discretionary grant available to businesses contracted to provide employment for disabled people under the WORKSTEP programme. The grant is intended to help provide long-term improvements to the commercial viability of businesses that will in turn increase the employment and personal development opportunities for WORKSTEP employees.

In 2006/07 approximately £600,000 worth of grants were agreed.

Remploy provides a proportion of the WORKSTEP provision though is currently subject to a separate consultation (see 'Remploy' paragraph below).

Disability Employment Advisers

Disability Employment Advisers are based in Jobcentre Plus offices and have specialist knowledge and experience of the complex issues some disabled people face in trying to find and/or keep a job. They provide a range of services, including in-depth job seeking advice, referrals to job support and advice to employers.

Access to Work

Access to Work is used to fund support or adaptations to enable disabled people to start and/or retain a job. It is open to disabled people resident in Great Britain in or about to start paid work, including self-employment.

Access to Work support was directly provided to approximately 24,000 individuals within 2006/07, however we estimate a further 16,000 people are continuing to directly benefit from support provided in the previous two years under the Special Aids and Equipment element.

Part B: The following disability employment provision is directly related to, **but not covered by this consultation:**

Pathways To Work

Pathways to Work is an initiative to provide extra support and opportunities to people with health problems and disabilities, so helping them get work. In doing so it will help lift more individuals and families out of poverty and help towards achieving the Government's aim of reducing the number of people who depend on incapacity benefits by a million by 2015.

Delivery of the Pathways service began as a small number of pilots in October 2003, and since December 2006, Jobcentre Plus has been delivering Pathways support across 18 Districts to 40% of new and repeat Incapacity Benefit customers.

On the back of the success of the Pathways to Work pilots this provision will be extended to the remaining 60% of new and repeat Incapacity Benefit customers by April 2008, through contracts with external provider organisations.

New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP)

NDDP is dedicated to helping people on Incapacity Benefit and associated benefits enter sustained employment. It is delivered by public, private and voluntary sector providers and is one of our most effective labour market programmes. For example, we know that it is very effective in helping move people not just into work, but also into longer-term sustained work.

Based on positive evaluation findings we have decided to continue to provide NDDP as an integral part of the Provider-led Pathways to Work approach, and are re-contracting the provision in the rest of the country as part of the 'Choices' package within Jobcentre Plus-led Pathways to Work areas. We are, of course, building on lessons learned from our extensive evaluation of NDDP, but at this stage we do not propose any fundamental reforms.

Remploy

Remploy is the largest employer of disabled people in the United Kingdom and is the largest provider of the WORKSTEP programme. Remploy is also a provider of NDDP and Work Preparation.

At the time of going to print the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions was carefully considering modernisation proposals submitted by the Remploy board and an alternative plan put forward by the trade union consortium.

More information on Remploy can be obtained at [**www.remploy.co.uk**](http://www.remploy.co.uk)

Residential Training Colleges

Residential Training for disabled people offers a service very different from our other programmes both in the length of courses and in the approach taken – however the ultimate goal of this provision is the same – to enable more disabled people to gain and retain employment.

We recently commissioned an independent evaluation of Residential Training. The findings from the report indicate that some aspects of the provision are working well, however there are significant areas that require improvement. With this in mind, new contracts were introduced in April 2007 to provide a greater focus on employment outcomes and we will continue to work closely with the providers to examine the case for further reform.

Work Psychologists

Work Psychologists are based in Jobcentre Plus offices and work closely with Disability Employment Advisers. They are specialists in employment including the impact of unemployment and employment on disability and health. Work Psychologists help people to return to work by:

- engaging directly with customers by providing interventions to identify work solutions to complex employment scenarios;
- engaging indirectly with customers to:
 - help advisers with specific back-to-work issues in complex situations; and
 - lead solution orientated case conferences;
- engaging with employers to negotiate, explore and implement effective work solutions in the workplace;
- engaging with advisers to enhance their:
 - skills – through developing learning programmes and by coaching; and
 - understanding of the psychology of work and disadvantage; and
- introducing new methods such as case conferences and improving guidance notes.



Other non-disability specific employment services

In line with our responsibilities under the Disability Equality Duty, we are committed to improving access for disabled people to our other employment services. We will continue to:

- review training and guidance for all our staff, so they are able to guide customers to the most appropriate provision;
- work with all our providers to increase the accessibility of provision (e.g. the New Deals) to all of our customers, including those with health conditions and disabilities; and
- consult on all major changes to this provision as recently demonstrated in our 'In work, better off: next steps to full employment' consultation document.