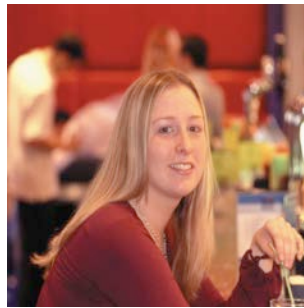


# Employment Research from Scotland



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**Integrate @ 25 Conference 11<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

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# Introduction

- Introductions
- Why employment is important
- Share research findings
- Discuss implications

# Why Is Employment Important?

- Part of 'ordinary life'
- Culturally valued role
- Many people with learning disabilities want 'real jobs'
- Realises O'Brien's 5 accomplishments
- Evidence of benefits
- Growth in supported employment



# Exercise

- What do you consider to be the main issues/barriers to real jobs for people with learning disabilities today?

Write up to 3 on post-its



# The Research

- Scottish Executive – employment support
- Workforce Plus – info for commissioners
- Pilot - life changing jobs

# Scottish Executive (2005)

- Scottish Executive policy
  - Review of learning disability services – *The same as you?* (2000)
  - Short life working group - *Working for a change?* (2003) agenda for change
- Gaps in information – who, jobs, support
- Research – Go for it! Employment Support (2005)



# Research Team

- Experienced researchers
- Infusion Co-op- a social firm
- 3 Research Associates with LD



# Methods

- Survey questionnaire - ‘where are we now?’
- Stakeholder views
- Best practice lit review
- 15 case studies – LD, families, employers



# Key Findings – Support Provided

- Small & large agencies providing support
- Local authorities, usually social work main funders and providers
- Few dedicated SE agencies
- More than 3,000 individuals supported in variety of paid and unpaid jobs

# Key Findings - People

- More men with LD in paid jobs
- Age – mainly 25-49
- Few from BME communities
- Few with ASD or severe disabilities

# Key Findings – The Jobs

- Many in unpaid or voluntary work
- 50% in paid jobs work under 10 hrs pw
- Many F/T jobs were sheltered or Workstep
- Modest earnings
- Generally paid minimum wage
- Variable job quality



# Conclusions

- Some grounds for optimism
- SE was changing people's lives
- BUT
  - No evidence of full implementation of SE
  - Focus on work experience or 'voluntary' work
  - Not real jobs for real pay
  - Not inclusive



Learning from Research about Best Practice in  
Supporting People with Learning Disabilities in Real  
Jobs  
**Information for Commissioners**

Julie Ridley and Susan Hunter  
2007

# Overlapping Concerns?

## Similarities

Real jobs

Support

Recognise benefits

Personalisation

Tackle benefits trap

Partnership important

## Differences

low key mention of LD

Assessment &  
preparation

High support needs

# Key Dimensions of Best Practice - Strategic

- Adopting strategic or partnership approach
- Ensuring people are better off in work
- Presumption of employability and aspiring to jobs of 16+ hours
- Promoting social inclusion through work
- Raising aspirations of young disabled school leavers
- Providing employment opportunities for people with complex disabilities including ASD
- Promoting supported self-employment opportunities

# Key Dimensions of Best Practice – Project/Service

- Adopting individualised or personalised approaches
- Understanding employers' needs
- Providing long term and post employment support
- Need for skilled and qualified staff
- Adopting an enabling approach
- Using 'natural support' and typical work patterns



# Concluding Comment

Offering work experience using permitted work or earnings disregard with little chance of developing sustainable employment is in effect, as Steve Leach (2002) said –

*“An off-site day service provision that will not lead to independence or self determination”*

# Pilot – Life Changing Jobs

- UCLan/VIAS/Edinburgh University
- 6 case studies
- Stories/accounts – interviews & photographs
  - People with LD
  - Families
  - Job Support staff
  - Managers/supervisors

# References

- Hunter, S., Ridley, J. (2007), Supported employment in Scotland: Some issues from research and implications for development, *Tizard Learning Disability Review*.
- Leach, S. (2002) *A Supported Employment Workbook. Individual Profiling and Job Matching*, London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.
- Ridley, J., Hunter, S., and Infusion Co-operative, (2005), “Go for it!” *Supporting People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorder in Employment*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.
- Ridley, J and Hunter, S (2006) “The development of supported employment in Scotland”. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 25 , 1, p57-68.



# Contact Details

Go for it! Report & Exec Summary can be accessed at:

<http://scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/06/14102552/25532>

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