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

• 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


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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