



Valuing People Now Employment Evaluations

Overview and key themes

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First published 16 March 2011

Published to DH website, in electronic PDF format only.

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Valuing People Now' employment evaluations

Overview and key themes

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Introduction

A critical part of Valuing People Now employment work will be a new evidence base to show what works for people with learning disabilities to realise their aspirations for employment. To produce this evidence base, the Government commissioned independent external evaluations of each of the three demonstration projects, Getting A Life, Jobs First and Project Search. The purpose of this paper is to give an overview of the evaluations and draw together some of the key themes that will come out of the research.

Other new evidence

In addition to these evaluations, other new research is being published on the Valuing People resource hub that adds to the evidence base. This includes cost-benefit research on the supported employment services in Kent and a study on the health benefits of employment for people with learning disabilities. In Government, we will continue to evaluate the Right to Control trailblazers and Work Choice.

Valuing People Now - employment evaluations

Each of the Valuing People Now employment evaluations uses a range of research methods to capture both the experiences of those involved in the demonstrations through in-depth qualitative research and to collect quantitative data to monitor the costs, benefits and outcomes of these new approaches. Outputs from the evaluations will also focus on the 'how to' so that others can benefit from the shared learning.

The evaluation of Getting A Life will be published at the end of March 2011. It is expected that Project Search will be published in autumn 2011. Jobs First will continue until September 2012. All reports and associated materials will be publicly available through the [Valuing People Now Employment Resource](#) hub and links on the [Office for Disability Issues website](#).

Key themes

In January 2011 the Valuing People Now employment team and research teams came together to identify some of the key themes that the evaluations will inform through their findings:

- Planning for employment through Person Centred Planning and Review

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- Employment pathways
- Focusing education on employment
- Funding and use of individual budgets
- Supported Employment provision
- Workforce issues
- Employer engagement and outcomes
- Family engagement
- Cultural attitudes

Each of these themes will be explored in-depth across the evaluations, demonstrating what works and providing 'how to' evidence.

Getting a Life

The aim of the Getting a Life (GAL) evaluation is to represent an evidence-based approach to the transition of people with learning disabilities from education to adult life and paid employment. Specifically, the GAL project has developed an evidence-based model of the actions needed in each year of statutory transition (from age 14) through consultation with its project partners and experts in the field.

Using case studies, the evaluation will highlight good practice for what needs to happen at local, regional and national level to achieve this and the benefits of doing so. Case studies will also focus on different approaches being taken in the demonstration sites, ranging from use of Person Centred Reviews to mini-enterprise initiatives.

Work is also being carried out by the Office of Public Management (OPM) to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of the pathway into employment compared with other routes that do not have employment as a goal. This will be published in March 2011.

The evaluation of Getting a Life has been carried out by Dr. Stephen Beyer and Dr. Axel Kaehne at the Welsh Centre for Learning Disabilities based at Cardiff University. The final report will be published in March 2011.

Jobs First

The principle behind Jobs First is that paid employment will be prioritised above all other life goals. Jobs First participants will undergo an employment focused review which refocuses their support package to free up time and money for the pursuit of paid work. Jobs First is aligned to [Right to Control](#), the Office for Disability Issues-led project that gives disabled people a right to a personal budget for all of their support entitlement.

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The seven Jobs First sites in England are each working with 20 people with moderate to severe learning disabilities, who will use their individual budgets to buy support to help them to get a paid job. The aim is for participants to purchase supported employment provision, funded by their individual budgets, to enable them to find and sustain paid work.

The evaluation will compare outcomes for Jobs First participants with those who have not undergone an employment focused review. Qualitative research will focus on process and implementation issues, including the impact of employment focused support planning and support from job coaches. The evaluation will also look at the cost-benefits of moving people into supported employment and using fewer other services.

The evaluation of Jobs First is being carried out by the Social Care Workforce Research Unit (SCWRU) based at King's College London. Jobs First will run until September 2012.

Project Search

Project Search is a licensed employer-led internship model, which has been successful in helping disabled people secure and keep paid permanent jobs. The Government is evaluating 14 demonstration sites in England in 2010/11. The aims of the Project Search evaluation are to:

- Monitor the progression and employment outcomes of Project Search interns.
- Highlight the key success factors needed to make the Project Search model work in practice.
- Provide evidence of the benefits to employers that can be used to make a business case for employing people with learning disabilities.
- Identify the main costs of implementing the Project Search model and describe how it is funded.
- Describe the expectations and experiences of interns, practitioners (i.e. tutors, job coaches), employers (including mentors, managers and other staff), the families and carers of interns.
- Demonstrate the wider impacts on the lives of participants and those around them, including confidence and attitudes.

The evaluation of Project Search is being carried out by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion. The final report will be published in autumn 2011.