

Context

Mental ill health accounts for the biggest cohort of people unable to work due to sickness; yet it has the poorest outcomes through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) contracted Work Programme.¹ Suitable employment can benefit mental health and well-being² and, with new employability programmes coming to Scotland³, this is an opportunity to help people with mental health problems into work.

We also know that many people with mental health problems still experience discrimination in the workplace⁴, and that less than 40% of employers would employ someone with a mental health problem.⁵

Key points

- The DWP [Work Programme](#), and to a lesser extent, [Work Choice](#), has poorly served people with mental health problems.^{6,7}
- Fifty per cent of people on Employment and Support Allowance in Scotland have a mental health problem as their primary condition.⁸
- Individual Placement and Support (IPS) helps more people with mental health problems into work than other employment programmes, at no greater cost.⁹
- Current DWP employment support is not integrated with other services which help people towards work, such as health, housing, education and skills.¹⁰
- Approximately £670m¹¹ is spent on employability support in Scotland but as much of this is spent by local authorities, we don't know what is achieved by this investment.
- Only 110 people in Scotland receive Access to Work funding, which supports disabled people into jobs, on grounds of mental health¹²: 0.3% of all Access to Work awards in the UK.¹³

¹ Mind, [We've Got Work To Do](#), 2014, p29

² Waddell and Burton, [Is Work Good for your Health and Wellbeing?](#) 2006

³ [SAMH response to Fairer Scotland consultation 2015](#)

⁴ Brouwers EPM, Mathijssen J, Van Bortel T, et al. Discrimination in the workplace, reported by people with major depressive disorder: a cross-sectional study in 35 countries. *BMJ Open* 2016;6:e009961. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2015-009961

⁵ See *Me general public omnibus survey 2004*

⁶ House of Commons Public Accounts Committee Report [The Work Programme](#) 2014

⁷ House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee [Welfare to Work](#) 2015

⁸ Department of Work and Pensions [Tabulation Tool](#) accessed 08/03/2016

⁹ International Review of Psychiatry, [Individual Placement and Support in Europe, the EQOLISE trial](#), 2008

¹⁰ House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee report [Welfare to Work](#) 2015

¹¹ Cambridge Policy Consultants 2014 [Review of the Allocation of Employability Resources in Scotland](#)

¹² <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-09-05/45060/>

- Health promotion programmes at work reduce absenteeism and save money.¹⁴

SAMH calls for:

- Specialised, personalised, intensive support for disabled people. People with mental health problems should, by default, be supported in this programme.
- An audit of current employment spending, especially within local authorities.
- IPS to be funded and rolled out, both within the new disability support programme and within all Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTS).
- Continued funding for the See Me programme to tackle stigma
- Continued promotion and funding of in-work support programme.
- Greater investment in and promotion of Access to Work and portability of awards between jobs.
- Employment to be a health outcome for the NHS.

Further detail:

Official guidance

- [NHS Scotland Positive Mental Health Guidance for Employers](#)
- [Scottish Government Working for Growth employability framework](#)
- [DWP Disability Employment Support: Fulfilling potential \(2012\)](#)

SAMH research

- [What's it worth now? \(2011\)](#)
- [What Works? \(2012\)](#)
- [Fit for Purpose \(2015\)](#)

Other information

- [Centre for Mental Health IPS evidence](#)
- [Employability in Scotland](#)

¹³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/538443/access-to-work-statistics-march-2016.pdf

¹⁴ Bundesverband, Kreis J and Bödeker W. *Health-related and Economic Benefits of Workplace Health Promotion and Prevention – Summary of the Scientific Evidence 2004*