

A Review of Disability Employment Support in Fife

For
Opportunities Fife Health and Disability Delivery Group

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Opportunities Fife Partnership Health & Disability Delivery Group commissioned this report to provide recommendations for the development of employability provision for people with disabilities or long-term health conditions. It presents the findings of a review of the employment needs, experiences and aspirations of people with disabilities or long-term health conditions and the current employment service provision in Fife.

Review Method

The review took place between April and June 2014 in Fife and included a combination of desk-based research, and interviews with service providers, service-users, carers and employers.

Key Findings

Current employability service provision for disabled and people with long-term conditions in Fife

The review found disabled people and people with long-term conditions' general aspiration for paid work is not matched by the quantity and quality of specialist service provision required to enable people to find and sustain employment.

In February 2013 there were 17,200 people claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in Fife and more who are on Job Seekers Allowance (JSA). Of these approximately half can be estimated to wish to return to or gain work.

This review reports that in 2013/14 between 300-500 jobs were secured for disabled people in Fife by a small number of programmes¹. This does not include the Work Programme, but that higher volume, mainstream programme does not provide the type of support disabled people require².

In Fife, overall current employability provision for people with disabilities or long-term health conditions is only securing jobs for small numbers and does not follow evidence-based good practice for this client group.

Individuals' employment aspirations, barriers and employment support needs

¹ Source of data: SWIFT figures for the Social Work supported employment service, FORT and the

² Source of data: review interviews; Disability Rights UK (October 2013); Hale, June 2014.

A key barrier for the client group 'people with long-term health conditions and disabilities' is their individual disability, and they require individualised support to match them to a job, which will lead to sustained employment.

People said they found the current employability support system confusing and they would like more information on the support available.

A commonly cited barrier to employment was lack of access to employers and a feeling of not being "given a chance" because managers perceive employing someone with a disability to be complicated. This was echoed by employers, who cited a need for encouragement and support to take on staff with disabilities.

The evidence base for effective employability support for disabled people and people with long-term conditions

Just as disabled people in Fife want access to more personalised support, national disability charities and expert reviews have called for funding for work-first, individualised approaches to support disabled peoples' employment. The Scottish Government has endorsed the five-stepped supported employment approach to provide this type of support in *A Supported Employment Framework for Scotland (2010)*.

A strong body of evidence shows that people with long-term mental health conditions are most likely to access employment through the Individual Placement and Support model. This is very similar to supported employment, but employment support workers are co-located with mental health workers, in Community Mental Health Teams.

Disabled people and people with long-term conditions, seeking greater choice and control over services, want to become more involved in the planning and commissioning of relevant employability support. Hence, any strategy for disabled people's employment support in Fife should engage with developments around Self-directed Support and promote co-production in service design.

Recommendations

1. Services that support the employability of disabled people be funded on the basis that they provide "work-first" support.
2. Opportunities Fife allocates specific funding for an outcome focused supported employment service.
3. NHS Fife lead on the development of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) within community mental health teams (CMTs).
4. Provide appropriate support to people with disabilities and long-term conditions in the Work Programme.
5. Information on service users' progression and outcomes is more readily available through increased use of FORT.

6. Opportunities Fife and Skills Development Scotland employer account management include a disability specific component.
7. Information on available employability support is accessible to disabled people, their families and support organisations through an easy access portal on the OFP website and a paper directory.
8. The Health and Disability Delivery Group scope with DWP the possibility of a creating a single point of contact for people with disabilities seeking support to gain or return to work.
9. The Health and Disability Delivery Group to investigate the use of the proposed DWP One Stop Shop for Fife's Employers.
10. The Health and Disability Delivery Group continue to promote joint working between the NHS and Opportunities Fife.
11. Fife Council and NHS Fife lead by example and take concrete steps to actively encourage the employment of disabled people.
12. Opportunities Fife use co-production to implement the reports' recommendations.
13. Opportunities Fife link strategically with social work and education departments to ensure employment is included in future developments.

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of a review of disability employment services in Fife, commissioned by Fife Voluntary Action (FVA) on behalf of the Opportunities Fife Partnership. Pippa Coutts led the review and the 2nd team member was Sarah Shimmen. The Review took place from April to June 2014.

The overall aims of the review were to:

1. Map out the current employability service provision in Fife for people with a long-term health condition or disability.
2. Learn from people with a long-term condition or disability about their employment aspirations, barriers and employment support needs.
3. Assess the effectiveness of currently available employability services and supports for people with a long-term condition or disability.
4. On the basis of the findings of the above research, and knowledge of the evidence-base, make recommendations for a strategy for supporting the employability of disabled people in Fife.

The report aims to synthesise the findings of qualitative research with service providers, in employability and health, and people with long-term conditions or disabilities.³ The report is designed for the use of decision makers in the Opportunities Fife Partnership (OFP), including the Health and Disability Delivery Group and the OFP Executive Group and we hope will be of interest to other partners in the Community Planning Partnership. The review did not undertake a comprehensive review of the whole employability landscape in Fife, but rather is designed to add to the existing knowledge of OFP decision-makers.

Service providers refer to people they work with as customers, clients, claimants, service users or beneficiaries. The term service users will be used in this report.

It is acknowledged that clearly not everyone with a disability or health condition wants to work, or is necessarily able to work, but this review focussed on those that do. Assessing the needs of those who don't was outside the scope of the review.

The report considers the national programmes funded by DWP – Work Choice and the Work Programme - to be mainstream. The review assumes these programmes will continue to be funded into 2015 and beyond, and a local strategy and provision for disabled people will complement these programmes and fill any gaps that may exist.

³ Where the report talks of disabled people, or people with disabilities, this refers to people with a long-term health condition or disability, unless otherwise stated.

2. Background

2.1. Employability and Disability

“The majority of disabled people can work and want to work. But without a step change in policy, practice and public attitudes, there will continue to be too few opportunities to achieve their aspirations.”

Richard Hawkes Chief Executive, Scope, 2014

Although many disabled people are in work, the gap in the employment rate between the disabled and non-disabled population remains stubbornly around 30%. In 2013, the employment rate for working-age people with a long standing health condition was 58 per cent⁴ and for disabled people of working age 45 per cent, compared to 77 per cent for working-age people without a disability or long-term condition (Labour Force Survey, quarter 2, 2013). The low employment rate is despite the fact that research shows many more than 50% of disabled people want to work. For example, Stanley and Maxwell found that 86% of people with mental health conditions currently not in employment would like to work (IPPR, 2004); McManus et al found that 56% (2009) of disabled benefit claimants wanted to work, and generally it is assumed that at least half of the out-of-work disabled population is interested to gain employment.

The low employment rate is a disservice to individuals, to employers and the economy. Research by the Social Market Foundation showed supporting one million more disabled people into work would boost the economy by £13 billion (Social Market Foundation 2007).

2.2. The Unemployed Population with a Long-term Condition or Disability in Fife

In Fife, 28,400 people were claiming out-of-work benefits including Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Incapacity Benefit in April 2014. This represents 12.1% of Fife’s working age population⁵. The majority will be claiming disability related benefits: 17,200 people were ESA or IB claimants⁶ in February 2013.⁷

⁴ This includes disabled people.

⁵ The comparable Scottish rate is 12.2%.

⁶ Nationally approximately 25% of the disability related benefits claimants still on IB. source: Jobcentre Plus Fife key informant interview

⁷ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038432135/printable.aspx>

A group of the people claiming ESA will have been assessed as “not fit for work” and been placed within the Support Group where they will not be expected to look for work. Another group will have been placed in the Work Related Activity Group (WRA) as they have been found fit for work with additional support. This group, under the Work Programme, will be expected to carry out job seeking activities, such as frequently applying for jobs.

National figures released in April 2012 showed that 41% of new ESA claimants entitled to the benefit were placed in the Work Related Activity Group. If this proportion of job-seeking disability related claimants in Fife are looking for work that is around 7,000 people, without including disabled people claiming JSA.⁸

National level statistics show that the number of people expected to look for work has increased since the introduction of welfare to work reforms, and specifically changes in incapacity benefit⁹. This review has found the increasing expectation is born out in benefit claimants’ experiences in Fife, with people now seeking work who previously would not have been.

2.3. The DWP Employment Journey for Disabled People on Benefits

A typical journey for a 25-64 year-old unemployed individual seeking work would be engagement with Jobcentre Plus (as an ESA WRA or JSA client) for 12 months. During which time they may be supported to access some local employability provision, or national skills, training or apprenticeship programmes. Disabled people can be referred to Work Choice, a voluntary programme. At a trigger, around a year, people are mandatorily referred to the national UK provision, the Work Programme. Work Programme and Work Choice service users generally are unable to access local level provision or provision funded by the Scottish Government.

DWP mainstream programmes struggle to provide the intensive, personalised support required for people with higher support needs. Disabled people referred to Work Choice are considered to be amongst the more “work ready” of that group, as Work Choice typically has 6 months to place people in a job.¹⁰

Work Programme outcome figures released in June 2014 show only 1.9% of ex-incapacity benefits claimants obtained job outcomes and 9% of new claimants.

⁸ Note: British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) states 65% of people with learning disabilities or severe mental health conditions want to work.

⁹ Analysis by Scope of the DWP Statistical tables “ESA: Outcomes of Work Capability Assessments 2013”, published March 2014, showed 65,000 more disabled people expected to be looking for work.

¹⁰ Although it can be extended by 3 or 6 months (source: Fife key informant interview and DWP website.)

2.4. Strategic Employability Structures in Fife

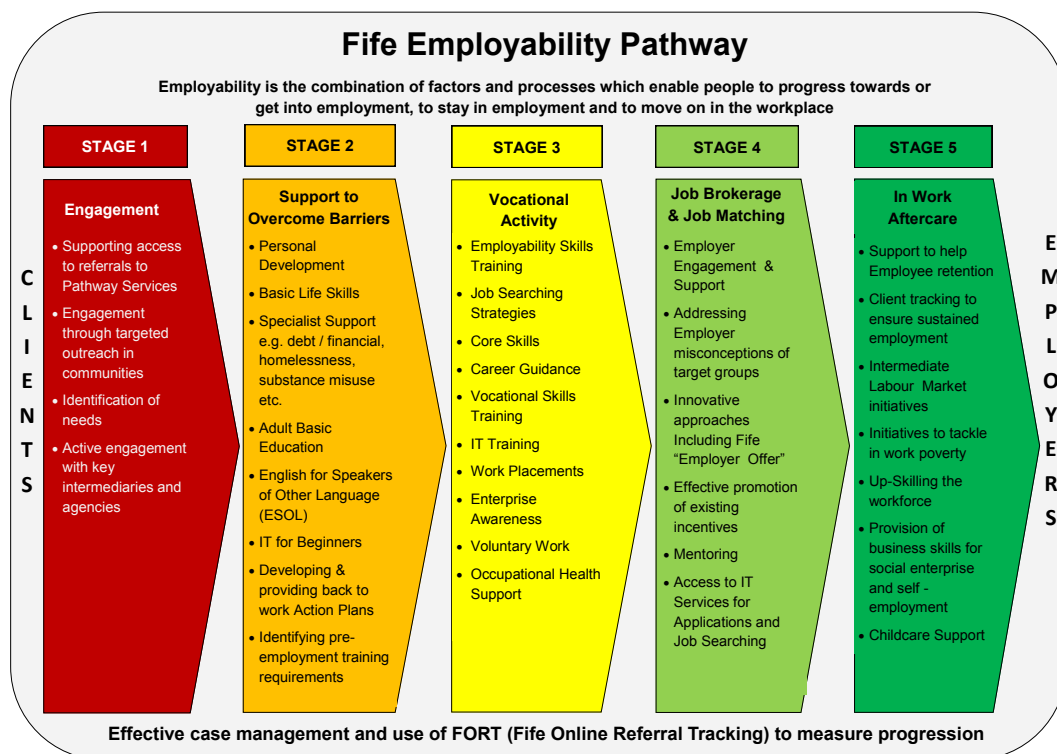
The review of disability employment support in Fife, and any subsequent developments, sits under the Opportunities Fife Partnership (OFP), which is the strategic local employability partnership and works closely with the Fife Economy Partnership and the Community Planning Partnership in Fife.

The Health and Disability Delivery Group is one of three delivery groups established to feed into the OFP and develop cross sectoral working.¹¹ It was formed in March 2014, and this review has found members already reporting benefits in terms of networking and increased links to the Partnership.

To increase co-ordination between agencies and initiatives, in line with Scottish employability policy, Fife designed an employability pathway. This was refreshed in 2014. See diagram one.

The pathway recognises that not all participant services seek to achieve job outcomes even if they are supporting peoples' employability. This has been taken into account in Fife's management information system, FORT, where the progress and outcomes of service users in Fairer Scotland Fund (FSF) and European Social Fund (ESF) projects and services are collected. FORT is a client-based system, but also can be used as a tool for analysing the impact of selected programmes and services.

Diagram 1



¹¹ A diagram is available at <http://www.fifevoluntaryaction.org.uk/downloads/ofpstuc.pdf>

The pathway allows OFP to map at which stages on the pathway services are concentrated. Currently there is no directory of employability services disaggregated by pathway stage or by client group in Fife.

OFP has produced the Commissioning Strategy for the Fife Employability Pathway from 2014 – 2017 (May 2014), which will guide spending of FSF and ESIF in Fife. The OFP expects to be commissioning new pathway services by the end of the year in line with the expected draw down of European Funding. There are eight client groups targeted for intervention: one of which is people with disabilities, and another is dedicated to employer engagement activities for clients. Both these strands of funding are relevant to this report.

2.5. Fife Health and Social Care Partnership

NHS Fife and Fife Council (Social Work and Health Committee) promote joint working to provide health and social care services for adults through the Health and Social Care Partnership. This partnership currently has aligned budgets. Three sub-groups, Strategy Implementation Groups, of relevance to this review report to the partnership: Physical Disabilities and Sensory Impairments; Learning Disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD); and Mental Health.

The Partnership Service Delivery Plan 2012-1015 includes principles such as choice, personalisation and partnership. Learning disability/ASD services commit to producing a supported employment strategy. Services for people with physical difficulties or sensory impairments commit to delivering, with partners, “meaningful employment” for service users. (p39).

Adult health and social care services in Fife, as elsewhere in Scotland, are required to integrate by the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill, passed in February 2014.

2.6. The Model of More Support: Good Practice in Supporting the Employment of Disabled People

People with disabilities need ongoing support to gain and maintain work. As the disability charity Scope recently stated, “Employment support should become more personalised” (p26, Trotter, R., 2014).

This follows on from a similar appeal from Disability Rights UK, which described the Work Programme as “the non-work programme for disabled people” (2013). Disability Rights UK called for the budget for disabled people’s employment support to be put in the hands of disabled people and

employers to design and implement effective workplace led support (Sayce, 2013)¹².

The advent of Self-directed Support in Scotland may lead to such opportunities. In Fife, the Health and Social Care Partnership Service Delivery Plan commits to Self-directed Support options for people with learning difficulties/ASD and people with physical or sensory impairments.

The personalised approach to employment support found to be the most effective in securing sustainable jobs is supported employment (OECD 2010; Beyer & Robinson, 2009; Perkins, Farmer & Litchfield, 2009; Wistow & Schneider, 2007).

2.6.1. Supported Employment

"Supported Employment promotes the rights of all individuals to achieve their full potential through a model of flexible support that enables people to overcome barriers to their employability and access real jobs for real pay." Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE) Definition.

The aim of supported employment is that disabled people obtain sustainable work in the **open labour market**, where they are paid the going rate for the job. Supported employment necessitates ongoing support for the individual and employer in the workplace¹³. It is a "work-first" model, often described as "place and train" where the emphasis is on finding the person a suitable job as soon as possible and then supporting them within the job, rather than placing people into preparation activities in a bid to get people "job ready". The latter approach over the years has resulted in many individuals never getting near a job, but rather rotating through training courses and services.

Supported employment schemes were initially used to help people with learning difficulties, but have increasingly been extended to other impairment groups including people with long-term mental health conditions. Supported employment for people with long-term mental health conditions is known as Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and is backed up by a body of evidence¹⁴. See Appendix One.

The Scottish Government and COSLA, in 2010, in the Supported Employment Framework for Scotland endorsed the five-stage supported employment approach. The Framework highlights that effective supported employment includes the provision of financial advice to job seekers.

¹² Accessed at <http://disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/reports-and-research/taking-control-employment-support>

¹³ EUSE Supported Employment Toolkit, p11.

¹⁴ IPS is also known as evidence-based supported employment (EBSE)

How Supported Employment Works

Supported employment is an “end to end” approach. It can run in conjunction to the Fife Employability Pathway: a case manager in the supported employment service holds the thread throughout for the client.

Key to the provision of effective supported employment is working with both employers and service users. This, and the intensive support, is made possible through ensuring that employment support workers have caseloads smaller than most other employability services, of 12-20 service users.

Supported Employment is made up of five stages:

1. Client engagement, which includes clarifying that the service user is seeking work.
2. Vocational Profiling: helping service users to identify their skills and aspirations for work, so that a good job fit can be established.
3. Job Finding: actively supporting the individual to search for a job, this includes contacting employers on the behalf of service users and setting up interviews and arranging adjustments at/for interview
4. Employer engagement: working with employers and job seekers to discuss areas such as terms and conditions, reasonable adjustments, support needed and what can be provided
5. Ongoing support for the client and employer once the job starts to include support to access training and for career progression.

(adapted from EUSE Toolkit)

There is some experience in the Fife of the supported employment approach, for example through the Social Work Supported Employment Service.

3. Methodology

The review focussed on:

1. Gathering information on current service provision and gaps, from employability and health services supporting disabled people's employment in Fife through desk-based research, an online survey and interviews.
2. Analysis of barriers and aspirations from people with disabilities and long-term conditions, their carers and representatives, and employers through one-to-one interviews and focus groups.
3. Desk review of existing information and good practice in supporting the employment of disabled people.¹⁵
4. Thematic analysis of the data with a focus on people's employment aspirations, existing support and gaps.

In light of the review's objectives when seeking research participants the reviewers were clear the conversation would be about work: this may have excluded people who were not interested in work. However, this bias was felt to be acceptable given the aim of the review was to develop a strategy around supporting people's employment.

This methodology and key contacts for the research were agreed with the Health and Disability Delivery Group at their meeting in April 2014.

3.1. Survey of Existing Employability Provision

The survey asked agencies about employability services they provide to disabled people, their focus and their outcomes. It also asked about the impairments and barriers of service users.

The survey was sent to agencies recorded on FORT, contacts from the Fife Youth Information Directory, organisations that had responded to the FVA 2013 Mapping and relevant projects in the Jobcentre Plus Directory. In addition, the Health and Disability Delivery Group was asked to forward the survey link to contacts they knew who were involved in disability and employment in Fife.

In total 23 surveys were returned, but after removing irrelevant surveys (with permission of the authors) and data cleaning 17 remained. A copy of the survey is Appendix Two.

¹⁵ The review commissioning document specified that the review take into account existing information on disability employment services in Fife, specifically "Working Together", (FVA, 2013) and the "Supported Employment Strategy for Fife" (Fife Council 2012), as well of the Fife Youth Information Directory and a paper based directory from Jobcentre Plus.

To supplement the findings of the survey we undertook 18 interviews with key service providers and other relevant stakeholders such as Disabilities Fife. A list of interviews is Appendix Three.

3.2. In-depth Interviews and Focus Groups with People with Disabilities and Long-term Conditions, and Employers

The research aimed to speak to people with disabilities and long-term health conditions who use employability services and those that may wish to but don't currently access them. The consultants contacted disabled people both through employability services and more general services, such as Fife Sensory Impairment Centre and the Local Area Coordination team. The research found that interviewees generally were, or had been, in touch with either a national or local employability service, or taking part in an employability college course.

The interviews and focus groups covered a range of impairment types including: people with mental health conditions; people with long-term conditions; people with physical disabilities; people on the autistic spectrum; young people and parents and college tutors of people with learning disabilities; people with acquired brain injury; people with sensory impairments

A list of research participants is in Appendix Three. The interview format is Appendix Four.

A total of 4 employers were contacted and followed up for interview, of which 2 responded. Due to the small numbers of responses the findings of this have been supplemented with desk-based research on the existing evidence around supporting employers: for example, *Employers Views of Supported Employment for Disabled People in Scotland (2012)*, which had included interviews with Fife employers.

In total more than 30 in-depth interviews and focus groups were held.

A draft report was presented to the Health and Disability Delivery Group on June 12th 2014 following which further revisions and edits were made.

4. Findings

4.1. Current Service Provision in Fife

4.1.1. The Support Currently Available

In May, the survey was emailed to services in Fife that potentially support the employability of disabled people. 17 responses were received for analysis.

In diagram three, services that responded to the survey are divided into groups according to their primary stated aim. It is important to note this is not an exhaustive list of all employment service providers but simply a snapshot of those who responded.

Diagram 2: Table of Services that responded to survey

Group One: Employment Support for Disabled People					
Organisation	Geography	Stated Aim	No. of disabled clients. April 13- April 14	Most common disability / condition	FORT Y/N/ Partial
Capability Scotland: A Work Choice Provider	Dunfermline, Cowdenbeath	People with disabilities into paid employment of 16+hours. Place and train approach, generally.	100 - 150	Learning Disability	N
Momentum Skills (Pathways, Work Choice, SDS)	Fife wide	Support disabled people back into employment. Place & train approach.	100 - 150	Long-term Condition	partial
Group Two: Support for employment and other meaningful activity for disabled people					
FEAT	Fife wide	People with mental health issues to access employment or other meaningful activity	>150	Mental Health Condition	partial
Social Work Supported Employment Service	Fife wide	Support disabled people into, in, work, including voluntary; and provide training. Place and Train.	>150	Long-term Condition	partial

Group Three Employment support for all, or focusing mainly on another client group					
Organisation	Geography	Stated Aim	No. of disabled service users	Most common disability / condition	FORT Y/N/ Partial
Fife Works (Kingdom housing)	Fife wide	Provide stage 4 and stage 5 supports. Place and Train approach.	10 – 40	Mental Health Condition	N
Clued Up	Fife wide	Support into education employment or training Y.P who misuse substances	0	Mental Health Condition	Y
SDS	Fife wide	Supports people to achieve career success	>150	Mental Health Condition	N
Making It Work	Kirkcaldy, Cowdenbeath	Lone parents into work.			Y
Group Four NHS Employment related activity for people with disabilities or long-term conditions					
NHS, mental health OT	Fife wide	Occupational therapy	>150	Mental Health Condition	N
Fife Rehabilitation	Fife wide	Occupational therapy with employment aim	>150	Long-term Condition	N
ICASS ¹⁶	Fife wide	Community rehabilitation	>150	Long-term Condition	N
OHSAS*	Fife wide	Occupational Health	100 - 150	Physical Impairment	N
NHS Learning Disability OT	Fife wide	Promote health and wellbeing of people with learning disability	>150	Learning Disability	N
Group Five Wider, more general social support					
Organisation	Geography	Stated Aim	No. of disabled service users	Most common disability / condition of the clients	FORT Y/N/ Partial
YMCA Glenrothes	Fife wide	Community learning and development	100 - 150	Mental Health Condition	N
Smart Living			10 – 40	Mental Health Condition	N
Link _MH	Levenmouth North East Fife	Social support Community integration	10 – 40	Mental Health Condition	Y
Give Something	Dunfermline,	Support people	>150	Mental Health	N

¹⁶ NHS Community Rehabilitation, prevention of admission and early supported discharge

Back - FVA	Glenrothes, Kirkcaldy, Cowdenbeath, Levenmouth	with disabilities into volunteering		Condition	
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*OHSAS is an occupational health service, focusing on the employed, not the unemployed, and on all general health and safety at work issues.

The table shows only two agencies, those in Group 1, report exclusively supporting disabled people into, and within, employment. Capability Scotland and Momentum Skills provide Work Choice in Fife: Capability Scotland, currently, only provides Work Choice.¹⁷ Capability Scotland in a year works with 100-150 service users (40 at any one time); Momentum has 100-150 service users (around 30 in the ESF project at a time).

Agencies in Group 2 are supporting disabled people and people with long-term conditions, into and within employment, but they also provide support for other activity such as training and volunteering. FEAT provides specific support for people's mental health recovery (which can include work), and to improve mental health.

Group 3 agencies, which do support individuals' aspirations for employment, generally do not focus on adults with disabilities. Although Skills Development Scotland (SDS) has more than 150 clients with disabilities, its primary target group is secondary school pupils and young people (16-19) post school; and the majority of its disabled clients are school pupils. Analysis of FORT, the FVA 2013 Mapping and review interviews illustrated there are several other agencies within this sort of group, e.g. the Client Action Team (CAT).

Group 4: Health services that support people's employment were well represented in the survey. Occupational therapists emphasised they provide vocational rehabilitation, which needs to be complemented with employability support. Vocational rehabilitation is a process that supports people to overcome barriers to employment, but doesn't provide the specific employability input, such as developing C.V.s or accessing interviews, or finding suitable posts/employers.¹⁸

The survey found limited service provision for people with disabilities or long-term health conditions looking for work, but requiring support of a specialist, more intensive nature.

¹⁷ Other contracted Work Choice providers in Fife are Enterprise Mentoring and Cornerstone. The latter are based in Dundee and only have very small wards areas in Fife.

¹⁸ For a definition of vocational rehabilitation see Healthy Working Lives: <http://www.healthyworkinglives.com/advice/Legislation-and-policy/work-related-illness-injury/vocational-rehabilitation/definition#definition>

4.1.2. Employment Outcomes

FORT records show that in the last 3 years 8336 service users accessed services funded through Opportunities Fife Partnership.¹⁹ From this group, by June 2014 there were 3459 outcomes. The following are classed as High Level Outcomes:

1. Entering full-time formal accredited education or training
2. Entering full-time employment
3. Entering part-time employment
4. Progression to a government training scheme.
5. Self-employment.

These outcomes are not unique, i.e. one person could have obtained more than one of the five high level outcomes.

The data shows that 777 of the 8336 service users were recorded as having a disability – 9.3%.

In 2013/14, 71 full-time employment outcomes were achieved for disabled people and 9 part-time employment outcomes²⁰.

For the Social Work Support Employment Service only the outcomes for the ESF funded “Work for U” programme with young people are recorded in FORT. Remaining data is held on the Social Work database SWIFT. This data increasingly includes “soft” and “progression” outcomes around people’s lifestyle changes and the training they have attended. A SWIFT report of the Social Work supported employment service in May 2014 showed it achieved 78 paid jobs for around 490 referrals: that is 32 part-time; 31 full-time and 18 in the Work for U programme (which is recorded on FORT)²¹. As mentioned above, the service doesn’t just focus on open employment. It has four Supported Employment Training units accessed by around 72 service users each month, or 130 people over the year. In the year, 112 service users were found work placements and 77 voluntary work.

The survey of agencies conducted in the review asked agencies about the outcomes they had achieved in 2013/14 (see diagram Three for a list of respondents.) Excluding the respondents in Group 3, who largely are not working with disabled adults and the Social Work Service Work for U (which has outcomes recorded in FORT), there were overall around 2-300 employment outcomes. The two Work Choice providers delivered the majority

¹⁹ FORT: <https://www.fortsupport.co.uk/opps-fife-reports/programme-level/opps-fife/registrations-opps-fife-prog>. Accessed on June 2, 2014 looking at registrations from start in July 2011.

²⁰ FORT accessed on July 2, 2014 for the year 1st April 2013 – 31st March 2014.

²¹ Analysis of SWIFT data for 1st April 2013 – 31st March 2014, available from the SW SE Service.

of these employment outcomes. Some of the services in diagram three partially record their outcomes in FORT, so there may be some double counting.

Overall, considering the outcomes for 2013/14 obtained from the survey (200-300 employment outcomes), SWIFT (63 jobs from the Social Work Supported Employment Service) and FORT (80), the number of disabled people being supported into work across the system in Fife is low compared to the approximately 17,200 ESA or IB claimants in Fife. Although not all this group want to work the number of jobs obtained in 2013/14 is also low compared to the clear aspiration for work expressed in the review.

4.1.3. The Most Common Disabilities Or Long-Term Conditions

Services were asked to suggest which were the most common impairments of disabled service users, through a ranking exercise. This found that a mental health condition was typically the most common impairment (11/16 respondents ranked it the most common or second most common), followed by a long-term condition, which was ranked 1st or 2nd most common by nine respondents. The prevalence of mental health conditions is in-line with data gathered in the key informant interviews and national statistics. However, this exercise hides the fact that many people experience more than one condition or disability.

Diagram 3: Ranking of the most common disability categories

Ranking of impairment/condition, where 1= most common and 6 = least common	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mental health condition	9	2	1	3	0	1
Learning Disability	2	3	4	2	3	0
Long-term health condition	3	6	2	1	0	3
Autistic Spectrum Disorder, including Asperger's syndrome	0	2	5	3	2	1
Sensory Impairment	0	1	2	1	5	4
Physical Impairment	2	2	2	4	2	2

4.1.4. Peoples' Experience of Available Employability Support

Disabled people expressed dissatisfaction with the mainstream employability programmes. They said the services were "too generic", referring to the type of support they received, such as interview skills or CV writing. One interviewee said it was "box ticking", and talked about an experience where the nature of his disability had meant that he struggled with very noisy situations, and but this was never discussed nor accommodated. Another reported, she'd wanted to work part time but had been told by a Work Programme provider that she'd have to do 30 – 40 hours a week.

People described going to the Work Programme as “a waste of time”, and they had little support from programme’s advisors, who they “only heard from every 6 months”.

The mainstream programmes are seen to be trying to place individuals in a job, any job, and not taking account of individuals’ preferences nor the employment’s sustainability. This applied to work placements too. Going on several, unpaid placements (without a training component), which don’t lead to jobs was described as “soul destroying”.

In the Jobcentre not everyone has access to a Disability Employment Advisor, and generally Jobcentre staff are short of time. Therefore they can’t provide the job coaching support that people want.

There were mixed views about the Social Work Supported Employment Service. It was viewed as more empathetic than the mainstream target-driven services, but not focussing sufficiently on individuals’ work aspirations, and without the necessary employer contacts. Some people said they were “very hands on”, whilst others said, “I never saw them” and one mentioned that she had been waiting since January to see the team. The service acknowledges a waiting list of at least 16 weeks and 62 people, and each disability employment coordinator is working with around 40 service users.

People receiving vocational rehabilitation support from occupational therapists, which they described as “brilliant”, wanted enhanced employability support. They reported, currently, people looking to return to work “have to feel the way” themselves.

4.1.5. Summary Of Key Findings

- The service provision does not adequately reflect the size or needs of the population of people with disabilities or long-term health conditions looking for work, but requiring support of a specialist, more intensive nature.
- DWP’s Work Programme has a low level of job outcomes for people with disabilities or long-term conditions (that is people on ESA) and Work Choice has a limited number of service users, most of who are considered to be more “work ready”.
- Service user feedback reflects a sense of disappointment in current provision as it is not personalised enough and the system is difficult to navigate.
- There is significant vocational rehabilitation support in the Health sector, but a felt lack of employability support.
- People with mental health conditions present the largest client group for all service providers both specialist and non-specialist.
- Only 4 providers that completed the survey were using FORT, which has implications for joint working and tracking of employability activity.

4.2. People’s Aspirations, Barriers and Support Needs

Focus groups and individual interviews probed peoples’ aspirations about work, barriers to work and the support needed to overcome the barriers. The key themes raised, with some reference to the survey findings, are detailed in the pages below.

4.2.1. Aspirations

“Disabled people want work more than, you know, what can be called “normal” people”. (Employee with physical disability and mental health issue)

People want paid work, but specifically are interested in “finding a job that suits”, and a career, too.

4.2.2. Disability Specific Barriers

In the survey, services were asked to rank the barriers to work for disabled people and the long-term condition or disability was identified as the major barrier.

Diagram 4: Service Provider Assessment of Individuals’ Barriers to Employment in order of importance

1	Long term health condition or disability
2	Low expectations of clients themselves
3	Lack of work experience
4	Lack of qualifications or skills
5	Likely or implied benefits changes
6	Fear that work will lead to worsening health
7	Low expectation of employment, health, social care agencies
8	Low expectation of family, friends, carers,
9	Accessible transport
10	Lack of child care

Individual disabilities affect people’s recruitment and retention in work in different ways. For example, people with learning disabilities or blind or partially sighted people often need assistance or more time to complete on-line application forms or tests²²; people with mental health conditions or on the autistic spectrum may need support to negotiate the social world of work.

²² For blind and partially sighted people, software such as screen reader doesn’t read boxes: typically found in application forms.

4.2.3. Lack Of Confidence And Low Expectations

Diagram 4 shows the barrier mostly commonly cited as the second most important or prohibitive was individuals' low expectations of themselves.

Service providers and employers reported people lacked confidence about work, related to a lack of self-esteem, and worry about what employers will think of them. One employer interviewee talked about individuals "fear" of employers or employment.

4.2.4. Job-Matching And Developing A Career

"They want you to do anything, but I wanted a career" (young university graduate).

A lack of focus on the right job, or a career, applied at all levels. A young person on a supported college course talked about his disappointment with a work place where he was "always washing dishes" and didn't get support to progress onto any other tasks in that placement, although the supervisor had said there would be an opportunity for that, "It never happened".

Short-term contracts of a few months and repeatedly changing jobs are difficult. This is particularly pertinent for people with mental health conditions or people on the autistic spectrum, to whom structure and knowing what is going to happen is important. Interviewees said short-term jobs and zero hour contracts don't promote their health, and hence, nor their employability.

4.2.5. Travel To Work

Travel constraints were frequently highlighted as a barrier. A blind person was apprehensive about travelling further to an unknown area; someone with a long-term condition managing their fatigue could go back to work but not if it involved three hours of travel, which would be exhausting; and some people were constrained by the cost.

Limited public transport in Fife was a raised as a barrier, for example a young person with a learning disability had been offered a summer job in Cupar, but there wasn't a suitable bus service from Methil.

4.2.6. Skills For Work

A few interviewees wanted to retrain, e.g. in IT, but found the cost of the course prohibitive or thought they were too old. Younger disabled people mentioned skill shortages and lack of work experience, but additionally the general scarcity of jobs as being a barrier to gaining employment or moving on (for example, after an apprenticeship).

4.2.7. The Benefits System

The system put people off finding work, especially work of substantial hours. "Permitted work" or "supported-permitted work" allow earnings up to £101 per week²³, but means that people have to constrain their hours if they want to keep their out-of-work benefits. One respondent cited changing this situation as a "big rigmarole", sorting out your benefits. Others talked about the need for more benefits advice in general, especially when changing their circumstances, such as when moving into work.

4.2.8. The Employability System

Service users perceived that aspirations for them were often low:

"we aren't sitting around with a big flat screen TVs in the hoose, that's what people think, we are lumped in with those people who claim benefits and have all these things just watching TV all day. We want to do an honest day's work." (focus group participant)

One focus group participant keen to "earn a steady wage" recited the story of when, recently, she was told by the Jobcentre that she'd be better to claim carers allowance and maximise the families' benefits. Advice she described as:

"horrendous", saying she felt she was "getting nowhere" in the job search.

Service users also reported not progressing because they felt like they were going around in circles, which means that:

"You have to explain again and again your issues" (interviewee with a long-term condition).

Service providers corroborated that people were frequently passed between services. This includes when a service user moves onto the Work Programme or Work Choice and has to stop working with local services, which disrupts the individual's employment journey. Later that person may come back to the local service when unsuccessful in finding a job under the mainstream programmes.

The situation is compounded by local services often being funded on short-term contracts, which means they are not sustainable and change regularly.

In light of a changing service landscape, parents, carers and service providers wanted information on available, appropriate employment support, especially for young people leaving college.

²³ For further information, see <https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/eligibility>

Disabilities Fife, which has an information provision role, suggested a consolidated directory of services was useful. It was thought an easy read, regularly updated printed directory may seem more costly than on-line material but it was more likely to be accessed by disability organisations and cascaded to disabled people.²⁴

People who'd become ill whilst in work requested a resource where you could find more about your back to work options after developing a long-term condition.

4.2.9. Access To Employers

Disabled individuals and people with long-term conditions repeatedly said they had few chances to meet with employers. This was inhibiting their ability to progress to interview stage and compete for jobs.

"I want to be given a chance by an employer, for them to see beyond my disability" (interviewee in a job but with longer-term work goal)

Declaring a disability in an application creates a barrier, but it's the disability label as much as the disability that is the barrier. Individuals' and specialist service providers' experience is it can be overcome through support that secures disabled people an interview, or chance meet employers face-to-face.

To secure these employer contacts, Disabilities Fife recently proposed:

"Fife Council's supported employment service should be encouraging actively other employers to recruit disabled people. In particular, the supported employment service should ensure that recruitment agencies and other similar organisations, located in Fife, promote the employment of disabled people to prospective employers." (Disabilities Fife response to Fife Council Equalities Unit on "Working Better: The Perfect Partnership", EHRC Policy Report).

4.2.10. In-Work Or After Care Support

Examples were given of where an individual with a disability had lost a job - for example being unable to cope with social world of work - which need not have happened if there had been a third party to call on for support. Someone to act as a go between for the employer and the employee: someone who understood both the employer and employee's needs.

²⁴ Apparently there used to be one, but funding was withdrawn.

4.2.11. Summary of Key Findings

- Personalised employability service provision to disabled people and people with long-term conditions supports individuals to overcome a range of barriers including: a disability or health condition; lack of confidence; low expectations; travel constraints; lack of appropriate skills and navigating the benefits system.
- Although having a long-term condition or disability - described by people as “very personal” in nature and dependent on the individual - is a barrier to work it is something that can be overcome
- Disabled people are seeking many different types, and hours of work and careers; and matching the disabled person to the right job is an important component of good quality support and necessary for a sustainable outcome
- Disabled people are looking for more contacts with employers, to gain work; and on-going access to support in work.
- Service users report going around in circles in the employment system; and when they move to mainstream programmes they have to leave other employability support.
- Service users are looking for more consistent support, from services funded on a sustainable basis; and more information on the support available.

4.3. Employers

4.3.1. The Employers’ Perspective

Negative workplace attitudes to disability, specifically for people with mental health conditions, are well documented in the literature (Perkins et al, 2009); and were also reported in the review. People attending a mental health support project clearly stated they felt prejudice and resulting discrimination was an issue, for people with mental health conditions.

However, the employers’ perspective is that they face barriers around a lack of knowledge and confidence about employing disabled people, coupled with a fear of having to provide support and a lack of time to do so.

“The issue is time. ..busy company.. They are worried about giving support for a person”. (HR professionals).

A relatively common perception, in terms of the amount of support available and the quality of support, in Fife, is that there are:

“pockets of provision” (HR professional).

Research conducted by SUSE in 2012 found employers’ valued disabled employees but sought more direct advice and encouragement. Employers

want agencies providing employability support to disabled people to be more proactive in identifying and meeting on-going needs.

4.3.2. Support for Employers

The Sayce Review and the emergent DWP Disability and Employment Strategy have promoted the idea of increasing employers' confidence around disability (Sayce, 2011; DWP, 2013). The Disability Confident²⁵ campaign for employers has been launched and The Strategy is planning a one-stop shop and information portal for employers.

Also following the Sayce Review, reforms to the Access to Work grant scheme are on-going, and it is possible that that employers (rather than the employee) will be allowed to apply for Access to Work in the future.

In Fife, more can be done to promote the scheme to employers, to provide practical support to help disabled people in the workplace.

Spreading learning and good practice from areas of operation where managers have supported individuals with disabilities is a method of increasing employers' strategic commitment to employment opportunities for disabled people. Some of these good practice areas/workplaces have been highlighted within the Fife Business Diversity Awards over the years. This has examples of managers who have actively worked with the Supported Employment Service, Capability Scotland and other providers to support disabled employees over time: 2013 Award winners included sections of Fife Council such as Fife Council Building Services and Fife Sport and Leisure Trust.

Appendix Five has information on past Fife Business Diversity Winners (2012 and 2013).

²⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-disability-confident-campaign>

5. Critical success factors

“Disabled people require effective support which genuinely improves their position in the labour market.” (Disability Rights UK, 2013)

This section of the report highlights critical success factors to be considered when developing employment support services for disabled people.

- Commitment to tackle the inequality of disabled people’s employment

The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland suggests that Local Authorities and Community Planning Partners lead the commitment (Scottish Government and CoSLA, 2010). The CPP has an obligation to develop and commission high quality specialist services, and scrutinise the role of the Community Planning Partners as employers of people with disabilities and long-term conditions.

- Sustained Funding

A key to provision of good quality services is a commitment to sustained funding. The Scottish Supported Employment Framework states this will “increase stability, forward planning and integration to provide more and better job outcomes” (A Working Life for All Disabled People, p15).

Echoing this, the review participants reported the lack of sustainable funding for disabled people’s employment support affected services, with provider agencies chasing where the money is targeted and services being transient.

- Joint Health and Employability Support

Providing joint health and employability support is crucial for many people with a long-term condition or disability and well evidenced for mental health conditions.

- Quality of service provision

To ensure that disabled people have the best chance of securing jobs high quality services are required.

As the Draft Fife Supported Employment Strategy for Fife (October 2012) stated, there is a need for:

- ✓ A well trained and competent workforce, who are specialist in working with employers and providing personalised employment support
- ✓ Following approved and evidenced pathway of service delivery, such as the 5 staged supported employment approach, which has the aspiration of 16 or more hours per week paid work for disabled people
- ✓ Measurement of outcomes related to jobs achieved, work sustained, and, arguably, also people’s independence and quality of life.

- Co-production

People with lived experience of a disability have clear ideas about what can help them gain and sustain work.

Tapping into this knowledge will help ensure a specialist disability service that is rooted in need, good practice and the delivery of job outcomes.

- Early intervention

Early intervention for promoting disabled people's employment can include:

- ✓ Acting early when someone with a disability or long-term condition becomes ill in work, or goes off work sick, as is promoted through NHS Scotland's Health Works strategy, and the Working Health Services intervention.
- ✓ Supporting young people with disabilities to transition from education to employment.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Current Employability Service Provision For Disabled And People With Long-Term Conditions In Fife

In Fife, the mainstream Work Choice programme successfully supports a cohort of disabled people into employment and, generally, is more work focussed than other specialist employability services supporting disabled people's employment. However, the two main Work Choice providers only have the capacity to engage with around 200-300 people per year. In addition, mainstream DWP programmes are not a suitable for all people with disabilities who want to work, with many requiring more intensive support.

Locally commissioned employability provision does not fill the gap and meet the needs of people with disabilities. The Fife Social Work Supported Employment Service is hampered in providing good quality supported employment as it's not solely employment focused, its employment support workers have large caseloads and it needs more and more intense employer contacts.

The low level of job outcomes emphasises the need to provide more work-focused employment support for people with long-term conditions and disabilities who want to work. This requirement to increasingly focus on outcomes is in line with the Commissioning Strategy for the Fife Employability Pathway and the Fife Supported Employment Strategy 2012.

The support could include providing additional inputs to people mandated to the Work Programme as the current system does not help disabled people's employability. The additional support would need to be funded, by Work Programme providers that'd receive payments when the individual gains sustainable work.

People with mental health conditions and long-term conditions accessing vocational rehabilitation require employment support alongside the health input. A mental health condition was the most common impairment encountered by services and people with long-term mental health issues need specific support.

6.2. Employment Aspirations, Barriers And Employment Support Needs

Common barriers that people with disabilities and long-term conditions face include: those related specifically to their disability or illness; lack of confidence; negative perceptions of employers; the benefits system; barriers around travel and transport and a confusing employment support system, or lack of support.

People are seeking a variety of jobs, in different sectors, and sustainable careers, and it's important the individual is matched to the job. There is a need to increase disabled jobseeker's contact with employers.

Disabled people's barriers are best overcome, and their aspirations met, through personalised support. However, it needs to be coupled with support to employers, both around the recruitment and continued employment of people with disabilities, and at a more strategic level to open up more options for disabled people and people with long-term conditions.

To reach more employers, support for employers can be provided both through a personalised, supported employment service and a disability specific component of employer engagement teams. They require staff with knowledge of disability and local employers to ensure employers get the right person for any job; on-going support is available to both employees and employers; and there is advice to employers on reasonable adjustments and available resources, including Access to Work.

6.3. Effective Employability Support For Disabled People And People With Long-Term Conditions

Services users' opinions on what works in terms of supporting them into sustainable employment concurs with evidence base for effective employment support. That is supported employment, which aims for:

- Employment in the open labour market
- Paid work
- On-going support in work.

At the same time more strategic actions across the system can promote greater involvement of people with disabilities and long-term conditions. At one level, the research showed that disabled people and their families would like an easier to navigate and more consolidated system. More information on the support available may help people navigate the system in the shorter term, but ultimately more joined-up responses would be beneficial. For example, NHS Fife has a range of occupational therapy services that support people's employability. These connect well with existing employability services such as the Social Work Supported Employment Team and Work Choice. However, to better connect existing rehabilitation services and fill any gaps in vocational rehabilitation, NHS occupational therapists would like to see a vocational rehabilitation coordinator or project manager appointed. This post would provide a single point of access to vocational rehabilitation for GPs.

Ideally, all people with disabilities and long-term conditions would enter employability services through one point of contact. This would make the system less confusing and help direct people to the most appropriate service

for them. However, many people enter services through Jobcentre Plus, so DWP would need to be involved in developing this idea.

System wide change should include promoting opportunities for disabled people's employment in the workplaces of Opportunities Fife, and the involvement of disabled people in the planning of services, through co-production.

Beyond employability, currently it is unclear how integration of Health and Social Care will affect employment related provision, such as that provided in Health by occupational therapists. Increasing links to the Health and Social Care Partnership will assist with monitoring these developments.

7. Recommendations

Developing Services

1. Services that support the employability of disabled people be funded on the basis that they provide “work-first” support.

Where funding is controlled locally, for services in the Employability Pathway working with disabled job seekers, the emphasis should be changed from training and work preparation to supporting people into and within work.

2. Opportunities Fife allocates specific funding for an outcome focused supported employment service

The service will provide intensive, personalised support according to the five-staged supported employment approach recommended in the Supported Employment Framework for Scotland. It will provide a case-managed service both for employers and individuals to meet identified needs in terms of individualised support, job matching, employer engagement and support in work, to place people in open employment.

Adapting the Social Work Supported Employment Service to allow it to become more “work focussed” could form this service. The Service, with commissioners, might explore examples of good practice in work-first supported employment, for example in North Lanarkshire and Glasgow.

It is recommended the service is funded on a sustainable basis and service delivery includes reporting and analysis of job outcomes, to ensure quality and effectiveness.

3. NHS Fife lead on the development of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) within community mental health teams (CMTs)

Best practice in supported employment for people with long-term mental conditions is that health and employment support is delivered concurrently, through employment support workers placed in CMTs according to the IPS model.

This will require service change within the NHS, and funding from Opportunities Fife for employment workers for the CMT(s). The Social Work Supported Employment Service and the third sector (e.g. FEAT) have experience of providing employability input to people with mental health conditions so could be funded to second an qualified, experienced staff member(s) to the developing IPS service.

The Supported Employment and IPS services would work in conjunction with the Employability Pathway.

4. Provide appropriate support to people with disabilities and long-term conditions in the Work Programme

To enable individuals to access appropriate support, it is recommended that local specialist agencies, funded by Opportunities Fife, be allowed to work with people who are mandated to the Work Programme. Funding for this activity should be sought from the Work Programme.

5. Information on available employability support is accessible to disabled people, their families and support organisations.

It is proposed a communication plan is developed with disabled people or disabled people's organisations in Fife, to include, for example, specially designed, accessible pages on the OFP website and a paper directory.

6. Information on service users' progression and outcomes is more readily available through increased use of FORT.

The FORT system allows service managers and commissioners to access client and organisational level data. It is recommended that more agencies, to include the proposed IPS and Supported Employment Services, use FORT to record their activities and outcomes.

Supporting Employers

7. Opportunities Fife and Skills Development Scotland employer account management include a disability specific component.

Local employer engagement teams managing relationships with key companies should promote the employment of disabled people.

As well as working at a general level to improve employer's confidence, disabled job seekers need to be linked with employers on a one-to-one basis. So there is a role for existing, local employer engagement teams to actively market this group of job seekers.

8. The Health and Disability Delivery Group to investigate the use of the proposed DWP One Stop Shop for Fife's employers

Employers want reassurance and advice around employing disabled people. The above recommendations will contribute to meeting that need, as will disseminating local good practice. In addition, to reach a wider audience, Opportunities Fife, through DWP in Fife, can link into the proposed, virtual 'One Stop Shop' for employers, which is to include an Information Portal, and the on-going Disability Confident Campaign.

Wider System Change

9. The Health and Disability Delivery Group continue to promote joint working between the NHS and Opportunities Fife

The Delivery Group provides an ideal opportunity for the NHS and employability services to work collaboratively.

NHS occupational therapy has recommended a vocational rehabilitation project manager be appointed. If realised, the post holder would be an important member of the Health and Disability Delivery Group and could take part in any developments around a single point of contact for employability services for people with disabilities and long-term conditions.

10. The Health and Disability Delivery Group scope with DWP the possibility of a single point of contact

For a single point of contact to work it needs to be developed with DWP, which generates the bulk of referrals for mainstream programmes. The emergent Disability Employment Strategy proposes developing "a new gateway" to employment services, which could provide an opportunity for this discussion locally.

11. The Council and NHS, lead by example, and encourage the employment of disabled people

Specialist employability services are looking for workplaces to place disabled people. At a strategic level, the large statutory sector employers should review their own policies and procedures, with these service providers, disabled people and disabled people's organisations, to minimise barriers to the recruitment of disabled people.

12. Opportunities Fife use co-production to implement the reports' recommendations.

This review, through consultation with service users, has taken a first step in co-production. It is recommended meaningful involvement be continued in the process of Opportunities Fife commissioning and developing a new programme of support for disabled people, to ensure that service users feel the needs they identified in the review are being met.

13. Opportunities Fife link strategically with social work and education departments to ensure employment is included in future developments

In the future more people will have personal budgets; these may become a mechanism to gain and maintain employment, but it requires raising the awareness of care providers and social workers of employment as a Self-

directed Support outcome. So, it is recommended links are made and maintained with the Health and Social Care Partnership Service Delivery Plan and key players developing Self-directed Support in Fife.

A further consideration for the future is the transitions of young disabled people both from school and further or higher education and what can be done to support them to move to employment during the transition processes.