



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

# Healthy and Inclusive Employment

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# Disabled People in Employment

The Government set a goal to see a **million more disabled people in employment** between 2017 and 2027.

The latest figures released for Q1 2022 show that between Q1 2017 and Q1 2022 the number of disabled people in employment increased by 1.3m – meaning the goal has been **exceeded** after five years.

However despite meeting the 1 million goal, disabled people are at a much higher risk of moving out of work and are less likely to get into, or return to, work

Disabled people are **10 times more likely** to have a spell of long term sickness absence and leave work following it than non-disabled people.

**340,000 disabled workers move out of work each year.**

**Disabled workers move out of work at nearly twice the rate (8.8%) of non-disabled workers (4.9%).**

**Workless disabled people move into work at about one-third of the rate (11.0%) of workless non-disabled people (26.9%).**

**Once out of work few return; only around 1% of people in the Employment Support Allowance “support group” leave the benefit each month, and not always by moving into work.**



# Long-term health conditions and disabilities are common among people of working age, often acting as a barrier to employment

In total, there are **41m working age people** in the UK and **31m in employment**

**1 in 3** (35%) of people aged 16-64 in the UK have a long term health condition – **14.5m** people



**1 in 5** (22%) of people aged 16-64 in the UK are disabled - **9m** people



## Working age people with autism or learning disabilities currently have very low employment rates

The employment rates for disabled people with autism and people with severe or specific learning difficulties are the lowest employment rates across all the main impairment types. (26.5% and 25.6% respectively in the financial year ending March 2021)

This is significantly lower than the employment rate for the disabled population as a whole in the same period (52.5%).

The ASCOF measure of the employment rate for people with a learning disability using local social care in England shows the extremely low employment rate for this group. The average for all LAs in 2020/21 was 5.1% and it has been around 5-6% for many years.



# Employment brings many benefits for people with learning disabilities and for the businesses employing them

- Evidence shows that being out of work is generally bad for health. Good work is good for an individual's mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- A job can help improve mental health and also provides an income which can help towards securing good quality housing and meeting other needs.
- Work can help people live healthier lives, giving an individual a purpose; allows for development of social contacts; is a factor for preventing both physical and mental health problems
- Employers of people with a learning disability who are placed and trained appropriately report that they are a positive benefit to their businesses. They have been found to be loyal, reliable and conscientious. They stay in jobs longer, saving on recruitment costs; and the morale and employee engagement of their colleagues is increased.
- We know that many people with a learning disability wish to work and believe they are capable of working with the right support
- There are a number of inter-related factors to supporting learning disabled people to get and keep employment that require a cross-system, cross-government approach to delivery and implementation.



# The right support from employers, the health system and employment services can improve employment outcomes for those with a learning disability

Evidence shows what needs to be in place to help disabled people **find and stay** in employment

## What is needed

Employers

Inclusive recruitment and employment practices, including retraining

Accommodation of needs of employees with health conditions, e.g. adjustments

Financial security to recover through sick pay

Health system

Access for employers/employees to expert-led advice, including good quality occupational health services

Employment and health provision, nationally and locally, which is aligned and integrated towards supporting employment of people with health conditions

Employment  
services

Early employment support to employees at risk of falling out of work

Access to tailored and personalised support for disabled employees with complex barriers to get into or stay in employment



# Employment support for people with learning disabilities

- **Supported Internships**, through DfE, provide young people with Education, Health and Care plans with the skills to secure and sustain employment. DWP have secured increased Access to Work funding to support this expansion and help pay for workplace adjustments where necessary
- DWP have contracted provision in England and Wales\* (both national and embedded in local services) aimed at providing support for disabled people including:
  - **Work and Health Programme (WHP)**, provides tailored personalised employment support for all disabled people
  - **Intensive Personalised Employment Support (IPES)**, provides highly personalised packages of employment support for disabled people who want to work but have complex needs or barriers and require specialist support to achieve sustained employment.
- **The Disability Confident** scheme supports employers to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to the workplace. It provides employers with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to attract, recruit, retain and develop disabled people in the workplace. DWP is engaging with employers through the Disability Confident scheme and helping to promote the value people with learning disabilities can bring to their businesses

*\*Contracted provision for disabled people and those at risk of unemployment where the provision of support is for 12 months or more is devolved to Scottish Government.*



# Employment support for people with learning disabilities

**Access to Work:** DWP is recruiting and training extra staff to meet additional demand and supporting a series of Adjustment Passport pilots.

**Access to Work Plus:** A proof of concept which will enable us to gain valuable insight into whether providing support for employers who are willing to adapt workplaces and flex job roles, and complementing this with new enhanced personal support elements. This can open up job opportunities and enable disabled people who have the greatest barriers to employment to see work as a viable option

**Engagement from DWP Schools Teams:** With Special Schools and Colleges where our school advisers work with local schools in areas of deprivation and low social mobility.

- Delivery of early years interventions.
- School advisers closely engaged in supporting over 150 SEND/Special schools through initiatives such as the Community Partners Programme.

**There is on-going training for:** Job Centre Plus Work Coaches, Disability Employment Advisers and Employment Advisers with many learning opportunities to equip staff with the right level of knowledge for their roles.

**Pilot project** was run in 2021/22 with the National Autistic Society to develop a framework for improving services to autistic customers then accrediting them in its use.



# The Local Supported Employment Initiative

- Local Supported Employment (LSE) will deliver a Supported Employment ‘place, train and maintain’ model.
- Supported Employment is an internationally recognised approach, with strong international evidence of its ability to support people with a learning disability, autism or both into employment.
- Local Authorities are ideally placed to provide LSE as part of their responsibilities under the Adult Social Care support framework and to ensure continuity of support to young people with Education, Health and Care Plans who aspire to work.
- LSE is designed to help people with a learning disability or autism, or both, who are known to Adult Social Care, or with the same level of employment support needs. The focus of support will be on employment rather than a lengthy period of pre-employment training.
- The initiative builds on the evidence and experience of delivering the LSE Proof of Concept run in 9 LAs in England between November 2017 and May 2019. Evidence showed positive impacts on an individuals self-esteem, job satisfaction and social contacts.
- The long term aim of Locally Supported Employment is to develop a sustainable model for delivering Supported Employment within Local Authorities, providing people with intensive one-to-one job finding support.





# Local Supported Employment Initiative

- LSE will run between Nov 2022 and March 2025.
- DWP is providing funding of £7+million for around 20 county councils and Unitary Authorities (including Metropolitan councils and London Boroughs) in England and Wales.
- Supported Employment will be delivered for approximately 2,000 participants. Each Local Authority will support 60-140 individuals into employment in accordance with the 5-stage fidelity model.
- The 5-stage model is:
  - 1. Participant Engagement** – An opportunity for jobseekers to find out about the supported employment model and make an informed choice on whether it is right for them.
  - 2. Vocational Profiling** – A detailed discovery and planning process that enables people to identify what they want to achieve and work out a plan for getting there.
  - 3. Job Finding** – The employment worker and participant work together to find vacancies that meet the participants employment goals.
  - 4. Employer Engagement** – The employer worker learns about the job and works out a plan with the employer on how they will support the participant through the recruitment process and in the workplace.
  - 5. On and Off the Job Support** – The participant is supported to learn the job and sustain employment; this could include job coaching at work or training.