

Education and Disability

July 6th 2010

- Barriers to participation in education, training and employment for adults
- Overcoming barriers - Examples of good practice
- Policies and practices that could help

Some key statistics from UK

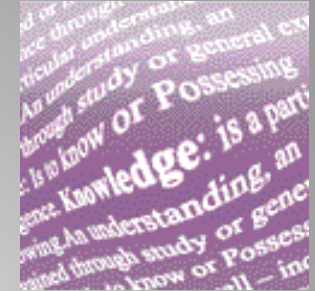
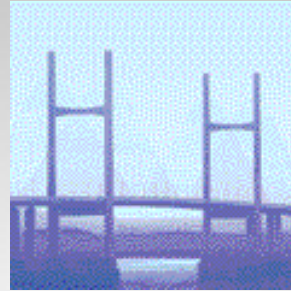
- 10M people with a limiting long term illness, impairment or disability in the UK (almost 1 in 6 of the population)
- Prevalence rises with age.
 - 1 in 20 children
 - 1 in 7 work age adults
 - 1 in 2 people over state pension age

Post 19 Education

- Disabled people more than twice as likely not to hold any qualifications compared to non-disabled people and half as likely to hold a degree level qualification.
- 24.3 % of working age disabled people do not hold any formal qualification (compared to 10 per cent of working age non disabled people)
- 11.4% of working age disabled people hold degree-level qualifications compared to 21.8% of working age non disabled people. (UK gov. Office for disability)

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

- Disability
- Aspiration
- Perceptions/prejudice/attitudes
- Organisational culture (schools and colleges, universities and employers)



EQUINEX

Excellently Equal

Making diversity a driver for
education, training and
employment

The Context and background

- **South East Wales**
- **Led by University of Wales, Newport**
- **Action Research over 2.5 years**
- **University and community supported partnership piloting new ways of enabling access to education, training and employment for people from disadvantaged groups.**

Some of the Participants

- City Council Social Services department
- National Autistic Society
- JobcentrePlus
- Independent Advocacy Service
- Prime Cymru
- People with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairments
- People with Autistic spectrum disorders
- People 50+

Overall aim of the project

- **To address the barriers faced by disadvantaged groups when trying to access education, training or employment.**
- **To work in partnership with other agencies to pilot solutions, evaluate the outcomes and to help organisations support people into education, training and employment.**
- **To influence policy and activity at local, regional, national and European level.**

Key findings

- **Disadvantaged people benefit from individual tailored support to enable them to overcome the barriers they face when attempting to access education, training and employment.**
- **Education and training establishments and employers benefit from information and practical support to actively engage with Europe's untapped labour resource.**
- **Partnership working has benefits beyond the utilisation of collaborative pooling of skills.**

Transitional support work

- Tested new ways of supporting people with learning, sensory or physical disabilities through transitions in their lives, helping them to access education, training and employment.
- Found new, more effective ways of using social services practitioner time to provide support for people referred. Consequent saving in local authority spend.

Learning Disability Transitions project

To assist a group of adults with learning difficulties in accessing and sustaining education, training and employment.

Some facts about learning disability

- 1.5M people with a learning disability in the UK.
- Less than 1 in 5 people with a learning disability work (compared with 1 in 2 disabled people generally), but we know that at least 65% of people with a learning disability want to work. (Mencap UK, 2010)
- Of those people with a learning disability that do work, most only work part time and are low paid.
- Children with a learning disability are often socially excluded and 8 out of 10 children with a learning disability are bullied.
- 1 in 2 families with a disabled child live in poverty.

More facts

- People with a learning disability are 58 times more likely to die aged under 50 than other people.
- Four times as many people with learning disability die of preventable causes as people in the general population.
- 75% of GPs have received no training to help them treat people with a learning disability.
- 7 out of 10 families caring for someone with profound and multiple learning disabilities have reached or come close to 'breaking point' because of a lack of short break services.

Some more facts

- At least half of all adults with a learning disability live in the family home - meaning that many don't get the same chances as other people to gain independence, learn key skills and make choices about their own lives.
- 58,000 people with a learning disability are supported by day care services.
- 29,000 adults with a learning disability live with parents aged 70 or over, many of whom are too old or frail to continue in their caring role. In only 1 in 4 of these cases have local authorities planned alternative housing.
- Source: Mencap UK.

Transitions work with learning disabilities

Through co-operation and partnership with relevant agencies, to work with people with learning difficulties so that they can take advantage of work experience, volunteering or other opportunities to enable them to improve their general well being and provide them with opportunities which would otherwise be unavailable.

To ensure that major “changes” in an individual’s life are planned, prepared and co-ordinated using a multi-agency approach with the individual being totally consulted and involved and at the centre of the planning. To observe and monitor these changes using a range of evaluation tools.

Transitions work methods

- **First Contact – Establishing clients' needs!**
- **Working with providers**
- **Provision of facilitation and support.**

Case studies



Case Studies



Rayana



Bob, learning a new skill

Learning from the work

- Provision of flexible cross organisational liaison facility to source new opportunities for clients including training and work experience.
- Increased representation of stakeholders on partnership boards and policy making bodies.
- Enabled organisations to provide opportunities where before they may not have been asked to do so.

Social Skills support

In response to need and with the support of individuals with Asperger's syndrome the project developed a comprehensive social skills curriculum for people with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD).

Developed and piloted throughout the UK, it is now commercially available and in use throughout the National Autistic Society.
(Socialeyes)

Learning from working with older people

Prime Cymru piloted new ways of helping people over 50 back into employment, including a variety of workshops and training sessions for employers as well as for potential employees. They particularly looked at recruitment processes and the need to make them more inclusive for this client group.

Learning from working in partnership

- Benefits for individuals
- Benefits for the University
- Benefits for partner organisation

How can inclusion be supported?

- Overcome disability by improving access and support
- Raise aspiration of all by recognising the abilities despite the disability
- Challenge prejudice leading to:
- Changes in organisational culture

Inclusion not prejudice

- Give equal status to people with disabilities
- Ensure common goals
- Cooperation not competition
- Support of authorities and institutions

Improving access and support

- individuals need:

- one to one support to identify their needs for education, training and employment.
- individual support to identify and practice strategies for accessing generic services.
- support and independent advocacy if necessary until people are able to survive in a new environment.

Improving access and support – organisations need:

- Practical advice and information from practitioners or specialists – increasing access effectively and economically.
- Awareness raising for staff on the benefits of employing a socially diverse workforce.
- Understanding of inclusiveness – and how to achieve it.

Practical helping mechanisms

- Awareness raising about effective inclusive practice should be available for organisations.
- Individual tailored support made available to help people access generic services. Without this it's not possible often.
- Training for professionals in inclusive practice (GP's, educationalists, social workers, medics, housing professionals, etc.)
- For people with learning disabilities access to independent housing/transport and support services.

QUESTIONS?