

Position of Employability Priority Groups in Edinburgh –

Disabilities: Physical Disabilities, Mental Health Conditions and Learning Disability

October 2010

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(this research project was compiled by Robbie Pye an intern with Capital City Partnership during 2010; if you require more information on this work or the work of the Job Strategy Team, please contact Capital City Partnership on 0131 270 6030)



Disabilities

Outline

Research by Berthoud (2006) has shown that due to the demographics and economic characteristics of the disabled target group (i.e. older and less educational qualifications) their employment rate if not disabled would be about 7% lower than the national employment rate (72.8%). As the actual employment rate for disabled people is 47.4%, this shows that, on average, having a disability reduces employment prospects by 18.4%. Furthermore, people with disabilities are also more likely to be in low paid positions and less likely to be promoted (Working Brief, 2010).

However, this average employment rate is limited in explaining the employment barriers due to the diversity of this group. The next three sections break this target group down into: physical disability, mental disability and learning disability.

It should be noted that due to a lack of data for these groups in Edinburgh, many of the following figures are estimates. These estimates have been based on a combination of other surveys and reports. However, an issue emerged with these different sources using different definitions of what they consider a disability. This created problems with the groups overlapping and with some reports having a stricter criterion for disabilities. Although some steps have been taken by the authorities in this area to combat this problem (Sykes and Groom, 2009), this has still created some issues for this report which should be taken into account. Therefore some of the figures displayed here are open to some amount of error.

The sources of information and the process used to estimate figures for Edinburgh have been specified where necessary.

1. Physical Disabilities

Definition

Under the Disability Discrimination Act a person is defined as disabled if they have a “physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and ‘long-term’ adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

Outline

As noted above, the prevalence of physical disabilities increases with age, with the most common impairments being mobility or problems lifting, carrying or moving objects.

(Williams et al. 2008)

Scope

According to the Annual Population Survey there are 49,700 disabled people in Edinburgh. 2,201 of these people suffer from learning disabilities and 27,709 have a mental health condition, which leaves **19,790** people with physical disabilities.¹

Employment

The average employment rate for all disabled people in Scotland was 44.7% in 2009. The average for the physically disabled was higher, at about 58.2%. This means about **11,517** physically disabled people are in employment in Edinburgh. However, it should be noted that the physically disabled employment rate was worked out by taking an average of the disability employment rates shown below (Table 1) – which are national figures. These figures have a 95% confidence rate between the lower and upper limits displayed. Therefore the figure for the number of physically disabled people employed in Edinburgh is open to a significant amount of error. This is apparent below, as the number of people claiming benefits is estimated to be 10,350, which, when added to the number estimated in employment, is higher than the number estimated in Edinburgh.

¹ APS does not offer a breakdown of disability type. The number of physically disabled people is estimated by subtracting the number of mentally disabled people, which is worked out via the number in employment and employment rate, and the number of people with learning disabilities. However, it is unknown if the APS counts the learning disabilities via the prevalence rate or the number known to local authorities. As I am assuming they use the amount known to local authorities, the number used here could be an overestimation. This method of deduction is still open to a significant amount of error, however.

Table 9: Employment rates by disability type, 2008. 95% confidence between lower and upper limits

Disability Type	Lower	Upper
Arms, hands	42.4	50.4
Legs or feet	39.1	45.1
Back or neck	40.5	45.6
Difficultly in seeing	39.2	55.2
Difficultly in hearing	48.3	67.3
Speech impediment	2.8	60.0
Skin conditions and allergies	61.8	76.8
Chest and breathing problems	60.0	65.5
Heart and blood pressure problems	56.7	62.1
Stomach, kidney, liver and digestion	53.9	62.3
Diabetes	67.8	74.4
Depression	23.3	29.5
Epilepsy	34.6	46.9
Learning difficulties	14.7	25.2
Mental illness and phobias	9.8	16.1
Progressive illness	37.7	45.4
Other disabilities	51.8	58.2

(Office for Disability Issues, 2010)

Benefits

Using estimations based off DWP figures, and taking into account the switch to ESA for new claimants, there are about **10,350** IB/ESA claimants due to physical disabilities (Nomis, 2009). However, as the switch to ESA was designed to allow fewer people onto disability benefits, the number of claimants is likely to be slightly lower than 10,350.

Barriers

- Barriers vary due to the variety of disabilities that fall under the physically disabled category
- Negative perception of disability by employers
- Workplace not adapted to accommodate for disability
- Fear over benefit reassessment/loss due to taking up employment
- Lack of confidence and motivation due to long term unemployment
- Transport problems
- Hours can work may be limited
- Less likely to hold a formal qualification

(Williams et al. 2008; Sykes and Groom, 2009; Hayllar, Sejersen and Wood 2010)

Overlaps

- 10.5% of school leavers with a physical, hearing, visual or language impairment NEET in 2007/2008.
 - 20% of school leavers with a mental impairment were NEET in 2007/2008
 - 46% (789) of male prisoners have a physical disability or long-term illness
 - Out of 1,328 children in care in Edinburgh in 2009, 41 (3%) had a disability
- (Scottish Government, 2008; Williams et al. 2008)

Services

***Supported Employment Service** – Run by City of Edinburgh Council, it provides a comprehensive employment support service to all those covered by the Disability Discrimination Act. This includes skills development, help finding employment and support in employment.

Ingeus – Pathways to Work – This national programme offers one to one advice and workshops on a range of issues, such as health advice, benefits/work earnings calculations, financial assistance and advice and facilities for job hunting. It is available for people claiming ESA or IB who have a physical or mental disability.

Grapevine – Provides information to disabled people and their supporters on a variety of issues, including employment and benefits.

CAN Craigmillar Ability Network – Provides advice and employability assistance through both one to one help and group courses. It is aimed at anyone with a disability – physical, mental or learning. They also provide debt and benefit advice.

Reemploy – Provides employment services for people with physical, mental and learning disabilities. They work with clients to identify their best job match and offer advice, guidance, training and work placements to help achieve their goal.

RNIB Scotland – Provides work preparation programmes, training, advice and assessments to blind and partially sighted people to help them into and to sustain employment.

RNID Scotland - Provides work preparation programmes, training, advice and assessments to deaf and hard of hearing people to help them into and to sustain employment.

Working Health Services Lothian – Offers vocational rehabilitation for returning to work following illness, injury or health problems. They provide guidance and advice with all issues associated with returning to work.

Research Issues

- There is a lack of information available for this target group in Edinburgh
- No single source of data for this information in Edinburgh, resulting in estimations being based off multiple sources which use different definitions for disabilities. This creates inaccuracies and leaves some people unaccounted for.

2. Mental Health Conditions

Outline

Recent research has shown employment to play a key role in improving mental health and well-being by adding structure to one's life, creating a sense of self purpose and facilitating social interaction (Perkins, Farmer and Litchfield, 2009; Scottish Government, 2009). However, the employment rate for those with mental health issues is very low, with many sufferers being long term unemployed. Research has shown that 86% of benefit claimants due to mental health remain on benefits for over 3 months (Perkins, Farmer and Litchfield, 2009).

Those with mental health issues often need a higher level of support into and to retain employment. Signposting and advice provided by most general employment programmes is often not enough for this target group, and although some national employment programmes provide extra support for those with extra needs, they have a very low uptake rate from people with mental health conditions (Perkins, Farmer and Litchfield, 2009). Specialist employability programmes for those suffering from mental health problems are necessary to facilitate the transition into employment and to help the client retain their job in the long term.

Unfortunately there is a lack of available data for this target group in Edinburgh. Most of the figures used here are estimations based off UK and Scottish level figures.

Scope

There are 49,700 disabled people of working age in Edinburgh according to the Annual Population Survey (2009). As the employment rate is 21% and information from the Department of Work and Pensions suggests that up to 21,890 are not in employment, then the total number of people suffering mental health conditions is about **27,709**. However, this figure is likely to overestimate the number of people whose mental health condition adversely affects their employment.

Employability

According to the DWP the employment rate for those with mental health conditions is 21% - far lower than the 47% employment rate for disabilities in general (Perkins, Farmer and Litchfield, 2009). The employment rate is also significantly lower for those with more serious mental health issues, dropping to

as low as 3.5% (Working Brief, 2010; Perkins, Farmer and Litchfield, 2009). Therefore there are about **5,818** people in employment suffering from mental health issues.

Benefits

According to the DWP 9,500 people were claiming IB/SDA due to mental and behavioural disorders in Edinburgh in 2009 (Nomis, 2009). However, there are two problems with this figure: it does not contain data for ESA claimants and it includes those with learning disabilities. An analysis of those claiming IB for mental and behavioural disorders from 1999 to 2007 shows an average increase of 400 claimants per year. Following the same trend to account for those now on ESA, the true figure for those claiming benefits could be closer to 12,390. However, it has also been reported that the new ESA screening process has been incorrectly finding claimants to be fit for work and moving them onto JSA, particularly those with mental health problems (Dryburgh, 2010). As this figure also includes those with learning disabilities, the number of people claiming disability benefits due to mental health conditions is expected to be **less than 12,390**.

The DWP also estimates that there are 1 million people suffering mental health conditions in the UK who are not claiming benefits (Perkins, Farmer and Litchfield 2009). This could be due to a variety of reasons, including the stricter screening process for ESA highlighted above. Therefore there could be a further **9,500** unemployed people in Edinburgh with mental health issues who are not included in the benefits figure. This means as many as 21,890 people suffering mental health conditions could be not in employment in Edinburgh, although this is open to a significant amount of error. Research by Kennedy and Coutts (2008) suggests that about 50% of these people want to work.

Table 10: Employment status of those with mental health conditions

Target Group	In employment	Not in employment	Total
Mental health issues	5,818	Up to 21,890, of which about 10,945 may want to work	27,709

(Annual Population Survey, 2009; Nomis, 2009; Perkins, Farmer, Litchfield, 2009)

Barriers

- Estimates that only 1 in 14 people in Scotland with a mental illness find support to get into employment
- Discrimination at the workplace and negative perceptions of mental illness: 66% of those who have received mental health care say they have suffered discrimination and less than 40% of employers said they would recruit someone with mental health issues in one survey.
- Additional barriers are faced by South Asian women due to cultural reasons, resulting in increased isolation from the job market
- Uncertainty over returning to benefits
- Lack of confidence and motivation
- Fear that it will worsen mental health
- Low expectations from health care professionals further reduces motivation
- Lack of long term support to help individual stay in employment (Perkins, Farmer and Litchfield, 2009; Health Work Wellbeing, 2009; McCollam, Myers and Watson, 2008)

Overlaps

- Alcohol and drug abuse, homelessness, poverty and a history of offending all increase vulnerability to mental health issues
- Also increases chances of poverty, which has a further detrimental effect
- Some ethnic minorities have a higher rate of common mental disorders than others. For example Pakistanis: 19.6%, Irish: 18.5%, Indian 18.1% and Black Caribbean: 17.3%. The rate for White is 15.8%. However, it should be noted that some ethnic minorities, in particular Black Caribbean, are more likely to be diagnosed with a mental disorder due to social reasons
- 39% of male and 62% of female sentenced prisoners have a significant neurotic problem (Health Work Wellbeing, 2009; Gordon and Cassidy, 2009; MIND, 2010)

Services

***Grassmarket Mission** – Focuses on people who are homeless, have mental health conditions, have drug or alcohol addictions or are socially excluded. They also provide work experience and training in cooking and food preparation and a woodwork workshop in partnership with Edinburgh Cyrenians.

Advocard – Provides advice for people with mental health conditions and encourages users to train as advocacy workers to work for them.

Health in Mind – Runs a variety of projects for people with mental health issues, including projects specifically for men, women and ethnic minorities. They provide employment and training support where they deem necessary.

Penumbra – Runs several projects that provide advice and counselling for people with mental health conditions in Edinburgh. This includes advice on employment problems that arise from mental health issues and specific projects focused on women and young people.

Women onto Work – Runs an employment programme alongside Penumbra for women with complex mental health needs.

Scottish Association for Mental Health – Provides services, including employability and training support, for people with mental health conditions. This includes the Midtext programme, which focuses on developing computer and office skills.

St. Katherine's Community Support Project – Provides help for homeless people with severe and enduring mental health conditions. This ranges from housing and support to sustain housing to advice with shopping, laundry and employment.

Forth Sector – Their Employment Service team provides support to develop skills and experience to help people who have suffered mental health issues into employment. This involves individual case management, training groups, workshops, courses and work placements.

Intowork – Intowork West Lothian – Uses supported employment to help people with mental health conditions into work. This includes assessments on if the client is work ready, skills development to match suitable jobs, employer engagement and continued support once in employment.

National Schizophrenia Fellowship (Scotland) – Next Step – Provides one to one support, advice and guidance to people with mental health conditions in areas to do with employment, education and training.

Research Issues

- Lack of data for employment rates of people with mental health conditions in Edinburgh, creates need to use figures and rates from multiple sources to estimate Edinburgh data
- Different definitions for disability used by multiple sources (i.e. Department of Work and Pensions, Annual Population Survey, Office for Disability Issues), adds inaccuracy to estimations.

- Department of Work and Pensions benefits data on Nomis excludes ESA claimants
- Department of Work and Pensions benefits data groups mental health conditions and learning disabilities into one category
- No data available on prevalence rates of severity of disabilities, yet employment rate is stated to be significantly lower

3. Learning Disability

Definitions

A report involving several UK government departments defines people with learning disabilities as having: "a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information and/or to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning) which started before adulthood, with a lasting effect on development" (Department of Health, 2009). This covers people with an IQ of less than 70.

Non-open employment refers to jobs that are specifically set up for people with learning disabilities. It usually involves participants being paid an allowance instead of an hourly wage.

Open employment refers to a job open to all members of the public, in which a person with learning disabilities is expected to be paid the same wage as anyone else.

Outline

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 gives local authorities the duty to promote well-being, social inclusion and development for anyone with a mental health condition or a learning disability. There have also been several national level programmes launched aimed at raising the employment level of those with learning disabilities.

Currently it is common for people with learning disabilities to do voluntary work or other "work placements" for which they are not paid. Although this is presented as work experience, for many people it means years of working in a voluntary position with no prospect of progressing to paid employment. Surveys have shown that about 65% of people with learning disabilities would like a job, yet the employment rate is far lower than the general disabled employment rate (Department of Health, 2009).

Edinburgh Council recognises the key role employment plays in active citizenship and is currently conducting a review of supported employment agencies to better inform their policy on the issue (City of Edinburgh Council, 2010b).

Scope

In Edinburgh there are 2,210 people with learning disabilities known to the local authorities. Their current situation is outlined in the table below.

Table 11: Status of those with Learning Disabilities

Further Education	Training	Able to live on own	Attending a day centre	Alternative day arrangements
25%	7%	27%	36%	23%

(Scottish Government, 2007a)

According to the Scottish Government (2007a) 20 in 1,000 people have a mild or moderate learning disability and 3 to 4 in 1,000 have a profound or multiple disability. The current working age population of Edinburgh is estimated to be about 320,000, meaning that there are 6,400 people with a mild or moderate learning disability and between 960 and 1,280 people with a profound or multiple learning disabilities. This is significantly higher than the amount known to the local authority. The Scottish Government (2007a) acknowledges that most people with learning disabilities are not known to the local authorities, claiming that an average of 20% of people with learning disabilities are known throughout Scotland. The above figures suggest that about 30% are known to the local authorities in Edinburgh.

Estimates suggest that roughly 80% of people with learning disabilities are over 20 (Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities, 2007). This means roughly **5,600** adults have a learning disability, although some of these will be over retirement age.

Employment

13% (291) of known adults with learning disabilities are in employment in Edinburgh. Of these 10 are in a voluntary position, 149 in non open employment, and 132 in open employment. Estimates by the Office for Disability Issues (2008) put the employment rate for learning *difficulties* at about 20% and the Department of Health claims it is 10%. Therefore the employment rate for those with learning disabilities is likely to be between 10% and 20%. This means that there are about **4,760** people with learning disabilities not in paid employment, although roughly 280 of these people are doing unpaid work.

Benefits

The DWP groups learning disabilities and mental health issues together, making it difficult to assess the amount of people claiming benefits for learning disabilities. Some of the 12,390 claiming disability benefits for “mental and behavioural disorders” have a learning disability. Although the exact number is unknown, it is likely to be less than those claiming for mental health conditions due to lower levels of people affected by learning disabilities.

Barriers

- Unable to read or understand application forms
- Lack of employer awareness on what jobs people with learning disabilities can do
- Concern over amount of in-work support available
- Workplaces not adapted to suit their needs
- Low aspiration from carers and family
- Work experience, further education and employability services not adapted adequately to help people with learning disabilities
- Problems using public transport
- Complexity and uncertainty of retaining benefits

(Gillespie, Mulvey and Scott, 2005; Department of Health, 2009)

Overlaps

- Young people with learning disabilities are 6 times more likely to have a mental health condition.
- 40% more likely to have a hearing impairment and more likely to have a vision impairment
- Between 1 and 10% of offenders have a learning disability
- 17% of school leavers with a learning disability were NEET in 2007/2008.
- 4% of known people with a learning disability in Edinburgh are from an ethnic minority.

(NHS Primary Care Contracting, 2007; Scottish Government, 2008b; Department of Health, 2009; City of Edinburgh Council, 2010b)

Services

***Action Group** – Real Jobs – Provides a wide range of support based on the individual needs of its clients. This can range from intense training to advice on getting a job. They also have the capacity to provide long term support. They target people with high support needs, including those with learning disabilities, mental health conditions, physical disabilities, ex-drug or alcohol abusers and ex-offenders.

***A4E** – New Deal Prime Contract – Provides services for those eligible for New Deal Provision covering numeracy and literacy, employability development and advice, job searching skills, training and support sustaining employment. It targets those with learning disabilities, lone parents and ethnic minorities.

Capability Scotland – This organisation runs two programmes for the disabled: Work Preparation and Work Step. Work Preparation is a short term service that provides work experience and guidance finding employment, whilst Work Step is a long term service that provides more intense support for people who face more complex barriers.

Enable Scotland – Woodhall at the Inch – Offers one to one employability services to people with learning disabilities, provides a plan towards employment, work experience and help finding, securing and sustaining employment.

EUS Community Learning Centre – CLAN – Provides basic skills classes for people with learning disabilities covering numeracy, literacy, math and English language and employment advice.

EUS Community Learning Centre – Personal Steps – Provides opportunities for people with learning disabilities to learn new skills, including computer skills, with the possibility of progressing into further education or supported employment.

Intowork – Bits and Bobs – Provides supported employment services to people with learning disabilities to help them into employment.

Garvald Community Enterprises Ltd. – Runs a project called The Engine Shed that helps people with learning disabilities learn skills in a real work environment. This is designed to help clients progress into paid employment.

Research Issues

- The Department of Work and Pensions categorises learning disabilities in the same group as mental health conditions for statistics on benefits
- Gap in number of people with learning disabilities known to the local authorities and the actual number in Edinburgh. It is not clear whether official employment estimations are for the number known or the estimated total.