

Specialist Disability Employment Support

A Call for Evidence

December 2010

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Introduction

The Department for Work and Pensions has commissioned Liz Sayce, Chief Executive of RADAR, to undertake an independent review of the Department's specialist disability employment programmes. This call for evidence will be one of several methods used to gather information. Evidence submitted will be used to create a final independent report, which will be published on DWP's website.

About this call for evidence

Who this call for evidence is aimed at

This call for evidence is aimed at organisations and individuals who have information that is relevant to how the Department provides employment support to disabled people.

Purpose of the call for evidence

This call for evidence will be used to inform the view of the independent reviewer. The independent reviewer will then make recommendations to the Secretary of State in the form of a report. As an independent review, the Secretary of State is not required to enact any or all of the recommendations, and any recommendations may be subject to further assessment by DWP.

Scope for the call for evidence

This consultation applies to England, Wales and Scotland.

Duration of the call for evidence

The call for evidence period begins on 2 December 2010 and runs until 28 February 2011.

How to respond to this call for evidence

Please send your responses or any queries to:

Post: Disability Programme Review Team
Floor 2
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NA

Email: employmentsupport.review@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Please ensure your response reaches us by **28 February 2011**

When responding, please state whether you are doing so as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled. We will acknowledge your response.

Alternative Formats

This document will be available in a range of formats, including large print, Braille, audio, BSL video/DVD, and Easy Read on request from:

Post: Disability Programme Review Team
Floor 2
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NA

Email: employmentsupport.review@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

In addition to publishing this document on DWP's website, we will be sending it to a large number of people and organisations who have already been involved in this work or who have expressed an interest. Please do share this document with, or tell us about, anyone you think will want to be involved in this consultation.

Freedom of information

The information you send us may need to be passed to colleagues within the Department for Work and Pensions, published in a summary of responses received and referred to in the published consultation report.

All information contained in your response, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure if requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. By providing personal information for the purposes of the public consultation exercise, it is understood that you consent to its disclosure and publication. If this is not the case, you should limit any personal information provided or remove it completely. If you want the information in your response to the consultation to be kept confidential, you should explain why as part of your response although we cannot guarantee to do this.

To find out more about the general principles of Freedom of Information and how it is applied within DWP, please contact:

Central Freedom of Information Team
The Adelphi 1-11
John Adam Street
London
WC2N 6HT

Freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

The Central Freedom of Information team cannot advise on specific consultation exercises, only on Freedom of Information issues. More information about the Freedom of Information Act can be found at www.dwp.gov.uk/freedom-of-information

Foreword

I am pleased to have been asked by the Secretary of State to undertake an independent review of specialist disability employment programmes.

I look forward to working with a wide range of people as part of the review process - people with lived experience of the spectrum of disability and long term health conditions; employers; trade unionists; and all involved, or with an interest in, employment programmes.

This initial call for evidence is your opportunity to let us know what you see as the most important features of specialist disability employment programmes for the future. In the New Year we will be talking with the range of stakeholders to explore the major issues in greater depth; and I will always be pleased to hear your views throughout the review period.

My aims are to review the support the Department for Work and Pensions provides to disabled people to support them in gaining, retaining and progressing in work, and to make recommendations on future strategy in this area. I hope that by starting from disabled people's experience and aspirations, and reviewing evidence from research and from practice, we will understand the most effective approaches to supporting satisfying, sustainable employment.

Liz Sayce

Context

Employment Support for Disabled People

1. The Department has a range of employment programmes which provide support to people with disability-related barriers to work. The Department plans to launch the Work Programme next year, which will offer support to customers in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance, including those with disability-related barriers.
2. On 25 October 2010, the Department launched Work Choice – as programme of support for those with more complex disability-related barriers to work. Work Choice will support around 23,000 customers each year. Alongside these two programmes, the Department offers a range of more specialist support for this group, notably Access to Work, Remploy, and Residential Training Colleges.
3. In addition to Work Choice, the Department will introduce the Work Programme - an integrated package of support providing personalised help to a broad range of customers. The Work Programme will cater for a wide range of disabled people.
4. Alongside the Work Programme and Work Choice, the Department has specialist disability employment programmes which will form the main focus of this review:

Residential Training Colleges

- Residential Training Colleges offer a service very different from the rest of the Department's specialist disability employment programmes, both in the length of courses and in the approach taken. They provide vocational training and support to unemployed disabled adults with the most severe barriers to employment whose needs cannot be met through any other government funded programme.
- Courses are tailored to each individual and duration varies to ensure customer needs are met. Maximum length of stay on a course is 52 weeks and the average is 35.4 weeks. There are currently around 500 people currently on this provision.
- There are nine Residential Training providers (five pan disability, three visual impairment and one hearing impairment) which are concentrated in the East and South of England. There are no colleges located in the North West of England, Scotland or Wales.
- The origin of the network of residential training colleges is varied. Some were established for the purpose of rehabilitating disabled war veterans, some were set up as charitable foundations before World War Two, and others were established as schools for disabled children and subsequently progressed into training for disabled adults.

Access to Work

- Access to Work was introduced in June 1994.
- Under the Disability and Discrimination Act employers have a legal duty to provide reasonable adjustments to assist disabled people in the workplace. Where it would be unreasonable for an employer to provide such adjustments Access to Work can provide practical advice and financial support to disabled people and their employers.
- When the programme began in 1994/95 it had a base budget of £15 million. The spend in 2009/10 was £95.3 million
- Access to Work will pay up to 100% of the approved costs of support including:
 - special aids and equipment *
 - adaptations to premises and equipment *
 - support workers / communication support at interview
 - travel to work

* Denotes that some employers are required to share costs depending on their size. The cost share arrangements from 1 April 2010 are as follows:
0-9 employees – £0 contribution. 10-49 employees – first £300 and 20% up to £10,000. 50-249 employees – first £500 and 20% up to £10,000. 250+ employees – first £1000 and 20% up to £10,000.

Remploy

- Remploy is one of Britain's leading providers of specialist employment services for disabled people and those experiencing complex barriers to work.
- It directly employs around 2,800 disabled employees in thirteen business sectors at its 54 factory locations and CCTV business.
- In addition, Remploy has been the largest single provider of WORKSTEP (now replaced by Work Choice) and its Employment Services operate in over 40 high street branches to deliver Work Choice and other welfare-to-work contracts won in open competition.
- In 2007, Remploy began a five-year modernisation plan, which aimed to support substantially larger numbers of disabled people into mainstream work, at a much lower cost per person.
- Remploy is on track to achieve its key modernisation plan target of 20,000 disabled job entries per year by 2012/13, including nearly 15,000 WORKSTEP/Work Choice job entries for which it will receive funding of £555 million over the 5 years (with £111 million extra 'modernisation funding' to enact these changes).

The Review

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the review are as follows:

- The review should provide the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions with an independent report evaluating the current specialist disability employment programmes and suggesting what direction the strategy in this area should take.
- Recommendations should build on the foundation provided by the Work Programme and Work Choice. While a fundamental review of these two programmes is beyond the scope of this review, the Department would welcome suggestions on improvements that could be made to their delivery.
- The review should focus on the work of DWP, but make links with, seek to facilitate and support, the work of other government departments as appropriate.
- Recommendations must be deliverable within the existing funding envelope as set out in the Spending Review settlement
- The review should seek to involve and consult a wide range of external stakeholders, including disabled people themselves, trade unions, employers and providers.

Next Steps

1. We now invite individuals and organisations to submit evidence to help us assess the current delivery of, and future strategy for, specialist disability employment programmes.
2. The closing date for the call for evidence is **28 February 2011**. A final report will be published by summer 2011.