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Publication of DWP research report 273

Key findings and publication of DWP research report: Taking part in a Randomised Control Trial: a participant's eye-view of the Job Retention and Rehabilitation Pilot.

A research report published today by the Department for Work and Pensions provides interim findings from research looking at the experiences of those people participating in the Job Retention and Rehabilitation Pilot (JRRP). The report includes information about the characteristics of participants; the experience of entering the trial, including understanding of and reactions to the randomisation process and reasons for joining; first impressions of providers; and experiences of the treatments received.

Key Findings

- Overall, response to the trial has been positive. The fact that people volunteered to join despite often vague expectations of what it could offer suggests a gap in services available. Panel study participants' reasons for contacting the service and their expectations were often vague, although a number had joined to receive specific (usually health) services unavailable elsewhere. Expectations concerning workplace services were less common.
- Those in the combined group were most pleased with their placement, closely followed by Health, then Workplace who were slightly less pleased. On the whole, participants had positive experiences, receiving clear explanations, good initial impressions of Providers, and timely treatments which they felt were helpful. The support provided by case managers was particularly appreciated.
- However, a minority experienced delays or problems accessing premises and a small group received no treatment. Client involvement in deciding treatment seemed limited, but clients were generally happy with this. Some, particularly Workplace clients, were unhappy with their treatment.
- Workplace supports included arranging changes in working hours or conditions or equipment to help clients do their jobs. Health support included physiotherapy, counselling, cognitive behavioural psychotherapy, referral to a consultant or specialist, or complementary therapies.

Experiences of physiotherapy were very positive as they often had a noticeable impact on health, as were those of occupational therapists, surgery, referral for medical tests, help with job applications and benefits advice. Some services had more mixed reactions, particularly psychological therapy and hypnotherapy, career advice and some of the other work-related services.

- The concept of randomisation was not always understood or believed, but Intervention Group clients were not greatly concerned about how their group had been allocated. Those in the control group were often disappointed, but most had realised there was a chance they would not receive help and were satisfied with the explanation.
- The trial design successfully prevented any significant 'contamination' of the Control Group.

Notes to Editors

1. 'Taking Part in a Randomised Control Trial: a Participant's Eye-View of the Job Retention and Rehabilitation Pilot' is published today in the DWP Research Report Series: report number 273. A summary and copy of the report are available on the DWP website at www.dwp.gov.uk/research
2. This is an interim report published as part of the evaluation of JRRP, based on partial data from a qualitative panel study, two partially completed surveys of participants, and the screening instrument.
3. The Job Retention and Rehabilitation Pilot is a large scale randomised control trial that aims to test the net and relative impact of a health and/or work-related early boosted intervention to help people at risk of losing their job through disability or ill health to return to work and remain in sustainable employment. The pilot began in April 2003 and service delivery ended in March 2005. JRRP ran in six areas (Glasgow, Tyneside, Teeside, Sheffield, Birmingham and West Kent) and 2845 people were recruited into the trial. The evaluation continues over the summer and will report in full in early 2006.

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