

# Supporting Return to Work- the challenges and obstacles learnt from experience

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# Returning to a vocation role

- Difficulties in a return following brain injury
- What can be done?
- Who can provide it?
- Experiences from practice
- The future

# Barriers to a return to work following A.B.I.

- Early return to work (Haig 2006)
- Health issues
- Depression
- Lack of confidence
- Benefits and job seeking system
- Employers attitudes

## Different Strokes Report

- 43 forced to retire by employer (18.5%)
- 70 can't meet expectations (30.2%)
- 71 can't drive/use public transport (30.6%)
- 74 afraid of losing benefits (31.9%)
- 141 not fit enough to work (60.7%)
- 144 can no longer do previous job (62.0%)

# Benefits of Returning to Work

- Developing a routine  
(Inman 2007, Davis 2004)
- Feeling of belonging / role
- Socialisation
- Financial

# Supporting Documents

- NSF Long Term Conditions
- DWP Vocational Framework
- Vocational Rehabilitation Association Standards
- Vocational Assessment and Rehabilitation for people with long term neurological conditions: recommendations for best practice BSRM
- Equality Act 2010

# Vocation

- Paid employment
- Voluntary
- Education
- Stepping stones

# Wolfson programme

- 3 phase programme
- **Phase 1** = 2 assessment days
- **Phase 2** = 1 ½ programme days for up to twelve weeks (Thursday & Friday)
- **Phase 3** = support in the workplace
  
- Support Group

## Impact of the injury

- Memory difficulties
- Concentration/attention difficulties
- Executive dysfunction
- Insight difficulties
- Reduced motivation
- Increased fatigue
- Emotional difficulties
- Disinhibition
- Reduced confidence/self-esteem

# Everybody is individual

- i-Phones, mobiles
- Voice recorders
- Computer
- Diary, filofax,
- Calendar, notebook
- Pacing
- Education and training

# Challenges and Obstacles

- Reliance on others
- Level of insight and impact on work
- Returning on too many hours
- Employers/colleague's understanding
- Decreased motivation in routine at home
- Fatigue – sleepy / tired at work

# Funding

- Funding requests to many PCT's. Some:
- Decline
- Decline with recommendations
- Do not reply – 2<sup>nd</sup> , 3<sup>rd</sup> letter
- Exceptional Circumstances Form
- Further questions for panel
- Phase 1 – report
- Yes

## Developing Links

- Jobcentreplus – Work Choices
- Disability Employment Advisors
- Voluntary providers
- Private companies
- Community rehabilitation teams
- Social Services
- Acquired Brain Injury Co-ordinator

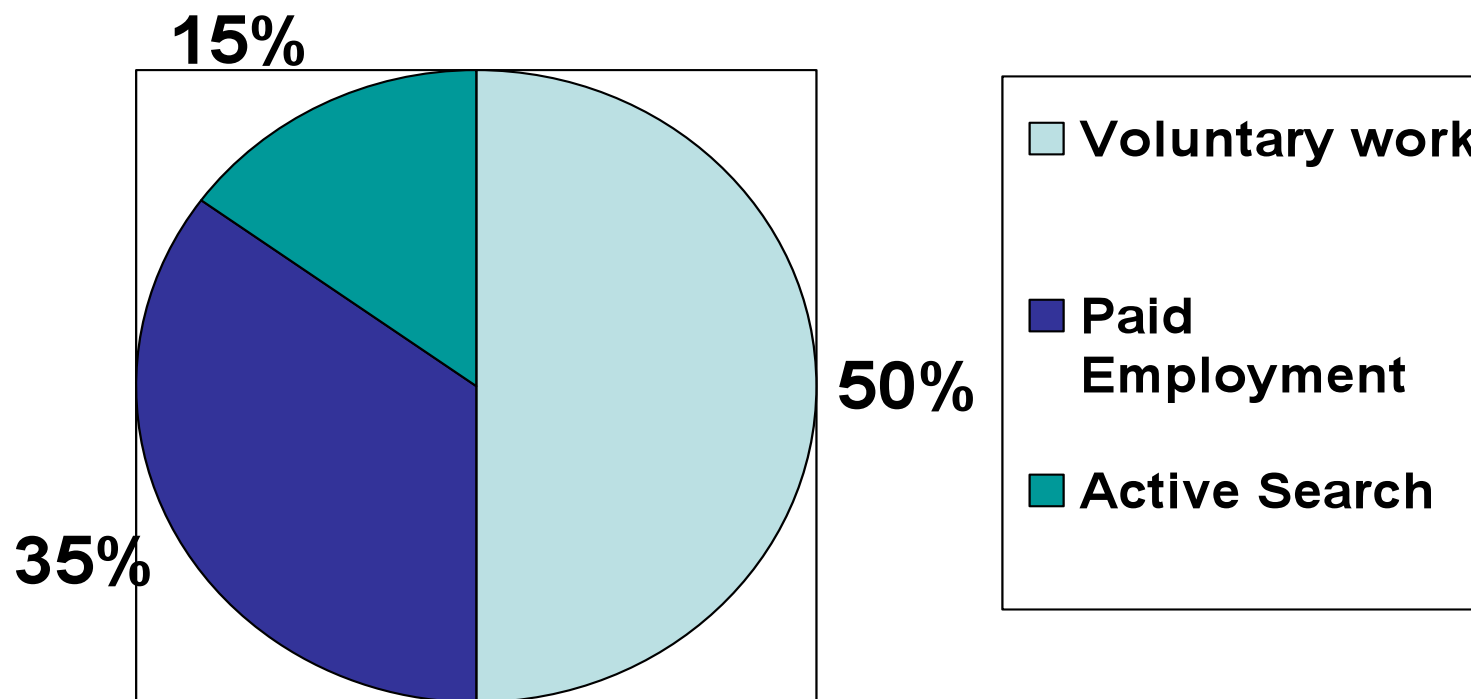
# Outcomes

- Case Study
- 22 year old male 'A'.
- TBI following assault .
- Memory, distractibility, impulsive, motivation, fatigue, reduced speed of processing.
- Initially goal for voluntary work but not motivated.
- Apprenticeship – Environmental Officer, council.
- Buddy system, probationary period.

# Outcomes

- Case Study
- 28 year old male, 'C', TBI following RTA.
- Memory, concentration, diplopia, suspicious.
- Aim to return to previous work, education re heights and cognitive difficulties
- Voluntary work trial – own initiative
- 2 further voluntary work jobs
- Completed NVQ2 in numeracy and literacy
- Researching further education – access course.

## 2009 - 2010



## Future plans

- Funding restricting access to services
- Seamless working between health and social
- Government changes related to funding with GP budget control and fit note

# Thank you

- Discussion