

7. Having employment, work, education and training opportunities



What we know

People with a learning disability or autism do not have the same opportunities to access employment.

In Norfolk 3.4% of adults with learning disabilities aged 18-64 known to us were in paid employment which is below the national average.

Nationally there has been some resources identified to support local education commissioners and providers to develop supported apprenticeships to encourage more opportunities for future employment.

We understand that having a job or a purpose can lead to having greater fulfillment, less social isolation and if in paid employment in a stronger financial position to make choices.

What people have said

“There needs to be greater opportunities and equality in the application and interview process”

- “Need to promote the positives and challenge the misconceptions about the value people experiencing a learning disability can bring to the workplace”.
- “Some employers are prepared to work with supported employment providers and schemes that can help.”
- “The Council should be a role model and employ people with disabilities including a learning disability.”

What we are doing

We are working with day opportunity providers to establish what their current employment training opportunities offer is, including whether this has resulted in paid work.

We are working with Children's Services to ensure that transition plans include developing opportunities into employment, training and further education.

We are working with mainstream employment support providers to understand what the offer is available across Norfolk, including developing skills, CVs, and access to work schemes.

We are working with Children's Services to consider the introduction of supported apprenticeships.

During assessment and reviews we are asking how people can access employment, voluntary opportunities and asking young people to think about what they would like to do in the future (their aspirations).

What we will do next

We will work with Children's Services and education to think about how they also prepare young people and adults to access employment opportunities and develop their skills to be prepared for a workplace.

We will continue to speak with the employment support agencies to understand what support can be offered dependent of needs, so that people know who can provide the right support at the right time.

Work in partnership with employment support agencies and day opportunities providers to understand what is currently available and what people need for the future.

Work with employers to promote the positives and opportunities as part of a wider employment piece of work to help change the culture and develop more opportunities.

Consider the development of a modular programme that supports people to engage in work related activities whilst supporting them to gain independent living skills. This could involve supporting people to access other mainstream services that offer advice and skills to increase independence and reduce reliance on funded care.

Work with Welfare Rights to support in accessing the right benefits and access to work and work with supported employment agencies to support people in retaining employment opportunities once in work.

Utilise the community to help make best use of the facilities, clubs and services that are already in existence in the community. We will need to work alongside colleagues, providers, other local authorities to ensure accessibility of community options.

Work with day opportunity providers to ensure that day services offer outcome focused services that are going to lead to more independence and more work-related activities.

What difference it could make

- ✓ Number of people in paid employment increases.
- ✓ More young people are involved in apprenticeships.
- ✓ More young people have employment, education and training included in their transition plan.
- ✓ People are being given skills that make them ready for work or training opportunities.
- ✓ This will ensure that people have a sense of purpose.
- ✓ More people with a learning disability will be able to access mainstream national funded job support with reasonable adjustments.
- ✓ The day opportunities model will reflect the future need and approach developed in partnership through the review process.