

Employment Services who we are support people with mental illness to find or retain employment video transcript

**Sharif, Vocational manager:** Hi, I'm Sharif Sharif Al-ani. I'm a vocational manager at Essex Partnership University NHS Trust, and I oversee our employment support services that we deliver in Essex. So Employ-Ability and Essex Partnership University Trust have been working in partnership now for many years, and by bringing together the different qualities of an NHS Trust, but also a fantastic local charity such as Employ-aAility, we really are together able to deliver a dynamic service.

At Essex Partnership University Trust we deliver support to help people to gain and sustain in good quality employment. So these will be individuals who maybe are managing their health, and we would help those individuals to either achieve a new job or if they're already in work, to retain their job successfully.

We've recently received some additional funding to help us to support people who have mild to moderate mental health or physical health, to move into work. Prior to that, we were able to support people with severe mental illness, which we continue to do. So it's great news that we received this additional funding to run a service called IPS in primary care to enable us to help even more people.

**Keiron:** It's been amazing, and it came really at the right time of my life. I was out of employment for many years due to mental health.

**Chris 1, Employment specialist with IPSPC:** Many talented individuals who've been through a mental health issue or they've had a physical health issue, and they really need the guidance and motivation to get them back into work. They have all these talents, all these skills, all these abilities, and because they've just been through something difficult, they often lack the confidence to use those skills, to use those abilities in a job, which would be highly valuable to an employer.

**Rebecca, Employment retention specialist:** We kind of just give them a bit of time to speak their truth, and we listen to everything that they say, and I think that's when we really start to build a rapport with our service users.

**Cloud, Employment specialist:** These are the clients who've actually lost hope, even though they've got a lot of experience. So I try and bring that encouragement so that they can go back to employment.

**Chris 2, Employment specialist, IPSPC:** On a day-to-day basis I meet clients. I've arranged meetings with them. Could be a first meeting, so that's about building trust and getting them used to me. Then finding out what they're looking for employment wise, what skills they've got, what they've done in the past. Sometimes it might be a complete change they're looking for. We then work with them doing something called a vocational action plan, which puts all the plans together for future. Then start job searching with them, maybe doing their CV, brushing it up, helping them with that, and from there, helping them with interviews, getting them to an interview might even actually support them into the interview. And then we stay with them in work once they get a job and help them stay in the job for as long as we can.

**Chris 1, Employment specialist with IPSPC:** We also help individuals with their confidence because sometimes people aren't confident going into work. So we help build up that confidence and make them feel more able to start work.

**Chris 2, Employment specialist, IPSPC:** We are very person centred. Every person is an individual and we treat them as such. We don't exclude anybody. The clinicians we work with, we challenge them to give us complex cases and we will actually fight for those people to do our best and get them back into employment.

**Rebecca, Employment retention specialist:** This service is so important because I think that the link between mental health and wellbeing and employment isn't explored enough, but there is such a tie. If you are happy and employed in a good workplace where you feel supported, you are earning a good amount of money, you are happy, you feel fulfilled. The correlation between that and the rest of your mental health is huge.

**Sharif, Vocational manager:** Well, there's lots of information and statistics that shows that health can be a very big barrier towards people having successful employment and likewise, and good quality employment can really support people coping and managing with their health much better. We know that in the UK there's quite a challenge with people who miss a lot of time off work due to ill health or because of ill health they can't gain work as easily as those people who aren't coping with ill health. So by providing these services, we are helping communities to achieve sustainable, good quality employment and hopefully manage their health more effectively.

**Ellie, Support worker, Early Intervention in Psychosis:** As a team, we work holistically, and employment is part of that. Sometimes patients need a bit of a financial boost, but to be honest with you, it's more about the socialisation, getting out of the house, not sitting and ruminating on thoughts, feeling like an active member of society. That's a big one. We have a lot of patients that are quite isolated. We have somebody who works really closely with our team from employment that is particularly affiliated with our team so that it's a really close relationship and we can follow up with, you know, how are things going, has the patient engaged with you? Have you contacted the patient, where are they on their employment journey?

**Chris 1, Employment specialist with IPSPC:** What we do is we help them get that motivation and get that belief back. So it's really important for individuals who have all so much to give to society to their ideal job role and it's really important that they know that we exist, so they don't feel alone or they don't feel isolated. They know that there's a service out there that can kind of get them back into the workplace and to express their skills and abilities.

**Sharif, Vocational manager:** Those that receive our services tell us that by having a purpose, by having an objective, and it could be multi-layered. The objective could be to earn regular income, to be independent. It could be to help others in their family and dependence or their wider community. It could just feel that sense of waking up each day, having that purpose and developing their skills and developing their talents in ways that they hadn't previously been able to feeling freed up to achieve what they want.

**Andrew:** I'm Andrew and currently I've got a new job, which is with Chelmsford Food Bank. I've been working there for about two months, and I'm really enjoying it. It's changed my life. I know it sounds like hyperbole, but it really has. I had a 30 year career as a nurse in the NHS. I did very well within that. Then I became ill, I found that I had a brain injury. I had to leave work. I was retired off work medically, and in the intervening five years between then and now, I've done bits and pieces of work, usually just myself and my own for companies, but it's not amounted to much.

This service is really important, it's been amazing for me. It has helped me to get a proper job and in an area of work that is right up my street, with poverty and wanting to alleviate that, wanting to change things. So they've made me a campaigner and organiser for food bank.

**Chris 3, Employment retention spcialist:** So I help people who are in work and are struggling through some sort of disability. It's a range of things that we can do to sort of help and support them, but the difference between my role and some of the other roles is, is that we're focused on people who are in work. Whether that means they're currently at work or off sick doesn't actually make a difference to us, but it's focusing on helping someone get back into the workplace if they're off sick or retaining employment if they're struggling.

So the impact on our service users when they access the retention service, and this is going to sound like I'm exaggerating, but it is immense. I've had people in tears, because they were overwhelmed by the amount of support we were able to give. We understand what that service user is going through, the support that they need at the time, and just to walk them through everything and explain what's happening.

**Sharif, Vocational manager:** Lots of people that we help on this service tell us that they can overcome their mental health and or physical health barriers by moving into really good quality employment. And that can be through potentially being in a job that they enjoy more, being in a job that links to what they want to do, but also working with an employer maybe that just provides that care and support for them in the workplace so that actually they can thrive and achieve in the job that they're doing.

This program is proving to be a real success. We are helping lots of people to achieve the goal of a new job or if they're in work, to put in place a plan to help them cope much better. And so not only are more people moving into work, which is good for the local community and the local economy, but also the individuals who are achieving their objectives are finding that their use of the healthcare around them is becoming different. Maybe they're not as reliant on healthcare or they're able to use it in a way that really works for them. So there's lots of win-wins in this.

**Keiron:** I was moving from pillar to post, home to home. I was living in many care accommodations and I managed to find the right place in Southend, my area where I lived there since 2015. And I improved so much that my social worker referred me to Employ-Ability. And now I can, now I'm bouncing back and I'm doing really well. I'm smashing it in life and it's amazing.And they've helped me find myself. Don't feel afraid to get back into work. Go out there, do your thing, smash it, you know, I work alongside the these lovely people and you'll, you'll find your way again, you'll bounce back.

**Sharif, Vocational manager:** Feedback from employers is that by having support for staff or by receiving somebody who really wants to work for them, they're much more likely to have long-term sustainable employees who show the passion and commitment to their business and to the work that they're providing.

**Karen, Employment specialist with IPSPC:** So today, one of the clients I had in my caseload really wanted to work within the rail industry. So I found a job within that sector for him and introduced him to Carley here at TES. And she was very supportive, interviewed him, and he's now doing his training. He's a second week into his training and he's doing amazing. I think to find an employer and an organisation that is supportive of the work we do and to work alongside each other is brilliant because we will support the employer as well as the employee to keep that employee in sustainable work. And also the employers happy too.

**Carley, Talent coordination, TES2000:** We've built a really good partnership with NHS employment specialists and we have hired one of their candidates who's really enthusiastic and we are really excited to have on board with us. So today he's doing his track induction course with our trainers in the background there.

I've been here since the middle of February and the inclusion that you feel being part of the team is just beyond anything I've ever experienced in any other workplace that I've been with. So for someone that has experienced any mental health issues coming on board here, I think they'd feel just part of something bigger than them, which is magic.

I couldn't even begin to describe the benefits of being partnered with the NHS employment specialists. The way that they have interacted with myself and the wider team, and enabled Daniel to feel comfortable enough to be part of us. It's just been a wonderful experience and one I hope that we are able to replicate.

**Daniel:** It's so beneficial and really knowledgeable and really easy-going to tell the truth as well, like with the trainers as well. And everyone that's been at TES 2000, they've been so welcoming and really knowledgeable. I just learned so much from it and hopefully soon I'll be on the tracks. Sooner than later.

I couldn't have faulted the agency for what they've don for me anyway, for what I've gone from. Because I was really down on my luck and then now getting into this as well. And they were so quick on the turnaround as well for what they've done for me. And it was really amazing. I've had a lot of people or courses in the past that have not, that have said they're going to help out with stuff and it's not really come through. And I think these people were amazing. I couldn't have faulted them.

**Will, Trainer and assessor, TES2000:** And especially when I've been out on track, I've known people to come from being homeless not long before they started, just about got into housing and then before you know it they're now supervisors on the railway. People coming from ex soldier backgrounds coming out of the army, coming to do really well into project managing. Someone like Dan as well, he's got one of the best attitudes I've seen, especially early on, eager to learn, wants to do it.He's working hard every day in the classroom. He's doing stuff outside the classroom to help benefit himself as well. So yeah, there's, if you go through it, there's a, a lot of stories like Dan's where they're gonna come through and absolutely take the railway by storm, as you say,

**Daniel:** It's so uplifting what I've gone from to what I'm at the stage now anyway, I feel just really happy as well in my life back to sort of normality as such. It's just like my life's actually carrying on again. I don't feel like I'm at a standstill. I actually want to get up in the morning basically now.