

SAMH'S VIEW:

EMPLOYMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH

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POLICY LEAD
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**ABOUT THE SAMH'S
VIEW SERIES**

SAMH's View statements set out SAMH's position on a particular policy topic. They are produced by the Public Affairs team.

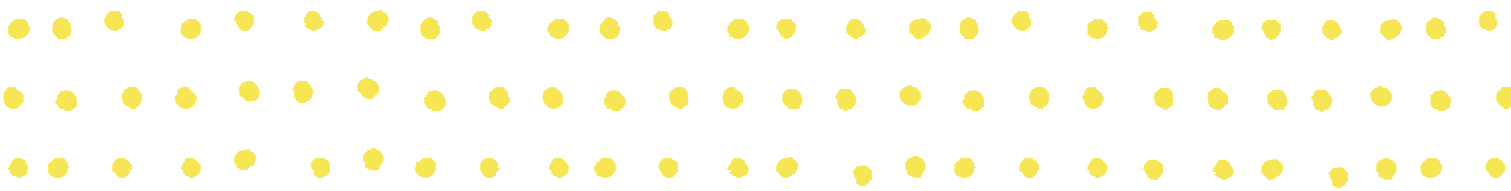
Context

Mental ill health accounts for the biggest group of people unable to work due to sickness; yet has traditionally had the poorest outcomes through UK employability programmes.¹ "Good" employment, where the person is well enough to work and has some control over their tasks, can be good for mental health and well-being.²

Two actions in the Scottish Government's Mental Health Strategy 2017-27 relate to mental health, disability and employment.³ The Scottish Government is now responsible for employability support for people with ill health and disabilities and is delivering this through the Fair Start Scotland programme..⁴ The Scottish Government's No One Left Behind plan aims to align employability work with areas including justice, health and housing.⁵ It includes mental health support under the Single Gateway health and work pilot in Dundee and Fife.⁶

Key points

- The most effective programme to help people with mental health problems into work is Individual Placement and Support (IPS), a voluntary approach placing people into jobs quickly and then providing support to both the person and the employer.
- IPS is two to three times as effective as any other intervention in terms of employment outcomes, resulting in savings of around £3,000 a year because of reduced use of mental health care: the one-off cost of IPS support is around £2,700 per client.⁷
- Research into SAMH's IPS services shows a net annual impact of £1,436 per person using the service, made up of increased earnings for the individual, reductions in benefit claims and reduced demand for healthcare services.⁸
- The Scottish Government's employability support programme, Fair Start Scotland, includes a requirement for IPS to be available where required.



However, in at least one area, SAMH has found that the funding model provided does not allow for IPS to be properly provided.⁹

- The UK Government has committed to doubling the numbers of IPS workers in England and Wales by 2021¹⁰ and piloting colocation of IPS staff with Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services.¹¹
- The UK Government has launched a Work and Health Challenge Fund, providing £4.2m to test new approaches to help people with mental health problems and/or musculoskeletal issues stay in work¹²
- Approximately £670m is spent on employability support in Scotland but, as much of this is spent by local authorities with inconsistent reporting mechanisms, we don't know what is achieved by this investment.¹³
- The Access to Work Fund, run by the UK Government, provides financial support and equipment to help disabled people start or keep a job. Relatively few Access to Work awards are made on the grounds of mental ill health, and though this has increased since the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service was introduced in 2011, in 2017 this service accounted for just 7% of all Access to Work awards.¹⁴
- Access to Work awards for equipment can now be ported over when a person changes jobs, but awards for services (such as taxis for people whose anxiety prevents them using public transport) are not portable.
- Employment and associated benefits like income, status and company, can be good for mental health,¹⁵ yet it is not always a focus for the NHS.



SAMH calls for:

- The Scottish Government to take steps to ensure that IPS is available across the whole of Scotland
- The Scottish Government to monitor pilots integrating IPS with counselling services in primary care in England, and follow suit if results are positive
- Audit Scotland to carry out an audit of current employment spending and outcomes across Scotland
- The UK Government to Increase promotion of the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service
- The UK Government to make Access to Work awards for services and support portable when a person changes jobs.
- Employment to be a health outcome for mental health services across Scotland

Further detail:

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

- [Scottish Mental Health Strategy 2017-27](#)
- [No One Left Behind](#)
- [Thriving At Work](#)
- [Improving Lives](#)

SAMH PUBLICATIONS

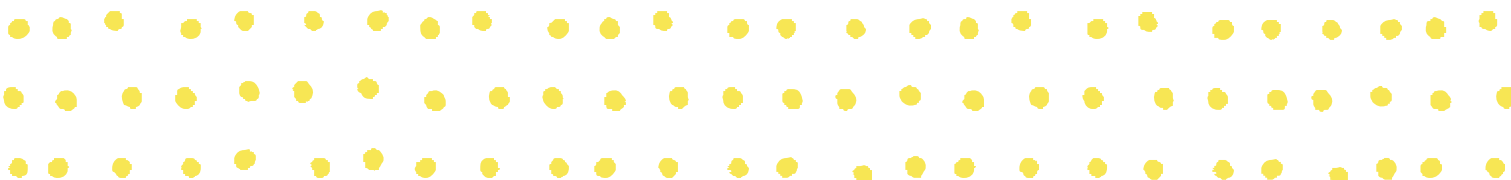
- [What's It Worth Now?](#)

IPS INFORMATION

- [Centre for Mental Health information on IPS](#)

Notes

- ¹ IPPR North, [In Safe Hands](#), (2014)
- ² Waddell and Burton, [Is Work Good for your Health and Wellbeing?](#) (2006)
- ³ Scottish Government, [Mental Health Strategy](#), (2017)
- ⁴ Scottish Government, [Fair Start Scotland](#), checked August 2018
- ⁵ Scottish Government, [No One Left Behind](#), (2018)
- ⁶ Scottish Government, [Job Support for Healthcare Users](#), (2017)
- ⁷ Centre for Mental Health, [Priorities for Mental Health: Economic report for NHS England Mental Health Taskforce](#) (2016)
- ⁸ Deloitte, Individual Placement and Support Programme – Economic Impact Assessment, Scottish Association for Mental Health (2017)
- ⁹ [SAMH Comment](#), , March 2018
- ¹⁰ Mental Health Taskforce NHS England, [Five Year Forward View](#) (2016)
- ¹¹ [West London Alliance, IPS Trailblazer Overview](#), 2017
- ¹² DWP, [Work and Health Challenge Fund](#), checked August 2018
- ¹³ Cambridge Policy Consultants, [Review of the Allocation of Employability Resources in Scotland](#), 2014
- ¹⁴ Department for Work and Pensions, [Access to Work statistics April 2007 to March 2017](#), 2017



¹⁵ NHS Health Scotland, [Good Work for All](#), 2015

