

LEARNING POINT 34

working together to create ways into employment: the *Re:Focus* Development Partnership

For example in Glasgow, health, social care and employability services are beginning to work together under one roof, an approach which is called 'Bridging Services'.

What next?

Re:Focus feels it could build on the work of these two pilot projects by:

- identifying gaps in current services, assess client needs, and agree common targets. Joint working is easier when organisations have the same priorities and targets.
- committing to joint working in health and social care employability. For example, it plans to offer training on employability to the whole of the Glasgow health partnership.
- mainstreaming – it has concentrated on building the learning from the pilot projects into ongoing activities. There is a clear message from the pilot projects that joined up working is good for people who are looking for jobs. This message needs to be continually and consistently emphasised to all staff, and built into service design in the future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information about any of the issues mentioned in this learning point, please contact:

Scottish Centre for Regeneration

Communities Scotland
Festival Business Centre
150 Brand Street, Glasgow G51 1DH
telephone 0141 419 1690
email: scr@communitiescotland.gsi.gov.uk
www.scr.communitiescotland.gov.uk

Find out more:

Re:Focus
Adelphi Centre, Block B, Unit 11,
12 Commercial Road, Gorbals Glasgow G5 0PQ
telephone 0141 429 2518
email: lizlogan@easglasgow.com
www.easglasgow.com/refocus.htm

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What are learning points?

Learning points share what people have learned from their experience in regeneration – from people working or talking together, or from research into issues and evaluation of what is happening. Learning points can help people and organisations to improve their practice through identifying what works and what doesn't.

What is this learning point about?

People with health and other problems can have difficulty finding work. To help them, a range of health, social care and employment agencies need to work closely together. Providing the right service at the right time can help people in these circumstances make progress towards and into work.

This learning point is about joint working in health, social care and employment services and draws lessons from the Re:Focus Development Partnership. The partnership of 98 organisations was set up in 2005 to pilot 22 Glasgow projects on new ways that health, social care and employment services could jointly support people into work.

This learning point looks at two of these projects: 'Options for Change' and a 'Staff Attitude Survey'.

Options for Change was a pilot that ran for a year from November 2005. A worker was based in two social work offices to raise the profile of 'employability' – being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work – with care teams and the people they work with.

Early in 2006 a survey of Glasgow's health, housing, social care, employment, training and education institutions gathered the views of nearly 1,200 staff about the relevance of employability to their jobs and highlighted areas for future development in relation to joint work between health and employability services.

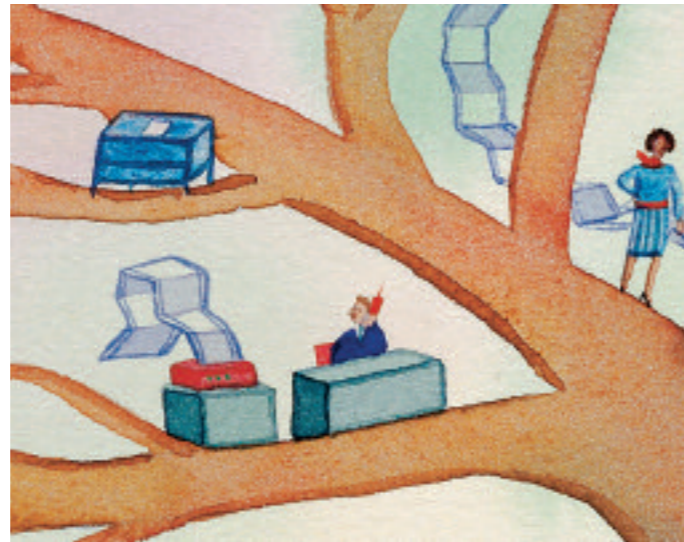
The findings from both projects have influenced the development of joint working arrangements between health, social care and employment services in Glasgow.

What are the important issues?

- How can organisations improve the way they work together to help people with health or social care needs to find employment?
- What factors can encourage organisations to work together?
- How can you change organisational culture, process and practice?
- How can learning from a pilot programme be built into service delivery?

What is known already?

In 2003, a major study on 'hidden' unemployment – those not registered officially



as unemployed (see The Glasgow Challenge Report www.easglasgow.com/GlasgowChallengeReport.htm) – found that:

- Glasgow has one of the UK's highest rates of unemployment. Almost two-thirds of unemployed people in the city are classed as sick or disabled.
- Poor physical health, mental health and disability are significant barriers to employment.
- Many people face multiple barriers to employment, but believe that work could make them feel better about themselves.
- Organisations working together could play an important role in reducing the barriers to work among people who use their services.

The Re:Focus Development Partnership based its work strongly on the evidence emerging from this report.

What has been learned?

Clear evidence makes change easier.

- The Glasgow Challenge report provided the impetus for organisations to work together more closely at a strategic level.
- The staff attitude survey strengthened the desire for joint working.
- Options for Change identified opportunities for improved joint working in the future. Having clear evidence about the successes and barriers in current arrangements helps to

strengthen the case for change.

- Producing evidence made it easy to get senior level commitment to change from the key organisations.
- Gathering the views so many of them meant that staff were committed to change early on.
- Providing feedback through a short briefing paper helped to make staff feel part of the process:
www.easglasgow.com/documents/EABriefing.pdf

Joined-up national and local priorities emphasise the need for change.

- In 2006 there was a national policy emphasis on joint working between health, social care and employability services – as well as it being a local priority in Glasgow.
- Clear, consistent messages about the value of joined up working helped to make sure that this was an important priority for everyone.
- A senior strategic group was created to oversee and make the case for joint working in health, employability services and social care in Glasgow.

Individuals or 'champions' can make things happen.

- Individual commitment and drive is critical.
- Committed individuals create links, for example making referrals and holding case management meetings, between and within organisations.
- Senior staff and officials can enable joint working in practical ways – such as providing contacts, raising awareness and promotion.

You can improve knowledge, skills and expertise at the same time as changing culture.

- To change organisational culture you need to change the way that people work
- It's important to make sure that staff have the knowledge, skills and expertise they need before introducing changes to the way they work.
- In Glasgow health and social care staff were trained on employability issues. But with hindsight, it would have been useful to involve

employability staff in this training, to build their awareness of health and care issues.

- It is also important to make sure that resources are there to support changes in the way organisations work.

Learning from pilot projects must be built into everyday practice.

- When developing a pilot project, it is important to consider its longer-term role and how learning can influence future activities.
- For it to have value, it is vital that the learning from it is built into everyday practice.
- In Glasgow, the pilot projects were designed to inform the way health, social care and employability services can work together.
- The experience of Re:Focus has been recorded, evaluated and built into the way that service providers work in Glasgow.

Joint working isn't easy, but the benefits quickly become apparent.

- Encouraging different organisations, agencies and departments to work together is not an easy task.
- Joint working needs to be led by senior management, but supported at every level in each organisation. Keeping people committed can be challenging, however, especially when there are staff changes.
- Where staff have begun to see the results of working together, they have often quickly changed the way they work. And many have also looked at further potential for joint working.

