

Occupational Therapy Vocational Assessment and Support Project Clydesdale Resource Network NHS Lanarkshire

The **Occupational Therapy Vocational Assessment and Support Service** is currently offered in one Community Mental Health Team, in the rural Clydesdale area of South Lanarkshire.

The service is run by a Senior I occupational therapist over six sessions a week (three full days). The Occupational Therapist is based in Clydesdale Resource Network, (the CMHT for Clydesdale) and is available to mental health service users of both the Focused Intervention (mild to moderate) and Outreach Teams (severe and enduring) within Clydesdale Resource Network as well as accepting referrals from local GPs.

The therapist provides vocational assessment, interventions and support to individuals who would like assistance to identify and achieve vocational goals. Individuals may already be at work and experiencing mental health difficulties, they may be at work but off sick or they may not be in work but wish to engage in a vocational role. Most clients are also being offered input by other members of the multidisciplinary team (ie: medical, nursing, Occupational Therapy, psychology, Social Work).

The length of input varies considerably from a single session to long-term (one year +) depending on the needs of the individual. The majority of the client group is not in employment at referral and the focus of input is often at the pre-vocational stage. However for those in employment, work site evaluations and return-to-work programmes are carried out.

Service Aims

1. To enable service users within the Clydesdale area to identify their vocational needs and goals through the provision of vocational assessment.
2. To enable service users within the Clydesdale area to engage in vocational activities through the use of advice and practical support.
3. To enable service users within the Clydesdale area to retain their involvement in vocational activities through the use of ongoing support to both service user and mental health workers involved in their care.



4. To develop systems of effective communication between health and vocational services in order to maximise successful outcomes for service users who engage in vocational activity.
5. To increase the awareness and knowledge of mental health workers within the Clydesdale Resource Network about the occupational therapy role in vocational rehabilitation and inform them about the full range of vocational services available to their client group.

Recent Developments

In 2009, funding has been awarded by National Education Scotland (NES) to develop the Lanarkshire Occupational Therapy service's capacity to offer similar services across NHS Lanarkshire, not only in mental health but across all specialties.

OTs across the Trust have been offered training to increase their awareness of vocational issues and to develop skills in vocational assessment in order that they feel confident to discuss clients' vocational needs as part of an occupational therapy assessment. In addition five therapists (3 in mental health, 1 in physical health, 1 in learning disabilities) are undertaking six NIDMAR modules at Glasgow Caledonian University with a view to developing the knowledge and skills required to become vocational Leads in their team: establishing vocational services in their teams and being a source of reference, advice and support for colleagues within their specialty. This project is currently being audited and evaluated and the report will be completed in Feb 2010.

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