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BEYOND EMPLOYABILITY: UNCOVERING MODELS TO A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

15th January 2015
Portsmouth Central Library, Room F

The aim of this workshop is to explore innovative approaches to the successful employment of people with autism. Many of the existing models around employability focus on support services such as cv writing, application form completion and interviewing skills and focuses on traditional employment pathways. The evidence suggests that these are not the best ways to unlock individual potential, engage and inspire confidence and the workshop hopes to facilitate some discussion around more innovative and creative solutions.

Programme

- 2:00 -2:15 Employment prospects for people with autism
 Beatriz López
 University of Portsmouth
- 2:15- 3:15 An exploration of innovative approaches towards employment in autism
 Building confidence: Hilary Strong- *Strong Voices*
 Entrepreneurial pathways: Natalie Long- *University of Portsmouth*
 Providing online support: David McKeigue- *Healios*
 Mentoring and networking: Yvonne Halloran- *Ravensbourne*
 Raising employers awareness: Beatriz López- *University of Portsmouth*
 Supported employment programmes: Francesca Prior, *City Limits*
- 3:15-3:30 Coffee break
- 3:30-4:30 Finding creative solutions and the way forward

There are a limited number of places available for anyone interested in joining the workshop. If you wish to attend the workshop, please contact us by email at: Charlesgifreeman@msn.com or Niko.Kargas@port.ac.uk or by phone at 07970822380.



BEYOND EMPLOYABILITY:
UNCOVERING MODELS TO A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE FOR ASD WORKSHOP
Notes of meeting held 15th January 2015, Central Library, Portsmouth

First of all we would like to thank you all for attending this workshop. It was pleasing to note that many who had been invited were able to stay for the later than scheduled finish time and were keen to remain in contact for the future.

The workshop explored the multiple dimensions of the issues and the broad range of difficulties experienced by people with ASD. Often outcomes are segmented. There appeared to be positive outcomes when there was less segmentation and a tailoring of need to individuals as seen in the models put forward by City Limits.

A point was raised based on personal experience with regards to the negative impact that referring to autism and Asperger's as a disability has on an individual. How changes in perceptions and understanding could have a great impact on personal development and aspiration raising. The negativity associated with the term disability and how growing up being told what you can't do and how you should live your life affects your self-esteem, your confidence and ultimately aspiration. The participant expressed how important it was to ask and to involve the individual and not to make assumptions around the condition.

Participants briefly discussed the difficulties Creative young people face navigating through a very complex set of structures and offers and how an 'Anchor Person' could be a valuable asset to help with personal progression.

Participants were advised that the Department for Education had released its call for funding applications for the £3.5 million initiative known as Character Education committed to helping schools ensure that more children develop a set of character traits, attributes and behaviours that underpin success in education and work.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/character-education-apply-for-2015-grant-funding>

EMERGING THREADS

1. There is a need for a Network to be established around issues related to Employability. This would enable a body of good practice to be established which could be routed in evidence based research. This would avoid duplication of effort and ensure the maximum use of resources and knowledge with regards local initiatives. The network could facilitate the concept of linking up as equal partners rather than as competitors.
2. Discussion needs to continue around progression and aspiration raising. This is closely linked with personal confidence and worthiness.
3. Discussion needs to continue around how we define employability and employment and that consideration for facilitating routes to freelancing and self-employment also need to be explored.

4. Discussion needs to continue with regards to the issues around sustaining employment as patterns exist around short episodes of employment and unemployment.
5. Segmentation: It was noted that a high level of segmentation exists between organisations providing advice to support with ASD people, dyslexic people or people with other learning difficulties.
6. Many employment initiatives are aware that a percentage of young people who are frequently unassessed are struggling to fulfil their potential in the labour market.
7. The segmentation in support can provide a barrier to all of the groups who with appropriate support could find successful pathways to employment or self-employment

ACTIONS FROM THE MEETING

1. To circulate an information pack with details of presentations given at the workshop and projects highlighted.

Action CF/NL/BL

2. To establish a mailing list for the network and possibly circulate regular newsletter updates etc

Action CF/NL/BL

3. To develop a network of people interested in neuro-diversity and employability: People expressing an interest in the workshop and attending to be invited to join the network, network to include individuals , employers , public sector agencies , and not for profit organisations.

Action CF/NL/BL

4. To call a meeting of Janet Maxwell, Paddy May, Job Centre Plus, Beatriz, Natalie Charles and others to follow up outcomes of meeting and explore ways of joining up existing project.

Action CF/NL/BL

5. To discuss ways of establishing 40 placements to link to Beatriz's research, should involve Caroline from the International Boat Building Academy, City Limits, Portsmouth City Council and Job Centre Plus.

Action BL

6. To listen to people within the neuro-diverse and ASD community, to engage with Jon Adams and others possibly to form a sounding board to support work,

Action CF/NL/BL/JA

PROGRESSION

1. To provide advice and guidance to help people within the ASD community to navigate the workplace, this possibly could be web based.
2. To look at ways of establishing anchors who can support people in the ASD community in developing their careers and to raise ambition noting high level of achievement some members and many new graduates in the community achieve. (note the way CIBAS provided this role under the radar).

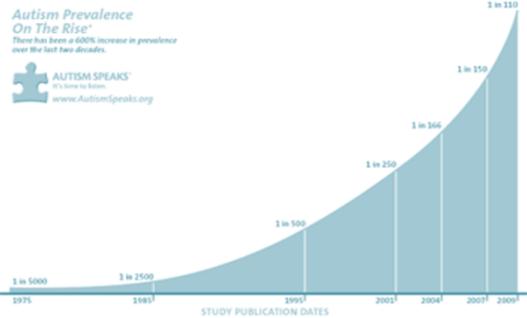
3. Employer Support: To investigate ways in which employers can be supported in taking on employees from the ASD community, this will include employer advice possibly building on Healios model, access to advisers and supporters, this may link to apprenticeships, interns and traineeships
4. Entrepreneurship: Research has indicated that frequently self-employment , freelancing and entrepreneurship can provide a successful career pathway for ASD people. This is particularly true in the creative sector. This path is however challenging and risky, appropriate support is needed.
5. Higher Education: High numbers of ASD students are securing places in higher education but for a range of reasons may not complete courses or take a long time to complete courses – ways of piloting support including support in providing pathways to employment need exploring.

Employment prospects for people with autism



Dr Beatriz López

The broader picture



Outcomes

	High functioning	Low functioning
No activity	23%	8%
Day centres	-	76%
Employed	23%	16%
Higher education	47%	

Mental health

	High functioning	Low functioning
Anxiety disorders	25% OCD (Russell et al., 2005)	12% (Moseley et al., 2011)
	50% (Lugnegård, et al., 2011)	42% (Bradley et al., 2004)
Mood disorders	37% (Ghaziuddin et al., 1998)	43% Depression (Sterling & Dawson, 2008)
	36.4% (Munusue et al., 2009)	50% Depression (Bradley et al., 2004)
	50% Depression (Lugnegård, et al., 2011)	
	53% (Ghaziuddin, et al., 1998)	

Vicious circle...



The cost of autism

	Prevalence	Cost
Adults	432,750	£25 billion
Children	107,016	£2.7 billion
Total	539,766	£27.5 billion

Full-filling and rewarding lives

- The large majority of costs come from benefits and health services
- Full-filling and rewarding lives policy (2011 to be implemented by 2013)
- Think Autism (2014): £ 1 million across England

Why such high unemployment?

- Despite the evidence of the effectiveness of interventions to promote employment in people with ASD (Howlin et al, 2005; Mavranzouli et al, 2013), unemployment rates in the UK still approach 85% (National Autistic Society)
- NICE guidelines: Employability skills, carefully matching the person to the job, support for the employer and the employee, and advice on making reasonable adjustments
- The large majority of employment programmes focus on employability

Barriers to employment (López & Keenan, 2014)

	Practitioners (n=43*)	Carers (n=28*)	Adults with ASD (n=28*)
Services	11.6%	7.1%	-
Application and interview process	18.6%	7.1%	-
Employer and staff lack of understanding	20.9%	39.3%	35.7%
Failure to make adjustments	16.3%	14.3%	42.8%
Other	7%	-	21.5%

Why?

- Existing employment programmes focus on employability and access to work rather than job retention and employers' awareness
- This is primarily because:
 - Huge variability in symptoms in ASD (i.e., sensory issues)
 - Lack of theoretically driven interventions
- Need to develop programmes, assessment tools and interventions that are person-focused and that broaden the idea of employability skills (i.e., aspirations)

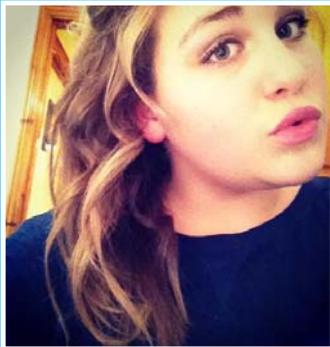
Anchors to Oars

Natalie Long

What do you call a penguin in the Sahara Desert?



My Reason



10%

of creative graduates are 'neuro-diverse'

Creative Graduates Creative Futures

20%

creative businesses are led by
'neuro-diverse' people

Julie Logan CASS

Now that is what turns me cold in the middle of the night

The University Admissions Policy

'...welcome applications from disabled students and will strive to ensure that no suitable candidate is unable to take up a place on one of our courses **or is placed at a substantial disadvantage while pursuing that course purely as a result of disability....'**

Or their 'Diffability'?

What if?

We risk not helping those individuals to realise their true potential and to utilise their extraordinary talents?

Where?

..was his Anchor Person?

What if?

You had an interview with a careers advisor at aged 15 and they listened to you explain your passions, your obsessions and your dreams and despite hearing everything they told you that you would have to find work in the area of your life that you found most difficult and least enjoyable? Every day would be a herculean effort?

What if?

I told you that your child would earn their living as a Poker Player?

Traits

Hyperlexia	Artistic	Pride in Work
Perfectionism	Attractive	Intelligent
Quirky	Practical	Eccentric
Tenacity	Hyper-focus	Cool
Honesty	Visual Thinker	Geek
Genius	Punctuality	Loyal

Rule Bound
 Unique Perspective
 Enjoys routine behaviour
 Ability to store vast amounts of information

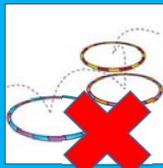
Why wouldn't you want to employ someone with these qualities?

Back to University

- Pre Induction Transition Programme
 - Undergraduate**
 - Level 3 Independent Living
 - Level 4 Self Determination and Awareness
 - Level 5 and 6 Career Preparation
 - Post Graduate**
- Supported Freelancing

Who could help me and who was really responsible for giving these students oars?

- ASDAC
- Credited units on the Degree
- Purple Door – Enterprise and 'Employability'
- Extra Curricular
- Club/Society
- Apply for Autism Accreditation to help get appropriate support and to recognise the good work that we do
- Consider a Teaching and Learning Grant to run alongside a Research Grant
- Develop an App or a Virtual Reality Interface that could act as Anchor Person- 'Siri - like'



Explicit

Assessment Opportunities which accentuated the positive

- Reflective Writing through Diary and Blog capture
- Role Play
- Personal photography/filming/scripting
- Compatible partnering to include peer assessment, presentation and mentoring
- Portfolio development
- Competence based

Pre Induction

- Choosing the right course
- Making connections – how the degree is made up and how units fit together to make a whole
- Timetables
- Planning
- Living in University – finding the right accommodation for you
- Getting help

Level 4

Independent And Academic Living Themes

- Personal Finance – accounts, fees, overdrafts
- Hygiene – personal and room, laundry
- Health and Fitness – Stress, Sleep, physical exercise, clubs and societies, getting help
- Diet – cooking and shopping
- Time Management – academic and personal
- Planning – deadlines
- Relationships – Communications and Self Awareness
- Academic Skills – writing, researching, note taking classroom etiquette

Level 5

Self Determination and Awareness

- Seeing your potential
- Working with your natural 'Aspergian' tendencies
- Playing to your strengths
- SWOT and Skills Audit

Making connections

- Social interaction through shared interest
- Navigating the small talk
- How do you value it?
- Rules of Engagement in Social Exchange
- Understanding the boundaries
- 10 second eye contact development or rule
- How do you respond to praise?
- Curbing the urge to inform/tell

Scripting Scenarios

- Limiting social topics and knowing when enough is enough
- How to make your view known without appearing stubborn or negative
- Expressing your feelings
- How to handle complaints in order to make things better
- Navigating meetings and Social Events

Level 5

Creating and Understanding Your Sensory Environment

- Sleep patterns
- Noise levels
- Lighting
- Colour
- What textures/fabrics can you wear?
- Understanding visual/tactile and auditory distractions

The Physical body

- Walking
- Body posture
- Improving Muscle tone
- Managing Stress and Mindfulness
- What do you do to have fun and be happy?
- Mood Awareness

Level 6

- Developing your Portfolio and Being Work Ready
- Preparing a strong and professional level portfolio
- Seeing your potential and working with your strengths
- Selling your work and not yourself – what I can do not what I can't
- Identifying your 'Aspergian' Interests and consideration of what application of that will make you happy
- Finding a compatible business partner

Post Graduate and Alumni

- Supported Freelancing
- Runs through the summer
- Meeting clients
- Making calls
- Giving presentations
- Business basics (NESTA)
- Aspie friendly clients from database
- Aspie friendly mentors/alumni

To be continued...

- Funding?
- Suitably interested staff?
- Clarity on whether it is 'Aspie' or 'Neurodiversity' targeted?
- Self referral/option on CCI/CT Degrees?
- Run along research to consider value/outcomes?
- Resource in terms of appropriate environment – continuity important?

Healios
Autism Spectrum Disorder

Healios™ changes the lives of families affected by disabling illness

Healios service: A clinician-led family intervention

Healios offers an online professionally-led information, skills and support service tailored to the patient and carer individual circumstance with the goal to improve overall outcome for patient and family members

A unique interactive online learning & support experience

Education and "patient shoes" experience
Slides Videos Audio

New skill training
Slides Role playing Personal skills archive

One or more family members Healios Clinician

It is easy to get started: NO software to download
 • Healios™ sessions are all initiated from www.healios.org
 • Accessible from any browser: Explorer, Firefox, Safari

www.healios.org 2

Healios' service has clinical evidence demonstrating improvement in carer/patient outcomes for mental health

Carer-related outcomes		Patient-related outcomes linked to reducing relapse and re-hospitalisation rates		
Overall caregiver burden	Carer overall distress	Family critical comments	Substance abuse	Treatment adherence
↓	↓	↓	↓	↑
28% reduction	23% reduction	13% reduction	22% reduction	8% increase

UK data from 2,000 sessions between Jun 2013 – Sept 2014 based on carers having 8 sessions with a Healios clinician
www.healios.org 3

Healios is bringing its family intervention service to autism spectrum disorder

Conditions covered TODAY	Adding new conditions in 2015	New for 2015
Psychosis	→	Autism spectrum disorder
Depression	→	Personality disorder
Schizophrenia	→	Substance abuse
Bipolar disorder	→	Eating disorders
Adjustment disorder	→	ADHD
PTSD	→	

Multiple languages

www.healios.org 4



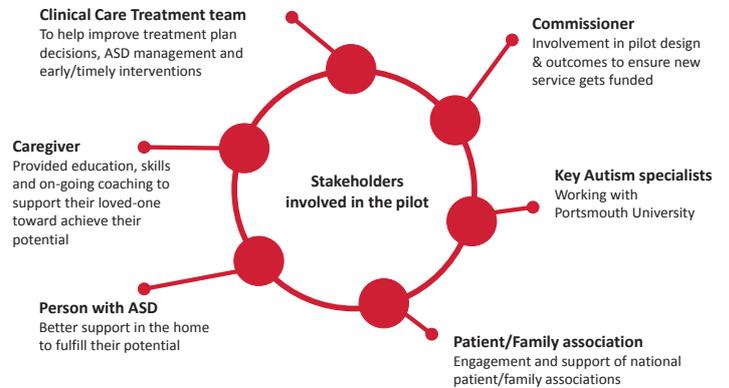
Working together to improve the lives of people affected by autism spectrum disorder and their families

Aspirations

Empower the people affected by autism spectrum disorder and their family members with knowledge and skills, through a new innovative service, that complements and enhances the effect of other interventions (pharmacological and non-pharmacological) for best long-term overall family outcomes.

Objectives

- Develop a research collaboration and strong working relationship between several organisations
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a new, unique and innovative service for families affected by autism spectrum disorder



ACE: Autism Centre of Employment



Dr Beatriz López

ACE

- ACE funded by Dept of Health (360 applications, only 11% awarded)
- Collaboration with local authorities (SHIP) and Autism Hampshire
- Aims:
 - To apply theoretical models of autism
 - To develop individual assessment tools of employment profiles and needs
 - To use the individual profiles to provide person-centred training to employers
 - To provide work placements

Stage 1: Individual assessments

- Individual assessments to include executive functioning (i.e., flexibility and planning), sensory profiles and social and communication skills adapted to work settings.
- In addition vocational preferences (i.e., manual or clerical work) and employability skills (i.e., initiative) will be assessed.

Stage 2: Job-matching

- Individual profiles used to match people with ASD to available work opportunities
- Individual employment profile report will be given to the person with ASD to identify areas of strength and areas in need of further support

Stage 3: Work placements

- 40 people with ASD (no LD) will be offered a work placement
- Employers will be trained on the basis of individual profile (a control group will receive generic training)
- Employees and employers supported by volunteers over the 8 weeks.

Stage 4: Evaluation

- Employers and work colleagues: The evaluation forms for employers and work colleagues will comprise questions relating to: Attitudes towards employees with ASD, autism awareness, expectations of the scheme (at start of the project only), likelihood of hiring a person with ASD in the future and feedback on the work scheme to include benefits and limitations.
- Adults with ASD: The evaluation forms for people with ASD will comprise questions regarding: Expectations from the work scheme, well-being measures, confidence in own abilities and on gaining employment, intention to gain permanent employment, absent days and feedback on the work scheme to include benefits and limitations.

Continuous feedback

- Feedback will be taken on a weekly basis by the people supporting the person with ASD during the work placement to collect extensive data from both employers and people with ASD.
- This database will be used to improve the individual profile assessment tool as well as the recommendations and training provided to employers in order to aid the process of making adjustments in the workplace.

Outcomes

- Individual assessment tools for job-person matching and career development
- Kit with recommendations to employers based on individual assessments for minor adjustments
- Online platform for nationwide delivery:
Follow-up project

City Limits Employment

Specialists in Supported Employment

A presentation by Francesca Prior



City Limits Employment

- Southampton City Council in the Chief Executives Office.
- We began as part of Southampton Day Services - In 1990 supporting five clients with severe learning disabilities.
- After 23 years we now support nearly 900 clients from all disability and disadvantaged groups.



Our Location



What is Supported Employment

Philosophy –

- That anyone can work regardless of their disability or disadvantage.
- Providing the right support is given, in the right place and at the right time.



It is about.....

- Meaningful occupation – real jobs for real people
- Individual tailor-made support using a person centred approach
- Open mainstream employment
- Working with individuals and employers to achieve on-going sustainable employment



How we do it

Vocational Profiling:

- Gathering information and experiences
- Look at skills, interests and abilities
- Other relevant information – travel
- Benefits Information
- Medical information

Job search

- Talking to employers
- Job carving
- Making reasonable adjustments
- Work trials & practical interviews
- Work Experience



The Clients journey

Referral received.
Meet with client initial paperwork completed / fact finding
2nd appointment – Vocational Profile completed with an action plan.

Vocational Profiling.

This is a getting to know you.
Skills / interests
Qualifications
Addressing barriers



Then...

Action plan – Goals long and short term
Set up small steps to achieve the goals.
Prepare clients for interviews and job searching
Look at matching client for the right work placement or employment opportunity.



Interview

Support prior to the interview / during the interview for both the client and employer.

Support for the employer around any aids and adaptations that might be needed for the work placement / employment to be successful for both parties.

Support in the work place for the client if required



The Employer

Work placements / traineeships / interns you get a “try before you buy”

Support organisation if there are issues that need to be sorted.

The service is FREE

No advertising costs

Train people how you want them trained



What makes us different?

- Job coaching
- Task & Job analysis
- Disability awareness training for staff teams
- Aids & adaptations
- Fading / Natural supports
- Monitoring & review
- Evaluation

Monitor and review

- Regular Reviews
- Developing relevant skills / qualifications
- Career progression
- New technologies
- Increased hours – New benefits / tax credits
- Support for Employers



Who do we work with?

All disability and disadvantaged groups:

- Mental Health
- Physical Disabilities
- Deaf and hard of hearing
- Blind and sight impairment
- Homeless people
- Learning disability (16 – 65 years)
- NEET 16 - 17
- Other vulnerable groups



Pathways to support clients.

Employment

- City Limits Employment
- Job Centre
- Wheatsheaf
- Work programme providers A4E / Maximus / CDG
- Work clubs / Job Clubs

Benefits

- JCP
- SARC
- Citizens Advice
- Welfare rights – SCC

Training

- Local colleges
- Solent EBP
- Learn Direct
- Wheatsheaf
- Princes Trust
- Enham
- Groundwork Solent
- Bespoke training
- Apprenticeships
- PETs Ikea / Costco / Sainsburys
- TWICS



Ryan



- Working for Waitrose
- Initial job coaching
- Now it is the Annual appraisal support we offer due to the scoring nature of the process and the reflection and planning aspect of their process.



Ben



- Initial 1:1 job coaching
- Supported when line management changed
- Helped new manager to relate and understand
- When performance dipped – 1:1 support to help go over tasks.
- Been in post for 10+ years
- Received a good service award.



Kate



- 1:1 Support to apply for the PET
- Support to attend the PET initially.
- 1:1 support in the training
- Interview Preparation
- Offered the job 5 years ago 8 hour contract – now full time – No support required. Doing really well



- There are about 65 million people living in the UK and nearly 3 in 10 have a learning disability or difficulty. Only 6.4% (BASE 2013) of people with a significant disability are in paid employment.
- A study carried out by The Welsh Centre of Learning disabilities in June 2009 showed that North Lanarkshire Supported Employment Agency's average annual cost per person was £7,216. The equivalent cost of local Community Day Services was £14,998 pp.
- 'Voluntary work' – The Cabinet Office and DWP have produced a working paper that shows voluntary work has an average savings of £13,500 FTE per person per annum (Wellbeing and Society 2011). Hence showing not only adds value to health and wellbeing to the individual but is also cost effective.



The Government is consulting on the draft statutory guidance for local authorities and NHS organisations on the Autism Strategy in England. This is to support the implementation of Think Autism which is the update to the 2010 adult autism strategy.

The consultation looks at:

- * **staff training**
- * identification and diagnosis of autism in adults
- * **planning of services move from being children to adults**
- * **local planning and leadership**
- * **preventative support and safeguarding**
- * **reasonable adjustments**
- * **supporting people with complex needs**
- * **employment for adults with autism**
- * working with the Criminal Justice system

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/adult-autism-strategy-guidance>

Taken from the BASE website www.base-uk.org



NEET??

- 27% More than a quarter of young people with Autism are NEET – Aa opposed to the 14% of the general population.
- 77% of Young people thought that an increased awareness of Autism to employers would increase their chances of getting a job.
- Minister Edward Timpson said “With the right support most young people with special educational needs and disabilities are capable of paid employment,” at an Autism Employment Summit 2014.



Any Questions?



EMPLOYMENT

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