

Helping individuals to consider employment opportunities

Note: This tool forms part of a suite of guidance documents, tools and templates developed by the IPS Grow consortium. It should be read in conjunction with document “2.0 Introduction to IPS Grow delivery tools”. Further information can be found at www.ipsgrow.org.uk. Please ensure you adapt this document fully to comply with local requirements. This tool was last updated June 2018.

Tips for Clinical Staff:

The Vocational Interest Tool (below) is designed to help you and your service users begin some meaningful discussions about access to employment, education or volunteering. Before you begin, please consider these strategies that other health professionals have found to be helpful.

- Try not to encourage the person in one direction or another. In other words, don't push the person to get a job or advise the person to slow down. Just be curious to hear the person's feelings and thoughts about work.
- Take your time. You don't have to complete the worksheet in one meeting. Encourage the person to share all of his or her ideas. For example, if someone describes a couple of their hopes for a job, ask “what else?”
- If someone says that they know how their benefits would be affected by a return to work, ask where they got their information. Make sure that they aren't relying on rumours. Offer a meeting with a benefits advisor or a better off calculation with JCP or a Welfare to Work Provider. Please speak to our Employment Specialist (ES) for more information.
- When working on the rating scales for confidence and importance, ask the person about the number that they chose. For example, “Why did you select a 5?” Or “Why a 3 and not a 1?”

Design a next step. For example:

- Organise a meeting with an employment specialist to learn about how they help people with jobs.
- Schedule a meeting with a benefits advisor, if there is not one available in your team talk to your OT or ES about how you can refer the individual to Job Centre Plus or a welfare to work provider for a ‘Better Off Calculation’ which can give them an understanding of where they will stand financially when they come off benefits.
- Plan to have more discussions about work and education needs.
- Set up a meeting with another person who has gone back to work or share recovery stories from service users who have returned to employment.
- Make a referral to supported employment (IPS), or an external provider if you do not have access to an ES in your team.
- Help with identified barriers to work. For example, help find options for childcare

Tips for talking about work on an ongoing basis:

- When you are feeling positive about yourself, how do you imagine your life to be? Will you be employed, doing volunteer work, studying, in training?
- Ask about job preferences. What is your dream job? What type of job would you like next?
- Ask about the persons work history. What was your favourite job? Why? Least favourite? Who was your favourite boss? Why?
- Ask if the person knows others who are working? What do they do?
- Ask the person to describe their life 5 years from now. Where will he/she be living? What relationships would they like to have in their lives? How will they be spending their days?
- Repeat this worksheet from time to time (for instance, in a few months). With your client, compare the old worksheet to the new one. Did the answers change? Why?

Template vocational interest tool

Are you interested in accessing employment, education or volunteering?

Name of Service User:	
Date of discussion:	

It may help to talk to someone about your hopes for employment, education or volunteering, so that you can plan your next steps. You can use this worksheet with your care co-ordinator as a way to discuss your vocational goals and think about the best way to get started.

What are your hopes regarding accessing employment, education or volunteering?

(e.g. Do you have any ideas about work or training options, or whether you would like to work full or part-time?)

How will employment, education or volunteering benefit your life?

What if any are your concerns about working, accessing education or volunteering?

(e.g. if the job is difficult, have not worked for 10 years and seems like a long time.)

Do you know how your benefits would be affected by a part or full-time job? Would you like some help to find out how your benefits would be affected i.e. a better off calculation.

How do you currently spend your time at the moment?

What's preventing you from doing the things you want to do at the present time?

(e.g. Skill gaps, lack of work history, happy with present lifestyle?)

What or who is supporting you to do the things you want to do?

On a scale of 1-10, how important is a job to you?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 x	8	9	10
<i>Not at all</i>										<i>extremely</i>
<i>Important</i>										<i>Important</i>

Client Signature _____
Date _____

Care Co-ordinator Signature _____
Date _____