

What do people with intellectual disability think about their jobs?



What is this report about?

This report is about what people with intellectual disability think of their jobs. It is about jobs in:



- **Open employment**

This is having a job in any workplace with support.



- **ADEs**

This is working at a workplace only for people with disability.



- **Social enterprises**

This is working in a business set up to make sure people with disability are included.

In the report, people with intellectual disability talk about:

- How they choose a job
- How they find a job
- How they keep their job
- What they do if they want to change jobs
- What was important about working in different jobs
- What they like about different jobs
- What they do not like about different jobs

SPRC

Social Policy Research Centre



Who did the research?

The Department of Human Services asked for the research to be done. They are part of the government.

The Social Policy Research Centre and Southern Cross University did the research.



Who took part?

51 people with intellectual disability were in the research. To take part they had to:

- Have a job
- Live in Sydney or Northern Rivers

How did they take part?

There were two ways people could take part:



- Talking with a researcher by themselves



- Talking with a researcher in a small group of people

What the research found

Choosing a job



The research found that some people could not choose what job to do, because:

- Parents or teachers chose for them
- They did not have many options to choose from

Some other people could choose what job to do. They found it easiest to choose when there were:



- People who helped them decide



- Services that helped them decide



- Chances to find out about and try different jobs

Finding and keeping a job



The research found that:

- It was hard for people to find a job in open employment
- It was easier to find a job in an ADE
- Lots of people wanted to find jobs in social enterprises, so sometimes they had to wait for a job to come up

The research also found that:

- It was harder for people to keep jobs in open employment than ADEs or social enterprises

Where people kept their jobs in open employment, they usually had:



- Help with tasks at work
- Good relationships at work
- Help to build their confidence

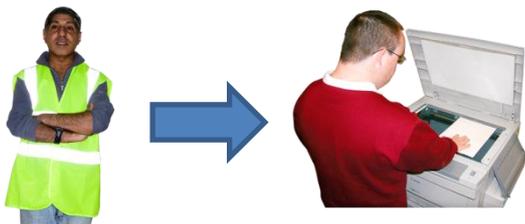
Changing jobs



The research found that lots of people in open employment had changed jobs when they didn't want to, because:

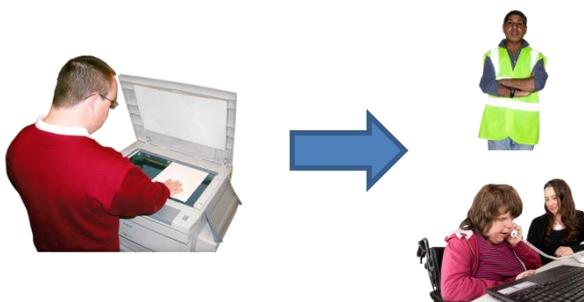
- Their workplace closed down
- It was a short job and it finished

Some people made their own decision to change jobs:



- Sometimes this was moving from an ADE to open employment.

These people wanted better pay or to work with people without disability as well.



- Sometimes this was moving from open employment to an ADE or social enterprise.

These people were treated badly in open employment and thought an ADE or social enterprise would feel safer.

What people thought was important about working



People in open employment, ADEs and social enterprises all said that the most important things about working were:

- Having friends and getting to know other people at work
- Getting paid



The next most important things to most people were:

- Learning new skills
- Having something to do
- Having something to take part in



Some people also said that other things were important to them, including:

- Feeling good at work
- Having rights at work
- Doing what they wanted with their lives



Mostly it was people working in open employment who mentioned feeling good, having rights and doing what they wanted to.



What people liked and did not like about different types of jobs



People working in open employment said that compared to ADEs:

- Open employment had better pay
- Open employment had better connections with the community

BUT



- It was harder to find and keep a job in open employment
- They were treated badly in open employment



People working in ADEs said that compared to open employment:

- It was easier to find and keep a job in ADEs
- There was more encouragement and understanding in ADEs

BUT



- The pay was not as good in ADEs
- There were less community connections in ADEs



People working in social enterprises said that:

- There was a lot of encouragement and understanding in social enterprises
- There were good connections with the community in social enterprises

BUT



- It was hard to find a job in social enterprises, because there weren't enough paid positions yet

These findings are important because they show that all the different types of jobs have some good things about them and some bad things. There was no job that had everything that people wanted.

What happens now?

This information can be used to help know how to make working better for people with intellectual disability.

For example, it shows that:



- People need more help to choose, find, keep and change jobs, especially in open employment

This help should include:

- Helping people one-on-one
- Changing the system to make it work better for people
- Making sure services can do enough to help



- More work needs to be done to make sure that all the different types of jobs can give more of what people want



- It is useful to help people have more connections with other people and the community outside of work – when they feel more connected outside of work, it might be easier for them to make their own choices about their jobs

This report is an Easy Read version of the following main report:

Meltzer, A. Bates, S., Robinson, S., Kayess, R., Fisher, K.R. and Katz, I. (2016) *What do people with intellectual disability think about their jobs and the support they receive at work? A comparative study of three employment support models: Final report* (SPRC Report 16/16). Sydney: Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW Australia.

This Easy Read report has been written by Ariella Meltzer, Shona Bates, Sally Robinson and Rosemary Kayess.