Employ-Ability
Achievement Report 2018
Top Five Achievements 2018

1. Ensuring Employ-Ability’s Individual Placement and Support contract in partnership with Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT) was extended until 2020.

2. Successfully establishing, developing and growing the delivery of HeadsUp, our Big Lottery Funded, Building Better Opportunities Programme work

3. Critically, delivering on our Individual Placement and Support targets, meeting increased targets for job retentions

4. Together with EPUT successfully bidding, with the support of Strategic Transformation Partnerships and Clinical Commissioning Groups, to NHS England to expand our core Individual Placement and Support service

5. Launching a new website to improve Employ-Ability’s visibility and profile
Welcome to this Employ-Ability’s first Achievement Report, which reflects on 2018 as it comes to a close.

Employ-Ability supports people who have common, severe and enduring mental health problems, to get and keep a job in Essex and beyond. We do this by providing an intensive Individual Placement and Support Service for those receiving secondary mental health care and HeadsUp, a work readiness support programme for those with primary mental health challenges, who are unemployed or economically inactive and live in Essex, Southend and Thurrock.

Our Achievement Report 2018 explores both programmes through the lens of outcomes, critically our service user experience through case studies, and for the first-time impact data, and importantly from the clinicians our team works with every day, whose knowledge and support help us to deliver our business plan outcomes, which are:

- An increase in the number of jobs we help our clients to secure
- An increase in the number of jobs our clients retain
- An increase in the number of referrals and participants to Employ-Ability’s services
- High quality care through our centre of excellence accreditation
- That our clients and stakeholders identify a good or excellent overall experience

Our success is based on quality, and the commitment of those who work for us. 2018 has been a success but there have been challenges. However, the mood music is in our favour. We have seen the realisation of NHS England funding to expand our IPS offer but contracting for it proved time consuming and momentum sapping. HeadsUp continued to be reliant on the vagaries of each Job Centre and the ambition of the Big Lottery to moderate the administrative demands of European funding has not been realised.

2018 has seen significant change and expansion for Employ-Ability, the organisation has a new structure to meet the demands of its rapid expansion. Looking forward, 2019 will no doubt produce challenges and opportunities, and of course Brexit. However, the fact remains that more people than ever report poor mental health and consequentially, more people than ever are finding paid work, with our support.

In the Autumn we were delighted to receive pilot funding for a workplace support programme from Essex Community Foundation that may ultimately enable us to provide prevention rather than intervention to the 1 in 3 of us in the workforce who, research identifies, may struggle with their mental health.

Steve Webb
Chair of Trustees

Kevin Garrod
Service Manager

November 2018

When asked how well their Employment Specialist has supported them to take the first steps back to work, 90% of clients either said ‘very well’ or ‘good’.
Getting work

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is the leading model to help people with severe mental illness into work. It is a model of supported employment, which means it aims to help people find paid jobs within just weeks of being referred to the service. Then it continues to work with both employer and employee to sustain the job placement for as long as possible, or to help the client into a different job.

IPS is based on eight key principles. These include a focus on competitive employment, rather than volunteering or sheltered work; zero exclusion, open to all who want to work; and close integration between employment specialists, who deliver the support, and mental health teams.

Employ-Ability’s service, with our partners EPUT, provides an outstanding service that is the country’s largest and that meets the requirements of the centre of excellence quality assurance model and thus, its accreditation.

Equally our HeadsUp our Big Lottery Fund project is certainly not a junior partner, as it works to help those with common or primary level depression, anxiety or mild mood disorders to return to work, training and education across West and South Essex, Southend and Thurrock, an area the size of Greater London, and with a working age population larger than Suffolk’s.

CASE STUDY 1

Employ-Ability’s HeadsUp client had last worked in December 2017 and was sat at home, their self-motivation was very low. They were doing on-line courses to keep themselves occupied and applying online for jobs, calling agencies, ringing them at least once a week to give them an update.

Fortunately, our client engaged through their interaction with Job Centre Plus.

The client felt it was the perfect opportunity to partner up with someone to help create success for them in their chosen career. Being understood and to help build on their self-confidence sounded amazing.

Initially the client wasn’t sure if it would be a completely free service, but the Project Coordinator soon quashed those thoughts.

Initially the client reported their self-confidence has increased and being extremely happy regarding the work we have done together on their CV, and that they are looking forward to doing the same with a covering letter and that they are very much looking forward to doing our workshops.

The client, subsequently and with HeadsUp’s support, after attending its workshops secured their dream para legal job following a placement with The British Red Cross who supported their personal career development weekly in London.
Sometimes the challenge of getting back to work can feel, initially, quite daunting particularly after a sustained struggle with poor mental health. Employ-Ability’s work as our business plan and the next case study illustrates that we take the long view, working to change expectations so that those with mental health problems get the right help to take the first steps back to work through supported access to: training, education, work placement and volunteering.

**CASE STUDY 2**

When I signed up to HeadsUp I had been unemployed for around four months. I had tried to get back to work in this period and had two disastrous attempts which led to me hitting rock-bottom. I felt so low and believed I would never do anything again, that I was completely unemployable and because I knew I could not find my way back to work alone.

I was worried about telling a stranger about my mental issues, especially as I have always tried hard to hide them and was concerned that they would not understand. I was most looking forward to exploring how my mental problems were a barrier to getting a job and staying in it, as well as, if there were other people who were in the same situation. How did they cope? Along with the support for my mental issues, I was hoping to get help with practical skills such as C.V. writing, cover letters and job searching.

The Workshops and my peer support worker helped me to produce an up-to-date C.V. and how to compose cover letters. The trainer at the workshop encouraged us to recognise positive things about ourselves and focus on them instead of the negative, which was good for confidence building and self-esteem. He also addressed the guilt that some of us were feeling about not working and being useful, by encouraging us to use the time wisely by learning new skills, educating ourselves, socializing more and volunteering.

I felt a lot more positive about my situation after the workshops and took the trainers advice. I have found some new hobbies, got involved in a local campaign and I am reading some factual books instead of just for pleasure. My family have always been supportive of me but I know they hated seeing me so down. They are relieved to see me getting back to my old self enjoying life again.

I am most proud of volunteering for a cat charity. Before contacting HeadsUp I could not see myself approaching anyone and offering to help, I thought no one would want to give me a position even as a volunteer. That’s how low and worthless I felt. My daughter saw the cat charities advert on Facebook looking for volunteers and she phoned them and told them about me and how much I love cats, they were keen to meet me. Although I was nervous, I did not want to let my daughter down so I went to the charity where I am thankful to say I now volunteer.

I am not working, but volunteering with the cats has made me realise how much I love working with animals and that I do not want to go back to doing anything I have done before. With the help of my peer support worker I am looking at courses in small animal care. It feels good to be doing something worthwhile with my volunteer work and having a course to look forward to gives me new energy and hope.

Although not all clients will feel ready for work, 44% of our clients agreed that they always feel more motivated to find work with the support of their Employment Specialist, along with 46% also saying that they are motivated, just not when they are having a bad day.
Keeping Jobs

We support our Individual Placement and Support clients to keep their current employment, as many feel the return to their workplace is daunting and requiring a significant effort. We also support clients to, where necessary, leave unsuitable work in a way which maintains their wellbeing and then helping them to find alternative, more appropriate work.

CASE STUDY 3

Our client, a male in his forties working for a leading supermarket, was referred to Employ-Ability as a result of struggling to get a contract change and settle his hours – to enable him to get the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.

He suffered from psychosis and extremely high anxiety, which led to him threatening to quit and go back on full benefits. As a result, this would cost the tax payer more as well as having a detrimental effect on his mental health.

He was reluctant for the Employment Specialist to contact the supermarket on his behalf, but after the Employment Specialist had explained how this would benefit him (and the employer), he agreed, and a meeting was held at the company.

The result of the meeting was extremely positive. Not only did they agree to offer the client a new permanent contract with the hours requested, they also offered a new ‘open door’ policy for whenever our client is having difficulties.

Our client is now very happy at work, as a result of his job being saved by mediation from the Employment Specialist and knowing that there is ongoing support from his Line Manager and Employment Specialist.

CASE STUDY 4

I was referred to Employ-ability by the Essex Mental Health Recovery Team in August 2017. Part of my mental health issues were affected by my then employment and my anxiety around finding new employment, especially as I had worked for the same employer for the past 18 years.

My Employment Specialist (ES) acted as an intermediate between myself and my workplace and initiated discussion around being able to leave work to concentrate on my recovery with a positive reference. I left my workplace on 31 December 2017.

The ES helped me produce a CV, set me up with an account on ‘Indeed’ with appropriate work-based searches. She read through any applications I completed to ensure I had met the criteria and to make sure I had used appropriate examples of my previous experience in my supporting statement.

My Employment Specialist quickly came to recognise my character traits and how my mental health affected these. They talked through the different opportunities and suggested questions I should ask possible employers to clarify the work I was going to undertake.

I have been working for a start-up business whilst I seek more permanent work. I can truly say that if it wasn’t for my Employment Specialist and the support she offered, my mental state would have deteriorated again, and I would not have been fit to work.
Increasing participation

2018 has seen, to date, a fourth successive year of growth, based on our half year results we expect to see continued sustained growth in referrals and outcomes for both our Individual Placement and Support West and South areas, whilst our retention work has consolidated its impressive growth. In addition, HeadUp’s is on target to increase its participants significantly in its first full year of delivery.

What does this mean in pounds, shillings and pence or to use a more up to date phase, what is our Value. Well each job outcome for IPS is a neat equation. Contract Value divided by Outcomes = £643.80 per client in 2017/18.

Inevitably, that is something of a simplification, but it is less than 50% of the old JSA entitlement and it does not reflect savings made; from housing benefit, expensive additional mental health spending and the additional use of scarce public and not for profit services, that evidence confirms those with poor mental health suffer disproportionately.

And that is not the end of the picture. Can you put a price on good health, mental or physical? We can all describe physical health, but mental health is altogether more subjective.

And so, our work grows, 2018 has seen the development of a more systematic approach to working with employers above and beyond the links that we foster, and nurture, in supporting or placing clients.

We have increased our ability to work with employers, with dedicated capacity and a first offer to the not for profit part of the SME sector of a programme tailored to its needs that features, awareness raising, culture shifting, retention and off-site support, delivered either in group work or in small or individual contexts.
Both Employ-Ability’s programmes provide quality outcomes for clients and, importantly the agencies and professionals we interact with on a daily basis. Our Centre of Excellence status is benchmarked and reviewed against specific criteria that ensure we deliver a truly outstanding service, for example:

- Employment Specialists caseloads are not excessive nor too challenging
- That our staff are deployed alongside and integrated into NHS clinical teams
- That we can broker a range of employment possibilities that reflect all sectors and types of work.

So as part of this process we regularly test ourselves against our quality measures, and 2018 saw the introduction of a performance framework that incentivises; measurable targets, organisational contribution and critically individual assessment against the 25 IPS standards.

These will take time to implement, so not content with this, we have also surveyed satisfaction amongst the NHS colleagues we work alongside, including; Consultants, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Occupational Therapist, CPN’s and Care Coordinators, Support Workers, Clinical Managers and Consultants.

For Employment Specialists, it is important to provide support that is consistent and focuses on client’s goals – this is reflected in the results of our surveys as 81% always feel confident that this is being achieved. 81% also agreed that Employment Specialists provide ongoing support and work in the best interests of the clients.

One of the most important things for clients is that information is maintained and shared appropriately between Employment Specialists and Clinicians – 84% of Clinicians agreed that this is always the case.
Employ-Ability’s IPS service has zero exclusions standard and Employment Specialists must always provide support regardless of job readiness, background, race/religion and their mental health – 84% of Clinicians agreed that Employment Specialists are never judgemental, with the remaining 16% agreeing that this is the case with most clients.

Appropriate referrals are an important component of a successful service and 97% of responding clinicians are very confident in terms of making a referral to Employ-Ability, and 81% reported that they felt they can always ask for help or at least to know who to go to for help.

55% of surveyed clinicians agreed that Employment Specialists always play a role in the improvement of client’s mental health – 39% agreed they do most of the time.

How confident are you about making a referral to Employ-Ability?

- 81% Very, I feel like I can always ask for help
- 16% Very, I know who to go to for help
- 3% I am, but I would like further information
- Other I don’t make referrals myself but I do recommend them to other staff members

Do you feel as though Employment Specialists play a role in the improvement of your clients’ mental health?

- Yes, they’re never judgemental
- Yes, with most clients
- Usually, but not with all clients
- Other

Equality and Zero Exclusion – Do you feel confident that Employment Specialists will provide support to all, regardless of job
Client satisfaction

Employ-Ability’s work is dependent on the quality of our end result - our outcomes, the jobs we help our clients to secure and keep.

In August Employ-Ability began to test, for the first time, routinely, how its service is valued and perceived by its ‘service users’ – its clients.

As with any ‘first test’ the methodology will need to be refined and the sampled cohort relatively small, nevertheless the results are highly encouraging.

What our clients thought?

Each client we saw in August and September was asked to participate in short end of session questionnaire, the work was based on specific lines of enquiry, and revealed that;

Our clients have been working with their Employment Specialists for varied amounts of time e.g. 33% for 12+ months, 27% for 3-5 months and in many cases their recovery journey was, initially, hard to sustain. Despite these challenges this does not change how the Employment Specialists support clients’ goals and help to overcome any barriers they may face in the work place. This is reflected in the results of our surveys where 98% of clients identified they are either confident or hopeful that they can overcome some of the barriers they may experience at work and 90% feel ready for work, as a result of the support provided by their Employment Specialist.

The research also reveals how Employment Specialists work in the best interests of our clients and allowing them to make choices about the work they would like to do, as 81% said that they do feel as though they can make choices and the remaining 19% being ‘sometimes’ or ‘most of the time’ – so we can conclude that none of our clients feel as though they never have a choice in what work they do.

85% of clients have reported that their mental health has improved since working with their Employment Specialist – where the remaining 15% of clients reported that their mental health has stayed the same, however, alongside are encouraging comments such as ‘it’s the same, but they are very patient and understanding’.

The main focus for Employment Specialists is that they are providing their best possible support for their clients, no matter what their situation. It was reported that 92% of Employment Specialists were rated either ‘Excellent’ (63%) or ‘Good’ (29%), in terms of support provided to find work.

The Employment Specialist’s focus should not only be on the present, but to support their clients in terms of their future goals – which is reflected in the results of our survey; 94% reported that their Employment Specialist has helped them to feel better about themselves and their future as a result of a return to work, alongside comments such as ‘really helpful’.
Thinking about the help your Employment Specialist has given you, how have they supported you to take the first steps back to work through training, volunteering or education?

- Very well: 69%
- Unsatisfactory: 21%
- Good: 8%
- Poor: 2%
- Satisfactory: 6%
- Other*: 8%

Does your Employment Specialist help you to make choices, feel less stigmatised and know where you can access support?

- Not really: 25%
- Yes, when I'm having a good day: 44%
- Maybe on a good day: 10%
- Definitely, except when I'm having a bad day: 33%
- Always, I think it will help me feel better: 10%
- Other: 6%

Do you feel more motivated to find work now that you are working with an Employment Specialist?

- Yes, completely all of the time: 33%
- Rarely: 6%
- Yes, a lot of the time: 58%
- Sometimes: 6%
- Never: 10%

Has your Employment Specialist helped you to feel better about yourself and your future as a result of a return to work?

- Yes, completely all of the time: 67%
- Rarely, if something good has happened: 21%
- Sometimes, if I'm having a good day: 10%
- Yes, on a regular basis: 2%
- Other*: 2%
Our Strategic Plan 2017-20

Our Strategic Plan sets out how Employ-Ability will deliver its services and achieve its ambitions from 2017-2020. The plan is defined by its focus on Individual Placement and Support, the addition of primary and universal support through HeadsUp and the creation of independent income for Workplace Support.

Our mission is:
To help people with mental health problems to get into and keep work, in Essex and beyond.

Our vision is:
That those with common, enduring and severe mental illness, can access high quality back to work.

The period will be an important for the organisation as it responds to the challenge of greater expectation around mental health outcomes and the need to generate income away from contracts to underpin growth. To provide a coherent rationale for further progress in 2019-20 and beyond the plan, includes a focus on;

• Service delivery by continuing to develop presentable, universal and targeted mental health support
• Communication as the organisation moves from delivering a service to disseminating the difference it makes.
• Quality that is led by an unrelenting focus on its Centre of Excellence status, ensuring that any development builds on a standards-based approach
• Skills by investing in our workforce, extending mandatory training and using personal development plans to promote a bespoke yet balanced approach that develops people and the organisation
• Impact by publishing an achievement report that is distinctive from its annual report, that measures and communicates its work.

Employers we worked with
Without a core group of Employers, we wouldn’t be able to do our job nor achieve our aims and outcomes, our profound thanks go to all those employers, supporting and raising our profile, enabling our client to get back into employment through competitive jobs and placements

Make sure your organisation is on the list next year!!
Public Sector and not for profit
HTS
Princess Alexandra Hospital
Addenbrookes
British Transport Police
Essex Police
Barnardo’s
Greater London Council
Homerton University Hospital NHS
Foundation Trust
Mencap
St. Bartholomew’s Hospital
St Margaret’s Hospital
HMRC
VAEF
Powder Mills
White Water
DWP
Met Police
Scratching Post
Oakview School
St Elizabeth’s
St Clare’s Hospice
Rainbow Services
Canal Ability
Accuro

Larger firms
Asda
Hobby Craft
Premier Work Support
Primark
Tesco
Marks and Spencer
Morrison’s
Sainsbury’s
Galliard Homes
Marriot Hotels
Blue Diamond
The Range
Starbucks
Next
Robert Dyas
RBS
Thames Water
Top Golf
Interserve
B & M
Home Bargains
Go Outdoors
Smith’s Engineering

Small and Medium Enterprises
Appliance Homecare
Austech
Beechlands Care home
Harris and Hoole
Audley End Railway
North Weald Motor Cycles
Duke of Wellington
Black Lion
The Little Kitchen
Maid to Clean
Jack & Jills nursery
Hewitt Warin Accountants
Via Wire Supportworks

Do you feel you can make choices about the work you can or want to do?

- Not really
- Sometimes
- No
- Maybe
- Yes I do
- Other*

- It’s the same
- I am much better than I was
- It’s got worse
- It’s improving but I know it will take time and effort
- Other*
Acknowledgements

Thanks
To our funders and partners, colleagues from EPUT, Essex County Council and Clinical Commissioning Groups, without whose cooperation and support we would be unable to fulfil our mission and sustain our services. To the Big Lottery for their support to fund HeadsUp, to Essex Community Foundation and Sanctuary Housing for their timely support for smaller scale but no less important pilot work that has met needs and contributed to our development and confidence for the future.

Supporters
To all those out there who regularly make us aware of how much they value our work, including clinicians at all levels from consultants to students, colleagues in Job Centre Plus and DWP, District Councils and the myriad of voluntary and community sector providers with whom we cooperate and collaborate with everyday.

Trustees
Put simply we would not be here without our Trustees; our thanks in 2018 go to:
Steve Webb         Chair
Jeffrey Attfield   Treasurer
Cindy Scott        Company Secretary resigned July 2018
Kevin Tucker
Alpana Rajcoomar
Jamie Pring
David Bright
Debbie Salmon
Gary Crane         Company Secretary from October
Stephanie Rea      Appointed 09/11/17
Tim Page           Co-opted, resigned May 2018
Sandra Monk        Appointed June 2018
                    Appointed July 2018

Staff
Our staff are our most important asset, so in alphabetic order
Daniel Abbott      Employment Specialist
Kelli Clark        HeadUp Coordinator
Ian Crow           Employment Specialist from October
Rebecca Dykes      Employment Specialist from October
Kevin Garrod       Service Manager
Elizabeth Goodwin  Student Researcher

*Other
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>Caroline Hatton</td>
<td>Administrator then Peer Support Worker</td>
<td>Sept</td>
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<td>Rianne Hoye</td>
<td>Employment Specialist</td>
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<td>Jackie Jay</td>
<td>Peer Support Worker HeadsUp</td>
<td>left March</td>
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<td>Peer Support Worker HeadsUp</td>
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<td>Kathryn McKee</td>
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<td>Susan Witty</td>
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