

1. Make a list of three actual or imagined responses attributed to a family carer of an adult with a learning disability when employment has been mentioned.
2. Write down a definition of

Complex Needs



Professionals

- Transient
- 9-5ers
- Dismissive of families
- Targeting the wrong audience
- Happy in the comfort zone
- Policy driven
- Miss-using funding





The National Valuing Families Forum gathers together regional representatives from carers groups to consider, exchange views and lobby.

“We are in it for the long haul”

(Family campaigner London)

Why carers distrust professionals

- Don't get what they want
- Subject to tokenism
- Are misled
- Are marginalised by advocacy

Employment

Target audience (is often)

- Low to moderate needs
- Post-25
- Ready for work

Employment

Comfort Zone

- 4 F's
- Classroom activity
- Work experience/volunteering

Employment

Miss-use of funding

- Commissioning
- Services rather than support



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WHY SHIEC?

To ensure that people of all ages with complex needs are properly supported to have the same life opportunities as everyone else, including employment, home life, education and leisure



Getting a Job

(Advice for family carers of adults with a learning disability.)



Low

Complex Needs
groups



Moderate

Hard to reach

“LET’S JUST DO IT!”

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Example page

C) “They don’t want to work”

This is usually because no one ever asked them.

People with a learning disability may have become used to a life of benefits and leisure. With the right support older people can gain access to paid work and becoming much happier.

This obviously has a positive impact on the family.

Top Tips

- Find out if there is an employment sub group on the local Learning Disability Partnership Board
- Ask for a referral to the local employment support provider
- Don't wait too long – ask for a meeting with other carers with support from local carers centre or adult services to see if you can work together
- Ask how many people with moderate to complex needs have gained employment in the last year.
- Ask who they work with on employment, for example Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Day Service/Opportunities, schools and colleges, Education Business Partnerships, employers federations, local councils as an employer, LD Partnership Boards, self-advocacy groups and family carers.
- Make a note of contacts at the back of this booklet

D) “How can they expect to get a job when unemployment is rising?”

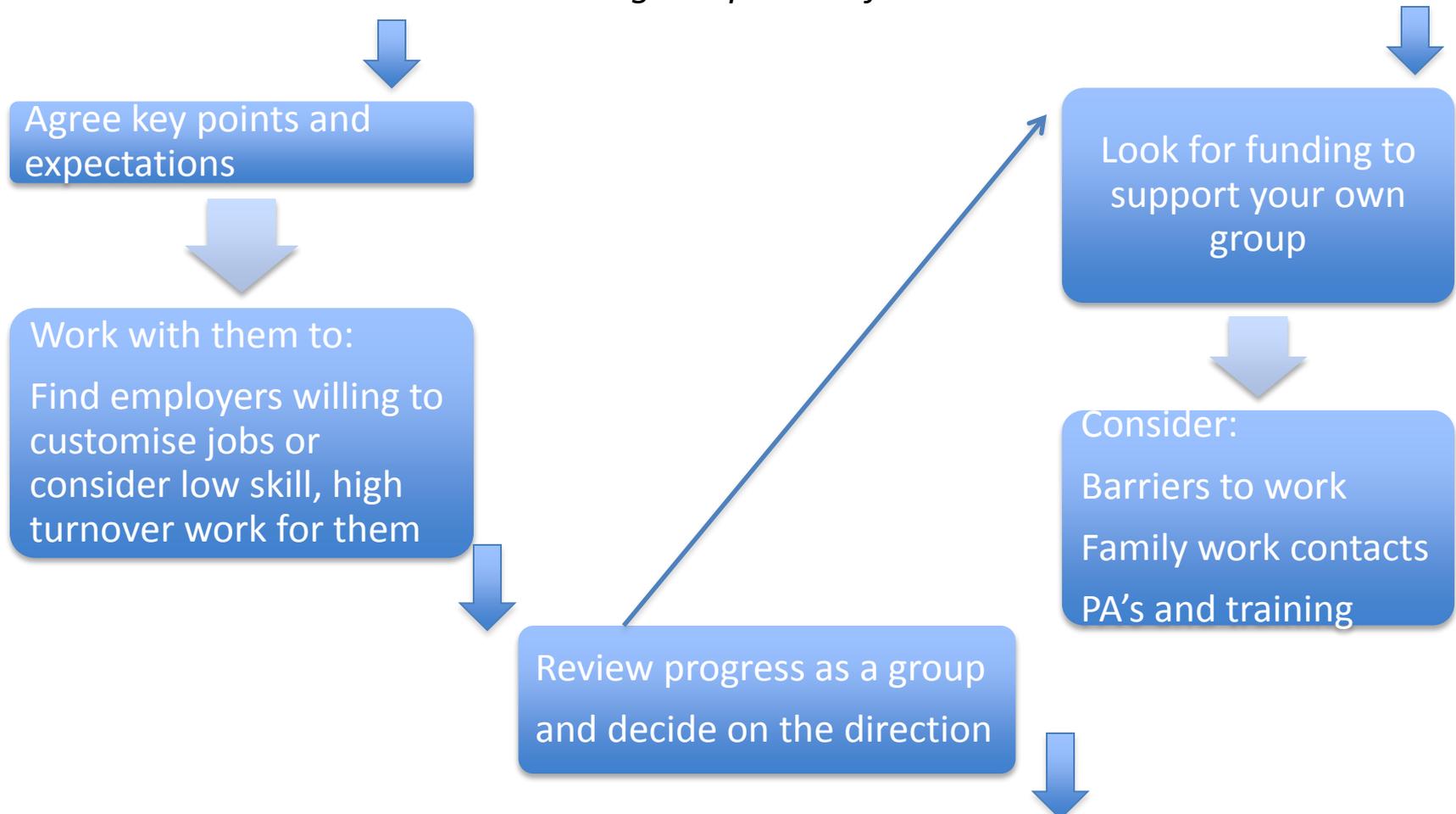
Competing with the long queue of unemployed people may not be the answer. There are, however, lots of low skilled jobs where the turnover is high which costs the employer. With good information and advice employers can be shown that a person with a learning disability can be an asset. One benefit of employing someone with a learning disability is that they are likely to stay with them longer.

Top Tips

- Your local council will be an employer of people with a disability. Ask them how many have a defined learning disability.
- See link to customised work, job carving and supported employment
- Find out who your Disability Employment Adviser is at the Job Centre.

Do it Now

1. Find other families interested in doing something
2. Use the Guide to prepare questions
3. **Contact** *Local Partnership Board Employment Sub Group - Local Supported Employment Provider - Careers/Connexions Service. Interview them and ask the questions.*
4. *Assess the responses and decide if there is a future in working with them.*
5. *If the answer is yes*
no
6. *Don't give up at the first hurdle*



Example page

2. Myth-busting

A) *“My son/daughter is too learning disabled to work”*

Parents/carers may have low expectations of their children with learning disabilities. There are examples of people with complex needs in paid work. (See case studies link)

Real Life Example

Ben has severe learning difficulties, epilepsy, challenging behaviour and communication difficulties. He is unable to read or write and Has limited understanding of money. Through the support of LINKAGE and Sustainable Hub for Innovative Employment Complex needs (SHIEC) he has three jobs of 3, 3.5 and 10 hours.



Ben at Work

Top Tips

- Look at the examples in the case study section here
- Ask your regional National Valuing Families Forum representative for contacts information on employment and complex needs
- See how SHIEC is making it happen (Links on page 25)

MY STORY BY CARL JOHNSON



A little bit about me...

I am **20**
years old

I have a
Moderate
Learning
Disability

I was
born in
Kent.

I communicate
through using
makaton signs & by
using hand gestures
e.g. pointing at what
I want or to indicate
what I am talking
about.

I have been diagnosed
with Cerebral Palsy &
Epilepsy

I am non-verbal
however have
the ability to say
a selection of
words e.g. Yes,
No, Bye, Hello.

Before CMG

- I went to St Nicholas School in Canterbury, Kent.

- While at school I was offered no work experience placements & employment was not suggested as an option.

- Although I was offered the chance to go to college, I did not want to carry on full time education and the options available were limited.

- I lived at home with my mum and step-dad in Faversham, Kent. I chatted to my mum about my future and I was excited about moving out of home and becoming more independent .

- I started to become frustrated living at home and this was affecting my relationship with my family.

Now... within CMG

- When I moved into The Ridgeway, a supported living home, I had a meeting regarding my Person Centred Plan.
- I was asked about my future goals and employment was raised as an option.

• I was really interested in getting into paid employment in a job that I would find interesting.

• I was then told about SHIEC and their involvement with CMG. I began having meetings with Frank to look at possibilities and how to begin getting into employment.

• I started by searching for voluntary employment to gain some more skills to put on my CV.

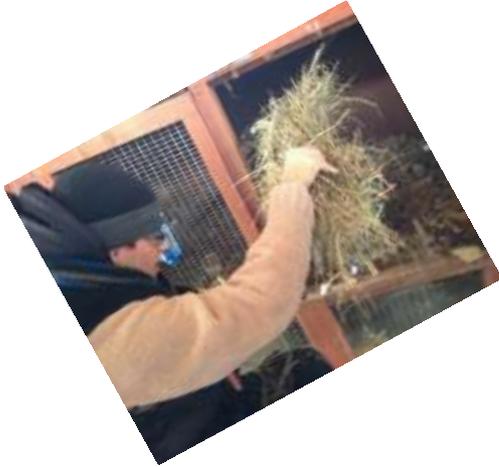
Voluntary Employment

Volunteering at Wellgate Farm

Job Role Includes:

- Cleaning out, feed, pet & give water to rabbits.
- Water the plants.
- Brush the kids (baby goats)
- Hold chicks & move them from outside in to the warm.

• I loved looking after the rabbits so much I got my own named 'Boo'.



My First Paid Employment

...Lilliput's Cafe

- I was successful in my interview for the position of assistant waiter, my first job interview!!



- I have been there for just over 2 months and I really enjoy it.
- I work 2 hours a week during cafe opening hours which are 11am-1pm every Thursday & I earn £7.20 per hour.
- I help to lay the table cloths and set the table. I clear the dishes and clean up after everyone has finished eating.



What are the Issues?

- Low Expectations
- Limited Opportunities
- Poor Employer Development
- Lack of Expertise in Identifying Individuals' Employability
- Current Systems
- Fear of Change
- No Reference point
- Always Last Group



Definition of Complex Needs

1. People with profound and multiple learning disabilities

Participants included within this sub-sample will meet the following criteria:

“Have more than one disability, the most significant of which is a profound learning disability. All people...will have great difficulty communicating. Many...will have additional sensory or physical disabilities, complex health needs or mental health difficulties...All...will need high levels of support with most aspects of daily life” (PMLD Network)

Definition of Complex Needs

2. People with severe-profound learning disabilities and challenging behaviour

Participants within this sub-sample must have a severe-profound learning disability and display behaviour that meets the following criteria:

“Behaviour can be described as challenging when it is of such an intensity, frequency or duration as to threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the individual or others and is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion” (Challenging behaviour: a unified approach, 2007)

Definition of Complex Needs

3. People with mild-moderate-severe learning disabilities and a history of offending behaviour and / or significant mental health difficulties

Participants within this sub-sample must have a moderate –severe learning disability and either:

A history of offending behaviour that has required specialist forensic input

A history of mental health difficulties that has resulted in a Mental Health Section

Questions Please!

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