

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

BASE Conference: 9th-10th Nov. 2021

Dr Stephen Beyer,
National Centre for Mental Health
Cardiff University

NCMH
National Centre for Mental Health



Where are we now?- a wider perspective

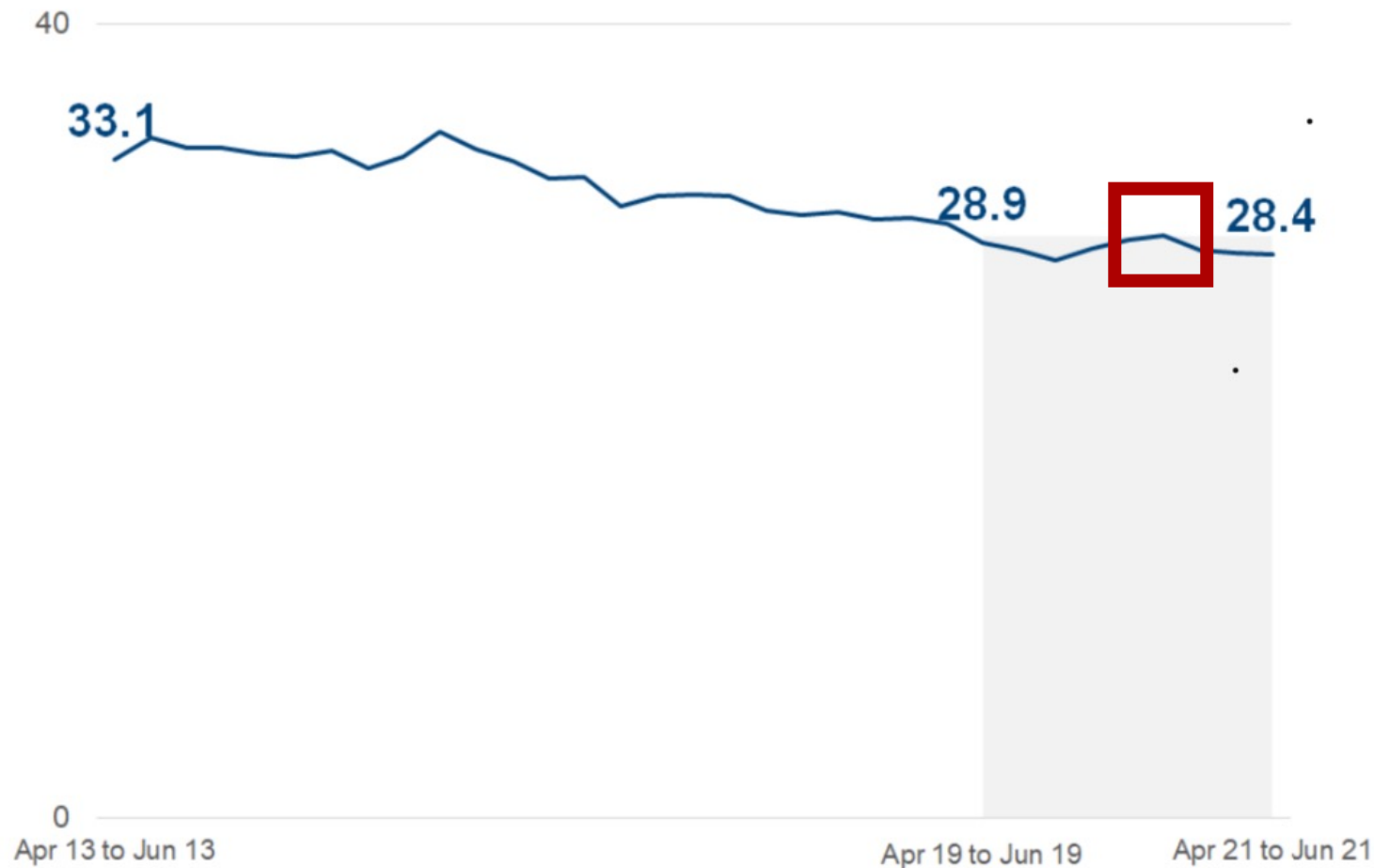
- For people with ASD, an intellectual disability or a mental health condition, the shift towards individually selected jobs, with skilled in-work job coach support, has increased their options for paid job.
- Across Europe, many disabled people are still served in sheltered, occupational centres and other congregate employment models with low or no pay and little prospect of transition to other employment.
- Sheltered workshops and Inclusive Enterprises have contributed to maintaining incomes for some where community wages and welfare benefit rates are low.
- Transition between group models and individual job placement models is low.
- Those with less significant disabilities are served by generalised vocational rehabilitation and training models, with poor outcomes.

Where are we now?

- The UK has moved significantly away from congregate models towards individually selected jobs compared to many other countries.
- There remain significant barriers to people with an intellectual disability or ASD getting supported employment support.
- Covid has dealt them another blow
- There has been significant investment in employability measures- however, we can illustrate in Wales some of the issues that remain.

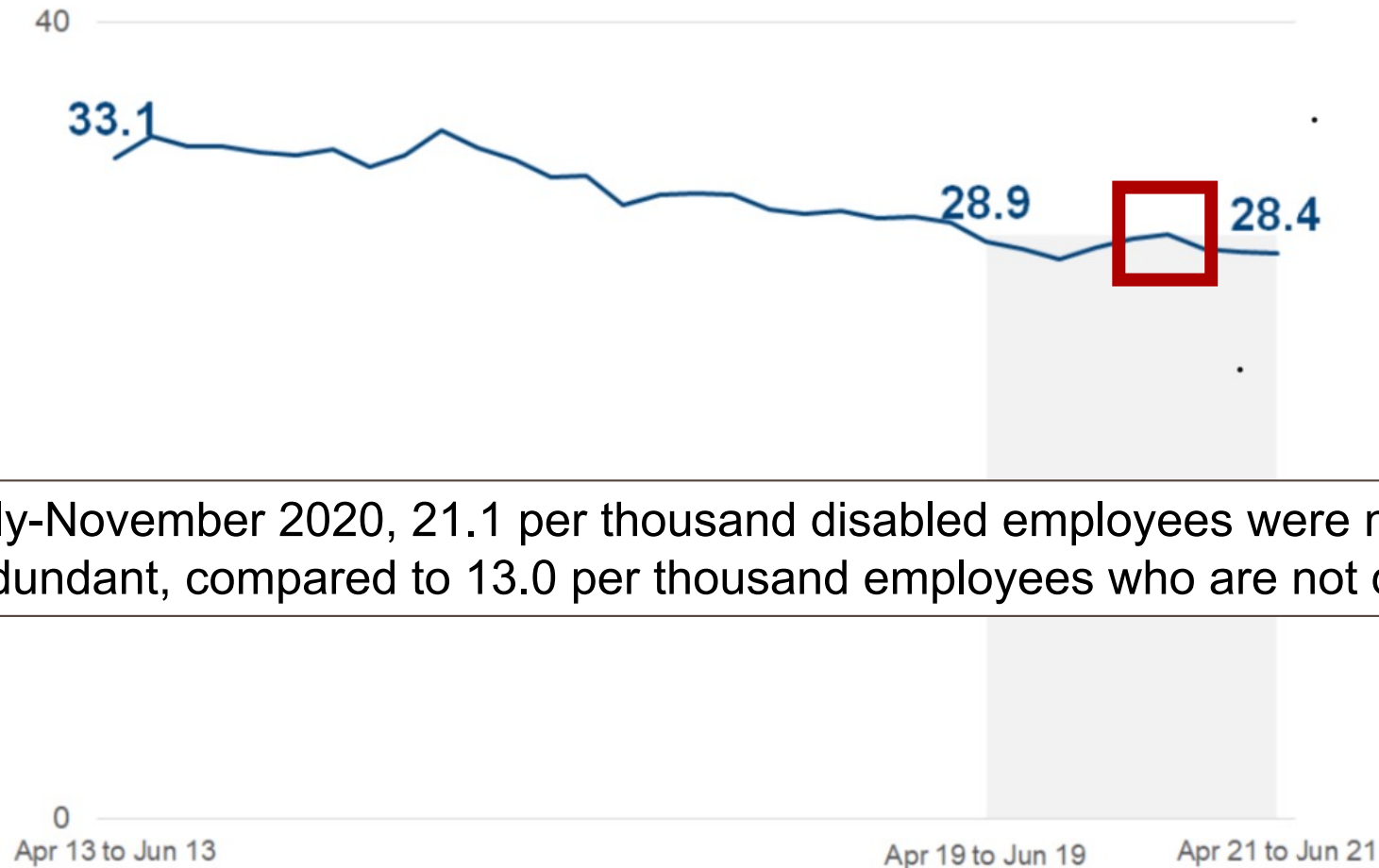
Covid: The Employment Gap

Disability employment gap (% points) 2013-2021



Covid: The Employment Gap

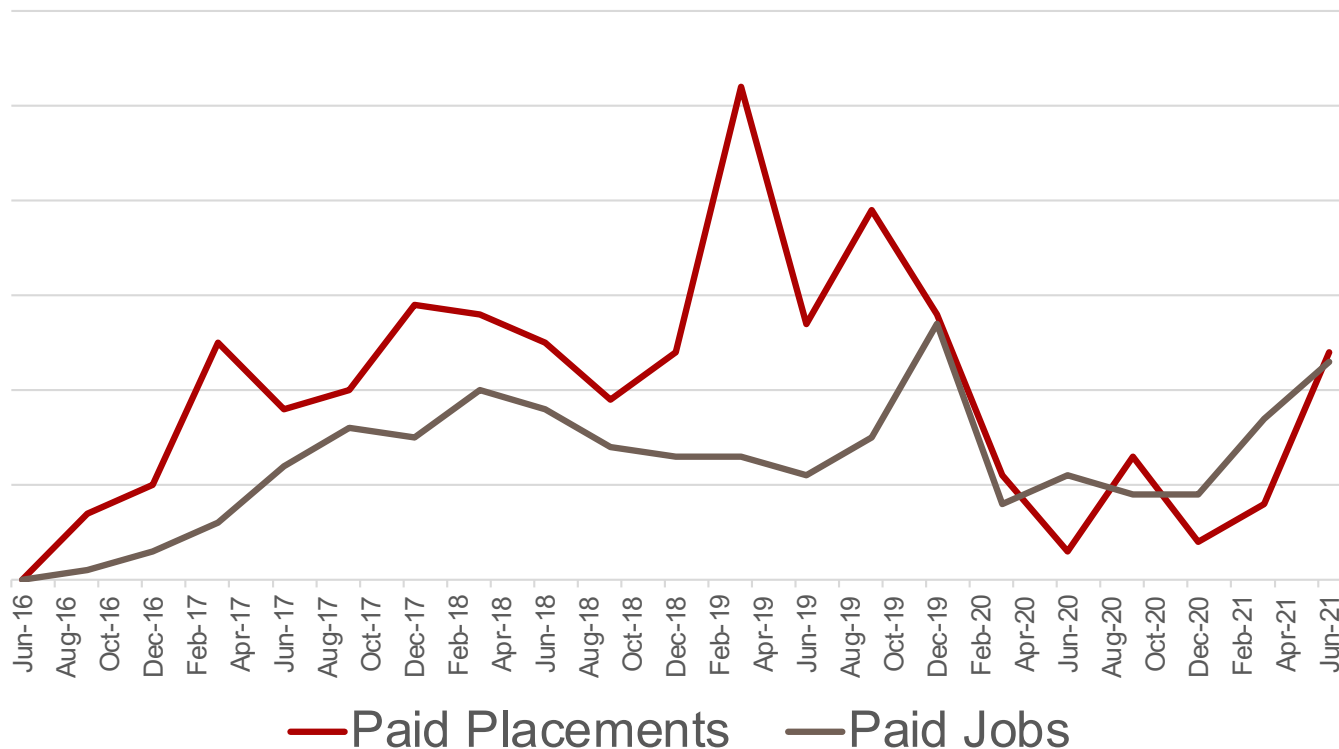
Disability employment gap (% points) 2013-2021



July-November 2020, 21.1 per thousand disabled employees were made redundant, compared to 13.0 per thousand employees who are not disabled.

Covid: Engage to Change Wales

Impact of Covid on placements and jobs



— Paid Placements — Paid Jobs



Welsh lockdowns

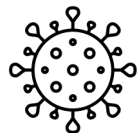
Challenges for people with Engage to Change

- Some participants were identified as vulnerable and due to shield at home
- Some family member had to shield
- Some feared to get Covid-19 and refused to continue working (lack of PPE – Personal Protective Equipment etc.)
- Difficulties in understanding new Covid-19 rules
- Reduction on public transport or temporary closure
- Employers needed support in Furloughing disabled workers
- Returning to welfare benefit for some
- Securing Access to Work and other grants while not working for the future

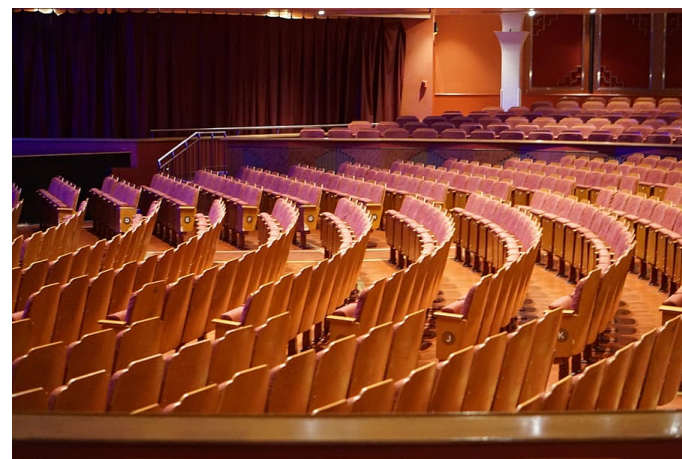
Engagement with supported employment a significant factor in the move from, and back to, employment.



Engage to Change – Covid effect



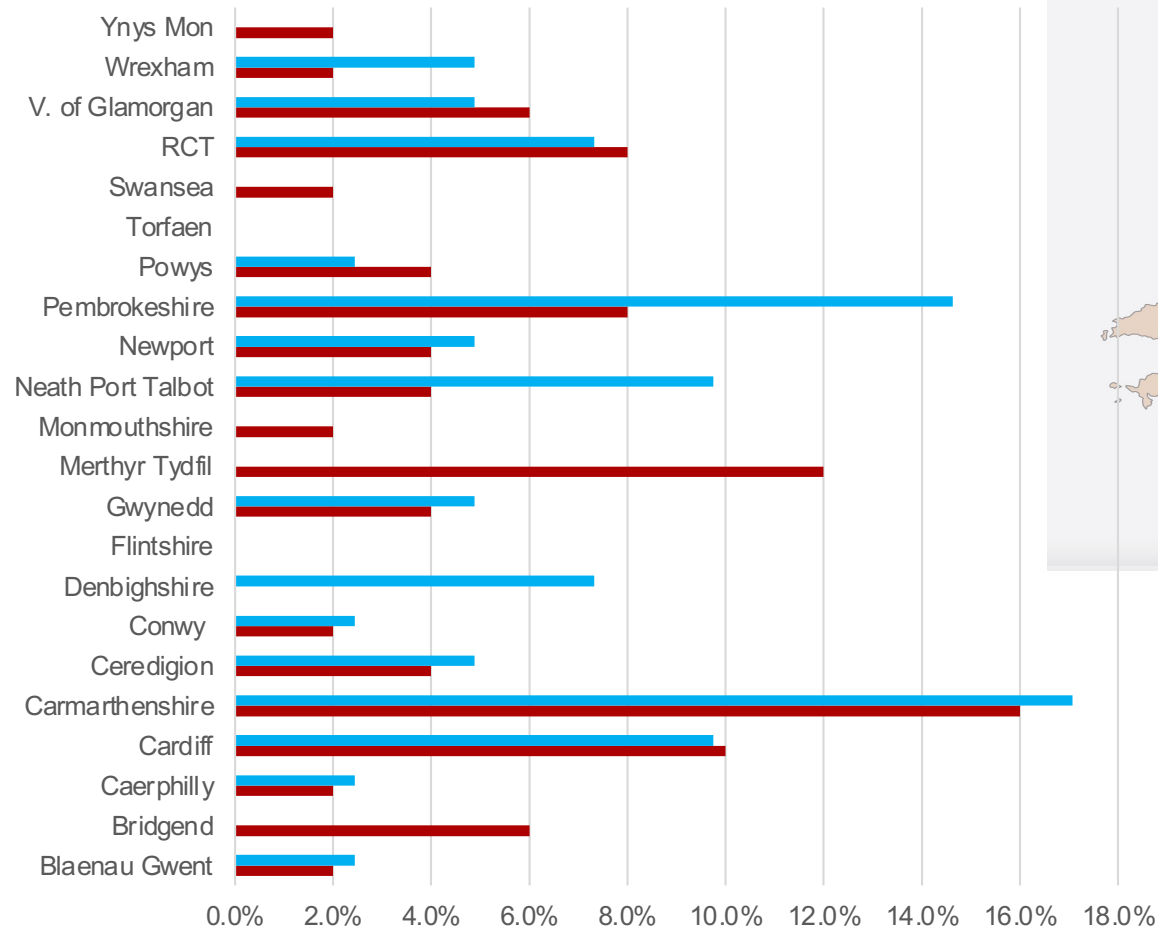
- Paid placements were suspended or postponed
- 26% of jobs furloughed (compared to 29% in Wales)
- 4% began working from home
- 6% were made redundant
- 67% of those furloughed returned to work....so far.



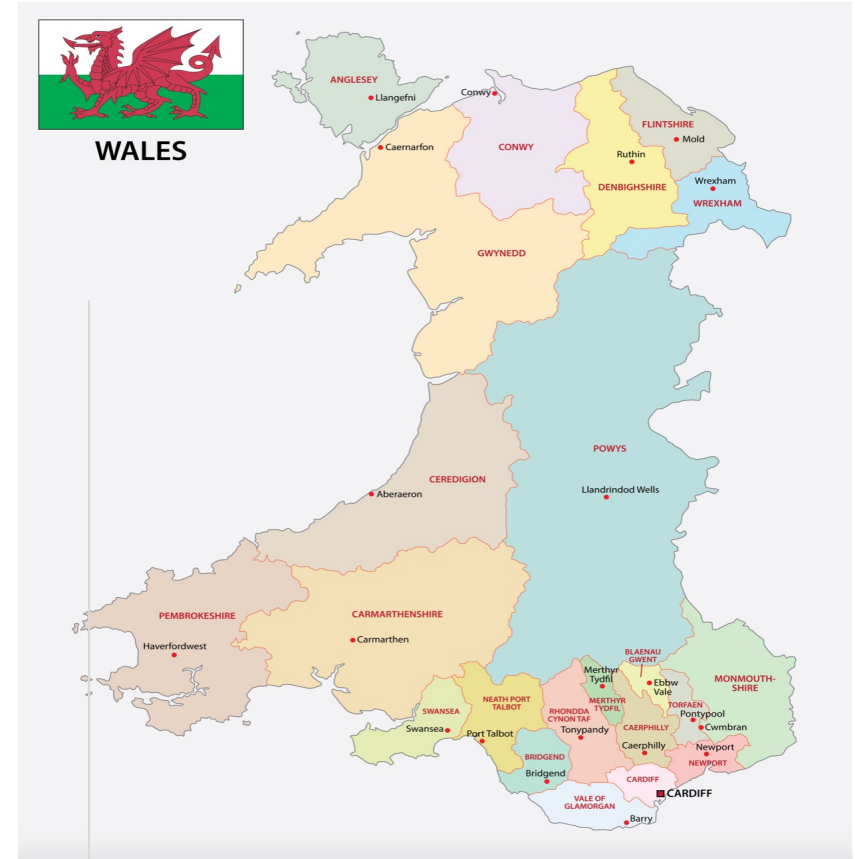
This does seem to show a protective effect from Supported Employment

Shift in pattern of jobs

Engage to Change- Paid Jobs



■ Paid Jobs Post-covid ■ Paid Jobs Pre-covid



Covid impact on supported employment

- Increased welfare benefits advice and advocacy
- Support with working from home and pastoral care
- Keeping participant engaged with the project
- Keeping Supported Interns engaged where work placements were not available
- Online job clubs
- Promoting job coaching online
- Travel training again, learning new Covid-19 rules
- Job coaching in the workplace considering new Covid-19 rules
- Working safely with Covid restrictions (new qualification)

Positive aspects post-pandemic

- Positive attitude of employers deciding to employ young people with an intellectual disability and/or autism they already know, rather than someone else.
- Employers relying on the services provided by Supported Employment Agencies
- More availability of jobs in some sectors and some areas due to lack of staff
- There is investment which may suit many people but are, on their own, likely to be inadequate to help people with a learning disability or autism:
 - Careers Wales Gateway
 - Jobs Growth Plus
 - Kickstart
 - DWP
 - Work and Health Prog
 - Restart Scheme
 - Traineeship grants
 - Inclusive Apprenticeships
 - Supported Internships
 - Communities for Work (Plus)

Challenges post-pandemic

- As future employment opportunities and business closures are unclear, job availability is unclear
- The extent of competition for jobs in some sectors is higher and people with disabilities remain at a disadvantage
- Access to jobs and employability schemes is often dependent on supported employment and job coaching but it is still not available to many
- Without this, schemes become competition for jobs and employers
- There are continuing problems in applying Access to Work in Wales as in England in relation to Supported Internship
- People are more hesitant to move from welfare benefit into SE or to take up opportunities when offered
 - We are missing incentives such as reinstated guaranteed return to benefit
- In Wales, many more young people's jobs were in sectors where jobs were lost, disadvantaging young people with ID/ASD
- Rates of insecure employment are higher among the young in Wales, which doesn't suit people with a disability
- There is no formal NHS commitment to recruit people with a learning disability in Wales - we need more support from public sector anchor institutions



Dr. Stephen Beyer
National Centre for Mental Health
Cardiff University
2.14 Hadyn Ellis Building
Maindy Road
Cardiff
CF24 4HQ
UK



Tel: +44 (0)29 2251 0774
Email: e2c@cardiff.ac.uk

Follow us on Twitter: [@engage_2_change](https://twitter.com/engage_2_change)

Engage to Change website: <http://www.engagetochange.org.uk>