

Effective Career Development Services for Young People (15 – 24) with Disability

Final Report – February 2012

A Research Report for the
Career Industry Council of
Australia (CICA)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the peak national body for the Australian Career Industry, the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) advocates quality career development service provision for all Australians. The Council is particularly concerned that young people with disability are able to access appropriate information, advice and guidance on life, learning and work matters.

Every young person needs the opportunity to transition successfully from school to ongoing learning, work and community life. To do this successfully, young people, including young people with disability, need information, support and guidance, which they receive from a range of people who directly and indirectly influence the development of their careers.

Young people with disability face the same barriers and challenges as all young people entering the workforce. Many of these can be exacerbated by their disability and they may also face a number of additional barriers, such as negative misconceptions about their ability, a lack of easily accessible information, and limited workplace experience.

To that end CICA commissioned the development of a set of Guidelines for *Facilitating the Career Development of Young People with Disability* to support those who provide career information, advice and guidance to young people with disability.

The guidelines are intended for a wide audience, though it is anticipated that disability employment service providers and secondary school teachers, particularly those in the special education sector, will benefit most from the information contained in these guidelines.

The guidelines were developed following consultations with select stakeholders in the career development and disability services fields, a review of relevant literature covering Australian and international best practice and feedback from over 250 practitioners received via an online survey.

The feedback received through the primary research element of this project indicates that there is a strong appetite for a set of guidelines and we recommend that:

- 1) Organisations that have encouraged their members to contribute to the development of these guidelines should be kept informed of their progress.
- 2) The draft guidelines should be 'workshopped' with both career development practitioners and disability service providers, to assess their usefulness for each of these target groups.
- 3) The draft guidelines should be refined and road tested or trialled with a small number of users prior to finalisation and distribution.
- 4) Once the guidelines are tested, refined and finalised, it may be useful to consider developing a measurement tool, which enables organisations or practitioners to meaningfully assess their performance.
- 5) The finished guidelines should be marketed and promoted widely using the same channels that proved very effective in engaging interest throughout this project.
- 6) CICA should create structures for establishing strong linkages between the career development industry and the disability support services sector.
- 7) There is reported demand for cross-sectoral information. Efforts to meet this demand should first be informed by a targeted scoping study on the precise nature and extent of the demand.

1 INTRODUCTION

About 4 million people in Australia, or 20% of the population, report having a disability, with nearly 1.3 million of these identifying as having a profound disability. According to recent statistical reports, the circumstances of the lives of many people with disability give considerable cause for concern. For example:

- 45% of people with disability live in or near poverty (PwC 2011)
- The current rate of employment for people with disability in Australia is low against the OECD average (PwC 2011)
- The current rate of employment for people with disability is half the rate at which people without disability are likely to be employed in Australia (PwC 2011), and
- In 2009, 54% of people with disability aged 15-64 were participating in the labour force, compared to 83% of the non-disabled population (ABS 2011).

In 2011, the Productivity Commission described the current disability support system as “underfunded, unfair, fragmented and inefficient” (PwC 2011, p11). The Commission’s report expressed concern that the needs of the service delivery system were being placed above the needs of individuals with disability, excessive demand pressures were being placed upon the support system, and multiple and complex State and Territory systems were underpinning considerable fragmentation and inefficiency of service delivery.

Australian career development service provision has also been characterised as fragmented and underfunded and offering no guaranteed entitlement to services for young people. For example, the OECD Review Team found that the structure of career development services in schools could vary considerably from place to place. They also expressed concern about the lack of accountability regarding the quality of career development programs in schools, and the fact that access to skilled career guidance expertise was very uneven (OECD 2002).

It is against this backdrop of clearly identified need, and in the presence of two critical, yet less than optimal service systems (disability support services and career development services) that this project was conceived.

Its purpose was to identify the characteristics of effective career development services for young people with disability, including those with mental health issues, to inform the development of a draft set of guidelines for those who facilitate the career development of young people with disability.

2 THE METHODOLOGY

The first stage of the project was a desktop literature review, which culminated in the development of an annotated bibliography (Appendix B). The knowledge gained from the review of the literature was used to inform consultation with stakeholders. Initial telephone conversations with selected stakeholders helped identify the service providers who would benefit most from these guidelines, and provided useful information for development of the guidelines themselves. Next, a survey was developed and widely distributed through a number of channels.

Finally, the information gathered through all of these mediums has been synthesised and used to develop this report and a series of guidelines to assist those who facilitate the career development of young people with disability.

2.1 The Review of the Literature

Articles for review were identified through an examination of established bibliographies exploring research on the post school transitions of young people with disability; desktop research using search terms “*career development*”, “*vocational rehabilitation*”, “*mental health*”, “*disability*” and “*career counselling*”; and a manual search of recent editions of the *Australian Journal of Career Development*. The literature was searched with a view to providing insights on the specified research questions:

- 1) What are the career challenges and barriers faced by people with disability?
- 2) How do people with disability, including a mental health issue, define career success?
- 3) What might effective preparation for the transition to work or future learning look like for people with disability?
- 4) What are the key similarities and differences between career development services for people with disability in Australia and elsewhere?
- 5) What are the characteristics of career development services that build confidence and enable individuals with disability to experience workplace success?

During the course of the literature review it became apparent that the originally defined research questions 3 and 5 were in fact addressing the same issues and so were merged into a single question for the purposes of further research and reporting.

2.2 Stakeholder Consultation

The consultation phase comprised three strands:

- Key support services personnel were surveyed using an online survey instrument designed to elicit information on the key research questions above.
- Telephone interviews were conducted with key informants to the project, including those offering career development services and a range of other education, training, and employment support services to people with disability.
- A discussion was initiated amongst a small group of professional career development practitioners via the social networking platform LinkedIn.

2.2.1 The Online Survey

The survey was distributed through the National Disability Coordination Officers (NDCO), Rehabilitation Counselling Association of Australasia (RCAA), Disability Employment Australia (DEA), National Disability Services (NDS), CICA member associations, via a career development discussion group on LinkedIn, CRS Australia and through government transition program coordinators in all states and territories. The survey was open for approximately one month, from the 7th of December 2011 until the 6th of January 2012. During this time 250 submissions were received.

2.2.2 Telephone Interviews

Telephone interviews were held with Louise Bilato, Director of IMconcepts, and Rehabilitation Counselling Association of Australasia (RCAA) representative on CICA; Bernadette Gigliotti, Executive Manager of Career Education Association of Victoria and President of CICA; Mark Glascodine, a career development consultant and researcher specialising in counselling, development and transition for people with disability; and Elaine Robb, a former teacher in the special education system and current CEO of Encompass Community Services and Victorian State Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) Committee Member. Consultations were also sought with representatives from DEA, NDS and People With Disability, a national peak disability rights and advocacy organisation. However, there were no representatives available from these organisations to discuss this project during the available timeframe.

2.2.3 LinkedIn Discussion Forum

A discussion thread amongst a Careers Debate group on the social media site LinkedIn was also established, asking members: “When you work with people with disabilities, do you use the same tools, techniques, strategies, processes etc.? If you change or supplement your process, what do you do differently?”

All participants in this discussion group emphasised the importance of being flexible and adaptable in order to meet the specific needs of each client. In particular, they highlighted the requirement to spend more time with a client with disability, and a need to be sensitive to any limitations that flow from the disability, and to understand the adaptations needed to overcome restrictions. Importantly, it was also emphasised that any such limitations should not form the starting point or basis of career exploration and planning activities.

2.3 Development of the Guidelines and Report

The findings of the literature review, along with the views of stakeholders, were analysed for key themes and these themes underpinned and informed the development of a draft set of guidelines for facilitating the career development of young people with disability and the preparation of this report. The draft guidelines are included at Appendix A.

3 THE LITERATURE: IN BRIEF

An annotated bibliography of the literature reviewed is appended to this report (Appendix B). What follows is a brief synthesis of what the literature suggests about the following research questions:

- 1) What are the career challenges and barriers faced by people with disability?
- 2) How do people with disability, including a mental health issue, define career success?
- 3) What might effective preparation for the transition to work or future learning look like for people with disability? What are the characteristics of career development services that build confidence and enable individuals with disability to experience workplace success?
- 4) What are the key similarities and differences between career development services for people with disability in Australia and elsewhere?

3.1 The Career Challenges and Barriers faced by People with Disability

Australia has recently been ranked 27th out of 29 OECD countries when it comes to the relative poverty risk of people with disability, with 45% of Australians with disability living in or near poverty (PwC 2011). The employment rate for people with disability is similarly grim, with Australia ranked 21st in this respect, with an employment rate of only 39.8% for people with disability, compared to 79.4% for people without disability (PwC 2011).

The specific career challenges and barriers faced by people with disability are dependent upon their extremely variable life circumstances. However, submissions to the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Inquiry into Employment and Disability in 2005 identified three broad areas into which these challenges and barriers can be grouped:

- A lack of easily accessible information
- The costs associated with factors such as assistive technology and workplace accommodations, and
- The financial and personal risks of workforce participation, particularly if health and support payments are impacted and the job does not work out (Australian Human Rights Commission 2006a).

It is not just people with disability who face these challenges; their carers often express similar difficulties in locating adequate information on post-school options (Beyer 2008).

Another barrier is constituted by the negative attitudes and misconceptions about disability held by employers and the wider community, with those who have a history of mental illness or a learning disability being particularly stigmatised (FACHSIA 2009). In some cases, this can lead to an unwillingness to disclose a disability or mental health issue for fear of discrimination, which can mean that appropriate supports are not identified and put in place, which creates further barriers and potential health risks (Australian Human Rights Commission 2006a).

People with disability may also hold negative attitudes or misconceptions themselves and/or members of their support network. These must be addressed before any post-school pathway can be planned or realised. In order to find and maintain employment, young people with disability must want this themselves and believe it is something they are capable of achieving.

An individual's beliefs and expectations for the future are heavily influenced by the attitudes of their immediate support network. An effective personal support network can play a significant part in supporting and encouraging young people's hopes and dreams, while avoiding becoming overly protective and stifling their potential (Benz 2001; Kendall & Murphy 2003). On the other hand, prolonged exposure to "horizon-limiting views and experiences" may see these beliefs become internalised and the person's capacity to recognise their potential diminished (PwC 2011, p.33).

Everyday barriers and challenges faced by people with disability will also impact their career choices. These include factors such as a lack of available transport, the high cost of living associated with disability, a reliance on an inadequate disability pension, and issues surrounding accessibility to the built environment (FACHSIA 2009).

Importantly, young people with disability face the same barriers as all young people entering the workforce. For example, there have been significant changes to the labour market in the last 20 or so years, including rapid technological developments, a decline in the number of full-time jobs, and the effects of globalisation and outsourcing. These factors have combined to create a highly competitive job market for young people attempting to enter the workforce, as they increasingly compete for a dwindling number of lower-skill, entry-level positions. This leaves young people with disability at a significant disadvantage (Shaddock, Kilham, Spinks & Williams 2004; Syzmanski & Vancollin 2003).

3.2 Defining Career Success

The question of how people with a disability, including a mental health issue, define career success is likely to elicit as many responses as there are individuals. Just like any individual seeking career development assistance, the way people define success is dependent on a whole range of personal variables. While definitions of career success clearly differ between individuals, a commonly cited desire amongst people with disability is to lead "an ordinary life" (PwC 2011, p.34).

In other words, young people with disabilities have needs very similar to the needs of all other young people. They need a safe and supportive environment, education, health services and access to sport and recreation. They also need to develop skills that will serve them well in the community and the work place.

A large body of literature exists on the link between being employed and good mental health (DEEWR 2008). It is generally the case that engaging in meaningful employment is seen as beneficial, or even essential, to maintaining good mental health. However, this must be read in conjunction with the caveat that such work must be carefully managed to avoid aggravating mental health conditions (such as those associated with increased levels of stress for instance), and that in some cases, work may actually increase the symptoms of those with more severe forms of mental illness (DEEWR 2008).

3.3 Effective Preparation for the Transition to Work or Future Learning

Nicholas Buys, Sharon Hensby and Jocelyn Rennie of Griffith University suggest that traditional models of vocational rehabilitation with a short-term focus on immediate job placement are outdated in the modern labour market. They instead advocate for a model based on current career

development principles formed in response to the contemporary and ever-changing world of work (Buys, Hensby & Rennie 2003).

This is not a unique view, and a great deal of recent literature advocates for similar client-focused approaches when working with young people with disability, with self-determination and/or self-sufficiency seen as the primary goal, particularly at times of transition (such as at the completion of secondary schooling) (Szymanski & Vancollins 2003; Test et al 2009). A range of options, including further education, competitive employment and supported employment, should be presented to all clients, with all avenues explored to determine the most suitable pathway and to develop an appropriate plan to achieve the desired outcome (Arnold, Seekins & Ipsen 2003; Beyer 2008).

One of the keystones to successful preparation for transition to work or future learning for people with disability, as commonly identified in the relevant literature, is the development of truly individualised plans/programs that take into account the individual's personal circumstances, rather than trying to use a "one size fits all" approach (Hudson et al 2009). While career development practitioners should focus on helping their clients recognise and work towards their personal career goals, input and support from family, carers, peers, teachers and any other relevant agencies working with the young person (such as rehabilitation counsellors, physical therapists or employment agencies) should also be sought (Beyer 2008; Luecking & Certo 2003; Martin et al, 2007; McIlveen et al 2005). Young people with disability may also need additional time and support, the length and nature of which will vary, in order to fully develop their self-awareness and create more effective career plans and strategies.

It is particularly important that career development practitioners recognise their limits and either seek expert assistance to ensure they are fully aware of a client's abilities and areas where extra assistance may be required (Renshaw 2003).

Studies suggest that young people with disability may be able to find work, but they often experience difficulty in maintaining long-term, sustainable employment (Cobb & Alwell 2009). Successful preparation for the transition from school to work should therefore include longitudinal planning and the development of techniques for ongoing career planning and self-management (Benz, 2001; Cobb & Alwell 2009; Buys, Hensby & Rennie 2003).

A commonly identified method of developing career management skills is to incorporate practical work experience in transition planning or vocational rehabilitation activities (Cobb & Alwell 2009; Miles Morgan & Innov8 Consulting Group 2009). In some cases, training providers (often in the adult community education and/or vocational education and training sectors) offer short vocational courses where students with disability learn the practical skills necessary to work in a particular occupational area. Such experience may assist young people with disability to find secure and sustainable employment (Flannery et al 2008).

There is also significant literature which suggests that many young people with disability, particularly intellectual disability and some mental illnesses, benefit from additional training in general life-skills that are necessary to sustain life and work roles, such as managing a budget or acquiring food preparation skills (Miles Morgan & Innov8 Consulting Group 2009; Test et al 2009).

Two commonly suggested strategies for ensuring that individual planning focuses on developing the skills to meet an individual's goals are employer engagement and the provision of mentoring opportunities. Employer engagement early on in transition planning or vocational rehabilitation is seen as a way of ensuring that all parties are aware of each other's needs and expectations and how best to meet them (Benz 2001; Hughes 2010; McIlveen et al 2005).

In some cases, people with disability who have participated in vocational rehabilitation or transition planning have identified mentoring by people who have had similar experiences as either being very useful, or as an element they felt would have improved their experience (Hudson et al 2009; McIlveen et al 2005). These mentoring opportunities have been identified as particularly helpful to those living in rural areas (Young & Katz-Leavy 2008).

3.4 Similarities and Differences in Services in Australia and Elsewhere

3.4.1 The Employment Context

More than a third of OECD countries place an obligation on employers of a certain size to employ a set quota of people with disability, ranging from 2% of the workforce in Spain and Turkey, to 7% in Italy (OECD 2003). In Australia, the UK and the US however, policy regarding the employment of people with disability is based on specific anti-discrimination legislation, which obligates employers to make suitable (and reasonable) accommodations to the workplace for people with disability able to fulfil job requirements (OECD 2003).

In Australia, there are two publicly funded employment services accessed by individuals through Centrelink: Disability Employment Services and Australian Disability Enterprises. Disability Employment Services assists people with disability to find competitive employment, while Australian Disability Enterprises provide supported employment. Applicants are assessed for eligibility, with successful applicants referred to an appropriate disability employment assistance service depending on the level and type of assistance required. According to the OECD, in Australia specialised vocational rehabilitation and employment assistance is only offered to those assessed as having more severe disability, while those with moderate disability are usually referred to mainstream programs (OECD 2003).

3.4.2 The Nature of Career Development Programs and Services

The desktop literature search uncovered little information on the nature of career development programs and services for young people with disability in other countries. It seems reasonable to assume that in those countries where systems and programs are in place which support the career development of young people, young people with disability fare better than those who live in countries where career service provision for young people is patchy and inconsistent.

The "customer segmentation model" employed by Careers Scotland is frequently identified in the literature as providing a model for best practice in targeting and providing for at-risk groups with specific or greater need. In a similar vein, Career Wales uses differentiation – a "triage"-like system

– whereby customers are assigned to different services based upon assessment of their presenting needs.¹

It is clear from the disability services literature that person centred planning, which places power with the young person, rather than the professional delivering the service, is used by most disability service providers in most developed countries. In most cases, this planning incorporates some elements of career planning, but does not constitute a comprehensive career development program.

In the US and UK, transition planning usually begins in the early years of secondary schooling, when the young person is around 14 years of age. However, in Australia, while schools are encouraged to begin transition planning at an early age, there is generally no specific purpose funding for transition planning until either the final year of secondary schooling or later in some states. The Northern Territory is the only exception, where formal transition planning can begin as early as year 8 (Miles Morgan and Innov8 Consulting Group 2009).

Access to practical, work-based experiences has been internationally recognised as a critical component of successful career preparation. The US Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has outlined the following preparation as essential for all young people:

- Career assessments to identify students' post-school interests
- Structured exposure to further education and training opportunities
- Access to career information including about wages and education/entry requirements
- Training in "soft skills" designed to improve job seeking and basic workplace skills, and opportunities to practice and further develop these skills
- Practical work experience opportunities, including site visits and job shadowing
- On-the-job training experiences, linked to a formal program of study and school credit, and
- Opportunities to learn first-hand about specific occupational skills related to their chosen career pathway.

In addition to these common needs, the ODEP suggests that young people with disability will benefit from an understanding of:

- The relationship between the disability support pension (and any other support payments) and career choices
- How to communicate their disability-related work support and accommodation needs, and
- How to locate and secure appropriate supports and accommodations in education/training and workplace settings.²

¹ Miles Morgan, unpublished report, 2011

² <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/CareerPreparation.htm>

4 THE VIEWS OF STAKEHOLDERS

Consultations with service providers and other relevant stakeholders were conducted through two primary pathways. A survey was also developed based on the findings of the literature review and distributed through the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) network, state/territory government departments responsible for transition to work programs for young people with disability, and the member organisations of CICA. As a result of promoting the survey through a career development practitioner group on LinkedIn, members started a discussion thread regarding adjustments they make to their practices when working with people with disability. This small thread was monitored and read alongside the literature review, telephone conversations and surveys.

4.1 Telephone Conversations with Key Stakeholders

A small number of stakeholders, with particular experience of working or living with young people with a disability, were interviewed by telephone. They confirmed many of the barriers and career challenges identified in the literature. It was claimed that parents are often eager to assist their children in career development activities, but are often unaware of the available supports, or where to go for information.

It was also suggested by two interviewees that information about the opportunities and supports that are available to young people does exist. The issue may actually be a lack of knowledge about who holds such information and where to go to find it. For example, there are many professionals and organisations available to provide expert advice on either career development or on disability support services. However, people often do not know how to access these services, and in many cases the services themselves operate independently of each other, and have very limited awareness of the ways in which they can support one and other.

Perceptions in the community about the capabilities of people with disability was identified as a significant barrier, with many people working from a deficit model, where the starting point is identifying what the young person can *not* do, thus severely limiting from the outset the options and opportunities that are available.

Some respondents expressed frustration at the limitations of the schooling system, which was not able to provide appropriate career programs/services for students with disability. This was not intended as a criticism of teachers, but rather a recognition that, in many cases, responsibility for career development is tacked onto general teaching duties, and very little support or time is made available for these activities. Teachers often have very limited or no knowledge of either career development practices or disability support services, and it was suggested that simple guidelines about effective practice would be a helpful tool in these situations.

Features of effective career and transition services identified during these consultations included:

- raising the young person's and their family's awareness of the supports available;
- starting intentional career development programs as early as possible;
- interagency collaboration (including opportunities to engage with young people earlier - currently this often does not happen until the last year of secondary schooling);
- providing mentoring and opportunities for work experience, and

- identifying and enlisting a proactive support network.

However, it was reported that a balance must be struck between planning and action, with it being all too common that networks can be bogged down with meetings to plan what needs to be done but with very little action being taken.

4.2 The Views of Survey Respondents

The survey was open for approximately one month, and in that time responses were received from 250 service providers. It was distributed through a number of channels including: the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) network, state government departments responsible for transition programs, and the member organisations of CICA. Feedback was received from disability employment services; NDCOs; rehabilitation counsellors; secondary school teachers; career development practitioners operating in schools, universities, VET providers and private practice; community service organisations; government agencies; and disability support staff at universities and VET providers.

4.2.1 *Challenges and Barriers*

Survey respondents were presented with nine career challenges and barriers faced by young people with a disability as identified in the literature, and asked to indicate on a five-point Likert Scale (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree) whether the young people they worked with in Australia faced these challenges and barriers. The barriers were:

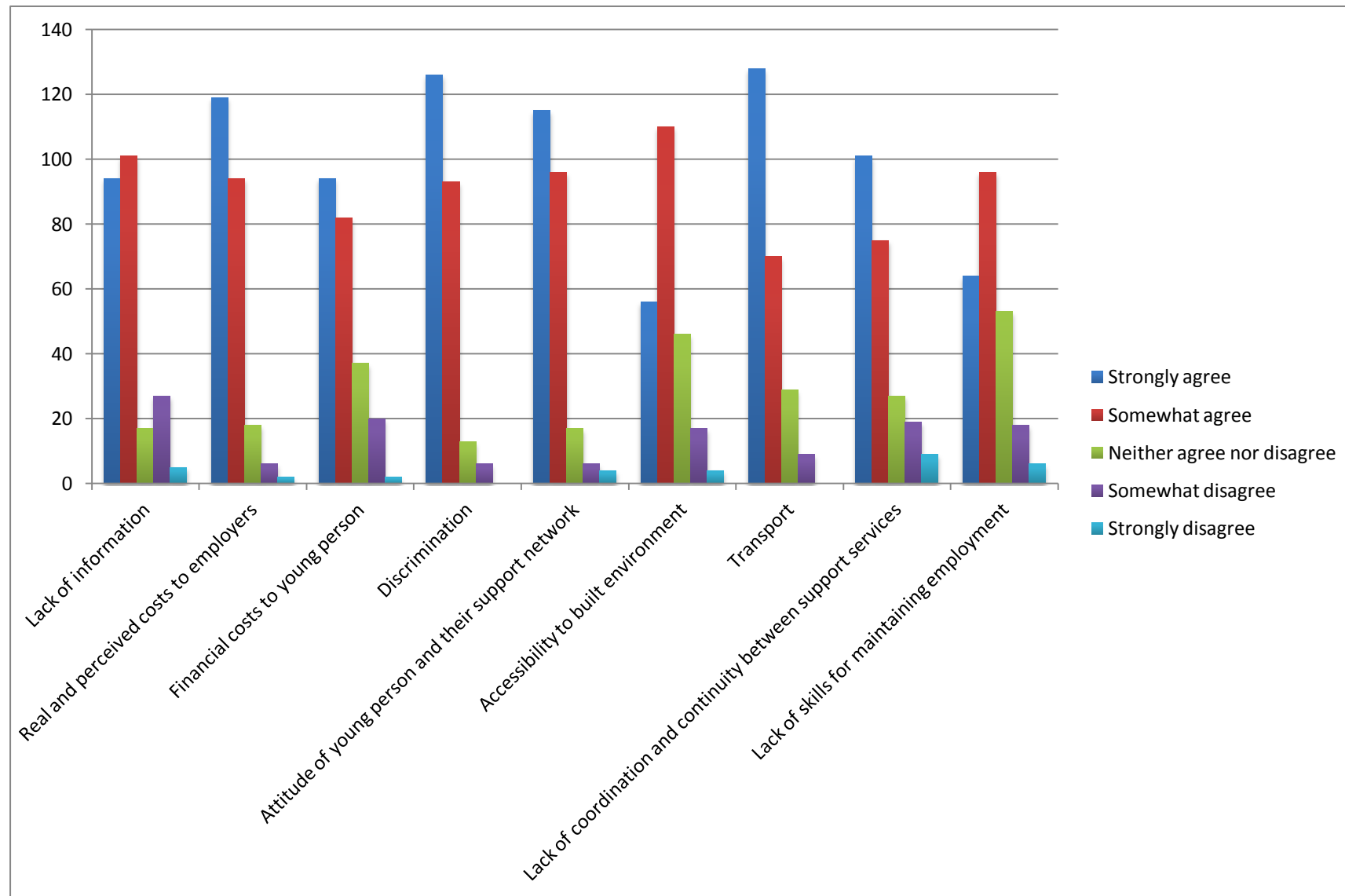
- a lack of available and accessible career information;
- employers' views of the real or perceived costs of employing a person with disability;
- the financial costs to the young person (such as loss of disability support payments or the costs of additional support and/or assistive technologies);
- discrimination;
- the attitudes and beliefs of the young person (e.g. lack of resilience, self-belief and/or confidence) and their family/carers;
- accessibility to the built environment;
- lack of adequate and affordable transport;
- lack of coordination of services during transition to work or further education and/or training;
- lack of skills needed to maintain employment after the initial placement;

Facing discrimination was the most commonly identified of these barriers, with 219 respondents agreeing (126 strongly agreed and 93 somewhat agreed) it was a significant challenge faced by their clients. Only 6 respondents disagreed it was a barrier, and none of these strongly. The views of employers and the limiting attitudes of young people and their families were also identified as significant barriers by over 200 respondents (115 strongly agreed and 96 somewhat agreed). Each suggested barrier or challenge was confirmed as significant by more than 50% of respondents, with

a lack of skills for maintaining employment receiving the lowest level of agreement with 160 respondents (or 67%) agreeing (64 strongly agreed and 96 somewhat agreed).

Figure 1 illustrates the extent to which survey respondents agreed that the following attitudes, conditions or situations acted as challenges/barriers for young people with disability.

Figure 1: Rating of barriers and career challenges faced by young people with disability, as identified by survey participants



Respondents were also given the opportunity to identify other barriers and challenges. A number of respondents expressed frustration at their inability to engage young people at an earlier age (during the early years of secondary schooling). Negative misconceptions held by members of the wider community about the capabilities of people with disability were also cited as being problematic.

4.2.2 Perceptions of Career Success

Just over 200 of the survey participants provided a response to the question “how do young people with disability define career success?” There was a wide variety of responses, with young people’s career aspirations, or notions of career success identified as being as varied as those of the whole population. Career success was most typically described as encompassing one or more of the following themes:

- getting and keeping any job;
- working in a job and area they enjoy, with opportunities for progression;
- earning enough to live independently;
- differs between individuals, the same as any other young person;
- working in a job where they are seen as just another member of the team;
- having a sense of belonging and contribution to the community; and
- having a supportive and understanding employer.

Nearly half of those who responded to this question incorporated two or more of these themes in their definitions.

4.2.3 Characteristics of Effective Preparation for Transition

Utilising the findings of the literature review, a list of strategies for preparing young people with disability for the transition to work or further education and training was developed, and survey respondents were asked to indicate those strategies they considered to be most effective. Respondents were able to select those strategies, which they believed to be effective, without the need to rank them in any manner.

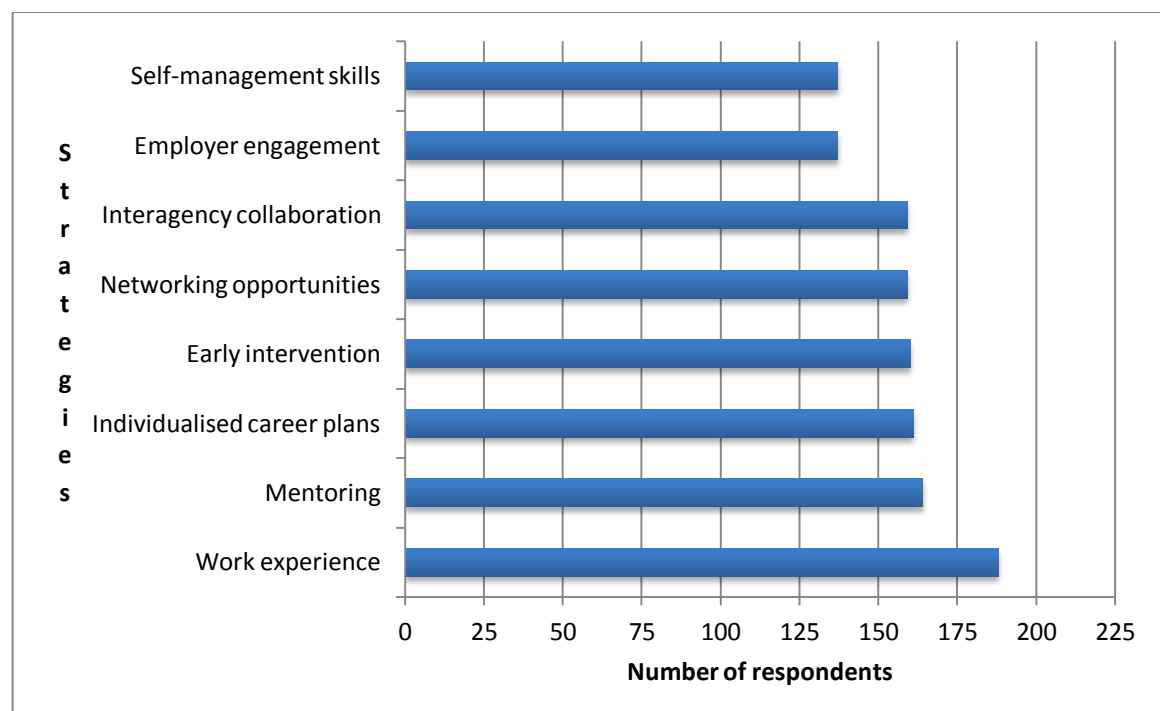
These strategies were:

- arranging work experience activities;
- arranging mentoring;
- facilitating networking opportunities (for example with local employers, disability service providers and education and training providers);
- developing individualised career plans;
- utilising a coordinated and multidisciplinary team approach (incorporating young people, disability support services, education and training providers, employers and family members/carers);
- early intervention (i.e. career planning activities beginning in early secondary school);

- engaging employers during the education and training stages of career development; and
- focusing on developing the skills and abilities necessary for self-management and self-determination.

Of the total 250 survey participants, 228 provided responses to this section of the survey. Each of the suggested characteristics and strategies were identified as being effective by more than 50% of respondents. Incorporating work experience was the most commonly supported strategy, with 189 respondents identifying this as effective. Employer engagement and encouraging self-management and self-determination were the least supported, though approximately 61% of respondents to this section still identified them as effective. Figure 2 indicates the number of respondents who expressed support for the effectiveness of each of these strategies.

Figure 2: Survey respondents' identification of effective career development strategies for young people with disability



Respondents were again provided with the opportunity to identify additional strategies they had enjoyed success with. However, fewer than 50 respondents took advantage of this opportunity. Building self-confidence in the young person, which is a core career management competency, was the most common strategy identified here. A number of respondents also suggested that parents should be engaged and encouraged to support their children into employment.

4.2.4 Additional Supports

Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to identify what would assist them to more effectively facilitate the career development of young people with disability. Unsurprisingly, the most commonly identified need was for greater funding, with more than half of the 188 participants who responded to this question highlighting this as the most useful support

they could receive. Not all respondents outlined their reasons for believing extra funding was key to effective practice, but amongst those that did some of the more common reasons included:

- hiring extra staff;
- providing professional development for existing staff;
- developing career development products specially tailored to people with disability;
- the opportunity to spend more time working with individual clients;
- developing new programs and services; and
- expanding existing services.

Under current systems, support providers who took part in the survey often do not have contact with young people until they have either finished school, or are in their last year. Improved access to young people in the early years of secondary schooling was seen as necessary to most effectively identify their aspirations, determine the skills that need to be developed, the supports that need to be put in place, and in this way develop a plan to reach these goals. Many of the survey respondents also identified a need for greater engagement with members of the young person's support network:

- engaging parents was seen as essential in both supporting and challenging young people with disabilities to realise their full potential;
- engaging employers was seen as necessary to both increase employment opportunities for young people and to combat negative misconceptions about the work limitations of people with disability in general;
- engagement with other support services and networking was seen as the best way to ensure that the supports provided to young people remain consistent and that all parties are working towards the same goals.

4.3 LinkedIn Discussion Forum

There were eight active participants in this discussion group, who shared their experiences of working with clients with disability. All participants in this discussion group emphasised the importance of being flexible and adaptable in order to meet the specific needs of each client. In particular, there is often a requirement to spend more time with a client with disability, and a need to be sensitive to any limitations that flow from the disability, and to understand the adaptations needed to accommodate these. It was also emphasised that any such limitations should not form the starting point or basis of career exploration and planning activities.

5 GUIDELINES FOR FACILITATING THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

The guidelines were developed based on effective practices identified in the literature review, existing international guidelines and the feedback received from stakeholders. They are intended for a wide audience, though it is anticipated that a range of disability support service providers and secondary school teachers, particularly those in the special education sector, will benefit most from the information contained in these guidelines.

The draft guidelines are attached at Appendix A.

6 CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

The findings of this exploration of the characteristics of effective career development services for young people with disability are encapsulated in the draft *Guidelines for Facilitating the Career Development of Young People with Disability*. They have been designed as a set of practical guidelines to assist both:

- Career development practitioners with limited understanding of the needs and opportunities that exist for young people with disability, and
- Disability service providers, including teachers in special schools, with limited understanding of the characteristics of effective career development programs for young people.

We propose that the next stage in their development should be to ‘workshop’ them with both career development practitioners and disability service providers, to assess their usefulness for each of these target groups, and to gather suggestions for their improvement prior to any wider road testing and/or distribution and promotion.

Once the guidelines have been finalised, they should be distributed as widely as possible. The high level of engagement with the survey, along with the nature of the responses received, indicates a strong level of interest in and support for a set of guidelines such as these.

Distributing the survey via CICA membership organisations and the NDCOs (via DEEWR) resulted in high response rates, despite the coincidence of the Christmas holiday period, and it is recommended that these avenues again be utilised to keep stakeholders informed of what steps will be taken subsequent to this first stage of the project, and ultimately for promotion of the finalised guidelines.

Stakeholder consultations also identified a demand for other resources, which would complement these guidelines. For example, an appetite was expressed for the development of a central, easy to access resource/portal that captures both information about state/territory and Australian government disability support **and** career development programs, services, and supports.

Interest was also expressed in the identification and development of case studies that showcase service providers who have developed and tested successful career development programs for young people with disability.

A considered scoping exercise to determine what information is already available and precisely what information is desired by both disability service providers and career development practitioners would need to be undertaken before committing to the development of any such cross-sectoral resource.

There was a strong interest in expanding the opportunities for networking between disability support service providers, career development practitioners and other schools-based personnel. This is an area where CICA could play an important part by establishing

links at the national level with peak disability support service organisations. It could also facilitate the development of a special interest group drawn from CICA member organisations. Their mandate would be to replicate these linkages at a State/Territory level, and to seek opportunities to make seminar, workshop and conference presentations that focus on the important interdependencies between disability support workers and career development practitioners.

In summary, the feedback received through the primary research element of this project indicates that there is a strong appetite for a set of guidelines and we recommend that:

- 1) Organisations that have encouraged their members to contribute to the development of these guidelines should be kept informed of their progress.
- 2) The draft guidelines should be 'workshopped' with both career development practitioners and disability service providers, to assess their usefulness for each of these target groups.
- 3) The draft guidelines should be refined and road tested or trialled with a small number of users prior to finalisation and distribution.
- 4) Once the guidelines are tested, refined and finalised, it may be useful to consider developing a measurement tool, which enables organisations or practitioners to meaningfully assess their performance.
- 5) The finished guidelines should be marketed and promoted widely using the same channels that proved very effective in engaging interest throughout this project.
- 6) CICA should create structures for establishing strong linkages between the career development industry and the disability support services sector.
- 7) There is reported demand for cross-sectoral information. Efforts to meet this demand should first be informed by a targeted scoping study on the precise nature and extent of the demand.

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**Guidelines for Facilitating
the Career Development
of
Young People with Disability**

INTRODUCTION

These Guidelines for *Facilitating the Career Development of Young People with Disability* have been developed to support those who provide career information, advice and guidance to young people with disability.

They are intended for a wide audience, though it is anticipated that disability employment service providers and secondary school teachers, particularly those in the special education sector, will benefit most from the information contained in these guidelines.

Every young person needs the opportunity to transition successfully from school to ongoing learning, work and community life. To do this successfully, young people, including young people with disability, need information, support and guidance, which they receive from a range of people who directly and indirectly influence the development of their careers.

Young people with disability face the same barriers and challenges as all young people entering the workforce. Many of these can be exacerbated by their disability and they may also face a number of additional barriers, such as negative misconceptions about their ability, a lack of easily accessible information, and limited workplace experience.

As the peak national body for the Australian Career Industry, the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) advocates quality career development service provision for all Australians. The Council is particularly concerned that young people with disability are able to access appropriate information, advice and guidance on life, learning and work matters.

To that end, these guidelines were developed following consultations with select stakeholders in the career development and disability services fields, a review of relevant literature covering Australian and international best practice and feedback from over 250 practitioners received via an online survey.

WHAT IS CAREER DEVELOPMENT?

Career Development is a term used to describe “the complex process of managing life, learning and work over the lifespan”³.

The way we manage this process significantly determines the nature and quality of individuals’ lives; the kind of people they become; the sense of purpose they have; and the income at their disposal. It also determines the social and economic contribution they are able to make to the communities and societies of which they are part.⁴

If individuals, including young people with disability, are to manage their career development effectively, they need:

- learning opportunities to develop their career management skills including:

³ Australian Blueprint for Career Development

⁴ careersENGLAND (undated publication)

- skills to understand their own strengths and weaknesses, and needs and wants;
- skills to make career-related decisions; and
- skills to pursue learning and work opportunities;
- access to high quality information on the opportunities that are available to them;
- opportunities to explore the relevance of a range of available options; and
- support to develop and implement their personal course of action or career plan.

Making the initial transition from secondary schooling into further education and training or work can be particularly difficult and challenging for young people with disability who often have not had access to services and experiences designed to facilitate their career development.

These guidelines seek to assist parents, teachers, employment service providers, career development practitioners and others who are likely to play a part in assisting young people with disability to develop their careers and transition effectively to a full and productive life.

1 BE RESPONSIVE TO THE UNIQUE ASPIRATIONS AND DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF EACH YOUNG PERSON

Career development service providers and disability service providers alike espouse the importance of individualised, person-centred life, learning and work planning. Its objective is to assist individuals to express their hopes and dreams, to identify their capacities and to develop strategies that help them to live their lives and participate in their communities as they see fit. It's also about supporting people in the choices they make about their lives.

- 1.1 Deal with young people with disability fairly, equitably and without prejudice, respecting their culture, values, beliefs and life-experiences and those of their families and the communities to which they belong
- 1.2 Ensure that the young person is at the centre of all career development activities
- 1.3 Assist the young person to identify for themselves the things which motivate and create satisfaction and well being in their lives, and those which create frustration and dissatisfaction
- 1.4 Discuss the nature and impact of the young person's disability, and work with the young person to identify strategies and workplace adjustments which may be implemented to overcome any potential workplace challenges
- 1.5 Encourage and assist the young person to develop the skills they need to be directly involved in their own exploration and decision-making processes
- 1.6 Explore and examine the full range of career and employment options with the young person, including further education and/or training, supported employment in a social enterprise (where this may be appropriate) and open employment, including self-employment
- 1.7 Avoid making decisions assumed to be best for the young person based on the personal values or beliefs of the practitioner or service provider
- 1.8 Accept the rights of the young person to make independent choices and to take responsibility for those choices and their consequences
- 1.9 In cases where a young person's preferred learning or work option is not be possible, examine the underlying reasons for this choice and use this information to inform the development of a range of alternative options for exploration
- 1.10 Ensure that there is sufficient flexibility in the structure and delivery of programs to allow young people to progress at their own pace

2 ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE SELF-MANAGING AND SELF-DETERMINING INDIVIDUALS

Encouraging young people with disability to make decisions and to manage their careers to the extent possible is central to their development. Actively engaging young people in planning their own future from an early age is an important part of giving them a sense of ownership of their lives and motivation to do it their way.

This does not mean that young people are left to their own devices. Instead, it means building the confidence and capacity of the young person to know when, where and how to seek assistance and support as required.

- 2.1 Challenge, encourage and support young people to realise their full potential
- 2.2 Engage young people in activities that build their confidence and self esteem
- 2.3 Encourage young people to ask appropriate questions in education, the workplace and related settings
- 2.4 Examine the benefits and drawbacks of disclosure of disability in educational and workplace settings, allowing the young person to determine their preferred course of action
- 2.5 Assist young people to develop the self-management skills⁵ needed to obtain and maintain employment, such as self-marketing, interacting with co-workers or asking for help when needed
- 2.6 Assist young people to understand their rights and responsibilities in the workplace and how best to advocate for themselves
- 2.7 Where necessary, assist the young person to develop the life skills required for independent living, by accessing appropriate services and agencies. This might include learning how to access transport to get to and from work, or financial management skills
- 2.8 Assist young people with disability to develop the skills necessary to identify, discuss and request appropriate workplace supports and adjustments with potential employers

⁵ See the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development*: www.blueprint.edu.au

3 ASSIST CLIENTS TO LOCATE AND ARRANGE SUITABLE WORK EXPERIENCE ACTIVITIES

Incorporating relevant work experience activities, including structured workplace learning, volunteer work, site visits, job shadowing and mentoring, provides significant benefits for young people with a disability. Work experience provides a valuable networking opportunity, helps build a résumé, improves the young person's confidence and allows the young person to gain real experiences on which to base their career decisions.

- 3.1 Assist young people with disability to locate and arrange suitable work experience activities
- 3.2 Proactively seek workplace experiences for young people with disability
- 3.3 Ensure young people with disability are well prepared and feel comfortable before entering a workplace
- 3.4 Engage potential employers early in career planning activities to ensure both the young person and the employer are aware of each other's needs and expectations
- 3.5 Assist young people to arrange any necessary training, certification or security checks which may be required before commencing work
- 3.6 Ensure employers are aware of the supports available to them when employing people with disability, including financial assistance to make necessary adjustments in the workplace
- 3.7 Monitor closely the workplace experiences of young people until you are confident that the young person is fully supported in their placement

4 ACTIVELY CREATE, EXPAND AND ENGAGE THE SUPPORT NETWORKS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Effective career development facilitators engage, and where appropriate, expand the young person's life, learning and work networks. They also value the role each network member plays in facilitating the young person's career development.

- 4.1 Encourage young people to identify significant people in their life—such as parents, other family members, friends, teachers, social workers, community members, healthcare workers and other service providers— who can assist them to develop their careers
- 4.2 Assist young people and their parents to develop and then utilise their own personal support network
- 4.3 Assist support network members to understand the particular roles they might play in the career development of the young person
- 4.4 Encourage all members of the young person's support network to hold high and realistic expectations for the young person
- 4.5 Where necessary, seek to align the aspirations of members of the support network with those of the young person

5 MAKE CAREER INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN A FORMAT THAT IS EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Easy access to a range of career information is essential for anyone engaged in career planning activities. Young people with disability may have particular requirements, and career information resources will need to be modified in response to these needs.

- 5.1 Make sure that the language used in publications and documents is clear and easily understandable for both young people and members of their support networks, particularly parents
- 5.2 Wherever possible, make sure that electronic information is made available in hardcopy format at the client's request
- 5.3 Make information available in a range of formats, according to the specific needs of clients
- 5.4 Discuss written information with young people and their immediate support network to ensure that it is understood
- 5.5 Explain the content, purposes, potential benefits and results of any planned activities in a manner easily understood by the person or persons for whom they are intended
- 5.6 Ensure that material contained in web-based programs, resource materials and career development programs is current and accurate

6 DEVELOP STRONG WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER RELEVANT AGENCIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

Ancient African wisdom suggests that “It takes a whole village to raise a child”.⁶ Facilitating the career development of young people is also a shared responsibility. While career development practitioners may be equipped to help young people achieve their career goals, disability employment service providers may have better knowledge of the widening range of options for young people with disability, or be able offer work experience placements, and parents may have rich insights into young people’s hopes and dreams. Creating bridges and service linkages is critical to coherent and seamless service provision.

- 6.1 Identify other services young people are accessing (such as school, disability employment services, healthcare and/or community services) and the ways they may also facilitate the career development of the young person
- 6.2 Identify any gaps in service delivery and develop a local network of providers offering these services for appropriate referral
- 6.3 Involve agencies and individuals that can assist the client with achieving their career goals in planning activities (e.g. Employment Pathways Planning, Personal Pathway Planning)
- 6.4 Refer the young person to more suitable professionals when your own skills and experience do not meet the young person’s needs, or when you are unable to continue service delivery
- 6.5 Ensure appropriate levels of support are available at times of transition and referral between agencies
- 6.6 Cooperate with other professionals and/or colleagues according to your organisation’s code of conduct and any other ethical practices and procedures relevant to the situation
- 6.7 Respect the privacy of the young person and adhere to any applicable privacy laws
- 6.8 Seek the young person’s express consent before disclosing their information to any third party

⁶ African Proverb

7 PROVIDE ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE DELIVERY OF EFFECTIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

In order for these guidelines to be most effective, staff working directly with young people with disability must be able to operate in a flexible and supportive workplace. Staff need access to appropriate training, information and resources to deliver an effective service, with the unique needs of the client being the primary determinant of need.

- 7.1 Advocate to policy-makers and administrative personnel for the development of career development programs and services that are relevant to the needs of young people with disability
- 7.2 Ensure that staff are adequately trained and have access to ongoing professional development
- 7.3 Ensure that staff have access to appropriately modified career information and career development resources that promote effective practices for young people with disability
- 7.4 Seek the feedback of young people with disability and their networks and use it to continuously improve programs and services

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Australian Blueprint for Career Development

To help young people develop career management skills, you may find the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development* useful. A framework for designing, implementing and evaluating career development programs for young people and adults, the *Blueprint* identifies eleven career management competencies (comprising skills, knowledge, values and attitudes) that individuals need to effectively manage multiple learning and work transitions throughout their lives

For more information on the Blueprint visit <http://www.blueprint.edu.au>

A professional development kit for working with young people with the Blueprint is available to download from the Blueprint website at:

<http://www.blueprint.edu.au/TheToolkit/UsingtheBlueprintwithYoungPeople.aspx>

There are also a range of worksheets, case studies and tools that practitioners may find helpful in the Toolkit section of the Blueprint website.

Australian Career Development Studies

<http://www.career.edu.au>

Australian Career Development Studies is a suite of learning materials available to those wishing to gain qualifications in Career Development Studies. The learning materials can be downloaded from this website, however an appropriate training provider will need to be located course delivery and assessment.

Australian Employers Network on Disability

<http://www.employersnetworkondisability.com.au/>

This website contains a series of fact sheets concerning job searching, worker rights and employer-employee communications

Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training

<http://www.adcet.edu.au>

This website provides information to assist people with a disability move from school into training and higher education, and then into their chosen career.

Australian Government Career and Transition Programs

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/CareersandTransitions/Pages/default.aspx>

There are a number of career and transition programs on the DEEWR website that service young people with special needs.

Australian Job Search

<http://www.jobsearch.gov.au/>

This is a government job database enabling people to find jobs, post resumes and receive daily emails regarding jobs they may be interested in. This site also provides free recruitment services for employers and agencies.

Australian Human Rights Commission

<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/>

The Commission's goal is to foster greater understanding and protection of human rights in Australia and address the human rights concerns of a broad range of individuals and groups.

Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA)

<http://www.cica.org.au/>

CICA is the national peak body for the career development industry in Australia. CICA promotes and supports the lifelong and life-wide career development of all Australians through its involvement in policy development and practice implementation.

Disclosure of Disability

<http://pubsites.uws.edu.au/ndco/disclosure/>

Choosing Your Path. Disclosure: It's A Personal Decision is a resource which provides substantial information about options and pathways that people with disabilities can use in disclosing their disability in post secondary education and employment environments.

Employability Skills Framework

<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/webdav/site/central/shared/for/current-students/career-planning/university-careers-service/career-planning-and-researching/steps-to-take-planning-your-career/documents/employability%20survey.pdf>

Outlines the attributes employers look for when hiring people, and the skills required to gain employment, progress one's career and achieve one's potential. Education and training providers, students and the community at large use this framework.

Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Career Information Products

<http://www.cica.org.au/practitioners/guiding-principles>

The Guiding Principles provide a framework against which career development service providers and career information publishers can assess and evaluate the processes and products they use.

Indigenous Portal

<http://www.indigenous.gov.au/>

An Australian Government website with links to resources, contacts, information, and government programs and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

JobAccess

<http://jobaccess.gov.au/>

JobAccess is an information and advice service funded by the Australian Government. It offers help and workplace solutions for people with disability and their employers.

Job Guide

<http://jobguide.deewr.gov.au>

The Job Guide provides information on a vast range of occupations and their education training pathways.

Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners

<http://www.cica.org.au/practitioners/standards>

This resource defines the career industry, its membership and services, providing a foundation for designing career practitioner training. The Professional Standards establish a benchmark against which career practitioners can be assessed and evaluated.

Job Services Australia

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/EMPLOYMENT/JSA/Pages/default.aspx>

This is a national network of private and community organisations dedicated to finding jobs for unemployed people, particularly the long-term unemployed. Whether you are a job seeker or employer, this site provides information about how Job Services Australia members can help you.

myfuture

<http://www.myfuture.edu.au>

Provides information about career planning and education, and training options for Australian jobs.

National Disability Coordination Officers (NDCO)

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Skills/Programs/Support/NDCO/Pages/default.aspx>

A national network of NDCOs operates within 31 regions throughout Australia to improve the coordination and delivery of support services to help make it easier to enrol or participate in post-school education, training and employment. The NDCOs provide practical assistance and advice to assist people with disability gain access to and successfully complete post school education and training, and employment.

ReCaP – Resource for Career Practitioners

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/CareersandTransitions/CareerDevelopment/Resources/Pages/ReCaP.aspx>

This resource is designed for people who provide information, guidance, support and advice to students and clients on career development.

APPENDIX B: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arnold, N., Seekins, T. and Ipsen, C., 2003. 'Self-employment for people with disabilities in the United States: A recommended process for vocational rehabilitation agencies', in *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 12(1), pp.49-57.

Arnold et al identify that self-employment is often an option for people with disability as it provides a great degree of flexibility. However, many rehabilitation counsellors are unfamiliar with this option and are uncomfortable or unable to provide the necessary support and guidance to interested clients. This article details a process developed to assist rehabilitation agencies and counsellors working with people with disability who wish to start their own business, suggesting ways that the two areas of vocational rehabilitation and best practice for business development can be combined.

Australian Human Rights Commission. 2006. *WORKability I: Barriers: Interim report of the national inquiry into employment and disability*. AHRC, available world wide web:

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/employment_inquiry/interim/index.htm (Accessed 24/11/2011).

This is the first of two reports produced by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) as a result of the National Inquiry into Employment and Disability in 2005. The focus on this interim report was on identifying the barriers faced by people with disability who are either already in, or are seeking to enter, the open workforce. The barriers or concerns raised in submissions to the inquiry are categorised into three broad areas:

- **Information** - people with disability and employers are concerned about the absence of easily accessible and comprehensive information that can assist in their decision making processes and support their ongoing needs.
- **Cost** - people with disability are concerned about the costs of participation, and employers are concerned about the costs of employing a person with disability.
- **Risk** - people with disability and employers are concerned about the financial and personal impact of participating in the workplace, especially if a job does not work out." (p. i)

The report also identifies the specific barriers faced at each of three stages in the work cycle: preparing to enter the workforce; finding and securing employment; and job retention. While this is only an interim report, there is significant discussion of each of the identified barriers, often with examples of commonly reported submissions, or submissions from notable sources, such as ACROD and the ACE National Network (a peak body representing disability employment services nationally).

Australian Human Rights Commission. 2006. WORKability II: Solutions: Final report of the national inquiry into employment and disability. AHRC, available world wide web:

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/employment_inquiry/final/index.htm (Accessed 22/11/2011).

This is the second and final report of the National Inquiry into Employment and Disability conducted by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) in 2005. The first report identified common barriers to employment and workforce participation faced by people with disability, while this report provides suggestions for addressing these issues. The AHRC advises that the solutions put forward in this paper should be treated holistically, with all recommendations being necessary to achieve the best result. Partial implementation is likely to lead to further barriers.

There are 30 recommendations set out in the report, though the majority of these are directed at Government as guidelines for policy development or publicly funded service provision. However, some of these - such as development of a case management model - may be adapted by individual practitioners.

The report also includes a chapter examining limited "international approaches to providing supports in the open workplace". Approaches from New Zealand, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom are briefly described, with any similarities to the Australian system highlighted. The Canadian and New Zealand systems are identified as the most promising for further research to determine appropriate amendments to the Australian system.

Azzopardi, A. 2008. Career Guidance for Persons with Disability'. University of Malta, available world wide web:

<http://eupa.org.mt/files/18345%20EUPA%20Euro%20guidance%20Booklet%20-%20FINAL.pdf> (Accessed 29/11/2011).

The subject of this study is how career guidance can help students with disability succeed. Azzopardi views the provision of career guidance through the lens of inclusion, as well as through the lens of how career guidance teaching is currently provided.

A person with a disability, like any other student, requires a positive experience and needs to answer questions related to 'Who am I?' and 'What can I become?' The study suggests that, among all the persons that can offer support, the career guidance practitioner plays a crucial part.

In his foreword, Joseph Camilleri, chairman of the National Commission for Persons with Disability, said that the labour market presents a major hurdle for all people with disability.

"Often, failure is not the result of an individual's disability, poor motivation, or a lack of job opportunities, but of low aspirations, a lack of conviction in the abilities of disabled people and a lack of innovative thinking when offering careers advice." (p.iv)

Azzopardi says that a survey among guidance practitioners revealed that they have little relevant knowledge or training about disability. Critical recommendations include: that practitioners should be instructed about the social model of disability, which shifts the focus of attention towards the removal of disabling barriers; the introduction of relevant post-graduate qualifications for practitioners; and the introduction of guidance teachers in the second part of primary education, so that career guidance becomes a central structure in educational and transitional programs.

Benz, M. 2001. 'Serving youth with disabilities within school-to-work systems'. University of Oregon. Available world wide web: <http://www.schoolhousedoor.com/media/teacher/wilkes-servingyouth.txt> (Accessed 18/11/2011).

Benz briefly outlines the policy setting in the US, where all students with disability are required to develop an Individualised Education Program in consultation with an appropriate support person (or persons). He outlines some of the characteristics of effective programs, such as longitudinal planning and work-based learning programs. A number of strategies used to increase the effectiveness of planning are also outlined and Oregon's Youth Transition Program is briefly examined as an example of an effective practice aimed at improving post-school life success.

Under the Youth Transition Program, participants, their parents, teachers, transition specialists and vocational rehabilitation counsellors work collaboratively to develop a student's individual transition plan. The University of Oregon also provides ongoing training and technical assistance to practitioners, enabling service delivery to be of a consistent and effective standard. Employer engagement is highlighted as another cornerstone to this program, with transition specialists facilitating relationships between schools and local employers in order to ensure that the skills being taught in the classroom match those required in the workplace. Opportunities for independent living are the final component described in this article. Program participants live in their own apartments, with responsibility for cooking, cleaning and managing their finances, with the result of higher self-esteem and improved job and social confidence.

Beyer, S., 2008 'Transition from school to employment – What works?' in Llais 87 (Spring 2008) pp.8-11.

Beyer offers a brief summary of a 2-year Welsh study into the effectiveness of employment support programs for young people with learning disabilities. From the age of 14, all students with a learning disability take part in transition planning. Beyer identifies that common practice in Wales is to pursue post-secondary training and education, with less emphasis on practical work experience or gaining employment straight from school.

Beyer claims that while finding employment is seen as a legitimate aim of a transition plan, it is uncommon for young people to pursue employment in its own right. Barriers including

“lack of personal support, limited transportation options, and difficulties with welfare benefits” (p.8) are identified as common hurdles for those who do pursue this option. Beyer advocates that all options, including employment, should be examined in transition planning, with more information about the benefits and options for work experience being made available to both students and their carers. He also suggests that there needs to be more consistency between schools, colleges, social services and employment agencies as to “what is possible and desirable for young people with learning disabilities to do at transition” (p.11).

Buyts, N., Hensby, S. and Rennie, J. 2003. ‘Conceptualising the vocational rehabilitation process using a career development approach’ in *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 12(1), pp.36-48.

Buyts et al suggest that traditional models of vocational rehabilitation are out-dated in the current labour market, due to their narrow focus on immediate work placement. Easily accessible jobs, where people with disability are often placed under traditional models, are generally very low-skilled, and are consequently low-paid with a low level of job security. A second issue with this model is a lack of career planning and management skills amongst people with disability. Without these skills workers tend to have very limited prospects for promotion and career advancement. In cases where they are laid-off, they may not have the necessary skills to adapt and successfully re-enter the workforce.

This paper proposes a model that allows people with disability to gain the skills and knowledge to manage their own careers. By working closely with a career practitioner, or rehabilitation counsellor with an understanding of effective career development practices, people with disability are better prepared to enter the workforce in a meaningful and sustained way, often with increased wages. Buyts et al advocate a career development model with four phases, career exploration and self-management, career enhancement, job realisation and career-management. This should be a repetitive and cyclical model, where career goals, plans and progress are regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate. Over time, the intervention of a career practitioner should gradually be replaced by the client taking on personal responsibility for their plan and progress toward goals. This model is examined through a practical case study, demonstrating its effectiveness in assisting a worker with disability to return to work in a meaningful manner.

Cobb, B.R. and Alwell, M., 2009. ‘Transition planning/coordinating interventions for youth with disabilities: A systematic review’ in *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 32(2), pp.70-81.

Cobb and Alwell review a number of US studies examining the efficacy of numerous transition planning programs for high school students with a wide range of disabilities. Their findings suggest that programs with student-focused planning show a great deal of promise in preparing students for post-school activities. Their findings also suggest that:

- a) Students with “identified special needs” would benefit more from strategies teaching them how to learn “cognitive and meta-cognitive strategy instruction” (p.78), rather than generic “catch-up” homework;
- b) Vocational training should include practical work experience, with access to suitable mentors;
- c) While students with disability are often able to find work, evidence suggests that they often experience difficulty in maintaining employment for a sustained period. Students would benefit from learning career planning and development techniques, which they could use post-school to improve their long-term employment prospects.

The poor treatment of students with a learning disability, both by peers and non-specialist teachers, is also highlighted as a challenge facing students with disability. A process of collaboration between general educators and specialist teachers is suggested as a way of increasing the knowledge and sensitivity required to work with students experiencing specific disability.

DEEWR, 2008, Employment assistance for people with mental illness: Literature review, prepared by URBIS for the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra. Available world wide web:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/ResearchStatistics/Documents/COAG_LiteratureReview.pdf (Accessed 21/11/11).

Much of the literature reviewed identifies work as an important part of maintaining, and improving, good mental health. However, this does come with the caveat that the work should be engaging and that it is possible for the wrong type of work, or workplace, to have a negative impact on a person’s mental health.

Mental illness, or psychiatric disability, is identified as being significantly different from other types of disability “in that it can fluctuate and is the result of an intermittent and episodic process” (p.15). It is impossible to predict the course of an individual’s illness and they may experience significant changes to symptoms over months or years.

Potential barriers to finding or maintaining employment are often associated with emotional, interpersonal or cognitive issues. These barriers can include community and employer stigma; individuals feeling incapable of working; and fear that work may cause a relapse. Homelessness, drug and alcohol dependency and/or criminal records are identified as associated barriers to employment many people with mental illness may face. The second half of the review focuses on identifying and evaluating various practices for working with people with mental illness, including the provision of a set of 11 best practice guidelines for “when competitive employment is the goal:

1. Services focused on competitive employment

2. Eligibility based on consumer choice
3. Rapid job search
4. Integration of rehabilitation and mental health
5. Attention to consumer preferences
6. Time-unlimited and individualised support
7. Income support and health benefits counselling
8. Intensive on site support
9. Multidisciplinary team approach
10. Emphasis on the rehabilitation alliance
11. Stigma and disclosure strategies.” (p.32)

FACHSIA, 2009. ‘Shut out: The experience of people with disabilities and their families in Australia’.

This report identifies the challenges and barriers faced by people with disability, based on feedback received by the Australian Government in reference to a public discussion paper used to inform the development of the National Disability Strategy. Directly related to employment are barriers of discrimination, with employers holding negative attitudes and misconceptions about disability. “Those with a history of mental illness or an intellectual disability appeared to be significantly stigmatised” (p.5).

It was also reported that many people with disabilities struggle with living independently, at a decent standard of living. In part this is due to the inadequacy of disability pension when compared to the high cost associated with living with disability, and an inability to access the support required to move off the pension.

Flannery, K.B, Yovanoff, P., Benz, M.R., and McGrath Kato, M. 2008. ‘Improving employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities through short-term postsecondary training’ in Career Development for Exceptional Individuals 31(1), pp.26-36.

The article examines the effect that completing a short course at a community college has on the employment prospects of people with disability. Data for the article was collected from one college, and only includes employment details for participants up to 90-days after completion of the course. The training program examined is referred to as “Occupational Skills Training”; these programs provide broad skills appropriate to specific vocational areas (such as waste water treatment, automotive repair and veterinary assistance) and generally take less than a year to complete. The researchers found that those who complete such a program generally find it easier to gain employment and often earn higher wages than those who do not complete a program, though it is difficult to judge what effect partial completion has on these figures.

It is suggested that career practitioners should be aware of programs such as those described above at local institutes, and give them consideration as a way of improving the employment opportunities for clients in cases where longer 2 or 4-year courses of study are not suitable.

Barriers to accessing post-secondary education are identified as:

- (a) lack of awareness of postsecondary education opportunities and requirements;
- (b) lack of academic, transition, and self-advocacy skills;
- (c) lack of responsiveness by postsecondary programs and personnel to comprehensive needs of individuals with disabilities; and
- (d) lack of partnerships between secondary schools and postsecondary schools, the business community, and adult agencies. (p.27)

Youths may also face an additional barrier of cost, with many programs like the one(s) examined being geared primarily to more mature workers who have been injured in a workplace accident and are looking for a way to re-enter the workforce. Such workers will generally have access to workplace compensation and so can more easily afford the associated costs than a young person transitioning from high school to the workforce.

Hudson, M., Ray, K., Vegeris, S. and Brooks, S., 2009. People with mental health conditions and Pathways to Work, Department for Work and Pensions (UK), Research Report 593. Available world wide web: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep593.pdf> (Accessed 21/11/2011).

Hudson et al provide an in-depth examination and report into a program run by the UK government to assist people with disability to find work. The research was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions, who administered the program to determine what the strengths and weaknesses of the program were, as clients with mental health conditions reported mixed results. Perceptions from both providers and clients were sought to inform the recommendations for improvement.

Some of the commonly reported barriers or challenges faced included: clients feeling pressured to apply for vacancies, which they may not have felt comfortable with (for various reasons); lack of communication/partnerships between various service providers, from whom a single client may have been receiving support; and clients facing discrimination (real and perceived) from employers, due to their history of mental illness.

Some of the suggested improvements included mentoring opportunities between new and former clients; greater support for clients managing transitions, saving and budgeting; more privacy in meetings between service providers and clients; and better communication and coordination between various support agencies.

Note: the program examined in this report, Pathways to Work, ceased on 31st of March 2011.⁷

Hughes, C. 2010. 'Career development and social inclusion at St Patrick's College: A case study' in Australian Journal of Career Development, 19(2), pp.5-12.

Of particular interest is Hughes' description of the career development services offered to "students living with a disability or mental illness" at St Patrick's College in Launceston, Tasmania (pp.7-8). There are two programs in place for these students. All students are provided with the opportunity for individualised assistance from a career counsellor, assisting students with developing a career plan and teaching the skills necessary to find and maintain work (e.g. resume writing, mock interviews and learning about local education and training options). The school also hosts a biennial dinner and networking opportunity for the parents of these students; local education and training providers; disability service providers; and local employers.

Kendall, E. and Murphy, P., 2003. 'The determinants of work adjustments following traumatic brain injury: A focus for career counsellors' in Australian Journal of Career Development, 12(1), pp.25-35.

Kendall and Murphy discuss the long and short term "work adjustments" required by workers following a traumatic brain injury. Findings of this longitudinal study suggest that social support is valuable in the short-term, but that in the long-term internal resources (e.g. self esteem) are more valuable, and that in fact prolonged social support can be detrimental. They highlight that early intervention is valuable in cases of traumatic brain injury, particularly in developing the skills necessary for long-term vocational rehabilitation.

Knapp, M. et al, 2007. 'Transition pathways for young people with complex disabilities: exploring the economic consequences' in Child: care, health and development 34(4), pp.512-520.

Knapp et al examine a wide range of data on young people with disabilities with complex needs, in an effort to quantify the associated economic impacts of transitioning from secondary school. Their findings demonstrate a high level of under-employment amongst young people with disability in the UK, and that wages were often lower than for young people without disability in comparable roles, with the same levels of education and training.

Two explanations for this underemployment are offered. First, they identify that young people with disability are far less likely to enter higher education and gain formal

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http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/Employmentsupport/WorkSchemesAndProgrammes/DG_171745

qualifications than non-disabled young people. Second, a lack of adequate support services was also identified as a potential issue. The type and level of support required and received varied greatly between participants in the study. However, it was common for access to support services to be lost or become more difficult as young people transitioned from school to adulthood.

Luecking, R.G. and Certo, N.J., 2003. 'Integrating service systems at the point of transition for youth with significant support needs: a model that works' in American Rehabilitation, August. Available world wide web: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0842/is_1_27/ai_110802878 (Accessed 20/11/11).

Luecking and Certo examine the effectiveness of a model of transition service delivery, which, at the time of publication, had been introduced at schools in two US states. The model involves collaboration between schools and specialist agencies in the rehabilitation and/or developmental disabilities systems. In many cases there is a distinct break between the services offered while students are still in the school system and what is available to adults upon graduation. However, under the *Transition Service Integration Model*, services begin in the student's final year of schooling, involving all parties, with individualised plans developed, which incorporate activities such as paid work, community service and planned recreation activities.

Luecking and Certo identify a number of benefits to this model, including: the ease with which it can be adapted for use in various locations; higher rates of employment (and higher associated wages) amongst participants when compared to the general population of people with disability; and seamless transitions from services provided in school to those in adult life, with no time spent on long waiting lists or the need for multiple assessments. Because these services are generally provided in a wider community setting, access to adequate transport is also identified as a common issue, particularly when students had previously relied on school public transport services.

Martin, J.E., et al. 2007. 'The student-directed summary of performance: Increasing student and family involvement in the transition planning process' in Career Development for Exceptional Individuals 30(1), pp.13-26.

This article examines the positive benefits of teaching students with disability self-determination skills and involving them in their own career/transition planning process. Current practices are briefly discussed, where it is common for teachers to dominate planning meetings, with students generally having very little direct involvement. The authors point to several detrimental effects of such a system and suggest an alternative approach, where students develop and maintain a "student-directed summary of performance" long in advance of these mandatory "Individualised Education Programs". These student summaries begin in early secondary school and it is envisioned that they will assist students to become more active in their IEP sessions when they complete secondary school. The Albuquerque

public school system is also provided as an example of where this system has been introduced and is having positive results.

McIlveen, P., Cameron, M., McLachlan, D, and Gunn, J. 2005, The Study to Work Transition of University Students with a Disability. Australian Journal of Rehabilitation Counselling 10 (1). 46-55.

McIlveen et al (2005) identified an initiative designed to assist the study to work transitions of students with disability. Key to the approach was the formation of a forum that effectively linked students with one another; with employers; with employment agencies; State and Commonwealth agencies; and key staff at the university's careers service. Here we can see the deliberate formation of a network of social capital by means of the program, that is able to correct the lack of access to such networks of capital for students with disability: "Feedback from students indicated the value of the event in terms of outcome and process" (McIlveen, Ford and Everton 2005, Abstract). (pp.73-74)

Miles Morgan and Innov8 Consulting Group. 2009. From Protection to Productivity: Evaluation of the Transition to Work Program. A report prepared on behalf of the NSW Department of Human Service. NSW Government, available world wide web [http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/file/0020/240374/Evaluation of the Transition to Work Program Report.pdf](http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/file/0020/240374/Evaluation_of_the_Transition_to_Work_Program_Report.pdf) (Accessed on 24/11/2011).

The Transition to Work (TTW) program is one of two post-school programs for young people with disability funded by Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Service NSW. The two-year program is primarily designed to support young people with disability achieve employment, by providing skills development, vocational preparation, and other supports needed to transition from year 12 to sustainable employment.

The success of the program was measured by the extent to which young people with a disability:

1. Moved to open or supported employment at the end of their program or their course of study.
2. Performed satisfying and meaningful work consistent with their employment goals.
3. Developed the skills and qualifications necessary for the transition to sustainable employment.
4. Sustained their work and training commitments.
5. Who are Aboriginal or from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds had fair access to support and achieved job outcomes comparable to other young people in the program.

The authors found that a number of key ingredients for successful transitions recur in the literature, including the importance of:

- offering opportunities for real work experience and work placements;
- designing a job to suit the individual;
- an awareness and accommodation of employer needs;
- a service perspective in regards to meeting the needs of employers;
- individualised programs, planning and services;
- flexibility in service provision;
- instruction in life skills to support work skills; and
- integrated support from a number of organisations and/or sectors. (pp.3-4)

The evaluation found that the TTW program itself was quite successful, and identified a number of factors that contributed to the program's success, including its:

- focus on employment outcomes;
- emphasis upon the provision of training in a work environment;
- person-centred nature;
- responsiveness to changing work needs;
- focus upon building effective partnerships between stakeholders in the transition process (schools, parents, employers, etc.);
- emphasis upon culturally competent services; and
- responsiveness to the needs of people living in rural and remote areas.

Through its attention to these principles, the TTW program in many instances was seen to create effective bridges that were assisting young people to move from school to employment, or in some cases, further education. Parents, service providers and young people reported that the transitions being made by young people would be unlikely to occur without the supports available through the TTW program. (p.4)

The review found that the service providers that focused on achieving employment outcomes for young people (that is, incorporating a service model outwardly focused and structured to provide young people with work-based, experiential learning opportunities, in both supported and open employment settings) were best equipped to provide service outcomes that satisfied service users and their families.

Morgan, V. et al. 2011. People living with psychotic illness 2010: Report on the second Australian national survey, Prepared on behalf of the Department of Health and Ageing. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra. Available world wide web: [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/353E10EE88736E02CA2579500005C211/\\$File/psych10.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/353E10EE88736E02CA2579500005C211/$File/psych10.pdf) (Accessed 24/11/11).

Psychotic disorders are a diverse group of illnesses that have their origins in abnormal brain function and are characterised by fundamental distortions of thinking, perception and emotional response. The most common of these disorders is schizophrenia.

- Two of the main symptoms are delusions and hallucinations.
- The onset for many psychotic disorders is in the late teens to early adulthood.
- Most people with psychotic illness will receive treatment, however, the stage and age at which this begins varies. (p.1)

This report focuses on the results of a 2010 survey of people living with psychotic illness accessing public and non-government specialised mental health services and follows a survey that was administered in 1997-98, which provided the first data on the prevalence of psychotic illness in the Australian population. One of the key aims of the survey was to identify the impacts of psychotic illness on people's lives and identify the factors related to better outcomes.

Two thirds of people living with a psychotic illness experienced onset in late adolescence and their early 20s, impacting their transition from school to further education and training and employment. 33.7% had not attained a secondary school certificate, compared to 24.9% for the general population.

When asked to name the top three challenges faced by people living with a psychotic illness GPs listed:

- Social isolation (41%);
- Lack of employment (37.7%), and
- Financial problems (37.5%).

The three biggest challenges identified by respondents were also financial matters, social isolation and lack of employment. Only one third were in paid employment and only 30% of this group were in full-time employment, compared to 72.4% for the general population.

Findings highlighted the need for "...an integrated approach to service provision for people with psychosis to ensure that their living requirements and needs for social participation are met, as well as meeting their very considerable mental and physical health needs." (p.101)

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2003. Transforming disability into ability: Policies to promote work and income security for disabled people. OECD, Paris, France.

This report includes a chapter on Integration Policy Challenges, with a section that specifically looks at vocational rehabilitation and training. This includes a brief comparison of the access to this type of support that people in different OECD countries have. France, Germany and Poland are provided as examples where all people with disability have the right (without restriction) to vocational rehabilitation, whereas in the United States, vocational rehabilitation is a voluntary program, and while all people have the right to *apply*, there is no guarantee that vocational rehabilitation support will be accessible. Eligibility for participation also varies between different countries. In Australia, special vocational rehabilitation programs are restricted to people with a severe disability, while those with moderate disabilities are referred to mainstream programs (p.109). In other cases eligibility may be related to entitlement to disability benefits, or in some cases there is a unique assessment, independent of that, for disability benefits. Further comparisons of funding models, types of employment programs and ages of people in these programs are also provided.

The report concludes with some suggested approaches to policy (and program) development, based on a mutual obligation between government (or other support provider) and people with disability. These policy objectives are:

- Introduce a culture of mutual obligations;
- Recognise the status of disability independently of the work and income situation;
- Design individual work/benefit packages for disabled persons;
- Promote early intervention;
- Involve employers in the process;
- Restructure benefit systems to remove disincentives to work;
- Reform programme administration;
- Improve coordination of transfer schemes. (p.159)

PwC, 2011. Disability expectations: Investing in a better life, a stronger Australia. PwC, Australia. Available world wide web: <http://www.pwc.com.au/industry/government/assets/disability-in-australia.pdf> (Accessed 30/11/2011).

PwC produced this paper with the aim of exploring the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) proposed by the Productivity Commission's report, *Disability Care and Support*. PwC start by providing a brief history of disability in Australia. Data from the OECD shows Australia is performing very poorly in regards to employment participation amongst people with disability, ranking 21st out of 29 countries. This OECD data also shows that 45% of people with disability in Australia are living in or near poverty. PwC use this backdrop to

advocate a reform of government policy and broader cultural change based on four principles of fairness, facilitation, choice and inclusion. By adopting a social model of disability, and providing the necessary social supports to allow people with disability access to the same rights and opportunities as all Australians, PwC suggest that there will not only be social improvement, but that the GDP will also be significantly improved.

The paper also examines current barriers faced by people with disability, and suggests reforms to address these issues. Throughout the paper, PwC examines the views and implications of the NDIS from the perspectives of both people with disability and their families/carers, with a number of personal stories interspersed throughout the report.

Rangarajan, A., Wittenburg, D., Honeycutt, T. and Brucker, D., 2008. Programmes to promote employment for disabled people: Lessons from the United States, Department for Work and Pensions (UK), Research Report 548. Available world wide web: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep548.pdf> (Accessed 21/11/2011).

This paper examines a number of US policies and programs aimed at increasing the workforce participation rates of people with disabilities, especially amongst those receiving disability pensions (or equivalent). The paper's authors use this review to extrapolate suggested best practice guidelines that could be applied in a UK setting. All of the US programs reviewed in the paper have been identified as examples of best practice in the US themselves. The evaluations are divided into three categories, those targeting individuals with intellectual disability, those targeting people with psychiatric conditions and a program targeting low-income mothers with disability.

The recommendations provided in this paper are aimed primarily at government policy makers, and include suggestions for additional funding and tools to evaluate the effectiveness of a program. However, the background research into the various programs and their effectiveness does serve to provide an idea of the sorts of programs offered in the US, along with an evaluation about their effectiveness.

Renshaw, J. (2003). Interview with Jane Renshaw/Interviewer: G. Murphy [transcript]. In Australian Journal of Career Development, 12(1), pp.4-8.

This interview is a career profile of Jane Renshaw, Victorian WorkCover Authority's specialist consultant in Injury Management. The first half of this brief interview covers Renshaw's early career and her history working in rehabilitation and workers' compensation. In the second part, she provides her views on the skills and knowledge a career development practitioner needs to successfully work with people with disability, and sorts of initiatives necessary to improve services in this field.

Renshaw advises that careers counsellors in this field should pursue post-graduate training and/or mentoring to gain the skills and experience necessary for "case-managing specific injury types" (p.6). All cases are unique and there is no effective one-size-fits-all service. She

also suggests gaining an understanding of pain issues, as self-reported “pain” is one of the most common barriers of returning to work worldwide. Her advice in regards to acquired brain injuries is that career counsellors not offer any services to clients with these sorts of injuries, unless they have done specific training in this field, as these are complex cases, requiring specialist attention to achieve effective results.

Roessler, R.T, Hennessey, M.L, and Rumrill, P.D, 2007. ‘Strategies for improving career services for postsecondary students with disabilities: Results of a focus group study of key stakeholders’ in Career development for exceptional individuals 30(3), pp.158-170.

This article summarises an investigation into the strengths and weaknesses of career services for people with disabilities in a number of US states. A mail-out survey was first conducted, from which lists of strengths and weaknesses of existing services were created. These lists were then presented to a number of focus groups with the aim of developing a set of recommendations which could be used to enhance the existing strengths and address weaknesses. A series of 114 recommendations were developed from this process and classified into five broad categories: Information; Research; Services and Curriculum; Self-advocacy and Self-determination; and Involvement of key stakeholders.

It is suggested that many of the strategies should begin before students enter postsecondary education and should continue until after graduation (p.164). It is also suggested that, contrary to common perceptions, students entering post-secondary education should receive at least equal levels of support as those transitioning straight to the workplace, though the nature of this support will of course vary between students pursuing the two pathways.

Shaddock, A., Kilham, C., Spinks, A. T. & Williams, M. 2004. ‘Getting and keeping a job when you have a disability’. Centre for Education and Innovation, University of Canberra. Available world wide web: <http://www.canberra.edu.au/faculties/education/teacher-ed/esi/papers/shaddock2001c> (Accessed on 24/11/2011).

Shaddock et al examine a broad range of literature on the barriers and challenges faced by young people entering the world of full-time work. Their report covers both generic and disability-related literature, though the ultimate focus is on the barriers faced by young people with disability, particularly those with intellectual disability. While “having a disability is not an insignificant barrier to employment”, the findings of this report warn that disability is only one aspect of an individual’s context, and young people with disability will face the same challenges and barriers that all young people will.

Barriers are divided into four interrelated areas (pp1-2):

Economic	Demographic	Personal	Educational
Labour Market	Family	Personal	Literacy and numeracy

		characteristics	
Unions	Socio-economic status	Employer and employee attitudes	Vocational Education
Income	Cultural background		
Recruitment	Gender		
	Nature of disability		
	Geographical area/proximity to labour market		
	Stability of residence		
	Contactability		
	Access to transport		

While barriers and challenges can be broadly assigned to one of the above categories, it is important to emphasise that a person's circumstances will be unique, meaning that the specific types of barriers, and the extent of their impact, will vary considerably between individuals.

The report concludes with some brief suggestions for ways in which some of these barriers could be addressed. These suggestions include: that advice and support should come from a wide variety of people, particularly family; provision of relevant education and training, including practical work experience; student-directed learning; and providing education and support to employers and co-workers in regards to necessary and reasonable accommodations which may be required.

Syzmanski, E.M, and Vancollins, J., 2003. 'Career development of people with disabilities: Some new and not-so-new challenges' in *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 12(1), pp. 9-16.

Syzmanski and Vancollins describe "an ecological model of career development and vocational behaviour", as well as identifying a number of recent changes to the world of work, and the associated challenges these have created for people with disability. Changes to the labour market (such as increased mobility of the workforce and lower levels of job security), increased reliance on financially costly technology, and globalisation are all identified as key barriers for people with disability.

Using their ecological model of career development, Syzmanski and Vancollins outline some broad guidelines, which career development practitioners could use to assist clients with disability to overcome some of these barriers. The first recommendation centres around gaining a full understanding of a client's particular context, including their socio-economic background, disability, employment policy context of the state/country and the prevailing social/cultural view of the individual's particular disability. The authors' second recommendation is to understand a client's work environment, suggesting that where appropriate, career practitioners advocate for ergonomically designed workplaces. Their final recommendation is that career practitioners should support clients with disability

through activities aimed at increasing career planning and decision-making skills, particularly those that will help clients to self-manage their careers.

Test, D. W., et al. 2009. 'Evidence-based practices in secondary transition' in *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals* 32(2), pp.115-128.

This article identifies a number of effective approaches and/or practices for secondary transitions for students with disability. These findings are based on a literature review of scientifically-based research, with each paper reviewed needing to pass a series of stringent guidelines to ensure their validity. Practices are divided into four areas:

- student-focused planning,
- student development,
- family involvement, and
- program structures.

A fifth category, interagency collaboration, is also identified, although no evidence-based strategies were identified for this category. Evidence for these practices is classified as either strong, moderate, acceptable or potential (requiring additional research). The article describes 32 evidence-based practices, with the majority falling within student development practices.

Young, A.E. and Murphy, G.C., 2003. 'Vocationally oriented rehabilitation service requests: The case of employed persons experiencing a spinal cord injury' in *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 12(1), pp. 9-16.

Young and Murphy investigate vocational rehabilitation services provided to a number of Australian workers with spinal cord injuries. Those included in the study were admitted to metropolitan-based spinal injury units in the early 1990s, and were employed at the time of injury.

Study participants were interviewed about their views in regards to the adequacy of the support services they received designed to help them return to work. The majority of participants believed they could have benefitted from additional services, more discussion of the options and alternatives, timely follow-ups, and greater access to more informed support service providers, commonly identified as additional services, which would have provided the greatest benefit.

The findings of this research are consistent with wider literature in suggesting that those in rural areas experience significant difficulties in accessing adequate support services. There was also a view that metropolitan-based services were ill-equipped to understand the unique requirements of rural workers.

Woolsey, L., & Katz-Leavy, J. 2008. 'Transitioning youth with mental health needs to meaningful employment and independent living,' Washington, DC: National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, Institute for Educational Leadership. Available world wide web: http://www.ncwd-youth.info/assets/reports/mental_health_case_study_report.pdf (Accessed 15/11/2011).

This report outlines a series of key features of programs for young people with mental health issues and provides a series of recommendations that can be mapped against CICA's Guiding Principles for Career Development Services. The five programs examined as part of this study are all designed specially for young people, with the recognition that the needs of a young person with mental health issues will be different from an adult with the same issues.

The common barriers faced by young people with mental health issues include:

- The stigma of traditional mental health therapy;
- Feelings of low self-esteem and lack of self-worth;
- Lack of ownership by youth over their own life plans;
- Low expectations by society on the ability of youth to succeed;
- Traditional work exposure and employment models that do not maximise individual strengths;
- Lack of appropriate transitional housing in the community.

The paper goes on to identify features of the examined transition programs that address these barriers, such as separating service locations for youth and adult programs, staffing choices and individualised case-management systems. These recommendations are organised into two categories, those for specific programs and staff, and those aimed at government policy makers.