

supported employment

Employment is an important part of recovery and every person who wants to work can work with the right support.



- Individuals with mental illness are a diverse group of people, with a wide range of talents and abilities. They work in all sectors of the U.S. economy, from the boardroom to the factory floor, from academia to art. Employment not only provides a paycheck, but also a sense of purpose, opportunities to learn and a chance to work with others. Most importantly, work offers hope, which is vital to recovery from mental illness.
- Studies show that most adults with mental illness want to work and approximately six out of 10 can succeed with appropriate supports, yet less than 2 percent of those served in public mental health systems use evidence-based supported employment. Employment rates for people with serious mental illness are abysmal. In 2012, only 17 percent of those served in community mental health systems were employed, while 33 percent were unemployed.
- Individual Placement and Support (IPS) supported employment is an evidenced-based model designed to help individuals with mental illness find jobs in the competitive marketplace. IPS is integrated into the individual's overall mental health treatment plan and tailors employment services to match the person's needs, talents and preferences. IPS programs prioritize rapid job search and placement, yet are available as long as program participants need support.
- Core elements of IPS supported employment:
 - Competitive, paid employment is the goal.
 - Zero exclusion - Anyone who wants to work can participate.
 - Rapid job search assistance is provided.
 - Employment Specialists develop relationships with employers.
 - Services are integrated with the mental health treatment team.
 - Personalized benefits counseling is offered.
 - Strengths-based approach that focuses on consumer employment preferences.
 - No time limits - Individualized long term support is provided.
- IPS supported employment is available in Wisconsin but there is a need to invest in technical assistance, fidelity reviews and quality improvement for existing programs.

(1) Diehl, S., Douglas, D., & Honberg, R. (n.d.). Road to Recovery: Employment and Mental Illness (pp. 1-29, Rep.). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <https://www.nami.org/About-NAMI/Publications-Reports/Public-Policy-Reports/RoadtoRecovery.pdf>