

Helping Customers with a Mental Health Condition into Work

- Listen to the customer – they are the expert on their condition how it affects them personally and what helps them manage any effects
- Be practical and realistic about the steps they should take to find work
- Find out more about mental health conditions
- If the customer mentions their mental health condition, do not be afraid to ask for more information.
- Use regular summaries and check understanding
- Relate questions to employment and specific job goal
- Remain optimistic and supportive throughout the contact, but avoid being unrealistic
- Be alert to customers' patterns of behaviour – how are they interacting, self presentation, signs of anxiety, attendance at appointments etc. Recognise and work within the limits of your own remit and expertise; maintain a focus on work related issues
- Refer on or seek further guidance as appropriate, involving other colleagues and professionals where necessary, such as the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) or Work Psychologist.
- Utilise internal and external sources of information and support
- Be aware of the risks of forming preconceptions and making assumptions; be aware of your own attitudes and possible prejudices which may influence interaction with customers.

For scheduled interviews:

- Inform the customer of the purpose, format and length of any interview, ideally in advance, to help minimise anxiety
- Be as flexible as possible in the scheduling and length of appointments to meet customer needs
- Identify any other arrangements the customer might need to help them participate fully in the interview (such as their own Support Worker attending).