



Northumberland
County Council

Towards a collaborative approach to reducing inequalities in
employment outcomes for our population
UPDATE

Emerging North of Tyne Work and Health Strategy
Northumberland Health and Wellbeing Board

8th June 2023

www.northumberland.gov.uk

Reminder of key issues

Northumberland

- Persistent high level of inactivity with 46,700 working age people economically inactive; 10,800 *due to long-term sickness, and 7,900 say they want to work.*
- Relatively low unemployment rate, but high incidence of long-term unemployment and workless households
- Impact of health inequalities on the labour market has intensified post-covid.
- Mental health, MSK and diabetes are main health causes of inactivity
- Place disparity across county – economic and health inequalities in deprived urban areas, and specific rural issues of isolation and poor access to services.

Reminder of Northumberland responses

- ICB, North of Tyne Combined Authority, LA Public health and Economy leads collaborating on a North of Tyne Work and Health strategy and improving service integration. **An update will be provided at this session.**
- Northumberland Inequalities Plan 2022-32
- Establishment of Northumberland Employment Partnership and Employability Network to coordinate services and integrate work and health support
- Health and Wellbeing Board consultation on existing activity of Anchor Institutions and commissioners to develop action plan . **Further Survey responses awaited.**
- Joint Strategic Needs Analyses on Inclusive Economy (**complete**) and Ageing Well (**in development**).
- Major Employer Forum and employer pledge Summer 2023
- Refreshed and reinvigorated Northeast Work and Health Network (local authorities, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities) to share learning and good practice and promote North of Tyne and Northumberland work.

Findings from North of Tyne CA & ICB commissioned research for emerging Work & Health Strategy

Ask of HWB Members – to provide general feedback on findings and comment on how Northumberland organisations can support or contribute to proposed actions.

1. Seize the opportunity of devolution and strengthening our strategic partnerships

- Make strategic connections between emerging **North East Mayoral Combined Authority**, **NHS Northeast and North Cumbria ICB** and **Provider Collaborative**, and the **Insights Northeast** research network
- Develop shared programme of Public Service Reform to address inequalities in health and wellbeing outcomes by **pooling capacity** and **decision-making**
- Develop a **robust evidence base** on what works to inform the investment principles made by strategic partners in the North East, including the **mayoral single financial settlements and proposed prevention fund**

Research findings continued

2. Integrating frontline health and employment support

- **Co-design a formal work and health system**, connecting primary care, voluntary sector and employment support services
- Develop **local models of intensive, integrated support**, e.g., through work and health hubs
- Enabling people who are unwell/experience illness/long term condition to access work

3. Creating and promoting opportunities for good work in the local public and private sector

- Work with our network of **anchor institutions** to **widen local employment pathways**
- Use Community Wealth Building approaches to support the development of **local supply chains, improve employment conditions**, and increase socially productive use of wealth and assets.
- **Work with local employers** to improve job retention for people with health conditions.
- Promote the principles of good work through initiatives like the **Better Health at Work Scheme** and **Good Work Pledge**

Towards a Collaborative Approach to Reducing Inequalities in Employment Outcomes Survey – Findings so far & a reminder

Ask of HWB Members – to complete the survey to inform local gap analysis and action plan (circulated by Lesley Bennett on 24th May)

1. What can **work, health, and inclusion support services** do to support people with health conditions who are waiting for treatment? Are there any examples of good practice?
2. What **more** could services deliver to support people with **long term physical and / or mental health** conditions to move into or sustain Good Work?
3. What **partnerships** can we develop **locally** to join up better our resources or what **good practice** are you already aware of?
4. What would a **well-integrated employment and health** system look like? Who would be involved and what would they do?
5. What else would you like to be included in a **North of Tyne work and health strategy**?
6. Are there any other **Health and Work-related** ideas or issues you would like to raise with a view to improving support services?

Responses so far - What would support people with long term health conditions to get into and stay in work?

Flexible working hours & location

Supportive sickness absence policies

Reasonable adjustments to keep people in work

Help people to understand their capabilities rather than their limitations and the benefits of employment

Identify skills of future and establish pathways for people with transferable skills

Employer Engagement particularly those with staff shortages to understand needs of those with health conditions, identify transferrable skills

Preparing for work earlier in health recovery as a way to improve health outcomes

Keep open dialogue about work and training needs as part of health discussions

Meaningful volunteering, work experience, taster sessions

Provide support on CV skills, confidence self esteem building alongside health support

Link workers/health coaches offer health, employability self help, support referrals whilst on waiting lists

Where could we go further?

Place employability triage services in community settings e/g food banks, cost of living events

Place work coaches in GP Practices

Could link workers be upskilled to understand barriers/benefits of work and employability support

Develop Northumberland anchor institutions network to maximise economic levers of large organisations

More Employer Engagement about the economically inactive and the assets they could be to their workforce

Pooled funds, co-commissioning & co-design of health and employability services

More neighbourhood working, place-based approaches to better integrate pathways

One skills platform to share training opportunities

Partnership of wrap around wellbeing services

BUT Minimise hand offs/signposting and referrals and work together holistically at the same time to address root issues

Next Steps

- Engage with employers on work and health agenda at the Major Employer Forum in July
- Continue to work in collaboration with NE&C ICB, NTCA and constituent LAs to develop North of Tyne Work and Health Strategy, including consultation, establishing governance and developing action plan is including :
 - Short term (quick wins) increased take up of existing provisions,
 - Medium term e.g. re-aligning local/regional funding arrangements and
 - Long term e.g. fully integrated system - proposal for government consideration
- Return to H&WB with the draft Health and Work Strategy.
- Scope the opportunities of developing a set of shared core Social Value commitments as Anchor Institutions.
- As the emerging NE Mayoral Combined Authority develops seize opportunities to expand the North of Tyne Combined Authority strategic developments on work on health to a wider footprint.

Contact for further questions or comments

If you have not already done so, provide your organisational response to the survey circulated in May.

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