## DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

### 1. Title of the practice

Employment strategies for people with disabilities

### 2. Organisation responsible for the practice

Gloucestershire County Council

### 3. Contact person(s)

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### 4. Summary of the practice

The disability (and vulnerable people) employment strategy aims to ensure that everyone, regardless of their background or ability, has access to employment opportunities.

There are four main programmes which Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) either commissions or delivers itself which provide support for a wide range of groups:

- **Forwards Employment Service (FES)**: supports people with disabilities to achieve their employment aspirations. FES provides career help to identify skills and job goals, improve confidence, manage anxiety and overcome barriers.

- **Going the Extra Mile Project (GEM)**: The GEM Project is a unique and unprecedented partnership of over 50 voluntary and community sector enterprises and other organisations in Gloucestershire. It is managed by Gloucestershire Gateway Trust on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council. It supports individuals facing barriers to work and encourages them towards education, training, volunteering or work (with an employer or self-employment).

- **AIM**: A supported internship and a work-based training programme for 16-25 year olds with special education needs and disabilities. The programme helps them to develop the skills to gain and sustain employment.

- **Better 2 Work**: A service providing advice and practical support to people with severe and enduring mental health conditions to get into employment, voluntary work, education or training.

GCC's primary focus are those with disabilities or long-term health conditions. However, they recognise that those who are furthest from the labour market have multiple and complex challenges that require a holistic package of tailored support.

GCC works with a network of partners across all sectors to ensure that people get the right support when they need it. It also ensures that all organisations, whether they are commissioned or delivered by GCC, are fully aware of their part in a person's journey to independence and work. GCC also ensures that services can reach those who are geographically isolated by reaching out to different communities.

| 5. | National/regional/local context of the practice |
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Relevant legislation and policy:

The national 2014 Care Act aims to provide clearer, fairer support to individuals and promote the well-being of both service users and their carers. It aims to prevent and delay the need for care and support and allows people to have control of the care they receive.

The Children and Families Act 2014 is a range of Government commitments that aim to improve services for key groups of vulnerable children including those with special education needs and disabilities.

Improving Lives is a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Policy which works across sectors to address employment barriers for disabled people and people with long term health conditions. It has set an ambitious target to help 1,000,000 disabled people find work over the next 10 years.

Building Better Lives is a local GCC policy which aims to provide people with disabilities of any age the support they need to feel valued within their community. It is a co-produced policy which promotes prevention, contribution and independence.

| 6. | Staff involved |
|---|---|

- GCC's Strategic Lead for Disability Employment

- FES team has 13 staff – two strategic staff based within the Council Head Office, six are involved in the direct delivery to adults and five work with education providers helping to bridge the gap between education and employment.  The staff work across a number of disciplines including one-on-one support, employer engagement, developing networks and knowledge of employment provision for partners and administration. In the team four have disabilities and one is a parent carer for a young person with a disability.

- GEM has a management committee of four people, with six administrative staff. Delivery is through 30 organisations employing one person on the project

- AIM is delivered by five providers. The delivery staff is approximately 10 people with management input. The providers are mainly colleges of further education (four), one school with age 16+ provision and a locally commissioned provider of education programmes for people aged 16+. All provide a range of programmes including AIM to young people with special educational needs and disabilities who are aged 16+.

- The Better 2 Work Service operates with five staff across the county

| 7. | Target group |
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People who have multiple challenges when entering the labour market, particularly people with disabilities or who have long term health conditions.

| 8. Aims of the practice | |
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To provide tailored support to people who are furthest from the labour market and to help them achieve their employment aspirations

### 9. Issues for social services

| Service Integration/ Cooperation across services | x | Service Planning | | Contracting | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Technology | | Skills development (of the workforce) | | Quality of services | |
| Others: _____ | | | | | |

## ANALYSIS OF THE PRACTICE

### 10. Status

| Pilot project (ongoing) | | Project (ongoing) | x | Implemented practice (restricted areas) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pilot project (terminated ) | | Project (terminated) | | Widely spread practice/rolled out | |

### 11. Scope of the practice

*Describe the setting of the practice, considering the following criteria:*

- *Micro level practice:* practice that involves individuals at local level
- *Meso level practice:* practice that involves organisations or communities
- *Macro level practice:* practice that involves large population groups

Micro level practice. The practice involves people with disabilities and mental health problems in Gloucestershire County Council.

### 12. Leadership and management of the practice

*Description of the leadership of the practice, considering the following criteria:*

- *Collaborative management*: shared between large partnerships, often of central, regional and local representation
- *Organisational management*: by one organisation
- *Professional management*: managed by a single person
- *Shared management*: shared with no defined leadership

Organisational management: GCC cooperates with different organisations and either delivers services directly or commissions them to external organisations.

### 13. Engaging stakeholders in the practice

*Description of the engagement of stakeholders, considering the following criteria:*

- *Individual practice*: individuals have sought practice change
- *Network approach*: one or more organisations develop a network
- *Collaborative approach*: large collaboration with relevant stakeholders

Collaborative approach: Gloucestershire County Council created a large collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

To ensure that provision reaches the furthest communities a broad range of stakeholders either support services or deliver through the projects. Partners are sought based on either their ability to cover a specific geographical area or because of their specialism.

Stakeholders include public, private and voluntary organisations as well as local user led organisations and partnership boards which help to ensure that individuals views are included in decision making and service design.

## 14. Involvement of service users and their families

*Description of the involvement of service users, considering the following criteria:*

- *Team involvement: service users and carers were part of the practice team*
- *Consultative: a consultative body of users was set up for an on-going dialogue and feedback*
- *Involvement in care: person-centred approaches to care/support*

**Team involvement:** Service user contribution is essential to the quality of the services GCC provides:

- Before GCC began the service design, consultation was carried out with service users to find out what they wanted and what they considered to be the main challenges.
- GCC has ongoing dialogue with local Disabled People's User-Led Organisations (DPULOs) and carers organisations.
- Through an intensive one to one service GCC is always learning about new ways that service users want to be supported or communicated.
- For the GEM project a Participants Council has a voice at the Project Strategy Board who are involved in the design of marketing and publicity resources.
- GCC also use service users for promotional activities such as films and events.
- Any major consultation will see the formation of service user groups
- The employment service, FES, employs staff which have lived experience. Currently six staff have either a health condition or have caring responsibilities as it is important that the team represents the people being helped.
- Employers and other providers are also involved in the co-production process.

## 15. Costs and resources needed for implementation

*Description of how the practice is financed, considering the following criteria:*

- *Within existing resources: staff time and other resources are provided 'in-house'*
- *Staffing costs: costs for staff investment*
- *Joint/Pooled budgets: two or more agencies pool budgets to fund services*
- *Funded project: external investment*

[Forwards Employment Service](#) (FES) is funded and delivered by Gloucestershire County Council. They have a team of 14 people delivering an all age all disability strategy. Ten of these posts are funded by Adult Social Care budget (cost £350,000) the other four from the High Needs Education Budget (circa £120,000). This is "permanent" funding.

The [GEM Project](#) is funded by ESF. This is Building Better Opportunities Funding co-financed by Big Lottery, due to finish at the end of 2019. This project currently has over 50 partners from the voluntary and community sector delivering this programme across locations in Gloucestershire. (Grant funding £3.2m over three years)

AIM internship programme is funded by the Department of Education's high needs budget and is delivered by five providers across the county. Costs for this programme are dependent upon the needs of the participants.

Better 2 Work mental health provision for people with severe and enduring mental health conditions is commissioned out to the local National Health Service (NHS) mental health trust at a cost of circa £300,000.

## 16. Evaluation approaches

*Description of the evaluation method of the practice, considering the following criteria:*

- *Multi-method:* use of both a qualitative and a quantitative approach
- *Single method:* qualitative or quantitative approach
- *Audit:* looks at data sources such as existing medical records, and/or other routinely collected service data.
- *Informal:* refers to in-house service evaluation using locally designed tools and/or collecting opportunistic feedback
- *No evaluation*
- *An evaluation is planned*

Multi-method. GCC uses a variety of evaluation techniques including evaluation questionnaires, external independent evaluation and internal data collection and analysis

## 17. **Measurable** effects of the practice and what it has achieved for…

| | |
|---|---|
| Service users | Since work started on the strategy GCC has seen over 300 programme participants find employment. |
| Formal care givers | |
| Informal carers | |
| Organisations | |
| Other | |

## 18. **Anticipated or 'aspirational'** effects of the practice and what it has achieved for…

*This category can include outcomes which are not documented, quantified or properly evaluated. They can include such elements as improved knowledge, quality, workforce, etc.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Service users | Raising the aspirations of people with disabilities to reach their career ambitions. |
| Formal care givers | |
| Informal carers | |
| Organisations | Changing attitudes of local society on the possibilities for employing people with disabilities. |
| Other | |

## 19. How the practice has changed the way the service is provided (lessons learned)

The biggest change observed is the attitude towards employment for disabled and vulnerable people through social care, education providers and professionals, employers, families and carers and disabled people themselves.

GCC have learned through this process that most people with disabilities or people with multiple challenges want to work, but they do not know how to access support to help them. GCC learned that you have to have a collective response to this and not operate in silos, to be creative and to have tailored support for each person as people can have unique needs.

Staff involved have learned about the myths and pre-conceptions that exist on all sides, professionals, employers and disabled people also make their own judgements about employers and support services. GCC also know that it is important to invest in young people, to raise their aspirations and to develop robust pathways to independence and employment as they approach adulthood. Partnerships are important to assure sustainable culture change.

## 20. Sustainability of the practice

*Description of whether the practice is sustainable, considering the following criteria:*

- *Potential for sustainability:* practice was newly started or is on-going/not yet mainstreamed. How could the practice be sustained (in terms of resources)?
- *Organic sustainability:* service users have been empowered to take the practice forward
- *Established:* the project has been operational for several years

FES and Better 2 Work are well established and there are no sustainability issues.

AIM is relatively well established and future work will strengthen education pathways.

GEM is only funded until December 2019. Work is currently being done on sustainability plans and GCC are confident that there are elements that will continue. This will include the ongoing network of organisations, the enhanced skills of the workforce and the heightened knowledge of people living in communities about where they can access support.

## 21. Transferability of the practice

*Description of whether the practice has been transferred, considering the following criteria:*

- *Transferred:* transfer to other regions, countries, service user groups, etc.
- *Potential for transferability:* there is interest from the outside; elements of the practice have been taken up and used elsewhere; material for transferability (for ex. training material) has been developed

Potential for transferability. All of the projects/service have the scope to scale up to provide support to a wider range of people or to transfer to other regions or countries.