

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: BRAIN INJURY SERVICES - PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF A JOB COACH POST
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 11 th MARCH 2004	Ref: ST/SKMCD	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. To seek Committee approval for the establishment of an additional Job Coach post, which will develop the Social Work Department's capacity to assist people with brain injury into employment.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Damage to the brain can occur through a variety of different injuries such as a blow to the head, lack of blood to the brain or through infection. As a result the difficulties people experience following an acquired brain injury are often wide ranging and complex, including:
- physical disability eg difficulty co-ordinating movement
 - cognitive impairment eg difficulty with concentration and memory
 - psycho-social problems eg mental health problems and problems with social interactions
- 2.2. Consequently, people are often unable to return to their lifestyle prior to their brain injury without a significant period of rehabilitation, which may initially be hospital based followed by service provision within their local communities.
- 2.3. Approval was granted at Social Work (Operations and Services) Sub Committee on 25 April 2002 for the DARE (Disability and Rehabilitation Education) Foundation, an independent organisation, to conduct a review of brain injury services. Funding of £36,510 was approved for this purpose.
- 2.4. DARE was identified as the most appropriate organisation to carry out this review as it aims to develop sustainable partnerships between service users and providers in shaping and evaluating services. It was founded in 1994, and their philosophy fits well with the Department's commitment to service user participation in reviewing and planning services and in developing person centred services.
- 2.5. The findings of the work undertaken by DARE is the subject of a separate report to Social Work Committee (11th March 2004), and highlights a range of service improvements/developments which require to be progressed. One of the areas highlighted is the need for support in accessing real, paid employment options.

3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. The Social Work Department has developed an innovative approach to supported employment, which has been widely acknowledged at a national level. The focus reflects a strong belief that people are ready to be employed, if attention is paid to the ability and support requirements of individuals. Based on this approach, the Supported Employment Team has been successful in placing 67 people in real, paid employment. To date, much of the work has been focussed on supporting people with learning disabilities, but recently the team expanded to include mental health.
- 3.2. For some time, it has been recognised that the service has not been widely available to people with brain injury, and this was highlighted in the recent review. For this reason, there is a requirement to create a Job Coach post, Spinal Column Point 22/27 plus 7.5% irregular hours payment. This will enhance the Department's capacity to respond to this unmet need. This job description, and work pattern for this post, will be similar to existing Job Coaches, and will be located and managed within the existing Supported Employment Team.

4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. A Job Coach post requires to be created, but can be funded via the existing budget source - Mental Health Specific Grant (MISG). Following the findings of the review, a vacant post of Support Worker, Grade AP2/3 is no longer required. The post is vacant and the tasks required can be refocused to support the employment of service users, thereby providing an improved focus on Social Inclusion. It is proposed that this post be deleted to release funds for the post of Job Coach.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1. Committee is asked to :
 - i. approve the deletion of the post of Support Worker, Brain Injury, Grade AP2/3..
 - ii. approve the creation of a Job Coach post, Spinal Column Points 22/27 plus 7.5% irregular hours payment.
 - iii. remit the report to the Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub Committee for consideration
 - iv. note the contents of this report.



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February 25, 2004

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