

Employment Works!

Twice-yearly IPS Supported Employment Newsletter

Fall 2020



THIS ISSUE

IPS for Other Populations

- 1 Pursuing Dreams of Work as Doula
- 2 IPS Employment Center Notes
- 2 IPS Breaking New Ground in Drug and Alcohol Treatment in English Trial
- 3 Providing IPS to Veterans Living with Mental and Physical Health Challenges
- 4 Using the IPS Model for Persons with Mental Illness and Intellectual/Developmental Disability
- 4 Jason's Story
- 5 My Daughter's Independence through Work
- 5 TANF Recipients Use IPS
- 6 IPS for People with Chronic Pain
- 6 Upcoming Online Courses
- 6 IPS Leadership Training
- 6 IPS en Español

Pursuing Dreams of Work as Doula

Jesse Lawrence, Peer Specialist, Clara Martin Center, Vermont

An individual I am working with dreams of becoming a doula. The job is a non-medical position that helps pregnant couples through pregnancy, birth, and post-partum adjustments. Examples of their duties include emotional, physical, and educational support in order for the birthing mother to have a positive birthing experience. It seems like a good match for Selina who is interested in yoga and reiki and also has taken some nursing classes.

To assist Selina in learning more about doulas, I helped her connect with a local doula who shared how she got into the profession, how to be successful as an independent contractor, and how to become certified as a doula. She also gave tips about dealing with clients who are in stressful situations. To get different perspectives, Selina and I have been doing online research as well as reading books that the doula has recommended.

Selina decided that she wants to earn at least one certificate for working as a doula (the post-partum certificate is optional). Training includes attending a number of workshops, experience in hospital birthing rooms, reading a series of books, and getting letters of recommendation.

Continued on page 2.



Employment Center

www.ipsworks.org



The
Rockville Institute

IPS Employment Center Notes

Twenty-eight randomized controlled trials now show the effectiveness of IPS for people with serious mental illness.

As studies continue to show the efficacy of IPS, IPS has continued to expand across the country and around the globe. And interest in IPS for other populations has grown.

In this issue of *Employment Works!* we delve into IPS for new populations. Veterans with a range of service-related disabilities use IPS to pursue higher level positions. IPS is being offered in drug and alcohol treatment facilities across England. A young man in Illinois with autism spectrum disorder and generalized anxiety found work with the local zoo with the help of supported employment.

We'd also like to remind everyone that we continue to develop new resources for providing IPS services during the COVID-19 pandemic. These resources, including tips on helping individuals weigh their risk factors and a virtual quality improvement consultation, can be found on our website at www.ipsworks.org

Pursuing Dreams of Work as Doula continued

Completing the certification process can cost about \$2,000 and we learned that no one has ever used state aid for this particular certificate before now. Therefore, we are working on a more involved process to learn whether we can get the cost of the workshops approved. This afternoon, I have a call to do just that. If we aren't able to secure all of the funds Selina needs through scholarships and grants, we will meet with a state Vocational Rehabilitation counselor to learn how Vocational Rehabilitation may help.

Helping Selina pursue her dream job has been a rewarding experience. The best part of this position is helping individuals turn their dream jobs into a reality. I believe it is also important to help people explore a wide range of jobs including positions they may have never thought about. It is a pleasure to have a hand in helping others explore which careers match their passions.

IPS Breaking New Ground in Drug and Alcohol Treatment in English Trial

Paul Anders, IPS-AD Trial Manager, Public Health England

IPS is becoming firmly established in mental health services in England through a roll-out taking in the entire country, but drug and alcohol services have not been forgotten. The personal, social, and economic consequences of substance use have a significant cost in England with some communities particularly hard hit.

In 2016, a major report was published examining the relationship between drug and alcohol use and employment. IPS was identified as an approach being used successfully by a small number of drug and alcohol services and worth further investigation – the aim being to determine if IPS is suitable for larger-scale investment and availability. That led to Public Health England, an agency of the UK Department of Health and Social Care, being commissioned to run IPS-AD: a large, multi-site randomised controlled trial of IPS in community drug and alcohol treatment, one of the first anywhere. The trial commenced in May 2018 and is expected to report

results in late 2021.

Every area of England was able to express an interest in taking part, and seven places were selected to go into the trial: Birmingham and Sheffield, Derbyshire and Staffordshire, Blackpool and Brighton & Hove, and Haringey – respectively large cities, rural counties, a seaside town and a seaside city, and a London borough. Not by design, but we have also ended up with an interesting mix of providers: a local authority, a National Health Service trust, a private company, and four charities.

IPS has been delivered with no substantial adaptations despite the change of setting, and despite being new to the approach, five of the seven sites had attained solid 'good fidelity' in independent fidelity reviews within 16 months of commencing delivery.

A range of outcomes will be analysed – vocational, benefits and tax, health, and criminal justice. Analysis cannot start until late 2021, but the signs are encouraging, including examples of people who have been disconnected from the labour market for a decade or longer taking up paid employment. Throughout the trial we've been fortunate to have Bob Drake and Gary Bond from the IPS Employment Center on our steering committee, something that all of us involved in the trial have appreciated.



Providing IPS to Veterans Living with Mental and Physical Health Challenges

Rich Toscano - Health Science Specialist / IPS Fidelity Monitor & Trainer
 Research & Development / U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center

In 2003, the Department of Veterans Affairs adopted IPS as the primary intervention to serve the employment and recovery needs of veterans living with serious mental illness. By 2005, VA researchers Lori Davis and Lisa Ottomanelli-Stone saw the potential of IPS for other target populations and secured funding for several randomized controlled studies for veterans with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and veterans with spinal cord injury (SCI). The multiple studies ran across a ten-year period from 2005 – 2015 resulting in substantial increases (3x the control in most cases) in employment outcomes and indicators of reduced symptoms and/or physical health complications.

The earlier research studies demonstrated strong individualization and diversity of jobs, but most jobs were entry level or with limited career options. The recent initiatives reveal a trend toward higher paying jobs with greater career trajectory. Based on interviews with veterans, a probable explanation surfaced. Many of the veterans from the two target groups have had substantial education either before or after their military service and have also added specialty skillsets in the military. The PTSD or SCI/TBI (traumatic brain injury) interrupted the career options post military and sidetracked many into managing symptoms.

Figure 1

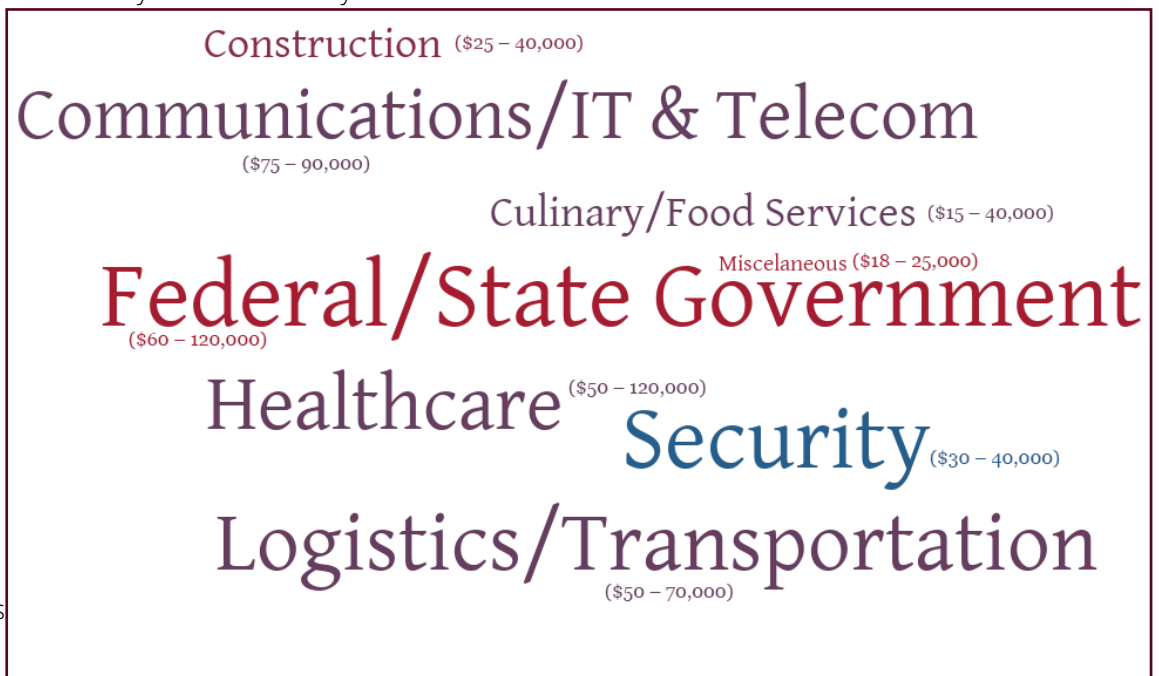
As the VA IPS programs have matured in the integration of IPS Specialists within clinical treatment teams, the veterans served have gained increased confidence that they don't have to settle for entry level jobs common in the earlier research projects. The IPS teams share the evidence supporting improved function and access to employment with the veterans in IPS and make them aware of the resources, supports, and adaptive equipment available through both VA and community workforce systems. The job seekers have improved motivation to reach for more challenging and higher paying positions consistent with their education and military training. Additionally, many of the IPS specialists in these pilots are also veterans and use motivational interviewing techniques with a message of continued service, mission, and contribution to society.



Figure 1 reflects the job types commonly seen in the early IPS work with veterans with PTSD and SCI/TBI. Most of these positions were entry level and of moderate to low pay.

Figure 2

Figure 2 shows a trend to higher paying, career-oriented jobs. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, more veterans have found jobs in healthcare and higher-level logistics, including contact tracing positions, which have been a nice job match for veterans with SCI who can do this work virtually from home. There have also been some wonderful outcomes for veterans with information technology skills who due to their ongoing anxiety or co-morbidities



find it difficult to work around many people or in cubicle workspaces. With more companies open to virtual and telework, the veterans who prefer to, can now work from home and use video connect technology with their supervisors and co-workers.

Using the IPS Model for Persons with Mental Illness and Intellectual/Developmental Disability

Sandy Wood, Bridgeway Inc., Illinois

Johnny is a young man with autism spectrum disorder and generalized anxiety who was deemed as likely “unemployable” by many. Johnny’s mother recalls, “In helping our son find employment, we were lost. Then a friend suggested we contact Bridgeway.”

Bridgeway, a mental health, employment, and family services organization in Illinois, began using the IPS model almost 15 years ago. While they started providing IPS to people with serious mental illness, they also began using it to serve their intellectual/developmental disability (IDD) population.

Johnny became one of the many people that Bridgeway’s Community Employment Program for people with disabilities has served. Johnny and his mother met with employment specialist Tracy Blanks, and Tracy spent time really getting to know Johnny.

After a few meetings, Johnny mentioned he would like to work at a zoo, so Tracy went to work talking to Tammy Schmidt who is the Assistant Director of the Niabi Zoo. Tracy set up an interview for Johnny and she took time prior to the interview to coach Johnny on what an interview



would be like.

Johnny was hired by the Niabi Zoo in 2018 as a greeter and the zoo was very willing to provide Johnny with whatever supports were needed. His manager Tammy Schmidt says it has been rewarding to watch Johnny grow in his role. “I could tell that he was opening up more and was truly becoming independent—from clocking in, setting up his station, taking his breaks at the appointed time and talking to his fellow teammates—with very little direction. We are so blessed to have Johnny working with us.”

Johnny continues to be a valued member of the Niabi Zoo family. His mom says, “This has been a wonderful experience for Johnny. He now has a job that he loves, and he is working with people who treat him with respect.”

Jason’s Story

IPS Employment Center

Jason Green’s dreams of being a linguist in the Army were cut short when he had an accident that left him paralyzed from the chest down. After a medical discharge from the Army, he struggled to adjust back into civilian life in Chicago and figure out his next steps. “I was in a wheelchair and didn’t want to do much of anything at first,” shares Jason. With the support of Veterans Affairs (VA) vocational rehabilitation, he eventually earned a bachelor’s degree in biomedical engineering in 2018. He volunteered his engineering skills at the VA while in school, adding “I’ve been to physical therapy, and I saw people using wheelchairs and using prosthetic devices. I thought I could help make better supports than those because of my firsthand experience.”

After graduation, Jason connected with IPS services at Edward Hines Jr. Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital to help

figure out his next move. He saw an advertisement for Code Platoon, a coding boot camp for veterans. Jason and his IPS specialist Sarah Lemp talked about his career ideas and came up with a plan together. Sarah supported his successful completion of the 14-week program and 3-month internship, including

“Sarah helped give me confidence that whatever obstacles came my way, I would not be alone in overcoming them.”

regular communication with his professors and internship supervisors. He started working full time at Enova as a site reliability engineer in November 2019, where he uses his coding skills to fix issues that come up with the company’s lending platform. Jason credits Sarah for helping him

negotiate the job offer and request accommodations: “Sarah helped give me confidence that whatever obstacles came my way, I would not be alone in overcoming them.” She connected with the Human Resources representative shortly after Jason applied for the job, explaining her support services and advocating for Jason. After Jason started work, Sarah has stayed in contact with him and his supervisors.

Jason is excited to grow in his role at Enova and further develop his skills. While his vocational journey has not gone as expected from his Army linguist days, Jason is happy with his life. “I want people to realize that everyone has something that bothers them, but you have to find a way to enjoy your life and find a way to be happy no matter what your situation is.”

My Daughter's Independence through Work

Dawn Kaminski

My daughter worked before she got sick, but afterwards she was afraid to go out. My husband and I thought she needed to get back out in the world with people. She was living at home. We love her, but we wanted her to be able to live on her own. We want her to be independent. We encouraged her to apply for jobs, but even that was a struggle. When she was invited to interview for jobs, she had trouble showing her best side to the managers. So, we decided to work with an IPS program.

Her first IPS specialist did not talk to us. But then she was assigned a new specialist, John, and I asked if he would talk to us. Our daughter agreed and so then we were able to speak with John and our daughter regarding her likes and dislikes, as well as businesses that could have the right jobs for her. I could tell John if our daughter felt good about the work the two of them were doing together or if he needed to adjust his approach. John used to

"I think IPS specialists should ask the person if it is okay to contact family members. Many people depend on their family members for support."

take her to a fast food restaurant for coffee because that was her favorite thing to do. While they were there, he would give her tips about how to get a job. She didn't want to hear that from us, but she was willing to listen to John. He went with her to job interviews and gave her feedback about how she answered questions until she got a job at a restaurant. John helped her a lot and met with our daughter weekly when she began working. He also kept in contact with her supervisor. She started to see that she had to show her best side in order to be scheduled for more hours and she felt more positive about her job.

Some IPS specialists may not have believed that our opinions were important, or they may have thought that she was an adult and they didn't need our help, but I think that our involvement was positive for her. For example, she has to stand during her work shifts in spite of having some back pain. John tried to help her consider strategies to deal with that problem and our daughter thought that was odd, but we explained that he was trying to help her. I think IPS specialists should ask the person if it is okay to contact family members. Many people depend on their family members for support.

"She didn't want to hear that from us, but she was willing to listen to John."

We're happy that our daughter is working and is now living in her own apartment. We still help her in some ways, but she is gradually becoming more independent.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Recipients Use IPS

Katie Wagoner, IPS supervisor, Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota

Transitioning to the role of an employed mother through the Minnesota TANF system (known as Minnesota Family Investment Program - MFIP) was a surprise for Yolanda. She wasn't sure that she could both work and take care of her family. Yolanda, mother of three young children, had been in the TANF system for more than ten years, collecting monthly cash and food payments.

Recently, she mentioned to her TANF case manager that she might consider working. The case manager referred her to meet with Nicole, the team's IPS specialist (known as career navigator) at Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota. The two looked at several jobs but Yolanda was not sure she liked or could perform any of them. They decided to meet at Taco Bell where Yolanda had coffee every day after dropping her kids off at the bus stop for school. Nicole asked Yolanda to look around the restaurant and imagine working there. Yolanda instantly replied that she could not work at the cash register, but she would be able to make the place spotless. Nicole asked if she could meet with the restaurant's manager to discuss work opportunities. Yolanda was hired quickly to work as a cleaner for 10 hours per week. She frequently called Nicole to tell her about something new she learned on the job and especially when she received a paycheck. The manager continued to increase her work hours. On one occasion, Yolanda told Nicole she needed to come to the restaurant and order tacos. She insisted. When Nicole arrived, Yolanda was working the cash register with a big smile.

Child care is a major barrier for TANF recipients. In many cases, they need to look for jobs that can accommodate the possibility of a sick child who will need a parent's care at home. Ambivalent motivation to work is a second barrier. Many of the long-term TANF recipients rely on monthly payments and are hesitant to risk losing the benefits for employment. For Yolanda, the confidence she built through work has led her to believe she can achieve even greater employment goals. Many of the clients have not worked for years and some have had serial jobs in which they have very short job tenure. The IPS program at Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota tries to gently motivate people and help them find jobs that match their skills and preferences. A secondary goal can often be to leave TANF. After six months at the first job Yolanda had in years, she increased her income enough to leave TANF. She continues to work with Nicole and is thinking about a next job that may provide her an even larger income.

IPS Leadership Training

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the IPS Employment Center is offering the IPS Leadership Training online for up to 13 people. This highly interactive training allows participants to discuss issues related to implementation and sustainability of IPS in their areas.

For upcoming dates and more information, visit

www.ipsworks.org/index.php/training-courses/ips-leadership-training/



IPS for People with Chronic Pain

IPS Employment Center

IPS researchers in Norway are examining how effective IPS is for people experiencing chronic pain. This medical condition is challenging to treat and requires an integrated team approach, but work support is often left out of people's treatment. A pilot study in Oslo, Norway, enrolled a small group of patients with chronic pain who were unemployed. Over the course of the year, 38% gained competitive employment. One study participant remarked, "I think it is better to work instead of sitting at home and just wait for the next pain episode" (Røddevand, et al.). Participants spoke highly of the IPS specialist's encouragement and assistance with searching for competitive jobs. They also noted how working helped shift their perspectives away from their pain. Based on the success of their pilot study, the research team is now conducting a randomized controlled trial with 65 participants that is slated to finish in December 2020. We are excited to see how IPS may work for this group!

Røddevand, L., Ljosaa, T. M., Granan, L. P., Knutzen, T., Jacobsen, H. B., & Reme, S. E. (2017). *A pilot study of the individual placement and support model for patients with chronic pain*. BMC musculoskeletal disorders, 18(1), 550.

¿Hablas español y te interesaría trabajar con IPS?

Nuestro curso más popular, ahora disponible en español. Próxima edición en febrero de 2021.

Más información

www.ipsworks.org/index.php/training-courses/ips-empleo-con-apoyo-para-profesionales-de-insercion-laboral/

Upcoming Online Courses in 2021

Practitioner Skills Course

- ◆ January 4 through March 26 (units 1-8) or April 16 (units 9 & 10). Registration is November 16, 2020 through December 18, 2020.

Spanish Practitioner Course

- ◆ February 8 through April 30. Registration is January 4 to January 29.

French Practitioner Course

- ◆ January 11 through April 2. Registration is November 30, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

IPS Supervisor Course

- ◆ March 8 through May 14. Registration is January 18 through February 19.

VR Counselors Course

- ◆ January 25 through February 26. Registration is December 7, 2020 through January 11, 2021.

To learn more about any of our courses, visit ipsworks.org/index.php/training-courses/



Employment Center

www.ipsworks.org

@ipsworks2002



The IPS Employment Center at The Rockville Institute

Rivermill Commercial Center
85 Mechanic Street, Suite C3-1
Lebanon, NH 03766

603-237-1899

Westat is under contract to The Rockville Institute for the operation of The IPS Employment Center.