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SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

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What is vocational rehabilitation?

Vocational rehabilitation refers to any intervention aimed at reducing the high unemployment rates in people with schizophrenia and other severe mental illnesses. Vocational rehabilitation may have wide-reaching benefits, including improved symptoms and personal achievement, and reduced ongoing health care costs. Two key approaches for rehabilitation are prevocational training and supported employment. Prevocational training aims to increase employability by providing community-based preparation before people enter into the competitive workforce (employment that is paid at competitive, or award wages); examples include “clubhouses”, transitional employment, work crews, and skills training. Supported employment aims to assist people with schizophrenia find and maintain a job by placing them in employment within the community (without preparation), and providing training on location as well as ongoing support.

What is the evidence for vocational rehabilitation?

High quality evidence suggests supported employment is more effective than prevocational training for increasing long-term competitive employment rates. Moderate to high quality evidence suggests supported employment provides greater benefit than standard vocational services for attaining competitive employment, increasing the number of hours/weeks worked, total earnings, and reducing time to employment. High quality evidence suggests fewer hospital admissions after prevocational training compared to standard community care, but no differences in employment rates (from moderate quality evidence). Moderate to high quality evidence indicates prevocational training in combination with psychological therapy is more effective for improving employment rates than prevocational training alone. Moderate to low quality evidence suggests supported employment in combination with assertive community treatment improves employment rates compared to standard care. Moderate quality evidence favours paid prevocational training over unpaid prevocational training for increasing employment rates and program participation, and reducing hospital admissions.

For more information see the technical table



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NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) is one of the largest independent medical and clinical research institutes in Australia and an international leader in neurological research.

Diseases of the brain and nervous system pose the greatest health, economic and social burden of any disease group because they are chronic, debilitating and have no known cures.

Medical research is the cornerstone of efforts to advance the health and wellbeing of families and the community. Our dedicated scientists are focussed on transforming their research into significant and practical benefits for all patients.

While we hope you find this information useful, it is always important to discuss any questions about schizophrenia or its treatment with your doctor or other health care provider.

HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

We are able to make significant advances due to the generosity of countless people. Your donation allows us to continue to work towards transforming lives. For information on how you can support our research, phone **1300 888 019** or make a secure donation at neura.edu.au/donate/schizophrenia.