

## **Feedback from Matrix Assessment**

Intended individual recipient outcomes are identified appropriately and accurately in Employment Services through the widespread use of Outcomes Star®. Carefully selected variants of the tool are in use, supported by in-house and provider's online training. The use of this tool, tailored to services, prompts the identification and tracking of softer outcomes, in addition to the harder employment related outcomes. The use of the Outcomes Star® provides a robust goal-setting approach, which is complemented by further use of the Stars to monitor distance travelled. Stars are administered online, and some managers are making good use of the associated reporting capability in a caseload management context and to evaluate achievements at cohort level.

There is a particularly strong focus on identifying individual needs and tailoring support programmes to suit recipients' needs and aspirations. A range of assessment techniques are in use, which include Outcomes Star®, SWOT analyses, Skills Scans, and these lead to the production of a Training Plan, action plan or ILP which capture the context and "prescribe" an agreed plan for support. All recipients feel that their support is tailored to them individually, and they confirmed they were involved in the assessment and decisions about what support was appropriate rather than merely being told.

The intended outcomes of IAG support have a high profile. They are determined at the beginning of each recipient's journey and reviewed and supplemented during programmes. Every programme has an initial assessment when initial intended outcomes are defined for each individual recipient. In some programmes intended outcomes will be defined in advance- this is the case in the PWB service, where Probation Officers identify from a prescribed list what outcomes are to be achieved; this is not accepted at face value by Employment Services staff, who conduct their own assessment, and challenge and agree changes with the commissioner where appropriate. In Employment Services most programmes (including PWB) make use of an Outcomes Star®, with a suitable variant selected for specific programmes as part of the programme design. The output of this self assessment exercise, facilitated by staff with their participants, is a visual representation of which outcomes need attention during the programme. For example, improvement may be sought in understanding of laws, systems and services, in health and wellbeing, in community & connections and in housing, these being among the range of eight outcomes considered for participants of the REP contract.

Delivery staff in Employment Services monitor their participants' progress through the use of the Outcomes Star® when interim assessments are carried out, and through their recorded notes on previous action plans. Staff have a thorough understanding of each participants achievement of outcomes. Some managers are also making very good use of the online reporting capability of Outcomes Star®, drawing off distance travelled reports to review, and to discuss with staff in Team Meetings and KITs. An example from the PWB programme shows that, among much other data, 82% of participants are making progress in managing mental health, 73% progressing with identity & self-esteem, and 33% making progress with relationships. Such statistics give managers a holistic insight into programme performance and help understand the bigger picture of impact. *"Staff identified that I was depressed- they were right. That transformed my outlook" Participant*

In Employment Services, the pilot use of Outcomes Star® has been recognised as having high value both to participants and to staff, and this good practice.