

TRAVORS Rehab Review Article 15 10 2010

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Over the last two years we have reported in Rehab Review on the progress of 'TRAVORS', a project to develop high-quality skills training for employment advisors and for their trainers.

The project team has concentrated what to do and how to do it when advising disabled people and employers about working. And we also developed training for their trainers – so that they can learn skills that really help their clients get work.

Now the project is over, and we have the assessment results. How did we do?

Here is the overview from the DWP evaluation report:

*All TRAVORS training products have had a positive effect on the trainers' and the advisers in working with people with disabilities
... the closer you can get to the (Design) principles the more positive impact your products will have...adhering to the design principles we can be more flexible in our choice of training method without overly compromising our objectives...
...whatever the constraints of geography, time and cost, we can still make a tangible difference to people through our training...
...there is still more learning to come out of this project ...including how best to communicate complex ideas and support partners who are at a distance from us..... We will carry this and other valuable pieces of learning into future projects.*

So some success in using the Design Principles for effective skills training.

And what happened in the trial-countries?

Instituto de Formación Integral (IFI) in Spain used e-learning so that Trainers and Advisors could work while participating in TRAVORS. The trainee-trainers were from associations of disabled people, working with employment advisors for disabled people. Seven finished the trial. They learned to use these concepts of Self-Efficacy and Learning Techniques with employment advisors in order to transfer them to disabled people during vocational rehabilitation. The innovative course structure included an induction document, handouts, bibliography, reflections and revision, and practical exercises to promote the development of these key concepts. The trainees gave positive feedback about e-learning and about the psychological approach, which them chances to learn new techniques and concepts.

The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund provides specialist case management support to unemployed Disabled People. Few Case Managers have specific training for helping disabled job seekers. The goal of the training led by Pärnu College was to maximise the outcome of short meetings with clients. The course, based on a Learning Needs Analysis, used material from modules covering Generic Skills, Assessment and Planning, and Work-Focused Interviewing Skills. A pilot group of 13 case managers undertook contact and web-based learning. Feedback confirmed that they experienced a considerable rise in skill levels.

and since then, VRC Ltd has been working with the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (their 'Jobcentres') to carry out more training of key staff.

In Greece, the General Hospital of Mytilene, operates a psychiatric clinic which designs individualised psychosocial support to keep clients in community. The TRAVORS training was judged to be very valuable by the participants. They learned about the importance of self-efficacy, graded return to work, goal setting and how to work in multidisciplinary teams. They learned about the "three-legged stool" model, and the importance of alternative targets, how to maintain the job and anticipate potential problems. When they analysed the outcome of cases afterwards, they understood how much the each was influenced by the training of the case manager.

And in Austria, the students experienced a range of innovative learning approaches. Here are some of their responses:

"I had never practised themes like these"

"The mix of e-learning and face-to-face sessions"

"We could do some of it at home"

"We got a lot of materials"

"To get good materials- in terms of practical use"

"To learn in different ways (face-to-face; tests; role play; the use of case studies, real-life exercises)"

"Exchanging experiences with other people"

"All participants work together on one information pool"

This training is now available in the UK, face to face and online. You can contact us to find out more or enrol. Here are the key products:

Train-the-trainer courses to develop trainers of personal Employment Advisors for Disabled People.

Employment Advisor Courses to teach the skills to advise Disabled people and Employers

Trainer-training Research principles and Design Guidelines

Principles, research resources and self-assessment guides to training design, covering psychological concepts, training techniques and training technology.

Learning Needs Analysis and Course Adaptation procedures

Guide and checklists on using Learning Needs Analysis to apply learning materials in a new setting.

Next steps?

We have approval to develop TRAVORS2. Taking this foundation of high quality training, we will be extending it to the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey, and adding transferable European Qualifications to the training. Do please get in touch with us to find out how you can participate in the UK, or indeed anywhere in Europe. Our contacts are below

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