

Please find below my response to your request for feedback regarding the social inclusion and skills for all Australians. It is my belief that currently we have a model in place that can only be referred to as a **deficit punishing** model.

- It is my belief that it is time for the term **disability** to be removed from our language and replaced with language that focuses on **ability**, maybe something that focuses on diversity - all Australians deserve the right to engage in socially valued roles regardless of their situation in life.
- Therefore, as a nation that truly believes in social inclusion and skill development we need to establish via our governments a whole of life model that focuses on the provision of services that will assist people to achieve social and economic independence and not a system that is based on punishment; this requires serious consideration being given to the concept of providing parallel services e.g. a job seeker having the option to receive PSP support whilst receiving DEN services.
- In terms of mental health the issue of stigma needs to be addressed especially in the workplace, and I believe it fair to argue that stigma is alive and well in mental health services both from professionals and allied health professionals.
- Local, state or federal government departments creating jobs outside of the current outsourcing practice - introduce positive discrimination; this was done in order to ensure that women were given access to promotion in the workplace particularly in the government and corporate sectors years ago with a degree of success. Departments such as DEEWR (the department responsible for Welfare to Work) have many opportunities to role modelling best practice in terms of availability of employment opportunities.
- Mental health services need to have a much broader and holistic approach to recovery orientated service delivery in terms of focusing on ability not disability, and not making judgements on what people are or are not capable of achieving in terms of employment e.g. often when a person becomes unwell the first thing to be taken away is the job, and in many cases this is the very thing that keeps the individual going.
- Training opportunities are useful but they are by not by any means the priority - **the best place to train and learn is on the job** - there seems to be a perception that people need to be trained before they are able to look for work in fact quite the reverse is true - it is essential to focus on achieving the job while the motivation is high and then train to meet the needs of the job.
- Accountability and administration is at an all time high at least 30% of the workers time is now spent doing administrative tasks - focus on the creation of a simple single audit process
- STAR ratings, if needed at all, need to be criterion referenced based on specific performance indicators not on a norm referenced system, in the current system it is possible to achieve a good star rating even though the outcomes may not be of the highest standard.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

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