

## PRACTITIONER'S STANCE, VALUES AND STYLE OF INTERACTION IN IPS

### Practitioner's stance

An ability to draw on knowledge that the IPS model rests on the foundation of a collaborative relationship with clients, their families and carers, and that:

it is predicated on shared decision making

the client should have a sense of control over any intervention

it is the client's choice as to whether to engage in the interventions associated with IPS

IPS interventions should maintain a consistent focus on the strengths, resources and assets of clients and their families/carers

An ability to draw on knowledge of the importance of working with each client to agree a shared language that embodies the ways in which they understand their problems and concerns

an ability to openly discuss any differences in the language used by the client and by the practitioner and other professionals involved in their care

### Practitioner's values

An ability to operate in a spirit of hope and optimism, and to foster these attitudes in clients, their carers and any professional teams with whom the practitioner is working

An ability to work in a manner consistent with the belief that clients have a right to employment in competitive (as opposed to sheltered) employment

An ability to focus on the whole person, their social context, and their individual, cultural and spiritual and religious preferences

An ability for practitioners to reflect on their own beliefs, attributions and assumptions about the factors that contribute to clients accessing and maintaining employment

An ability for practitioners to be able to reflect on (and moderate) their emotional and behavioural responses to the client, and in particular their beliefs about the client's difficulties and the practitioner's ability to help

### Style of interaction

An ability to maintain a style of interaction that is consistently open, responsive and transparent, e.g.:

actively listening to clients in order to understand their perspective and concerns

acknowledging when something has been misunderstood or when an error has been made

a willingness to explain the rationale for IPS interventions

An ability to draw on knowledge of the risk of clients feeling disempowered, and a willingness to address this by working towards a relationship in which all parties can respect and learn from each other's expertise and perspective, such that:

practitioners can learn from clients' expertise by experience

clients can learn from the expertise the practitioner has gained through their training and clinical work

## KNOWLEDGE OF THE RECOVERY MODEL

An ability to draw on knowledge that the recovery model underpins the work of IPS services

An ability to draw on knowledge of the key principles of the recovery model, namely that:

it is possible to recover from a mental health condition, and that:

recovery is about living a meaningful, satisfying and purposeful life (rather than achieving a 'cure')

recovery outcomes are unique to each person and will reflect their values and goals

it is a strengths-based approach which helps clients to:

build resilience

build their sense of self-esteem and develop a positive identity

foster hope (a sustainable belief in themselves and a willingness to persevere through uncertainty)

support their capacity to meet challenges in life through self-management

social inclusion is a critical feature of recovery (i.e. being involved with society through work, as well as through education, culture and leisure activities)

recovery is a process that takes place over time, and will include learning from setbacks

An ability to draw on knowledge that engendering hope, gaining a sense of control and being afforded opportunity are key elements of the recovery model

An ability to draw on knowledge of the importance of helping clients to become active participants in their own care, for example by ensuring that:

they have the resources and opportunity to become well-informed about their condition and its treatment

the clinical team operates a collaborative model of care

## KNOWLEDGE OF THE RATIONALE FOR IPS

An ability to draw on knowledge of the evidence base for the effectiveness of IPS
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An ability to draw on knowledge of the rationale for IPS and its focus on helping clients gain and sustain employment, and that:
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employment has an important role to play in adult life
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gaining (and/or regaining) employment is an important part of recovery
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most people with serious mental illness want to work
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An ability to draw on knowledge of the potential benefits of paid employment, e.g.:
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being in receipt of an increased and consistent income
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improvements in self-esteem, social networks and quality of life
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better control of symptoms, leading to a reduction in hospitalisation and use of mental health services
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reduction in substance use/misuse
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An ability to draw on knowledge of the potential negative impacts of unemployment, for example:
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reduced self-esteem
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loss of social contacts
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risk of alienation and apathy
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increased substance use/misuse
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increased physical problems
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increased mental health problems
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## KNOWLEDGE OF IPS PRINCIPLES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION IN PRACTICE

An ability to draw on knowledge of the basic principles that underpin and structure IPS, and that:

IPS is open to every person with serious mental health problems who wants to work: people are not excluded because of diagnosis, recent hospitalisations, criminal history or an assessment of readiness for work

the goal is for the person to obtain competitive employment:

jobs that exist in the open labour market, are paid at the same rate as similar jobs and are open to others without disabilities (rather than sheltered jobs designated for people with disabilities)

the search for a job starts soon after a person expresses interest in working:

at a pace that right for the person, but usually within 1 month of starting the IPS programme, and with minimal or no pre-employment assessments, training and counselling

the client's preferences guide decisions and are honoured:

basing the job search on the individual's preferences, strengths and work experiences (rather than on the pool of available jobs), and guided by their preferences for job type, working hours, and types of job supports

the intervention includes counselling about benefits:

referring people for comprehensive, individualised benefits planning by a benefits specialist, with the aim of helping them make informed decisions about starting or changing jobs

employment specialists systematically develop relationships with employers:

learning about employers' needs in order to identify who would be suited to the available jobs, and developing and sustaining relationships by making multiple visits to each employer

support is offered in the long term:

offering individualised support (based on the person's needs) without arbitrary time limits, aiming to promote a positive work experience (including help with changing job and career advancement, and any additional schooling and training required)

employment services are integrated with mental health services:

becoming an intrinsic member of the team(s) providing support to the client (e.g., care coordinators, therapists, medication providers)

working with the team to find solutions to issues that impact on work and recovery (such as medication side-effects, persistent symptoms, cognitive challenges, managing substance misuse, managing risk and safety issues)

meeting regularly and frequently with the team in order to review each client's status and plan coordinated, recovery-oriented services

An ability to draw on knowledge of the IPS Fidelity Scale and its application in monitoring service implementation and measuring progress

## **KNOWLEDGE OF MENTAL HEALTH PRESENTATIONS AND THEIR IMPACT ON FUNCTIONING AND ON PHYSICAL HEALTH**

### **Knowledge of mental health presentations in clients seen in the context of IPS**

An ability to draw on knowledge of mental health presentations in people with whom employment specialists will be working, such as:

psychosis and bipolar disorder

substance misuse (as a dual diagnosis)

non-psychotic mental health presentations (e.g., depression, anxiety disorders, personality disorder, responses to trauma) where these have had a significant impact on the person's functioning)

An ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which serious mental health problems present (particularly psychosis and bipolar disorder)

an ability to draw on knowledge of problems that commonly co-occur with psychosis and bipolar disorder

An ability to draw on knowledge of the social, psychological, family and biological factors associated with the development and maintenance of mental health problems.

An ability to draw on basic knowledge of the psychological and pharmacological interventions usually offered to people with mental health problems

### **Knowledge of the impact of mental health presentations on functioning**

An ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which mental health problems can affect functioning and individual development, e.g.:

impact on family functioning

difficulty in developing and maintaining intimate and social relationships

difficulty gaining and maintaining employment and study

An ability to draw on knowledge of factors that promote wellbeing and emotional resilience (e.g., being in employment, having greater self-esteem, higher levels of social support, good physical health)

### **Knowledge of the interrelationships between mental and physical health**

An ability to draw on knowledge that, when contrasted to the general population, people with severe mental health problems have:

a higher risk of developing a physical illness

a higher relative risk of premature death (on average dying 10 years earlier)

an ability to draw on knowledge that approximately half of excess mortality rates result from 'unnatural' causes (suicide or accident)

An ability to draw on knowledge that people with mental health problems are more vulnerable to a range of physical health conditions (e.g., obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease)

## KNOWLEDGE OF LEGISLATION RELEVANT TO EMPLOYMENT

An ability to draw on basic knowledge of employment legislation, particularly the Equality Act 2010, and the ways in which this sets out fundamental rights in relation to:

the recruitment process

the terms and conditions set out in employment contracts

the definition of 'disability'

the expectation that employers should consider putting in place reasonable adjustments for employees with specific needs arising from their disabilities

procedures relating to the disclosure of disabilities (and the individual's right not to disclose these to an employer)

An ability to draw on basic knowledge of employment legislation regarding the provision of flexible working patterns in order to assure equal opportunities, e.g.:

flexible work schedules

job-sharing arrangements

family-friendly hours

An ability to maintain knowledge of local services providing specialist legal advice, and to recognise when it is appropriate to signpost clients to these organisations

## **KNOWLEDGE OF, AND ABILITY TO OPERATE WITHIN, PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL GUIDELINES**

The standards of conduct set out in this document are those expected of all practitioners. As such it applies to workers with and without a core profession, all of whom would be expected to adhere to the internal operating procedures of their organisation.

The standards include references to confidentiality and consent, areas of practice that are described in more detail other sections of this framework.

An ability to draw on knowledge that ethical and professional guidance represents a set of principles that need to be interpreted and applied to unique situations

An ability to draw on knowledge of mental health legislation relevant to professional practice

An ability to draw on knowledge of the relevant codes of ethics and conduct that apply to all practitioners, and to the profession of which the worker is a member

An ability to draw on knowledge of national policies and their local implementation in relation to:

capacity and consent

confidentiality

data protection

### **Autonomy**

An ability for practitioners to work autonomously, while recognising the limits of their own competence, and not attempt to practise an intervention for which they do not have appropriate training, supervision or (where applicable) specialist qualification

an ability to refer to colleagues or services with the appropriate level of training and/or skill

an ability for practitioners to inform a client when the task moves beyond their competence, in a manner that maintains the user's confidence and engagement with services

### **Ability to identify and minimise the potential for harm**

An ability to respond promptly when there is evidence that the actions of a colleague put a client or another colleague at risk of harm by:

acting immediately to address the situation

reporting the incident to the relevant authorities

cooperating with internal and external investigators

When supervising colleagues, an ability to take reasonable steps to ensure that they recognise the limits of their competence and do not attempt to practise beyond them

An ability to consult or collaborate with other professionals when additional information or expertise is required

### **Sharing information to maintain safety**

An ability to draw on knowledge that it is appropriate to breach confidentiality when withholding information could:

place an individual or others (e.g., family members, significant others, professionals or members of the public) at risk of significant harm
prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime
lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to others

An ability to judge when it is in the best interests of the person to disclose information, taking into account their wishes and views about sharing information, and holding in mind:

that disclosure is appropriate if it prevents serious harm to a person who lacks capacity

the immediacy of any risk (e.g., where there is clear evidence of suicidal intent, such as a plan)

An ability to draw on knowledge that the duty of confidentiality does not preclude listening to the views of family members/carers or providing them with general information about managing a crisis or seeking support

An ability to judge when sharing information within and between agencies can help to manage risk and safety

An ability to discuss concerns about disclosure with colleagues (without revealing the person's identity)

### **Ability to maintain appropriate standards of conduct**

An ability to ensure that clients are treated with dignity, respect, kindness and consideration

An ability for practitioners to maintain boundaries, for instance by:

ensuring that they do not use their position and/or role in relation to the client to further their own ends

not accepting gifts, hospitality or loans that may be interpreted as attempting to gain preferential treatment

maintaining clear and appropriate personal and sexual boundaries with clients, their families and carers

An ability for practitioners to recognise the need to maintain standards of behaviour that conform with professional codes of conduct both in and outside the work context

An ability for practitioners to recognise and work within the limits of their qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience

### **Ability to maintain standards of competence**

An ability to maintain and update skills and knowledge through participation in continuing professional development

### **Documentation**

An ability to maintain a record for each client that:

is written promptly

is concise, legible and written in a style that is accessible to its intended readership

identifies the person who has entered the record (i.e. is signed and dated)

An ability to ensure that records are maintained after each contact with clients or with professionals connected with them

An ability, where necessary, to update existing records in a clear manner that does not overwrite existing elements (e.g., in order to correct a factual error)



An ability to ensure records are stored securely, in line with local and national policy and guidance

An ability to use and store key templates to support practice (e.g. vocational profiles, action plans, in work support plans)

An ability to provide accurate and timely data for performance reports

### **Ability to advocate for clients**

An ability to work with others to promote the health and wellbeing of clients, their families and carers in the wider community for instance by:

listening to their concerns

involving them in plans for any interventions

maintaining communication with colleagues involved in their care

An ability to respond to complaints about care or treatment in a prompt, open and constructive fashion (including an ability to offer an explanation and, if appropriate, an apology, and/or to follow local complaints procedures)

an ability to ensure that any subsequent care is not delayed or adversely affected by the complaint or complaints procedure

## KNOWLEDGE OF, AND ABILITY TO WORK WITH, ISSUES OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONSENT

Decisions about issues of confidentiality and consent may be influenced by judgements regarding the individual's capacity. (Capacity is referred to in this document, but considered in more detail in the relevant section of this framework.)

### Knowledge of policies and legislation

An ability to draw on knowledge of national and local policies on confidentiality and information sharing, both within and between teams or agencies

An ability to draw on knowledge of the principles of the relevant legislation relating to legal capacity

### Knowledge of capacity\*

An ability to work with the host clinical team to draw on knowledge relevant to the capacity of individuals to give consent to IPS

\*Competences relevant to the assessment of capacity are detailed elsewhere in this framework.

### Ability to gain informed consent for an intervention

An ability to give clients the information they need to decide whether to proceed with IPS, with a commitment to shared decision making, e.g.:

what an IPS intervention involves

the potential benefits and risks of IPS

Where clients have a disability that affects their capacity to understand, an ability to ensure that information is provided in an accessible form (e.g., using an interpreter for people with hearing impairments)

An ability to invite and to actively respond to questions regarding IPS

An ability to address any concerns or fears regarding IPS

### Ability to draw on knowledge of confidentiality and information sharing

An ability to draw on knowledge that a duty of confidentiality is owed to:

to the client to whom the information relates

to any individuals who have provided relevant information on the understanding it is to be kept confidential

An ability to draw on knowledge that confidentiality is breached where the sharing of confidential information is not authorised by the person who provided it or to whom it relates

An ability to draw on knowledge that there is no breach of confidentiality if:

information was provided on the understanding that it would be shared with a limited range of people or for limited purposes, and information has been shared in accordance with that understanding

there is explicit consent to the sharing of information

An ability to draw on knowledge that it is appropriate to breach confidentiality when withholding information could:

place a person (e.g., the client, family members/carers, the practitioner or members of the public) at risk of significant harm

prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime

lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to others
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**Ability to inform all relevant parties about issues of confidentiality and information sharing**

An ability to explain to all relevant parties (e.g., the client’s family/carers or other professionals) the limits of confidentiality and circumstances in which it may be breached (e.g., when a client is considered to be at risk)
An ability to inform all relevant parties about local service policy regarding the ways in which information will be shared, and to seek their consent to these procedures
An ability to revisit consent to share information if there is:
there is significant change in the way the information is to be used.
there is a change in the relationship between the service agency and the client
there is a need for a referral to another agency who may provide further assessment or support
An ability to draw on knowledge that safeguarding needs usually take precedence over issues of consent and confidentiality

**Ability to assess the client’s capacity to consent to information sharing\***

An ability to gauge the client’s capacity to give consent by assessing whether they:
have a reasonable understanding of what information might be shared, the main reason(s) for sharing it and the implications of sharing or not sharing the information
express a clear personal view on the matter (as distinct from repeating what someone else thinks they should do)
are reasonably consistent in their view on the matter (i.e., are not changing their mind frequently)

\*Competences relevant to the assessment of capacity are detailed elsewhere in this framework.

**Ability to share information appropriately and securely**

An ability to ensure that when decisions are made to share information, the practitioner draws on knowledge of information sharing and guidance at national and local level, and:
shares it only with the person or people who need to know
ensures that it is necessary for the purposes for which it is being shared
checks that it is accurate and up to date
distinguishes fact from opinion
understands the limits of any consent given (especially if the information has been provided by a third party)
establishes whether the recipient intends to pass it on to other people, and ensure the recipient understands the limits of any consent that has been given;
ensures that the person to whom the information relates (or the person who provided the information) is made aware that information is being shared, where it is safe to do so
An ability to ensure that information is shared securely and in line with local policies
An ability to help each client develop a personal information plan which identifies:
the specific personal information that will be shared (e.g. mental/physical health, criminal record, other issues relevant to employment)
who will share the information, and how this will be done

## ABILITY TO ASSESS CAPACITY

### Knowledge of how capacity is defined

An ability to draw on knowledge that an adult over the age of 16 may be deemed to lack capacity if (by reason of mental health problems or because of an inability to communicate owing to physical disability) they meet one or more of the following criteria, and are incapable of:
acting, or
making decisions, or
communicating decisions, or
understanding decisions, or
retaining the memory of decisions
An ability to draw on knowledge that capacity should be assessed in relation to major decisions that affect people's lives (e.g. managing day-to-day finances, safety/risk taking, appraisal of their health needs)
An ability to draw on knowledge that incapacity can be temporary, indefinite, permanent or fluctuating, and that it is important to consider the likely duration and nature of the incapacity
An ability to draw on knowledge that diagnosis alone cannot be used to make assumptions about capacity

### Assessment of capacity

An ability to ensure that judgements regarding capacity take into account any factors that make it hard for the client to understand or receive communication, or to make themselves understood
an ability (where possible) to identify ways to overcome barriers to communication
An ability to maximise the likelihood that the client understands the nature and consequences of any decisions they are being asked to make, for example, by:
speaking at the level and pace of the person's understanding and 'processing' speed
avoiding jargon
repeating and clarifying information, and asking the person to repeat information in their own words
using 'open' questions (rather than 'closed' questions to which the answer could be 'yes' or 'no')
using visual aids

## ABILITY TO SHARE INFORMATION TO MAINTAIN SAFETY

An ability to draw on knowledge of local policies and procedures for managing risk, maintaining safety and safeguarding (specifically, the risk of harm to self and/or risk to others)

Where there is evidence that a client may present a significant risk of harm to themselves or others, an ability to respond to this in a timely manner (following local policy, but usually by alerting relevant members of the mental health team and/or the employment team leader)

An ability to judge when it is in the best interests of the client to disclose information, taking into account their wishes and views about sharing information, but holding in mind:

that disclosure is appropriate if it prevents serious harm to a client who lacks capacity or is a vulnerable adult

the immediacy of any risk of suicide or self-harm (e.g., the degree of planning, or the type of suicide method planned or already attempted)

An ability (if practically possible) to ensure that the client is informed of communications between the employment specialist and other parties regarding risk

An ability to draw on knowledge that it is appropriate to breach confidentiality when withholding information could:

place a person (e.g., the client, their family, the employment specialist or a third party) at risk of significant harm

prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime

lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to others

An ability to develop a safe return to work plan with the individual and their care coordinator which takes into account the specific risk and safety issues that are relevant to the individual's employment role and environment, and identifies how they can be mitigated and managed

## ABILITY TO WORK WITH DIFFERENCE

There are many factors that need to be considered in the development of culturally competent practice, and finding a language that encompasses all of them is a challenge. For example, issues in relation to gender, disability or sexual orientation may vary according to a specific cultural group. Nonetheless, the competences required to work in a culturally competent manner are probably similar. They relate to the capacity to value diversity and maintain an active interest in understanding the ways in which people who use services may experience specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles, and considering any implications for the way in which an intervention is carried out.

Issues of specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles often relate to differences in power and to inequalities. As such, practitioners need to be able to reflect on the ways in which power dynamics play out, in the context both of the service they work in and when working with individual clients.

### Stance

An ability to draw on knowledge that when working with specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles, it is stigmatising and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours that are problematic, rather than any specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles, and therefore:

an ability to value equally all people for their particular and unique characteristics

an awareness of stigmatising and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours in themselves and others (and the ability to challenge these)

an awareness that there is no 'normal' state from which people may deviate, and therefore no implication that a 'normal' state is preferred and other states are problematic

### Knowledge of the significance for practice of specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles

An ability to draw on knowledge that the demographic groups included in discussion of 'different' beliefs, practices or lifestyles are usually those that are potentially subject to disadvantage and/or discrimination

An ability to draw on knowledge that because clients will often be a member of more than one 'group' (e.g., a gay person from a BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) community), the potential impact of different combinations of lifestyle factors need to be held in mind

An ability to maintain an awareness of the potential significance for practice of social and cultural variation across a range of domains, including:

ethnicity and culture

gender, gender identity and sexuality

religion and belief

socioeconomic deprivation

class

age

disability

An ability to draw on knowledge of the relevance and potential impact of social and cultural factors on the effectiveness and acceptability of IPS

### Knowledge of social and cultural factors which may have an impact on access to the service

An ability to draw on knowledge of cultural issues that commonly restrict or reduce access to interventions, e.g.:
language
marginalisation
mistrust of statutory services
lack of knowledge about how to access services
the range of cultural concepts, understanding and attitudes about mental health that affect views about help-seeking, treatment and care
stigma, shame and/or fear associated with mental health problems
stigma or shame and/or fear associated with being diagnosed with a mental health disorder
An ability to draw on knowledge of the potential impact of socioeconomic status on access to job-related resources and opportunities
An ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which social inequalities affect development and mental health
An ability to draw on knowledge of the impact of factors such as socioeconomic disadvantage or disability on practical arrangements that influence attendance and engagement in employment (e.g., transport difficulties, poor health)

### Ability to communicate respect for a person and their family or carers

Where people from a specific sociodemographic group are regularly seen within a service, an ability to draw on knowledge of relevant beliefs, practices and lifestyles
An ability to identify protective factors that may be conferred by membership of a specific sociodemographic group (e.g., the additional support offered by an extended family)
An ability to take an active interest in a person's social and cultural background and hence to demonstrate a willingness to learn about their sociocultural perspectives and world view

### Ability to gain an understanding of the experience of specific beliefs, practices and lifestyles

An ability to work collaboratively with people in order to develop an understanding of their culture and world view, and the implications of any culturally specific customs or expectations for the ways in which problems are described and presented
an ability to apply this knowledge in order to work with the person in a manner that is culturally sensitive, culturally consistent and relevant
an ability to apply this knowledge in a manner that is sensitive to the ways in which people interpret their own culture (and therefore recognises the risk of culture-related stereotyping)
An ability to take an active and explicit interest in a person's experience of the beliefs, practices and lifestyles pertinent to their community to:
help them discuss and reflect on their experience
identify whether and how this experience has shaped the development and maintenance of their presenting problems
identify how they locate themselves if they 'straddle' cultures

### Ability to adapt communication

Where the practitioner does not share a person's language, an ability to identify appropriate strategies to enable their full participation in the assessment or intervention
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where an interpreter/advocate is employed, an ability to draw on knowledge of the strategies that need to be in place for them to work effectively and in the person's best interests

An ability to adapt communication with people who have a disability (e.g., using communication aids or by altering the language, pace and content of sessions)

**Ability to demonstrate awareness of the influence of the practitioner's own background**

An ability for practitioners of all backgrounds to draw on an awareness of their own group membership and values and how these may influence their perceptions of the client, their problem and the relationship between the client and the employment specialist

An ability for practitioners to reflect on power differences between themselves and the client



## ABILITY TO MAKE USE OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

An ability to hold in mind that a primary purpose of supervision and learning is to enhance the quality of the service received by clients, families/carers and employers, and to support the employment specialist in their role.

This section focuses on the process of supervision rather than on its content.

### **Ability for the employment specialist to work collaboratively with the supervisor**

An ability to work with the supervisor in order to generate an explicit agreement about the parameters of supervision (e.g., agreeing the areas that need to be discussed, being clear about the respective roles of supervisor and supervisee, the goals of supervision and any contracts that specify these factors)

An ability to help the supervisor be aware of the practitioner's training needs

An ability to present an honest and open account of the work being undertaken, including reflections on the emotional impact of the work

An ability to discuss work with the supervisor as an active and engaged participant, without becoming passive or avoidant, or defensive or aggressive

An ability to present material to the supervisor in a focused manner, selecting (and so concentrating on) the most important and relevant issues

An ability to contribute information relevant to fidelity monitoring

An ability (where relevant) to use supervisory support from both the clinical team and IPS professional supervision

### **Practitioner's capacity for self-appraisal and reflection**

An ability to reflect on the supervisor's feedback and to apply these reflections in future work

An ability for the practitioner to be open and realistic about their capabilities and to share this self-appraisal with the supervisor

An ability to use feedback from the supervisor in order to further develop the capacity for accurate self-appraisal

### **Capacity for active learning**

An ability to follow through suggestions regarding relevant reading or additional training made by the supervisor, and to incorporate this learning into practice

### **Ability to use supervision to reflect on developing personal and professional roles**

An ability to use supervision to discuss the personal impact of the work, especially where this reflection is relevant to maintaining the likely effectiveness of the work

An ability to use supervision to reflect on the impact of the work in relation to professional development

## IMPLEMENTING IPS IN LINE WITH ITS PRINCIPLES AND SUPPORTING THE WORK OF STAFF

An ability to draw on knowledge of IPS principles in order to implement and maintain a service that is congruent with the IPS model
An ability to draw on knowledge that the usual operating characteristics of an IPS service include:
restricting the role of employment specialists to vocational services
ensuring that employment specialists have a manageable caseload (usually no more than 20 clients)
locating employment specialists as part of (and integrated with) the mental health team, and that as members of the team they:
regularly attend treatment team meetings
meet with other team members on a regular basis
are involved in shared decision making
operating a 'zero-exclusion' criteria for referral to IPS, which:
has no eligibility requirements for referral to an employment specialist
uses the client's expression of interest in gaining employment as the criterion for referral
structuring the service in a way that permits job searching to start quickly
specifying and protecting the job roles and functions of employment specialists, such that they can:
carry out all the phases of a vocational service (engagement, assessment, achieving employment and ongoing employment support)
offer individualised job searching that matches job choices to the client (rather than fitting the client to available jobs)
develop and maintain engagement with employers and negotiate job opportunities in the 'hidden' labour market
develop a diversity of jobs employment options across a range of sectors
offer vocational assessment as an ongoing process, building on the assessment as the client gains experience of work
work with (and provide support to) clients and employers on an ongoing basis, without arbitrary time limits
recognising that employment specialists carry out most of their work in community settings
functioning as a supportive unit with other employment specialists, e.g.:
sharing information
providing back-up and support if there are difficulties and challenges
attending supervision as a group

### **Assuring good quality supervision for employment specialists**

An ability to ensure that supervision and support for employment specialists is available from employment team leaders, with the aim of helping:
individual employment specialists to work in line with best practice
the team of employment specialists to meet job outcome targets
An ability to use supervision and support to identify the training needs of employment specialists, and to organise and implement appropriate training

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS WITH CLIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES/CARERS

### Knowledge

An ability to draw on knowledge of the role of basic communication skills as a way for the listener to gain an accurate sense of the concerns and needs of the person, helping them to:

- feel respected, heard and understood
- feel connected to others (and so experience themselves as less isolated and alone)
- express themselves and make sense of their experience
- reflect on and request the support that they feel is appropriate to their immediate needs

### Application

An ability to apply communication skills that help to engage clients in a collaborative discussion of their circumstances and immediate needs

- an ability to make adjustments for people who may have difficulty expressing themselves (e.g., because of a disability)

In order to gain an accurate sense of the person's account, an ability for the listener to be aware of (and avoid) any 'filters' they may find themselves imposing, e.g.:

- listening in a judgmental way
- making assumptions (in advance, or instead, of listening fully)

An ability to convey an attentive stance through body language, e.g.:

- sitting close (but not too close) to the person
- sitting 'square on' or next to the person (rather than across a desk)
- adopting an open posture
- maintaining an appropriate level of eye contact

An ability to listen attentively to the person by:

- actively listening to their verbal account and trying to make sense of their experiences, behaviours and feelings, and the social context in which these arise
- listening to the tone and pace of what is said, as well as its content
- allowing silences if this appears to help the person express themselves at their own pace
- attending to the person's non-verbal behaviour such as agitation (as a guide to the areas that are more intensely distressing or as an indicator of 'unspoken' feelings that might be difficult to express verbally)

An ability to help the person expand on or explore relevant issues by using:

- statements (e.g., brief summaries of what has already been said)
- questions
- non-verbal prompts

An ability to ask both:

- 'closed' questions (that usually have a specific answer and which are best used to establish factual information)
- 'open' questions (that require more than a 'yes'/'no' answer and encourage discussion)

An ability to judge when questioning is being experienced as helpful and when less so (e.g., where the person is feeling 'grilled')

An ability to listen 'empathically' to the person, by:	
	actively trying to understand their perspective and the way they understand their situation
	'stepping into their shoes' in order to understand their world
	taking on board their feelings (but taking care not to mirror these feelings in oneself)
An ability to maintain an awareness of one's own perspective or frame of reference in order not to inadvertently impose it	
An ability to convey a basic and empathic understanding of what has been said or conveyed, for example by:	
	paraphrasing what has been said (but not repeating verbatim)
	making short summaries that try to connect various aspects of what has been conveyed
	using appropriate non-verbal behaviour that 'chimes' with what has been said (e.g., through appropriate facial expression)
An ability to check the person's understanding by asking them to summarise the discussion and/or any decisions that have been agreed	
An ability to ask the person whether all the issues that they wished to raise have been discussed	

## **ABILITY TO FOSTER AND MAINTAIN A GOOD WORKING ALLIANCE, AND TO GRASP THE CLIENT'S PERSPECTIVE**

### **Understanding the concept of the working alliance in IPS**

An ability to draw on knowledge that the working alliance is usually seen as having three components:
the relationship or bond between practitioner and client
consensus between practitioner and client regarding the techniques/methods employed in IPS
consensus between practitioner and client regarding the goals of IPS
An ability to draw on knowledge that all three components contribute to the maintenance of the alliance

### **Knowledge of practitioner factors associated with the alliance**

An ability to draw on knowledge of practitioner factors that increase the probability of forming a positive alliance, which include being:
flexible and allowing the client to discuss issues which are important to them
respectful
warm, friendly and affirming
open
alert and active
able to show honesty through self-reflection
trustworthy
Knowledge of practitioner factors that reduce the probability of forming a positive alliance, such as:
being rigid
being critical
being distant
being aloof
being distracted
making inappropriate use of silence

### **Knowledge of client factors associated with the alliance**

An ability to draw on knowledge of client factors that affect the probability of forming a positive alliance, e.g.:
interpersonal issues (e.g., assuming that the practitioner will disbelieve the client's perspective on events)
involuntary presentation (e.g., only engaging in the IPS process because of external pressures)
service-related issues (e.g., previous negative experiences)
influence of family and peers (e.g., families who encourage or discourage the client from maintaining contact with services, or peers who stigmatise the client for being in receipt of an IPS intervention)

### Capacity to develop the alliance

An ability to listen to the client's concerns in a manner that is non-judgemental, supportive and sensitive, and which conveys an accepting attitude when the client describes their experiences and beliefs
An ability to validate the client's experiences and concerns
An ability to gauge whether the client understands the rationale for IPS, has questions about it or is sceptical about its rationale, and to respond to these concerns openly and non-defensively in order to resolve any ambiguities
An ability to help the client express any concerns or doubts they have about IPS and/or the practitioner, especially where this relates to mistrust or scepticism

### Capacity to grasp the client's perspective

An ability to apprehend the ways in which the client characteristically understands themselves and the world around them
An ability to hold the client's world view in mind throughout the course of an IPS intervention and to convey this understanding through interactions with the client, in a manner that allows them to correct any misapprehensions
An ability to establish the client's point of view by exploring their position in an open and accepting manner, taking their concerns at face value and suspending any tendency to disbelief
An ability to hold the client's perspective in mind while gathering all relevant information in a sensitive manner
An ability to hold the client's world view in mind, while retaining an independent perspective and guarding against collusion with the client

### Capacity to maintain the alliance

#### Capacity to recognise and address threats to the working alliance ('alliance ruptures')

An ability to recognise when strains in the alliance threaten the progress of IPS
An ability to use appropriate interventions in response to disagreements about tasks and goals, and to:
review the client's understanding of the rationale for IPS and to clarify any misunderstandings
judge when it is best to refocus on tasks and goals that are seen as relevant or manageable by the client (rather than continuing to explore issues that lead to disagreement)
An ability to use appropriate interventions in response to strains in the bond between the practitioner and client, e.g.:
for the practitioner to give and ask for feedback about what is happening in the here-and-now interaction, in a manner that invites exploration with the client
for the practitioner to acknowledge and accept responsibility for their contribution to any strains in the alliance
where the client recognises and acknowledges that the alliance is under strain, an ability (when appropriate) to help them make links between the rupture and their usual style of relating to others
to allow the client to assert any negative feelings about the relationship between the practitioner and themselves
to help the client explore any fears they have about expressing negative feelings about the relationship between the practitioner and themselves

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS WITH THE MENTAL HEALTH TEAM

An ability to draw on knowledge of the roles, responsibilities, culture and practice of the other professionals in the team

An ability to draw on knowledge of the specific areas for which members of the team are responsible (in relation to assessment, planning, intervention, and review), with the aim of ensuring that treatment and employment plans are integrated

An ability to help the team understand and implement the IPS model, e.g.:

the principles that underpin the IPS model

the assumptions that are made by the model, and that may not be obvious to, or shared with, other workers in the team

the promotion of employment as a meaningful and worthwhile clinical intervention

any adaptations required to align current team practice with the principles of IPS (with the aim of ensuring that treatment and employment plans are integrated)

An ability to draw on knowledge that education regarding the IPS model will be based on the team's experience of IPS in action as much as attempts to 'educate' the team

An ability to communicate relevant information to members of the team (based on the principle of a 'need to know')

An ability to ensure that information sharing is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure

An ability to update the team regularly on clients' progress in gaining and maintaining employment

An ability to communicate specific clinical issues that have emerged during the process of gaining employment that are not currently being addressed, and which may challenge employability if not responded to by the team, e.g.:

side-effects from medication

specific psychological problems that impact the client's capacity for employment (e.g., anxiety, low mood, poor concentration)

safeguarding and concerns about safety and risk

An ability to record what information has been shared, with whom and for what purpose

An ability to seek advice (e.g., from the employment team leader) when in doubt about sharing information

An ability to be aware of team dynamics that may challenge effective communication, and to develop strategies to manage these, for instance where:

unhelpful power relationships within the team inhibits communication

the role of the employment specialist is not recognised as distinct from other workers

the employment specialist's views are not accorded the same status as those of other members of the team

An ability to discuss challenges to team communication with the employment team leader/supervisor and to consider how these can be best managed, for example by using basic conflict resolution strategies:

identifying when (and when not) to challenge problematic team behaviours

focusing on the problem (rather than on personal issues)

listening to the point of view of other team members

exploring solutions to issues that have an impact on work and recovery

presenting a case calmly and clearly
problem solving (e.g., identifying common ground and potential resolutions to areas of difference)
focusing on the future rather than the past



## ABILITY TO COMPLETE A CONCURRENT RECORD OF PROGRESS

An ability to draw on knowledge that a progress note for each client should be entered into the clinical record (usually after each contact), in order to:
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document progress
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communicate pertinent information to other members of the team
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An ability to write a progress note that:
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summarises the activities that have taken place to date with each client
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addresses the goals and objectives set out in the employment plan
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outlines the client's wellbeing
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identifies any significant issues or concerns that have arisen
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## ABILITY TO USE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT IPS

Where clients have difficulties, worries or concerns that have an adverse impact on their capacity to take up or maintain employment, an ability to use psychologically informed strategies that can help them to:

identify and specify the relevant issues

generate and implement strategies that lead to solutions (e.g., drawing on motivational interviewing or solution-focused approaches)

An ability for the employment specialist to:

work within the limits of their knowledge and training in psychological techniques

maintain a focus on issues that relate to supporting employment (rather than to broader aspects of the client's functioning)

An ability to be alert and responsive to implicit or explicit expressions of worry about any aspect of employment by helping clients discuss these, e.g.:

worry about the impact of mental health problems (e.g., psychotic symptoms or cognitive impairment)

pessimism about succeeding, based on previous negative experiences of work

lack of confidence

concerns about a lack of relevant experience

An ability to implement psychologically informed strategies to help the client overcome challenges that arise while gaining and/or maintaining employment, such as:

problem solving strategies

motivational strategies

unpacking negative predictions and thoughts about employment and identifying possible alternative predictions

social skills training (e.g., helping the client build natural supports in the workplace)

modelling and role-playing effective workplace skills (e.g., planning negotiations with an employer)

coaching

## ABILITY TO ENGAGE THE CLIENT IN THE IPS PROCESS

An ability to meet with clients as promptly as is practically possible (e.g., within one 1 week of their referral)

An ability to discuss with the client the nature of the support they will be offered and the role of the employment specialist, with the aim of building their interest in IPS

An ability to ensure that the client understands:

that the employment specialist is part of the mental health team

the ways that information will be shared between the employment specialist and the mental health team

An ability to spend time getting to know the client, identifying their goals, along with their interests and concerns

An ability to help the client discuss their motivation for gaining employment, and understand how this fits with their values, e.g.:

what gaining employment would mean to them

what has prompted an interest in gaining/returning to employment

an ability to judge whether the client's capacity to sustain motivation for employment should be directly discussed with them

An ability to meet with the client in a range of settings (e.g., in the office, in the client's home and in community settings) in order to:

demonstrate the employment specialist's commitment and improve client engagement

learn how the client relates to others outside the mental health setting

an ability to follow local guidance on safety procedures when visiting clients outside the office

An ability to pace the initial sessions to match the client's needs and capacities (e.g., working towards identifying their goals at a slower pace if this is indicated by the client's responses)

## ABILITY TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE BENEFITS SYSTEM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

An ability to draw on knowledge that benefits advice should be offered as one of the first stages in the IPS employment process

An ability to draw on basic knowledge of the operation and application of employment and other benefits:

- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Housing Benefit
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Personal Independence Payment

An ability to draw on basic knowledge of Employment and Support Allowance and the permitted work regulations that apply to this allowance

An ability to discuss with the client the financial implications of gaining employment or becoming self-employed, e.g.:

- recognising that taking up employment may result in a change to the benefits to which they or members of their family/carers are entitled (including secondary benefits, such as free prescriptions)
- discussing the benefits that they currently receive
- helping them estimate the impact of taking up employment (e.g., by using an online benefits calculator)
- helping them to consider the financial implications of employment against other social factors

An ability to recognise when formal benefits advice is required in order to accurately appraise the financial implications of seeking and gaining employment, usually where the employment specialist does not have:

- the specialist knowledge required to undertake an assessment of benefits
- accurate and up-to-date information about the client's financial status

An ability to maintain up-to-date information about the availability of, and access to, benefits advisors in local services

- An ability to signpost the client to benefits advice and ensure that they access this
- An ability to discuss the outcome of formal benefits advice with the client, and help them consider its implications for taking up employment
- An ability to help clients access support for budgeting, if required

## **ABILITY TO DISCUSS DISCLOSURE OF A DISABILITY AND OTHER PERSONAL INFORMATION WITH THE CLIENT AND WITH EMPLOYERS**

### **Knowledge about disclosure of a disability**

An ability to draw on knowledge that disclosure of a disability is not a legal requirement, nor a condition of working with the client

An ability to draw on knowledge that the purpose of disclosing a disability should be to benefit the client, and decisions about disclosure should be aligned to this principle

### **Communicating about disclosure with a client**

An ability to describe the ways in which disclosure of a health condition or a disability links to the identification of reasonable adjustments and the role of the employment specialist in communicating and negotiating this with the employer

An ability to help the client consider and discuss the advantages of disclosing disability and other personal information to a potential or current employer, for example that this:

allows for reasonable adjustments to be considered and implemented

reduces the need for the client to hide symptoms or difficulties

enables the employment specialist to advocate for the client directly with the employer

An ability to help the client consider and discuss the disadvantages of disclosing a disability and other personal information to a potential or current employer, for example that:

they may be concerned that this could result in discrimination (an employer being unwilling to employ the client)

this focuses attention on disability rather than on the person

the client may wish to advocate for themselves

An ability to answer questions about disclosure in an objective and neutral way

An ability to help the client reach a decision regarding the advantages and disadvantages of disclosure

Where clients are unwilling to disclose disability, an ability to discuss the reasons for this in a manner that respects their decision but also helps them explore (and so review) their concerns

Where the client agrees to disclosure of a disability and/or other personal information, an ability to discuss the specific information that will be disclosed and to document this in a personal information plan, e.g.:

identifying what information is relevant for the employer and what will be kept confidential (including matters such as physical, cognitive or neurodiverse issues, criminal history, risk and safety, addiction)

considering the level of disclosure to different people (e.g., employer, colleagues)

considering the stage at which disclosure will take place (e.g., at interview or after a job has been secured)

An ability to return to discussion of disclosure at any stage of the employment process (e.g., where non-disclosure means that difficulties that have emerged in a job cannot be addressed by implementing reasonable adjustments)

### **Communicating about disability with an employer**

An ability to describe to the employer the nature of a client's health issues and other relevant information (as agreed in the personal information plan)
An ability to restrict disclosure to the areas agreed with the client
An ability to discuss the possible implications of the client's disability for their functioning in the workplace, and to negotiate the reasonable adjustments that could be put in place to support them
an ability to help employers understand the practical operation of the Equality Act 2010
an ability to signpost the employer to services that can advise on adjustments relevant to specific disabilities

## ABILITY TO CONSTRUCT A VOCATIONAL PROFILE

An ability to draw on knowledge that the aim of a vocational profile is to gather information that establishes a clear picture of the client's strengths, resources and needs, and so identifies the type of work and work environment that will be right for them

An ability to draw on knowledge that the vocational profile is built up over time and continues to be elaborated in the light of the client's responses to the process of gaining employment

An ability to draw on knowledge that building the vocational profile is part of the process of helping clients learn about their capacities and interests in the context of work, and so identify jobs that are optimal for them at any one time

An ability to draw on a comprehensive range of sources of information to construct the vocational profile, including the client, the mental health team and (with the client's permission) the client's family/carers

An ability to help the client identify their short- and long-term vocational goals

An ability to identify the client's work history, such as:

previous jobs

what has gone well in previous employment and what has gone badly

reasons for ending or changing jobs

An ability to identify the client's current level of adjustment, for example:

mental health symptoms and their management

physical health symptoms problems and their management

cognitive and any neurodiverse issues

An ability to identify the client's interpersonal resources, such as their:

interpersonal skills

social and support network

An ability to identify the client's work skills, e.g.:

job-seeking skills

specific vocational skills

transferable work skills

characteristic work-related behaviours, e.g.:

patterns of attendance

motivation

stress tolerance in the workplace

An ability to draw on labour market research to inform decision making around employment goals and to connect clients to job opportunities

An ability to identify factors that may influence decisions about the type of work for which the client is suited, for example their:

access to (and ability to use) transportation

support from family/carers and friends

current living situation (type and with whom)

substance use

criminal record

willingness to disclose mental health problems

expectations regarding the personal, financial and social benefits of working

motivation for work

money management skills

current income and benefits

daily activities and routines, and regular contacts
type of work environment and work tasks

An ability to identify contacts the client could use to facilitate the job search, e.g.:
family/carers
friends
neighbours
previous employers
previous teachers
community contacts



## ABILITY TO CONSTRUCT AN INDIVIDUALISED EMPLOYMENT PLAN

An ability to draw on knowledge that an individualised employment plan needs to be drawn up for each client, and that the plan sets out the course of action, including:

the client's short- and long-term goals(s), written using in the client's own words

the steps that will be taken to achieve these goals, which:

are set out as behavioural objectives

identify the sequential steps that may need to be taken to meet these objectives

specification (by name and service) of the support the client can expect at each step

the time frame for each step

An ability to draw up a plan that is:

behaviourally specific and establishes the actions that will be taken

clear and descriptive, and contains enough information to permit other employment specialists who do not know the client to pick up the work

An ability to ensure that the employment plan is integrated with treatment plans developed by and with the relevant clinical team

An ability to review and amend the plan on a regular basis

## ABILITY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR JOB APPLICATIONS

An ability to judge the degree of support that may benefit the client, ensuring that this maximises their autonomy and capacity to draw on their own resources	
An ability to identify the areas of support that may benefit the client, e.g.:	
	helping clients who wish to undertake their own job search to do so (e.g., using the internet and social media to support job search)
	if they have a CV, working with them to review it
	if they do not have a CV, helping them to develop one
	ensuring that the CV is up to date and oriented to the role that the client has expressed an interest in/is applying for
	helping to ensure that the CV emphasises positive features of their experience
	helping the client to complete application forms
	discussing how to account for periods of unemployment or absence from the job market
	helping the client to research the employer and the role for which they are applying
	anticipating potential interview questions and rehearsing answers
	modelling and role-playing interview strategies
	discussing dress codes
	providing follow-up after an interview
	planning ahead for the possibility of rejection (and so mitigating its impact)

## ABILITY TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

An ability to draw on multiple sources of information in order to identify local employment opportunities, e.g.:

maintaining active links with job centres (so as to know about current vacancies and likely developments in the local job market)

linking with advisors from other supported employment services

making links with local recruitment agencies

making links with local chambers of commerce

regularly reviewing job sites, social media, local papers and trade magazines

attending jobs fairs and making contact with stallholders

An ability to actively seek out information about potential employment opportunities that may not be formally advertised, e.g.:

walking around the local area in order to check for recruitment notices (e.g., adverts posted in shop windows or outside places of employment)

making speculative, direct enquiries to potential employers

using personal and professional networks

maintaining contact with clients who have successfully obtained employment

## EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

An ability to draw on knowledge that the aim of employer engagement is to build a relationship that enables the employer to trust that the employment specialist understands their specific workforce needs

An ability to draw on knowledge that employer engagement:

is a core area of activity for IPS employment specialists

involves making multiple (rather than one-off) visits in order to establish a good working relationship

requires a range of engagement strategies, adapted to the type and size of employer

involves a commitment to maintaining ongoing contact

aims to position the employment specialist as a resource both for the employer and for the client

is usually focused on supporting an individual client to obtain a job

An ability to draw on knowledge that identifying job opportunities will usually require several contacts with employers over a period of time, and that persistence is a key and necessary feature of employer engagement

An ability to draw on knowledge that initial contacts should focus on learning about the employment context and the employer's recruitment needs, rather than on attempts to support a client to obtain a job

An ability to formulate and execute a planned strategy of employer engagement that is individualised to the needs of each employer and client needs

An ability for the employment specialist to make an initial introduction to employers, communicating:

their role, the organisation they represent and the purpose of the contact

the potential benefit of the contact (i.e. a free resource that can help meet their recruitment needs and so help improve their business)

An ability to communicate an initial message that is:

clear and concise

targeted and identifies the aims and goals of the service

uses 'business' language that employers will recognise (rather than health service terminology)

An ability to gain an in-depth understanding of the employment context and the employer's recruitment needs

using communication skills (such as active listening)

asking relevant questions that help to develop an understanding of the specific job roles available, the employer's requirements for these roles and the usual recruitment process

An ability to convey key messages that stress the potential benefits of involvement with an IPS programme, for example helping employers to:

meet their recruitment needs

reach an untapped, motivated and diverse workforce

save money on recruitment costs

widen their pool of potential applicants

gain direct access to highly motivated individuals who are ready to take up posts

employ individuals who can make a positive contribution to the overall success of their business

An ability to adapt the approach being taken to the emerging information being presented by the employer

An ability to identify and respond to concerns about the IPS service raised by the employer, for example by:

- actively listening to the employer's concerns
- summarising their concerns (to convey that these are understood accurately and to facilitate further discussion)
- responding to and addressing the concern being raised, and checking whether this addresses the issue(s)
- checking whether this meets their concerns
- identifying whether unresolved concerns will need to be revisited in order for the employer to progress or whether they can be put aside

An ability to present a realistic and measured account of the IPS service (and not to oversell or attempt a hard sell)

An ability to describe the ongoing support that the IPS service will put in place for both the employer and the client, and that this will:

- identify and resolve problems in a timely manner
- result in better retention than might be the case for other employees

An ability to suggest the broader benefits to the employer of liaison with the IPS service, for example, helping employers:

- learn more about mental health
- consider how to support existing employees with mental health problems (and so reduce absence and improve retention absence)

An ability to follow up initial visits by a variety of planned contacts (e.g., by phone, email, sending relevant literature, arranging further face-to-face meetings)

Based on a good understanding of the employment context and the employer's needs, an ability to help employers create jobs, e.g.:

- by identifying unmet needs for which there is no current job-role
- through 'job carving' (identifying potential positions that may not currently exist but which observation of the employment context suggest could be developed (e.g., acting in a support role for other members of staff))

An ability to identify clients for whom the job opportunity would be a good match and initiate introductions to the employer

An ability to respond actively when placements are under strain and act as a mediator in order to identify the source of difficulties, manage any conflicts, for example by:

- listening to the point of view of the employer and the client
- focusing on the problem (rather than on personal issues)
- problem solving (e.g., identifying common ground and potential resolutions to areas of difference)
- focusing on the future rather than the past

## ABILITY TO PROFILE THE JOB SETTING

An ability to profile the job setting so as to arrive at a clear picture of the demands of the position and its suitability for the client, including:

interpersonal characteristics and demands, e.g.:
the number of co-workers
whether co-workers work in close proximity to another
the implicit social and interpersonal requirements in the work setting
whether and how employees interact with each other (e.g., having breaks together, expectations that they socialise after work)
level and type of support, management and supervision, e.g.:
the nature of support, management and supervision
induction and initial training (for clients who are new to the role)
the frequency and duration of supervision
the work schedule, e.g.:
expected working hours (time of day, number of hours, days of the week)
flexibility for time off
arrangements for sick leave, annual leave and other types of leave
the working environment, e.g.:
the characteristics of the job setting (e.g., outside/inside, noisy/quiet, crowded/isolated)
potential job stresses (e.g., pressures from customers, pressures related to the pace of work, noise, using dangerous equipment)
financial arrangements, e.g.:
the contract details, salary and payment schedule
any implications of the salary for receipt of benefits
accessibility, e.g.:
whether the position requires lengthy travel
the transportation options open to the client to reach the employment site
whether the work schedule coincides with the public transportation schedule
whether the travel plan means passing through neighbourhoods in which the client feels uncomfortable

## ABILITY TO CONDUCT A JOB SEARCH

An ability to draw on knowledge that:

people are more likely to maintain employment when supported to obtain a job consistent with their preferences

the availability of a position should not be the main determinant of job choices

the aim of the job search is to arrive at the best match between the person and the job

An ability to discuss (and agree with the client) who takes responsibility for the job search

where the client wishes to undertake the job search themselves, an ability to discuss with them whether or not they would like support for this process, and if so what form this would take

An ability to draw on knowledge of available positions and the characteristics of these positions, based on:

employer engagement

knowledge of the local job market

job profiling

An ability to identify potential matches between the client's interests and abilities and available positions

where there is a good match, an ability to make a direct approach to an employer in order to advocate for the client

## PROVIDING INDIVIDUALISED JOB SUPPORT

An ability to draw on knowledge that people with serious mental health problems may have difficulty maintaining employment without ongoing follow-on support, tailored to the individual client and adapted to their needs and preferences

An ability to draw on knowledge that the goal of job support is not only to help the person maintain employment, but also to improve their quality of life

An ability to draw on knowledge that the offer of job support always includes support to the employer

An ability to judge when to offer support to the client and when to foster independence and their capacity for self-management

An ability to make use of the vocational profile in order to anticipate likely support that the client will need

An ability to ensure that:

when there is positive feedback about the client's progress this is communicated to them

when there is feedback about areas that need attention, this is framed in a positive way that enables the client to learn from their experience

An ability to monitor placements (especially in their early stages) in order to identify and troubleshoot initial and ongoing issues

An ability to respond promptly to any problems that emerge

An ability to match the intensity and timing of support to the client's needs and to judge whether and when to increase or decrease the level of response

An ability to identify interpersonal issues that may have emerged and to work with the client and the employer in order to resolve them, for example where:

communication issues have made it difficult for the client to express their needs

the client has experienced feedback offered to them as negative

difficulties have emerged in relationships with colleagues

An ability to offer practical support directed to any emerging difficulties, e.g.:

help with organising and undertaking travel to and from work

morning calls to help with scheduling issues, such as getting up and timekeeping

discussion of grooming and dress, and help to address any issues

An ability to offer psychologically informed support directed at any emerging emotional issues or difficulties, for example helping the client:

feel more confident about making requests of the employer or colleagues

discuss and identify strategies to manage interpersonal issues (such as discomfort or inhibition when talking to colleagues)

communicate needs that arise from disability and other health issues

manage cognitive issues, such as memory problems or poor concentration

address difficulties in maintaining motivation

identify what the employer can do to support them in the workplace

build natural supports in the workplace, and via personal and community networks

An ability to offer support to the employer, e.g.:



meeting with them to review the client's performance
discussing and responding to any concerns raised by the employer by identifying and agreeing possible solutions, and providing feedback to the client
negotiating reasonable adjustments
providing education and guidance regarding mental and physical health and any risk and safety issues

An ability to offer direct support in the workplace, for example to:
observe how the client is functioning
act as a coach
model alternative responses to difficulties
problem solve issues <i>in situ</i>

An ability to discuss with the client (and the mental health team) issues that emerge in (and have an impact on) their work environment and which relate to the client's mental and physical health, such as:
increased and troubling mental health symptoms
intrusive side effects from medication

Where the client raises the possibility of leaving their post, an ability to judge the most appropriate response, e.g.:
offering further support if this relates to unresolved issues that can potentially be addressed
where this looks to be a reasonable course of action (e.g., because the person is not satisfied with the position or there is a mismatch between the position and their interests), helping them identify what has been learned (and therefore gained) from the post and how this learning can be applied to future job searches
if appropriate, supporting them to find a more appropriate job

An ability (with the client's permission) to liaise with the client's family/carers to consider how they can support employment and identify any challenges to this, e.g.:
discussing their expectations (e.g., where families/carers are expecting more rapid progress than is reasonable, helping them adjust this to a more realistic pace)
identifying the client's role in the family and its implications for support
discussing the support the employment specialist can offer

An ability to help the client build natural supports in the workplace and draw on their personal network to sustain employment
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### Supporting job retention

An ability to support clients who are already in employment (but who are struggling or are off work sick and returning to work after a period of absence), by developing a return to work plan with the client, their employer and relevant health and social care professionals.
An ability to draw on knowledge that a return to work plan should identify:
interventions that will support the return to work (including negotiating/mediating with employers to identify return to work options, such as suitable duties and work hours)
return to work goals that the client feels are right for them (e.g., the same or a different job with the same employer, the same job with a different employer, or a different job with a different employer)
An ability to refer to other agencies (such as ACAS) where relevant and appropriate (e.g. where there are complex workplace issues which need to be formally mediated or legal advice is required)

## SUPPORTED EDUCATION

An ability to draw on knowledge that supported education is only offered where this directly supports vocational goals (i.e. gaining the training and/or qualifications needed for employment)

An ability to draw on knowledge that supported education:

focuses on training and education opportunities open to all members of the community (rather than opportunities only open to people with disabilities)

is offered only to clients who require significant help to maintain training/education

should be considered for clients of all ages

An ability to help clients enter and sustain training/education, for example by helping them:

discuss their goals and interests, and identify relevant educational/training programmes

identify and research potential programmes of study

consider the benefits and disadvantages of disclosing a disability, and to whom a disclosure would be made

make links with disability services within educational institutions to identify potential reasonable adjustments

consider how best to present themselves in an application (e.g., accounting for periods out of education)

identify and consider how to manage symptoms and/or interpersonal issues that make studying difficult to maintain (e.g., managing anxiety about classes, finding it challenging to develop relationships with fellow students)

discuss and learn from difficulties that they are encountering (rather than perceiving these as indications of failure), and work towards implementing potential solutions

An ability to draw on the resources of the mental health team to help the client manage psychological difficulties that impact their capacity to undertake education (e.g. medication management)

## SUPERVISION OF EMPLOYMENT SPECIALISTS BY TEAM LEADERS

An ability to draw on knowledge that an employment specialist may receive both individual, group and peer supervision, each at a frequency determined locally

### Supervision structure

An ability to draw on knowledge of good practice in supervision of employment specialists, including:

gaining direct knowledge of the clients with whom employment specialists are working (e.g., by observing their meetings with the employment specialist)

ensuring that (over time) all clients with whom the employment specialists are working are reviewed

ensuring that the supervision process identifies and reviews those clients who are not making progress with their goals

An ability to draw on knowledge that supervision should be outcomes based, and therefore focused on client progress with their specified goals

### Setting up the session

An ability to develop collaboratively an agenda for the supervision session, which may include, e.g.:

help with administrative issues (such as meeting relevant local standards for documentation)

reviewing progress and issues related to the clients with whom the employment specialist is working

reviewing clients' progress in gaining and maintaining employment

reviewing any issues related to the development and maintenance of relationships with employers

reviewing any issues related to the development and maintenance of relationships with mental health teams

identifying clients for review

helping employment specialists to review and manage their caseloads and schedules

helping employment specialists discuss psychological stresses arising from their work and the ways in which these can best be addressed

An ability to draw on knowledge that sessions should start with a review of any previously identified goals (both to identify progress and identify any challenges)

### Ending the session

An ability to draw on knowledge that at the end of the session the supervisor and employment specialists should agree the next steps to be taken and specify the ways in which these will be achieved

An ability to draw on knowledge that the content of discussions in supervision should be documented, identifying the next steps and any agreed goals

### Maintaining a focus on strengths-based supervision

An ability to draw on knowledge that supervision should help employment specialists focus on client's strengths and on maintaining hope

Where employment specialists express frustration with client's progress, an ability to empathise but to redirect discussion to problem solving issues that have emerged, while maintaining a focus on the client's strengths and resources

Where employment specialists express concerns about their capacity to carry out their roles, an ability to maintain a strengths-based perspective, identifying those areas in which they are succeeding

### Managing performance problems

An ability to try to anticipate and address performance problems, for example by:

setting clear expectations, such as:

writing down expectations as they are discussed and agreed

monitoring progress with expectations and identifying when agreed tasks are not completed

discussing and clarifying areas where agreed tasks have not been completed (e.g., checking that these have been understood, and identifying reasons why it has not been possible to complete them)

providing induction and ongoing training, coaching and field mentoring:

to detect and manage 'drift' from IPS practices

to refine and improve skills:

discussing and commenting on the employment specialist's work within supervision sessions

through direct observation of practice and service audits of practice

identifying problems while they are still minor, and giving timely and frequent feedback:

where work is progressing well, providing positive and specific feedback, usually based on concrete examples

openly discussing performance against targets

where progress varies from agreed goals and expectations, providing timely, direct constructive feedback that is behaviourally specific and so makes clear what it is that needs to be improved

helping the employment specialist to respond to the feedback

collaboratively identifying the strategies that may need to be put in place to address concerns

implementing HR policies where required to address performance, sickness and disciplinary issues

### Direct observation

An ability to observe the employment specialist directly in the range of contexts where IPS skills are demonstrated, for example in:

meetings of the mental health team

IPS team meetings

meetings with the client

meetings with the client's family/carers

meetings with the employer

the workplace

## Giving feedback

### Ability to create a context for giving feedback

An ability to ensure that the supervisory relationship is good enough to allow feedback to be accepted (and reflected on) by the employment specialist

An ability to detect whether the employment specialist is able to engage with feedback, and (if relevant) to identify and explore any factors that make this difficult for them

An ability to ensure that the employment specialist is in a position to understand the feedback (i.e. that the feedback is congruent with their current level of understanding/ learning)

An ability to detect when feedback may have a negative impact on the employment specialist (e.g., increased anxiety), and to manage any consequences in a supportive manner

### Ability to give feedback in an appropriate manner

An ability to give feedback that:

is balanced (i.e. identifies what the employment specialist did well, as well as what was done less well)

Is clear and appropriately direct

focuses on specific aspects of the employment specialist's work (rather than making general or global observations)

When commenting on perceived problems, an ability to suggest alternative actions the employment specialist could take

An ability to phrase feedback in a manner that avoids the attribution of personal failure by:

focusing on examples of behaviour (as opposed to attributing problems to the employment specialist's personal qualities)

phrasing comments in a manner which directs attention to the issues rather than to characteristics of the employment specialist

An ability to give feedback in a manner that makes it clear when this reflects the employment specialist's opinion rather than a fact or the 'truth'

An ability, after giving feedback, to be receptive to (and to engage with) feedback from the employment specialist

### Modelling and observing

An ability to identify areas that it would be helpful to practise in supervision sessions (usually through collaboration with the employment specialist)

An ability to use modelling to demonstrate specific techniques and to aid learning:

clarifying with the employment specialist how sessions that include modelling will be run (e.g., whether they will also practise techniques that the supervisor has modelled)

setting up and conducting exercises that allow the employment specialist to practise/rehearse implementing strategies and procedures (e.g., exploring ways to phrase questions, implementing specific techniques)

setting up and conducting role-play of encounters that are relevant to the skills being demonstrated

An ability to structure practice sessions in a manner that ensures that the employment specialist is:

clear about the aim(s) of the practice session

appropriately prepared (e.g., through prior discussion or modelling of the skills by the supervisor)

clear about the skills they are expected to practise/demonstrate

An ability to give feedback to the employment specialist that is accurate and constructive, focuses on strengths and weaknesses, and is task-specific (rather than global)
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An ability to help the employment specialist to reflect on feedback
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### **Using data reports**

An ability to collate and interpret data reports
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An ability to use data reports in supervision meetings and complete service audits of practice
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## META-COMPETENCES

An ability to balance the various roles of an employment specialist (e.g., offering support and motivating clients focusing on clinical issues, and understanding the needs of employers)

### Engagement

An ability to judge when it is best to refocus on tasks and goals that are seen as relevant or manageable by the client rather than continuing to explore issues that lead to disagreement

An ability to judge when social and cultural barriers to engagement may be relevant and need to be taken into consideration (e.g. where most of a client's family members do not work, and this is reflected in their and the client's expectations regarding employment)

### Motivation

An ability to judge whether the client's capacity to sustain motivation for employment is low, and so should be addressed directly

an ability to judge when reduced motivation reflects a deterioration in mental health

An ability to judge when the process of gaining employment is unlikely to progress and needs to be challenged, terminated or postponed, for example when:

it becomes clear that the client's motivation to seek employment is low or severely compromised, and this has not improved despite attempts to address relevant issues

progress is severely inhibited by successive barriers that reflect low motivation

An ability to judge when to support the client and when to foster independence and their capacity to manage support for themselves

An ability to judge when clients would benefit from a slower pace or a temporary suspension of the IPS intervention (e.g., in order for them to muster their resources or feel more in control of the pathway to employment)

### Support

An ability to match the intensity and timing of support to the person's needs and to judge whether and when to increase or decrease the level of response

An ability to judge when to focus on support and when to offer a more directive (goal-oriented) stance

An ability to judge when to offer support to the client and when to foster independence and their capacity for self-management

### Employer engagement

An ability to maintain a neutral position when working with employers and clients (being open, receptive and supportive to both parties so as to understand each of their needs and perspectives)

An ability to judge when an employer is unlikely to offer positions, and to withdraw from attempts at engagement

Where an employer is operating potentially discriminatory procedures, an ability to judge whether this reflects a considered position or a poor understanding of issues related to mental health and employability

an ability to judge which strategies and responses are most likely to effect change

### **Working with challenges to implementing IPS arising from the clinical team**

An ability to judge when the team is, or is not, working in a way that is consonant with (and which supports) the IPS model. When required, an ability to identify:

the strategies that are most likely to remedy the situation

when and how to implement these strategies

an ability to judge when internal difficulties within the team are such that strategic interventions need to be put on hold (e.g., in the face of severe staffing problems or serious internal conflicts)

### **Assessing risk**

An ability to judge the steps that need to be taken to restore safety when a client is at risk of harm to themselves or others