

“Pathways to Work?”

**Narrative experiences of people
claiming health-related benefits**

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Common perception

- **“Addicted to idleness.”** (*The Telegraph*, 12/10/06)
- **“Parasites grow fat on your taxes.”**
(*Daily Mail*, 27/04/04)
- **“Incapable or simply unwilling to change a way of life that thrives on welfare?”**
(*The Times*, 26/08/05)

Participant reality

- “It’s not easy when people say you’re a *****
dole scrounger. A beggar could make more
than £55 per wk.” *(Study 10, on being genuine)*
- “I worked for 32 years, I worked before I was
fifteen.” *(Study 7, on work ethic)*
- “I effectively had two full-time jobs and a
couple of part-time jobs as well.”
(Study 4, on previous work)

Introduction

- Purpose / Intention / Method
- Data-analysis
- Outcomes
- Key issues

Participant barriers

- **Additional health / social complications**
- **Loss of work, declining work skills and increased isolation**
- **Ill health**
- **Benefit type, complexities and policy**
- **Fear of benefit loss / low income**
- **Constant justification of health condition**

Emotive themes: Interview 1

- **Feeling let down by standard healthcare**
- **Feeling overwhelmed by Government agencies**
- **Additional complications/onset of depression**
- **Feeling disempowered**
- **Feelings of helplessness**

Emotive themes: Interview 2

- Feelings of surprise / relief at offer of supported self-help
- Recognition of health improvement
- Appreciation of RIAB CMP input
- Return of self-belief and future aspirations

Emotive themes: Interview 3

- **Feeling valued again**
- **Improved self-management of health condition / additional complications**
- **Feeling empowered and enabled**
- **Participants advice to others**
- **Future thoughts / plans becoming reality**

Participant progress

- 11 are now in paid employment
- 3 are in voluntary work
- 5 are seeking employment
- 4 significantly increased activity levels

Study outcomes

- Transferable experiences
- DWP preconceptions
- Participant health-gain
- Financial support?
- CMP cost benefit analysis

Key issues

- **Work ethic**
- **Benefit traps**
- **PCA / Centralisation**
- **GP / Patient contract**
- **Highlighting guidelines**
- **Exclusive experience**

The future?

Further research

- Experiential qualitative 06/07 revisited
- Work re-entry decisions

External research

- Release of National Evaluation findings
- PVS v NHS

Recommendations

- GP attitudes and approaches
- PCA review
- Benefit regulations
- G-PASS, NICE guidelines