

# Partnership Approach to Worklessness

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## *Working for a Healthier Tomorrow: Review for a new consensus on health and work, Dame Carol Black*

### Principles:

- Prevention of illness and promotion of health and well-being;
- Early intervention for those who develop a health condition; and
- An improvement in the health of those out of work – so that everyone with the potential to work has the support they need to do so.

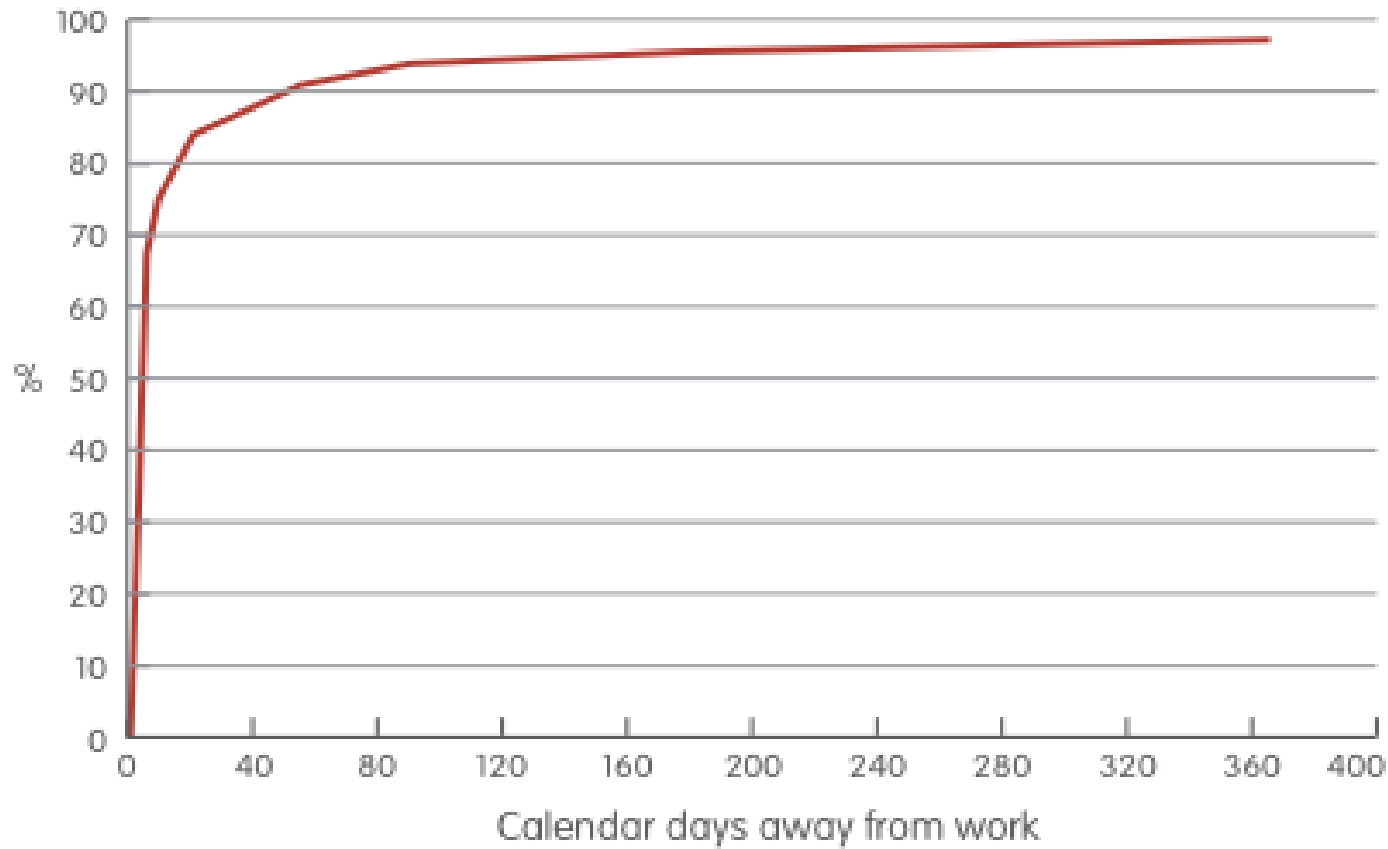
## The Scale of the Problem

Despite life expectancy and numbers in employment being higher in Britain than ever before, 175 million working days were lost to sickness in 2006.

7% of the working age population are workless and receiving incapacity benefits because of long-term health conditions or disabilities.

In County Durham and Darlington there are approximately 42,220 people claiming incapacity benefit (IB). Easington has the highest percentage rate of IB claimants at 17%

Figure 5.1 Proportion of people returned to work with back pain



## Back Pain

- For employees with lower back pain, interventions have been shown not only to return employees to work up to five weeks earlier than under normal care, but also to reduce the recurrence of back pain in the following year by up to 40%.

## Mental Health

- 5% natural recovery rate for anxiety disorders
- The majority of people need support to achieve recovery from common mental health problems and to help keep them in work.

# Partnership Approach

- Jobcentre Plus
- One North East
- GONE, Durham County Council
- Wear Valley, Easington, Sedgefield and Derwentside District Councils
- Practice Based Commissioning
- Durham University

## What has been achieved?

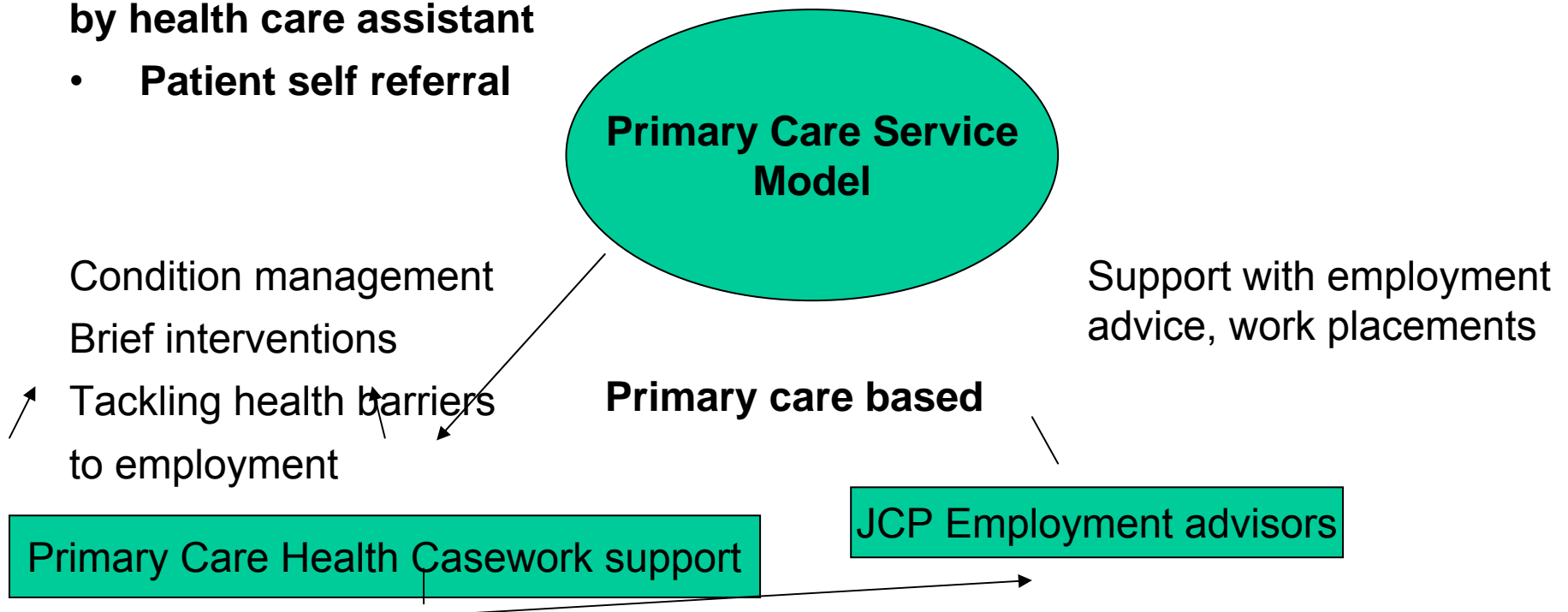
- Two stakeholder workshops held
- Worklessness service model developed
- Development of patient pathway
- Financial modelling
- Agreement to explore one 'Fit for Work' pilot site
- Strategic intent and vision agreed

# What will a Primary Care Health Intervention Service Look Like?

## Referral routes:

- GP/practice nurse can refer on criteria
- Scrutiny of patient list by health care assistant
- Patient self referral

Health caseworkers provided by practices



## What's in the service?

- 3 Health case workers per District area providing a range of health interventions in order to improve health and support people back to work (core service)
- As above with additional occupational health nurse for 'Fit for Work' Service
- Closely working with DWP and third sector employment case workers

**Meeting with Patient at Surgery**

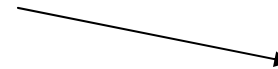


**Community venue**



**Health Check**

**Action Plan Developed**



**Health Support Package and Work with JCP Advisor**

## **Mental health and psychological interventions**

Counselling and stress management

CBT (including “Beat the blues” electronic CBT)

Specialist employability support

## **Condition Management Programmes**

Expert patient programmes

Physiotherapy e.g. back pain clinics

## **Health behaviours**

Alcohol treatments

Smoking cessation services

Get active – exercise on prescription

Dietary advice

Support from health trainer

# Research element

- Joint PCT and Durham University proposal to evaluate new Durham service

## Evaluation objectives:

- To establish what health improvements are associated with the programme
- To establish what financial and employment improvements are associated with the programme.
- To compare the cost of the interventions with the financial benefits to users and services
- To recommend changes to the intervention likely to improve its effectiveness

## Future Work

- **Proposal to submit two grant applications.**
- **The first will be to the National Institute for Health for resources to either (a) run a pilot Randomised Controlled Trial within one GP practice, or (b) to enable tracking and in-depth analysis of similar indicators to the intervention group for comparison groups in matched non-intervention practices.**

- The second application will be for an NIHR Programme Grant to support the follow-up of programme users over 4-5 years, investigating longer-term health effects and the sustainability of the interventions.