

Further information and some other useful help

Hafal has long recognised the importance for recovery from serious mental illness of education, volunteering and employment; and as such these form part of our holistic approach to Recovery. (See *Recovery section*)

Short Steps is a Big Lottery Mental Health Matters funded initiative to assist Hafal's local projects in engaging individuals in education, volunteering and employment and thereby to promote Recovery.

From the available literature, people with serious mental illness have the same need as other individuals to participate in meaningful social, educational, vocational and other community activities. However, it is well-documented that individuals with serious mental illness are some of the most socially excluded individuals and the least likely to be in employment (*Labour survey 2003*).

However, as quoted in Dame Carol Black's report "*Working for a Healthier tomorrow*" (2009) a recent review concluded that work was generally good for both physical and mental health and wellbeing. It also showed that work should be *good work*+ which is healthy, safe and offers the individual some influence over how the work is done and a sense of self worth. The report states that the beneficial effects of work were shown to outweigh the risks and to be much greater than the harmful effects of long-term worklessness or prolonged sickness absence.

In order to help develop opportunities for *Good Work*+, the Short Steps project Regional Employment Co-ordinators:

- Work with local Hafal projects to help identify and develop partnerships which can assist individuals to engage or reengage in learning, volunteering or employment as part of an holistic approach to recovery.
- Develop effective working relationships with voluntary organisations, education providers and employment advisors & employers.
- Provide information and advice to individuals and Hafal projects.

By encouraging people to set realistic goals, broken down into small achievable steps, using the holistic approach as outlined in *My Recovery*+, the Short Steps project assists in accessing '**Good Work**' to help promote recovery in either education, volunteering or employment.

Please see in addition Hafal's publication "*Short Steps towards Recovery: a guide to achieving goals in education, training, volunteering and employment as part of your recovery*".

If you are interested in finding out more about your options with regard to education, volunteering and employment; as well as benefits information and better off in work calculations, see the links below.

Links:

Education:

<http://www.fforwm.ac.uk/index/collegecontacts.html>

site detailing local further education colleges in wales.

Volunteering

<http://www.volunteering-wales.net/index.html>

This site is useful for locating your nearest voluntary centre.

Employment:

http://www.mentalhealthshop.org/products/rethink_publications/work_and_mental_illn.html

a useful guide when considering returning to work

<http://www.startups.co.uk/>

site giving general advice on self employment

<http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/index.html>

http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/JCP/stellent/groups/jcp/documents/sitestudio/dev_015519.pdf

Job Kit, practical advice to help apply for jobs leaflet

Benefits Advice:

<http://www.benefitsinmind.org.uk/>

general benefits information

http://www.benefitsinmind.org.uk/employment_and_support_allowance.htm

information on the Employment Support Allowance

Other

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm>

information on all topics from benefits to employment

Citizens advice bureau:

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>