

**Submission to the
National Mental Health Services Review**

**Fourth Submission: Individual
Placement and Support**

September 2014



WAAMH

**Western Australian Association
for Mental Health**

Peak body representing the community-managed mental health
sector in Western Australia

Western Association for Mental Health
Lotteries House, 2 Delhi Street, West Perth WA 6005

ABN: 15 165 640 637

T: (618) 9420 7277 F: (618) 9420 7280 E: reception@waamh.org.au W: www.waamh.org.au

Background

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) was incorporated in 1966 and is the peak body representing the community managed mental health sector in WA. With more than 150 organisational and individual members, our vision is to lead the way in supporting and promoting the human rights of people with mental illness and their families and carers, through the provision of inclusive, well-governed community-based services focused on recovery. WAAMH advocates for effective public policy on mental health issues, delivers workforce training and development and promotes positive attitudes to mental health and recovery. Further information on WAAMH can be found at

<http://www.waamh.org.au>

This submission provides information about the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model, which WAAMH is implementing in Western Australia.

Individual Placement and Support

Those with severe mental health issues are amongst the most disadvantaged members of our community facing lower rates of labour force participation. IPS is an internationally recognised and intensely researched model of supported employment and is undoubtedly an effective approach to be adopted, adapted and expanded in Australia.

To develop our third submission to the Review¹, WAAMH consulted via survey with our members and received 16 responses. Of those, 13 members answered and agreed with WAAMH's wish to see recovery through employment as a routine part of mental health services, through national roll-out of the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) program.

IPS' effectiveness has been detailed in WAAMH's first submission to the National Mental Health Services Review² and our submission to the Review of Australia's Welfare System³. While there have been ad hoc, state-based efforts to build the IPS model in Australia, a sustained national approach, focussed on development support and an integrated partnership between Disability Employment Services (DES) and mental health services is required.

The WA Mental Health Commission provided one off grant funding to WAAMH to establish four IPS partnerships in 2013/14, and a second grant for four further partnerships in 2014/15. The integrated approach leverages existing resources of the mental health service, which provides mental health specialist support, office accommodation and other operational support, and the DES which provides the IPS employment specialist on site.

MHC's one off funding resourced mental health services' engagement with the partnership and a trial is underway which will require the DES to pay a fee for service for their engagement. This fee for service approach assumes that the substantially improved employment outcomes and subsequent increased fees income expected from the IPS will provide sufficient incentive for DES's to engage in the partnership. The viability of IPS would

¹ <http://waamh.org.au/systemic-advocacy/national-mental-health-services-review.aspx?catID=23>

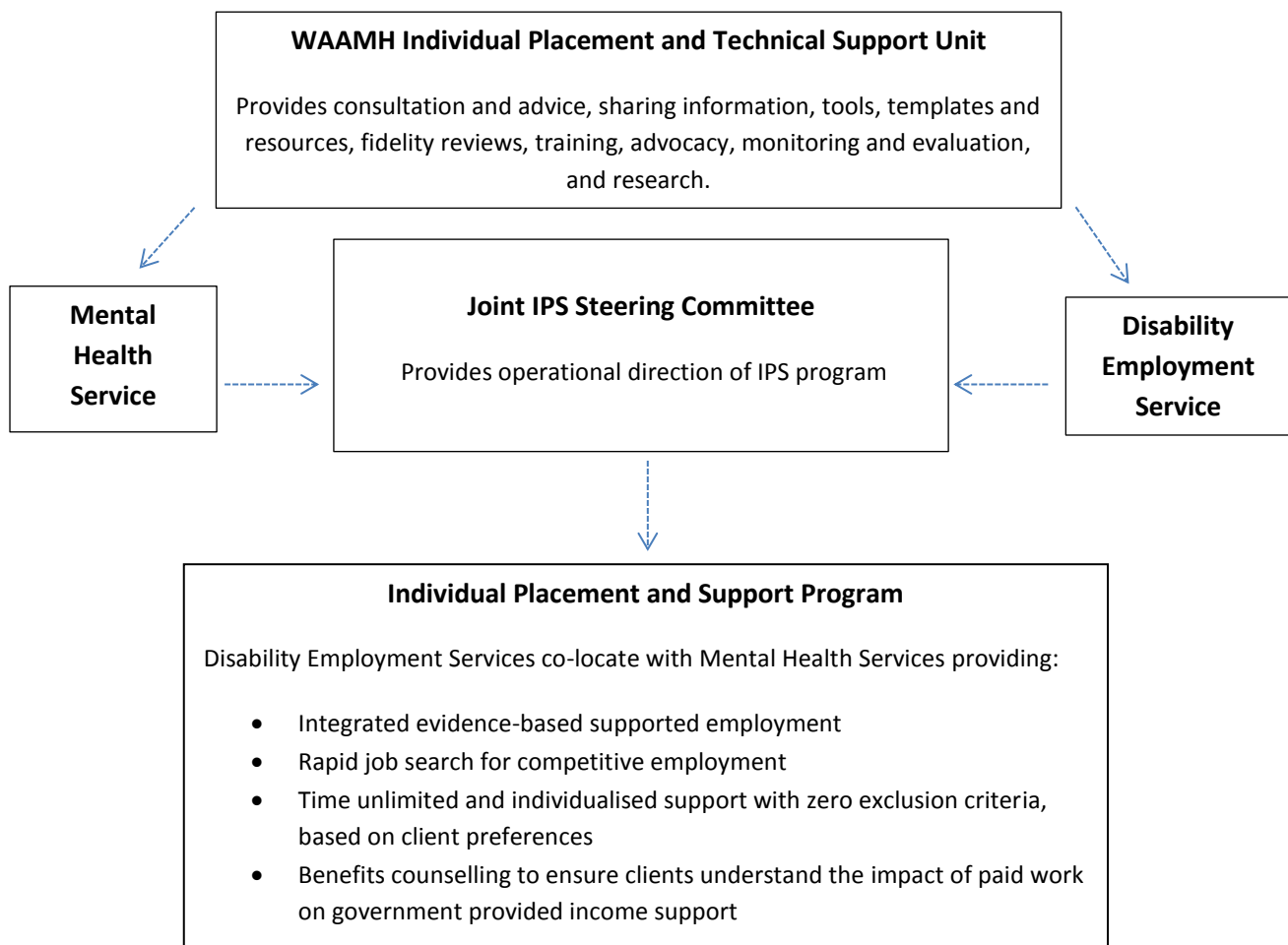
² *ibid*

³ <http://waamh.org.au/assets/documents/systemic-advocacy/submissions-and-briefs/waamh-submission-to-the-interim-report-a-new-system-for-better-employment-and-social-outcomes.pdf>

improve if the employment services funding model provided stronger financial incentive for employment services to deliver sustained employment outcomes rather than ‘parking’ clients with complex needs^{4, 5}.

External technical assistance is critical to the successful implementation of IPS. WA IPS services receive developmental support and technical assistance from the WAAMH IPS Technical Support Unit.

The operational model



⁴ AASW, Submission to Employment Services Building on Success Issues Paper, March 2013 p. 2

⁵ Orygen Youth Health Research Centre, Tell them they're dreaming; work, Education and Young People with Mental Illness in Australia, 2014 p. 40

Scott's journey of hope

Scott was referred to IPS by his Mental Health Service. Although having a diagnosis of Schizoaffective Disorder, and history of aggression and abuse of illicit and prescription drugs; Scott remained highly motivated to gain employment.

Scott had already achieved some personal goals including: addressing his substance use, continuing with reducing treatment by attending support services; maintaining stability in his mental health; and continuing to engage in support from his Mental Health Service.

Since commencing the IPS Program and working with his IPS Employment Specialist, Scott has chosen a vocational goal based on his preferences, and researched skills and qualifications required for this type of work. His IPS Specialist assisted him with the development of a resume that he was happy with, and with relevant short term training courses.

Scott completed an Aviation Security Course with a local training provider, and passed with flying colours. Scott was one of 15 applicants who were selected to attend a job interview upon completion.

Although Scott was unsuccessful in securing that particular role, his care coordinator at Mental Health Services reported a significant difference in him. Despite missing out on the job opportunity, Scott presented very bright and positive to the staff, which they'd never before - he had even cut his hair to improve his presentation.

Scott and his IPS Employment Specialist are currently working with other team members for job interviews with security companies around Perth. He is currently waiting to hear from a very large employer about an interview within the next week for a position. With the help of the IPS program, Scott has decided he is open to disclosing his mental illness to potential employers and can see the benefit of having their support.

Recommendations:

1. WAAMH recommends that the review urge the Commonwealth to invest in a sustained national approach to the implementation of IPS in Australia.
2. That this should be done by establishing and sustaining a network of IPS Technical Support Units across the country to ensure an integrated, coherent and consistent approach to implementation, service provision and evaluation.
3. This technical support should include the development of integrated partnerships between Disability Employment Services (DES) and mental health services.
4. That the network should be supported by a national centre of excellence in evidence-based employment services to foster continuous improvement and best practice⁶.
5. That the review recommends the employment services funding model is modified to provide stronger financial incentive for employment services to deliver sustained employment outcomes and remove the incentive to "park" individuals with complex needs.

⁶ Ibid, p. 55