

Employment Works!

Twice-yearly IPS Supported Employment Newsletter

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An Employer's Perspective on IPS

Cris Bergmans, Netherlands

Els van Zanten is an inclusivity specialist employed by Albert Heijn, the oldest supermarket chain in the Netherlands. She finds collaboration with IPS counselors like Erik Kruijff, from Roads VIP of Amsterdam, to be an integral part of meeting and hiring suitable candidates for open positions. Erik and Els meet together with candidates as a part of the hiring process.

After a candidate is hired, Els enjoys the ongoing partnership with IPS counselors like Erik because they provide job coaching and supports to help people to be successful in their jobs. Els and her employer, Albert Heijn, believe creating a supportive work environment is important. Commonly, an internal buddy or someone who performs the same work and who is the first point of contact for the employee throughout the training process is assigned to new employees. "Everyone is insecure on their first days at work and going to a manager can be pretty difficult, but a buddy is someone who is standing next to you, who has just a little more patience and a little more attention for you."

Els is a fan of IPS because people are encouraged to get started as quickly as possible with finding work after a tough period occurs in their lives. Some employees may come to work at Albert Heijn for a period of time in the same position, but the majority learn what it is like to work in a team again and what it is like to get up and going every day and then they stay on and move up.

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Employment Center

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IPS Employment Center Notes

The IPS Learning Community got its first international members in 2012 when Italy and the Netherlands joined. Since then, four more international regions have joined the International IPS Learning Community and IPS programs have expanded to many other countries.

In this issue of *Employment Works!* we explore how IPS has spread around the globe and what strategies have worked for IPS in different countries. An Employer in the Netherlands describes the benefits to companies working with IPS. In New Zealand, IPS teams work to integrate cultural values of Māori into their services. IPS programs in Norway are expanding to new populations, including transition age youth, individuals with chronic pain, and refugees.

We'd also like to welcome England - the newest member of the International IPS Learning Community!

A hearty congratulations to all the awardees from the 2019 International IPS Learning Community Annual Meeting, which was held in Denver, Colorado.

IPS in England: A Case Study from Working Well Trust

Ella Cade-Smith, Employment Specialist Working Well Trust

Frank* was referred by a psychiatrist to the IPS service in December 2018 after he expressed interest in finding part-time paid employment. He had been under the care of the community mental health team since 2004 with a diagnosis of severe depression and anxiety with psychotic symptoms. Frank had previously worked as a customer service assistant for a large grocery chain but he had found that the early start times combined with the effects of his medication were not suitable, and he only stayed in the role for a couple of months.

The employment specialist engaged Frank over the telephone initially, building rapport and explaining how the service could help. Frank then attended appointments in person and engaged in the vocational profiling process to identify a job role that would suit his support needs. He spoke positively about a previous job working in vehicle sales but found the high pressure associated with the target-driven environment quite overwhelming. Together, the employment specialist and Frank identified the optimum shift pattern for him being a start time after 9am and no more than 25 hours per week. A financial calculation confirmed that Frank would be better off with this income than on his state benefits.

The employment specialist identified a local employer, a hardware store that offered retail positions and delivery driver positions that could be suitable for Frank. The employment specialist met with the manager and discussed their business needs and the type of candidates they look for. The employment specialist spoke to the employer about Frank, his strengths and how he could contribute to their business. A week later, the manager contacted the employment specialist about a full-time role that Frank might be interested in. The employment specialist negotiated that the role be split into part-time (25 hour) contracts and arranged for Frank to attend an interview. The employment specialist accompanied him to the interview and Frank left saying he had felt comfortable and supported.

Frank was offered the role shortly after and started work in May 2019. The employment specialist assisted Frank with formulating a plan with his new employer to support his well-being at work. Frank is receiving in-work support from his employment specialist and is enjoying his role. Since beginning work, Frank reports stability in his mental health and increased confidence.

"IPS has given me the confidence to pick myself up and realize that I can find work and move forward with my life without feeling pressured or inadequate. I have been given a new belief system which has had a positive impact on my life. I am really enjoying working and contributing to society."

*Name has been changed



IPS International Expansion and Special Issue of *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*

Bob Drake, The IPS Employment Center

In early 2020, the *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal* will publish a special issue entitled "IPS International." The issue will contain an overview of the spread of IPS around the world, approximately 10 articles on IPS in specific countries other than the United States, and a commentary from Deborah Becker and Gary Bond.

IPS has spread outside of the U.S. to 18 countries on four continents. In North America, several Canadian provinces are implementing IPS, including the IPS Learning Community site in Montreal. In Europe, IPS presently is available in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, England, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. Asian countries with at least some IPS programs are China (Hong Kong), Israel, and Japan. Finally, IPS flourishes in Australia and New Zealand.

The articles in the special issue describe the implementation barriers, including not only the usual issues of finances and leadership, but also idiosyncratic aspects of health insurance, workforce regulations, employer incentives, and resistance from professionals committed to other approaches. These countries are in different stages of implementation, penetration, and sustainment, but they all demonstrate the creativity and desire to help people achieve independence that characterize IPS in the U.S. Notably, some have moved ahead of the U.S. in terms of spread to new populations, legislative changes, and innovative projects.

The IPS Method Achieves Seal of Approval and Growth in Denmark

Lars Olaf

In December 2018, the Danish Ministry of Employment presented the results of a six-year research project called Project Inclusion. The purpose was to test the IPS method in the Danish labor market.

The results were spectacular. As many as 59.5 percent of the project's participants were employed or enrolled in education after working with an IPS specialist for 18 months. Thus, the IPS method is more efficient than the traditional job center efforts in Denmark. The Minister of Employment at the time of project's results, Troels Lund Poulsen, was enthusiastic and stated that the experience with IPS should be disseminated to all of Denmark.

Many Danish Municipalities Are Already Successful with IPS

In Denmark, since 2015, the consultancy and knowledge center, IPSCenter Denmark, has assisted Danish municipalities and job centers in their efforts to ensure mentally vulnerable people into employment

or education using the IPS method. The Danish research project has really kicked off demand, and IPSCenter Denmark is rolling out IPS in many Danish municipalities.

For instance, Hjørring Municipality has had great success with the IPS method. IPSCenter Denmark has trained municipal IPS consultants and conducted fidelity measurements. Already during the first 10 months, 56 percent of the municipality's IPS citizens were employed or enrolled into education.

Front-Runners in Denmark

"IPSCenter Denmark's ambition is to be a front-runner with IPS as a key method to employment and education for mentally vulnerable people. So far, we have completed IPS with more than 400 citizens across Denmark. Of those who have completed our IPS course, 60 percent or more have entered employment or education.



That is why we are also looking forward to continuing to propagate the IPS method in Denmark," says Lars Olaf Nielsen, founder and owner of IPSCenter Denmark. He adds:

"Our experience shows that the IPS method also has relevance for other groups of unemployed. Among other things, we have implemented IPS courses in the integration area. Furthermore, people with disabilities can benefit from the IPS method."

Implementing an IPS Prototype in New Zealand

Richard Bell, Workwise Service Relationship Manager

Last year Workwise employment agency was contracted by Waitemata District Health Board to implement an IPS prototype programme within a community mental health centre. The objective of the prototype was to see if an IPS service could reach good IPS fidelity within a nine-month time frame. They worked at Waimarino Community Mental Health Centre in the western suburbs of Auckland. Parts of this region have moderate to high social deprivation, e.g. high levels of unemployment, low levels of tertiary education or qualifications, poor housing, and dependence on social welfare benefits. A Māori mental health (Moko) and general adult team (West Recovery) were identified for the prototype, with two employment specialists provided by non-government employment support provider, Workwise.

In the go-live phase of the prototype, the IPS supervisor focused on developing high trust relationships with each of the clinical teams at management and clinical levels, prior to the employment specialists starting. This was prioritized with a focus on Māori cultural protocols such as *whakatau* (welcome) and *whakawhanaungatanga* (connection). Focus was held on becoming one with the Moko *whānau* (family). All team members and Workwise senior management took part in cultural ceremonies. Employment specialists maintained a high level of integration by sharing office space with clinical team members and attending clinical meetings and morning *karakia* (prayer) at Moko Services.



The IPS supervisor was present (at least weekly) to meet with clinical management and supervisors. They ran several in-service training sessions on IPS principles for the clinical team.

After nine months an external fidelity review was conducted and a score of 97 was achieved. This was a positive achievement given the short time frames. A full trial for the next two years for 450 participants has now been funded, with eight employment specialists to be integrated with mental health teams. Key learnings include that when developing IPS within cultural settings, it is imperative to have meaningful consultation and co-design, to ensure partnership is developed from the very beginning. The prototype was successful due to the clinical team's willingness to have new members integrated into their teams. This resulted in good employment outcomes. Together there is a strong commitment to partnership.

IPS in Norway

Vigdis Sveinsdottir, NORCE Norwegian Research Centre

A few years ago, a large study showed that IPS was effective in helping people with moderate to severe mental illness gain employment in Norway. Since then, IPS has been implemented as a permanent service for this group, and the focus of IPS research in Norway has taken an interesting turn: Can IPS be successfully repurposed to completely new groups?

A recently finalized study showed that this was indeed the case for young adults at risk of early work disability due to various social or health-related problems. Young adults who received IPS were six times more likely to get a job than those who received traditional vocational rehabilitation. Another study is currently investigating IPS for people with chronic pain conditions, a severely challenged group with reduced work capacity and high levels of sick leave and disability. A third and ongoing study was motivated by the increase in refugees due to the humanitarian crisis related to the Syrian conflict. These are individuals who are faced with a new life in a new country, with next to no social network or experience with our labor market. Can an IPS specialist help them gain employment, and thereby promote better integration into the Norwegian society?

The results from the ongoing studies will shed light on new issues that may arise when repurposing IPS, related to the involvement of other stakeholders outside the mental health care system, and possible barriers such as language problems. Meanwhile, these new developments represent a promising way to extend the large potential of IPS to reach new groups who face exclusion from working life due to various challenges that may or may not involve mental illness.



IPS in Italy Is Coming of Age

Angelo Fioritti and Denise Manchisi

EQOLISE, the first European trial of the effectiveness of IPS, included the Italian site of Rimini. The study was planned in 2001 and replicated the excellent results of American studies, despite the extensive differences in labor market regulations, organization, and culture of mental health services. Quite unexpectedly, IPS in Rimini was more effective than in Northern European countries participating in the study, possibly because of a high motivation to work in a country with low unemployment and disability benefits. After EQOLISE, IPS continued to be practiced in Rimini and since then more than 350 users have received IPS services, with employment rates of about 45%.

From Rimini, IPS spread to the whole Region Emilia-Romagna (about 4.5 million inhabitants in Northern Italy), whose Council put IPS in its policy in 2008 and financed a program for its implementation in all Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs). This mission was accomplished in 2018 when all 41 CMHCs were able to

provide IPS to their users. By March 31st 2019, 668 users were in IPS and 340 of them were working in the competitive labor market. In 2017, IPS also started to be offered to users of



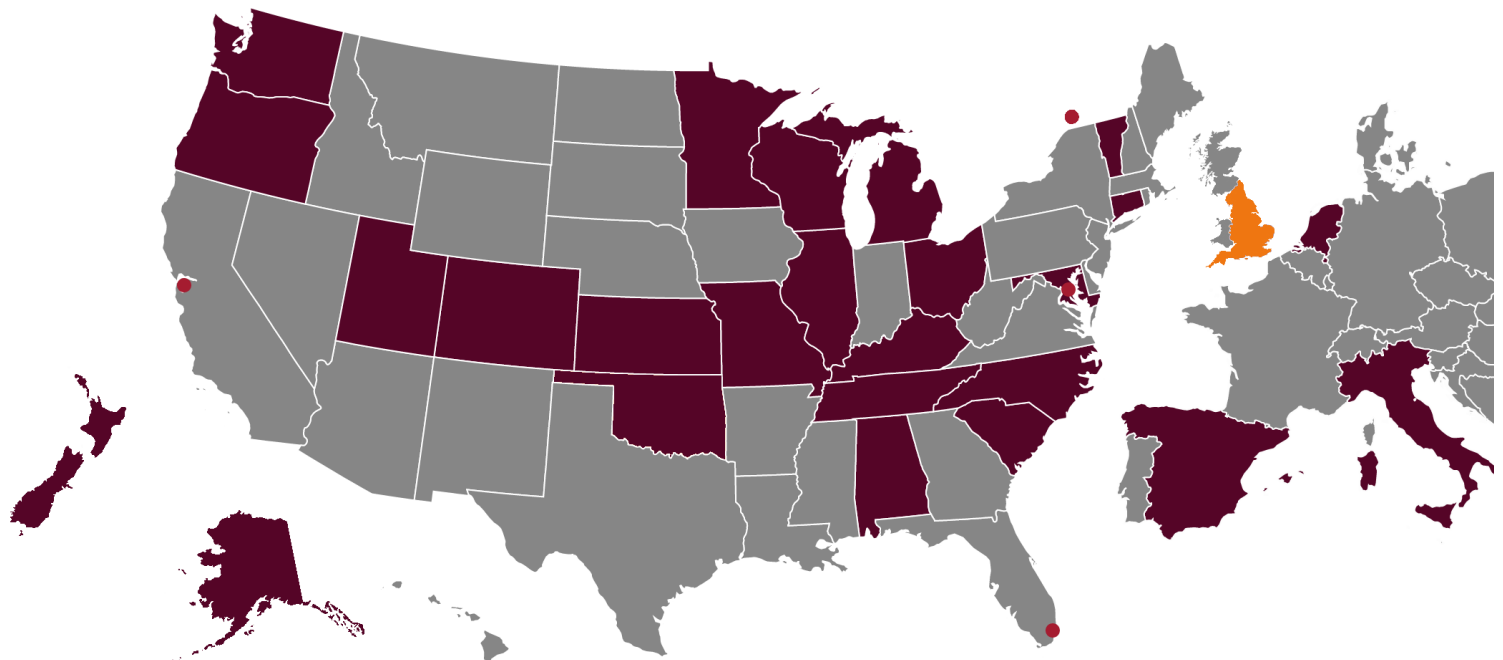
drug addiction centers, and in 2019, a new program on IPS for adolescents and young adults with transition problems started.

The IPS Emilia-Romagna regional team has also actively trained staff from pilot CMHCs located in eight other regions: Lombardy, Veneto, Liguria, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Marche, Lazio, Sicilia, and Tuscany. These centers have created a network that holds an annual national meeting since 2015, organized by the professional association of IPS workers IPSILON. The 2017 meeting was introduced by a speech of the Minister of Labor, Giuliano Poletti. All Italian sites are actively involved in and supported by the IPS International Learning Community coordinated by Deborah Becker, a unique opportunity for professional improvement and personal growth. The IPS Italian Community is particularly grateful to Sandy Reese for her field work in training, supervision and start-up of fidelity checks.

As IPS is coming of age in Italy, we can say that it is expressing its full ethical, technical, and practical potential.

New IPS International Learning Community Members

Since our Spring 2019 newsletter, England has joined the International IPS Learning Community. Welcome to our new colleagues! Our community now includes 24 states/regions inside the United States and 6 countries/regions outside the U.S. May we continue to grow!



IPS Leadership Training

March 31 - April 2

This highly interactive training allows participants to discuss issues related to implementation and sustainability of IPS in their areas. The 2.5-day training takes place in person at our office in Lebanon, New Hampshire.



Upcoming Online Courses

Practitioner Skills Course

- ◆ January 6 through March 27
Registration November 18 through December 20

Spanish Practitioner Course

- ◆ January 13 through April 3
Registration December 2 through January 3

French Practitioner Course

- ◆ January 13 through April 3
Registration December 2 through January 3

Young Adult Course

- ◆ January 13 through February 21
Registration December 2 through January 3

IPS Supervisor Course

- ◆ October 21 through December 27
Registration **NOW** through October 11

VR Counselors Course

- ◆ November 4 through December 6
Registration **NOW** through October 18

To learn more about any of our courses, visit
[ipsworks.org/index.php/
training-courses/](http://ipsworks.org/index.php/training-courses/)

2019 Learning Community Awards

The IPS Employment Center presented engraved plaques to awardees at the 2019 annual meeting of the International IPS Learning Community.

Achievement Award

This award is for significant improvement in either the number of people who have received IPS supported employment services or the number of people working in competitive jobs.

- ◆ Compass Health Network and Vocational Rehabilitation, Missouri

Family Advocacy for IPS Award

This award recognizes outstanding advocacy/educational activities regarding IPS by a family advocate.

- ◆ Warren Taylor, Colorado

Peer Advocacy Award

This award recognizes a peer who has actively advocated, educated, or helped to implement IPS.

- ◆ James Lawson, North Carolina

Rick Martinez Leadership Award

This award honors an individual that has made significant and lasting contributions to IPS.

- ◆ Demetrius Henderson, South Carolina
- ◆ Cristina Molina, Catalonia, Spain
- ◆ Gene Oulvey, Illinois

Employer Award

This award recognizes an employer who has hired an IPS job seeker and maintains high standards for a supportive, inclusive work environment.

- ◆ Lucky's Market, Wheat Ridge, Colorado



The 2019 Annual Meeting of the International IPS Learning Community was held in Denver, Colorado, on May 23-24. Gift scholarships from the Foundation for Excellence in Mental Health Care and the West Family Foundation covered costs for some family advocates and peer advocates, who otherwise would have been unable to attend. Thank you!



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