



Removing barriers to employment for local people in alcohol and drug recovery

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A national drug and alcohol recovery charity's employment programme helps remove barriers for people recovering from issues with drugs and alcohol.

WithYou's Individual Placement and Support (IPS) programme offers intensive, individually tailored support to help people across North and North East Lincolnshire recovering from issues with drugs and alcohol, to find and maintain a job.

Launched locally in August 2023 across WithYou's North and North East Lincolnshire services, the programme has so far received over 70 referrals and successfully placed 20 clients into employment. The programme offers a person-centred approach to explore the barriers and previous successes within someone's aspiration to work.

Linda Naveran, Senior Employment Specialist at both WithYou in North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire, said:

"I'm passionate about IPS – I've done this for six years. Employment gives clients structure, meaning and purpose and the team here has the mentality that, just because you have barriers, doesn't mean you can't achieve.

"When someone self-refers or is clinically referred to WithYou for alcohol and drug treatment and support, they are asked if they want to work. If they do have aspirations to work, we ask them about their dream job and make every effort to get them work-ready and realise that dream.

"We won't just drop someone into a role or employer – we support both client and employer with ongoing advice and guidance around alcohol, drugs and mental health. Even if the clinical treatment with a client has finished, we can work with them for a number of months after. It's about matching the right skills to the right industry and values."

Cheryl, a client of WithYou now employed at Fitness Boxx, said:

"All I can say is "thank you" for changing my life around. I have found interest, had doors opened for me for work with a brilliant company, studying a course at college to better my work prospects. It's the best thing that has happened to me. Without IPS and WithYou I wouldn't be here now – I have hope and motivation for the future."

Employers and employees also receive support together to help ensure that the person keeps and develops in their job.

Hollie Kitchen, Manager at Fitness Boxx who employed a WithYou client through the IPS programme, said:

"It has been brilliant learning about IPS, the team is very approachable and knowledgeable. Welcoming Cheryl to our team has been a very positive experience; she is highly motivated and brings a fresh outlook to the business. Cheryl has a very bright future ahead and we are excited to be a part of it."

"At Fitness Boxx we strive to promote healthy lifestyles and offer affordable nutritious food, supplements, advice and community support. Cheryl aspires to be a personal trainer and we have no doubt she will achieve this. We are very proud."

Graham McGaw, WithYou Director of Service Delivery (North East), said:

"We know that for many people, challenges with employment, housing or mental health can lead to, or increase, alcohol or drug use. And if someone is in drug or alcohol treatment, experiencing challenges like this can make it much harder for them to sustain their recovery journey."

"As a society, we have to become more empathetic and remove the stigma attached to use, so that vulnerable people feel able to ask for help. And when people do ask for help, we need to ensure it is immediately and easily available."

"We are absolutely committed as an organisation to doing everything we can to provide the right support, and the IPS programme is just one initiative which aims to support clients through their lasting recovery journey."

If you or someone you know is struggling with alcohol or drugs across North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire and would like support with employment visit the WithYou website wearewithyou.org.uk to find your local

service or to use the free, confidential Webchat service.

ENDS

Notes to editors

- Supporting photo of Linda Naveran, Senior Employment Specialist at both WithYou in North Lincolnshire and WithYou in North East Lincolnshire
- A spokesperson from WithYou will be available for interview (upon request)

'Drug-related deaths' includes accidents, suicides and assaults involving drug poisoning, as well as deaths from drug abuse and drug dependence.

There were 4,907 deaths related to drug poisoning registered in England and Wales in 2022; this is the highest number since records began in 1993 and 1.0% higher than in 2021 and the North East has double the death rate of some areas.

Drug poisoning deaths by Local authority:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/drugmisusedeathsbylocalauthority>

Dame Carol Black, whose Independent Review of Drugs led to the publication of the cross-government drug strategy 'From Harm to Hope' highlighted that, *alongside treatment, meaningful activity makes an important contribution to sustaining recovery from drug use. There is considerable evidence that employment can improve treatment outcomes, reduce the frequency and severity of relapse, and reduce re-presentations to services.*

For more information and spokespeople requests, please contact the WithYou press office at pressoffice@wearewithyou.org.uk or by calling 07929877401

About WithYou

WithYou is a leading drug, alcohol and mental health charity operating across England and Scotland. Each year we work with more than 100,000 people in over 120 locations, providing a free and confidential service without judgement to adults and young people experiencing issues with drugs, alcohol or mental health.

www.wearewithyou.org.uk