

Independent Review of Job Network

Submitted on behalf of Workco in Horsham, Victoria.

Issues

Contract

- Totally one-way partnership. Govt imposes changes on providers with a 'take it or leave it' attitude leaving the provider to bear the cost.
- However, if situation or circumstances change for the provider, little or no room for negotiation with Govt.
- Need to take into account differences between city and country providers. Country providers are working with distance, small population numbers and limited job opportunities. The time and effort required to access employers and jobseekers is often not in proportion with the outcome payment, particularly with Job Matching.

Job Matching

- Whilst Job Matching provides a venue to place Intensive Assistance clients into employment, it is not a viable program in its own right as the outcome payments do not reflect the costs of actual service delivery.
- Would like the ability to negotiate the delivery, or not, of Job Matching.

Job Search Training

- Providers resent being used as a clearing house for Centrelink with this program. Providers are providing Centrelink with information about clients who are currently in part-time or full-time work but have not informed Centrelink. We are not paid for this service and it takes the same amount of time and effort as enrolling an appropriate referral.
- Low unemployment in our area means referral numbers are extremely slow.

Intensive Assistant

- Contract again one-sided. We were given additional numbers in IA at the beginning of 2001 however DEWRSB and Centrelink have not been able to maintain our caseloads at 85% let alone supply us with the contracted additional numbers.
- Our referrals are extremely low and often inappropriate. The number of re-referrals is extremely high with clients just being recycled.
- Application of JSCI needs to be strengthened.

Compliance

- What is this all about? We are becoming bogged down in irrelevant paperwork instead of being allowed to do our jobs – ie place clients into employment. Once the bureaucrats get their hands on a working project, they seem to raise the compliance flag and squeeze the initiative and innovation out of it.
- Compliance is now over the top and unnecessary. If providers are caught doing the wrong thing, they should be prosecuted and punished appropriately. Don't over-react and penalise performers with additional paperwork (once again at a cost to the provider).
- Compliance is another reason for the high turnover of employment services staff generally. Those with initiative and drive are frustrated by an over-burdened system and chose to leave.

