1. Financial In-work supports

We want to know what works best and is attractive for people with disabilities when considering a return to or taking up work in terms of financial supports

How important are the following when considering taking up or returning to employment?

	Very Important	Moderate Importance	Neutral	Slightly Important	Low
Disability Allowance Earnings Disregards (up to €120, €120-350)	◉	O	O	O	O
Partial Capacity Scheme (on Illness Benefit, Invalidity Pension)	O	O	O	O	O
Retention of Medical Card for 3 years	◉	O	O	O	O
Secondary Benefits: (Rent Supplement/Free Travel/Fuel Allowance)	◉	O	O	O	O
Household Benefits Package (Electricity/Gas Allowance/Free TV Licence)	◉	O	O	O	O
Family Income Supplement	O	O	O	O	O
Tax Credits and reliefs	◉	O	O	O	O

How well do you think the following are understood by people with a disability or their advocates?

	Well Understood	Moderately Understood	Neutral	Slightly Understood	Not
Disability Allowance Earnings Disregards (up to €120, €120-350)	O	◉	O	O	O
Partial Capacity Scheme (on Illness Benefit, Invalidity Pension)	O	O	◉	O	O
Retention of Medical Card for 3 years	◉	O	O	O	O
Secondary Benefits: (Rent Supplement, Free Travel, Fuel Allowance)	◉	O	O	O	O
Household Benefits Package (Electricity/Gas Allowance, Free TV Licence)	◉	O	O	O	O
Family Income Supplement	O	O	◉	O	O
Tax Credits and reliefs	O	◉	O	O	O

Comments

Depends very much on individual cases.

2. Financial Barriers

Please rank the following in importance 1 – 6 (according to the scale of barrier) when considering taking up or returning to work: (1 = most important)

Loss of DSP Payment	o	1
Loss of Secondary Benefits (Rent Supplement, Free Travel, Fuel Allowance)	o	4
Loss of Household Benefits Package (Electricity/Gas Allowance, Free TV Licence)	o	5
Perceived difficulty obtaining DSP payment/benefits again (e.g. If work ceases)	o	3
Loss of Medical Card after 3 years	o	2
Other (please specify) _____	o	

It is recognised that the needs and issues arising for people with disabilities vary, and that different circumstances arise for different people at different times. If there are circumstances that are particularly relevant, please indicate:

In general, do people with a disability feel that they would be better off financially by taking up work?

Yes	No
o	X

Please elaborate:

In general PWD feel they will lose their D.A. entitlements and the benefits that accompany it. My experience is if I sit down and explain simply the implications, they seize the opportunity. However fear of losing entitlement is a big issue

3. Length of time out of workforce

Are there particular financial barriers to resumption of work for PWD if out longer term, i.e. 2 yrs or more?

The financial barrier maybe the reduction or loss of medical card entitlements. The take home wage (generally) in addition to the DA payment although reduced is acceptable.

What suggestions would you have to overcome barriers for PWD who have been out of the workforce long term?

The employability programme and the role of its job coaches needs to be reviewed. The biggest failure in any experience is the lack of on the job support / mentoring for PWD. This is key to making the opportunity a success.

Do you feel there are particular financial barriers that apply more to men than women, or to women than men?

No. I have a married couple however that experience financial barriers.

4. Communication

Please rank the following sources of information people with disabilities use to research the financial aspects of taking up or returning to work:

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Department of Social Protection website	●	O	O	O	O
Intreo office/Local DSP office	●	O	O	O	O
Citizens Information Office	O	O	●	O	O
Citizens Information Website	O	O	●	O	O
Representative groups for PwD	O	●	O	O	O
Friends and family	●	O	O	O	O
Media (TV/Radio/Newspapers)	O	O	●	O	O
Other (please specify)	O	O	O	O	O

Do you think people worry about asking for information from the Department of Social Protection when considering returning to work – e.g. applying for Partial Capacity Benefit, or the Disability Allowance Earnings Disregard?

Yes	No
●	O

If yes, why?

there is an underlying fear if I question an entitlement I could lose it.

5. Experience of PWD who ARE working

Approximately 21% *of PWD are in the workforce; in your view what are the financial and other factors which have supported these people to:*

A) Transition successfully from education/training to employment:

Income disregard
Retention of DA or partial payment
Wage Subsidy Scheme < needs to be more flexible benefits
Rentention of secondary benefits
i.e. medical card, travel and various allowances

B) Remain in employment:

As above plus

- on the job support is crucial
- peer mentoring
- supportive employer – regular communication
- Regular contact with service provider
- In terms of the D.S.S.
  this needs to be flexible
  i.e. if there are more hours on some weeks, people + employers need to be accommodated

6. How do you see the role of the Intreo centre evolving to meet the needs of PwD?

The Department of Social Protection is expanding the role of the Intreo centres as an employment and recruitment service for pwd who wish to take up work.

What do you think PwD need from their Intreo centre in terms of assisting them to search for work?

Knowledge of various support needs requir.

(1) training (certificate in supported Employment)
(2) To liase closely with key workers
(3) Require time to support individuals on the Job. Move hands on position. Crucial.

How do you think the Intreo centre can best engage with PwD? e.g.

- Communication – social media, email/letters from intreo, telephone?
- Promotion of services via disability representative bodies/media?
- Named case worker

All of the above
Face to face meetings ← individual / family member / supports / key worker

NB stream lined + closer links ~~with~~ between DSP, DA and HSE

When considering work all these agencies have to be contacted!!

Accompaniment of family/friend/advocate at Intreo:

- Is this important to PwD? Yes ✓ No O

NB For employments where the wage is not considered PwD should retain partial DA and secondary benefits. to encourage them to remain in employment

Was there an easy to read version of this questionnaire for PwD to complete.

Are they involved and their opinions being considered in this process ??