KARE

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	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	O
Secondary Benefits: (Rent Supplement/Free Travel/Fuel Allowance)	O	O	O	O	O
Household Benefits Package (Electricity/Gas Allowance/Free TV Licence)	O	O	O	O	O
Family Income Supplement	O	O	O	O	O
Tax Credits and reliefs	O	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	O
Partial Capacity Scheme (on Illness Benefit, Invalidity Pension)	O	O	O	O	O
Retention of Medical Card for 3 years		O	O	xO	O
Secondary Benefits: (Rent Supplement, Free Travel, Fuel Allowance)	o	O	O	O	O
Household Benefits Package (Electricity/Gas Allowance, Free TV Licence)	O	O	O	O	O
Family Income Supplement	O		O	xO	O
Tax Credits and reliefs	O		O	O	O

Comments

Information on these is not accessible to people in a user friendly manner. People with Intellectual Disabilities struggle greatly in these areas.

Without the support of staff from supporting agencies many individuals and their families are not sure of how benefits and entitlements will be affected and can sometimes fear a complete loss of benefits.

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

If moving to independent living setting

Family financial income reduces

If someone has a long term medical issue such as Epilepsy this will stop people from taking up work for fear of losing their medical card.

The communication with people with disabilities at times will not be appropriate in relation to supporting people to understand their rights and entitlements. DSP staff need support to work with people with more complex communication needs.

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

Yes	**No**
O	O

Please elaborate:

To be financially better off earning up to the €120.00 only while working part-time.

Most individuals see employment as a means of gaining an income that helps to create financial independence which in turn leads to a better quality of life and equal opportunities for them.

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?

Cost and expense in attaining training skills courses.
Having access to an appropriate support service that is funded to support the needs of the person. People with significant intellectual disabilities cannot access long term supports unless they are connected to a support agency such as KARE in Kildare or St Cristopher's in Longford. The Employability service does not cater for these people.
Supported employment services are not recognised enough by government agencies as the most successful way to support people with ID into employment. The system doesn't believe that they can work so supports are not properly financed.

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

Free accessibility to up-skills training courses
Career guidance counsellor to support
Training in personal marketing and interview techniques
Access to support workers who can assist people with all aspects of the employment process including these five stages to the supported employment model.

1. Client Engagement
2. Vocational Profiling
3. Job Finding
4. Working with Employers
5. On and Off the Job Support

Please see the European Union of Supported Employment Toolkit for a synopsis of the Supported Employment model.

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

No

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	O
Intreo office/Local DSP office	O	O	O	O	O
Citizens Information Office	O	O	O	O	O
Citizens Information Website	O	O	O	O	O

Representative groups for PwD	O	O	O	O	O
Friends and family	O	O	O	O	O
Media (TV/Radio/Newspapers)	O	O		O	O
Other (please specify) Irish association of Supported Employment	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	O

If yes, why?

The fear of losing payments and benefits
The fear of means testing
The reluctance of discussing personal incomes and situations
The family reluctance to discuss financial circumstance
Queues in offices can be long. If you have a disability this will discourage you from going in.
Using the telephone can take very long times.
Forms and paperwork are not in easy read formats
Being passed from department to Department

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:

Availability of work experience and job sampling programmes offered to experience the world of work
The professional supports offered by an employment specialists
Assigned job coach\ job developer prior to leaving education \ training establishments
Agencies such as KARE who operate a specific Supported Employment service who follow a model of support that works for people with disabilities.
Projects such as Project SEARCH at Naas Hospital that operates an internship programme to support young adults with an Intellectual Disability gain and maintain employment by having the opportunity to get real meaningful experience in a work setting.
People with Intellectual Disabilities find it difficult to transfer skills from one place to another. The model of placing in the job and then training works best for people with ID

B) Remain in employment:

The financial gain of earning extra money
Supports set-up and available on site
Opportunities to develop in the job
Continued family supports.
Focussing on a career not just a job
The availability of appropriate ongoing supports both on the job and off the job (a job coach)
Using the model of placing the person and training is the most effective way to support people with ID to gain and maintain employment.

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?

Training and support in career planning Education and training needs met Exposer to the real world of work Intreo need to develop further knowledge re supporting people with an Intellectual Disability to use their services. Doing things by having a named contact person who will work through the different process with them would be of great assistance

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

Through a service provider and representative Named case worker

Accompaniment of family/friend/advocate at Intreo:

	Yes	No
▪ Is this important to PwD?	O	O