

News story: New employment programme begins in England and Wales

The government's new Work and Health Programme to help disabled people into employment started this week in north west England and Wales.

The entire programme is expected to provide specialised support to around 245,000 people with disabilities or health conditions, and also people who have been unemployed for over 2 years.

Participants will get personal support to help them find sustained employment. The support may include:

- identification of employment needs
- matching skills to work that's available
- putting participants in touch with employers
- managing health problems to reduce their impact on work

Five providers across 6 regions in England and Wales will deliver Work and Health Programme. The programme will roll out across the rest of England during early 2018.

Around £100 million of funding has been devolved to London and Greater Manchester to procure and deliver localised versions of the programme from 2018 to capitalise on the local knowledge, good practice and expertise of these areas. Participation on the programme will be voluntary for disabled people and specified early entry groups.

The Work and Health Programme forms part of a wider package of employment support for people with disabilities, as outlined in the government's [Work, Health and Disability Green Paper: Improving Lives](#), published in October 2016. Next steps following on from the Green Paper will be outlined in due course.