

Out of Work Service funding extended until 2020

The Out of Work Programme (OoWS), which was launched in September 2016, provides peer support and employment advice to people recovering from substance misuse and/or mental health issues.

The scheme supports people aged 16-24 who are recovering from substance misuse and, or mental health issues and are not in education, employment or training. It also helps people aged 25 or older who are recovering from substance misuse and, or mental health issues and are long-term unemployed.

The programme is funded by the European Social Fund, Welsh Government and the Substance Misuse Area Planning Boards in Wales. It is available across Wales and in addition to helping people recover and gain life and employability skills, it offers transitional support for up to three months to participants who find work.

The extension of funding will ensure both groups continue receiving support until 2020. Planned total funding for the programme will be £17.3m, including £11.5m from the European Social Fund.

Rebecca Evans said:

“I am pleased to announce the extension of funding for this programme which aims to support up to 14,000 people to overcome their barriers to gaining and staying in employment.

“It will provide new opportunities and improve outcomes for unemployed people, often those furthest from the labour market, so that they can receive the help and support they need to access skills and employment.”

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, Mark Drakeford, said:

“Being in employment can help people recovering from substance misuse or mental health issues. By removing the barriers to employment, this project is supporting thousands of people across Wales to enter and stay in the job market.

“I am pleased that EU funds have enabled the extension of this programme, enabling many more to benefit from a healthy future.”