Back to work
Helping neurological patients back into employment

WOLFSON VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMME
Excellence in rehabilitation

St. George’s Hospital is a national centre of excellence, offering a wide range of pioneering treatments and therapies.

Part of St George’s Healthcare NHS Trust – which has an international reputation for the quality of its patient care, education and research – the neurorehabilitation services forms a section of the Regional Neurosciences Unit for South West London and the surrounding area.

The Vocational Team staff work with patients, who have acquired neurological conditions, to maximise their psychological and physical recovery, minimise their disability and help them reintegrate back into the community.

Meeting their needs

Our Vocational Rehabilitation Programme is specifically tailored to each client’s needs. Throughout the programme staff provide assessment, guidance and support, helping clients regain their confidence.

The programme consists of three key phases:

**PHASE ONE – vocational assessment**

A two-day assessment during which clients undergo a series of comprehensive neuropsychological and work simulation tests. Throughout this time staff work closely with them discussing their employment history, evaluating their aspirations and discovering their motivations for work.

Both the programme and its duration are flexible and this phase determines the structure the client’s treatment will take. For example, employed clients may only need to complete phase one and three, while unemployed clients may need to complete the whole programme.

**PHASE TWO – vocational rehabilitation**

A 12 week programme with clients attending the Centre and taking part in a range of individual and group therapeutic activities. Each activity is designed to rebuild work skills and confidence, whilst preparing them for their return to employment.
Vocational Rehabilitation Programme

In 2003 we began our Vocational Rehabilitation Programme which assesses and rehabilitates people experiencing neurological conditions, encouraging them to reach their full potential and return to employment.

Over the years we have treated many people with a variety of neurological injuries and conditions, including head injuries, strokes, and multiple sclerosis.

Of those who have completed the programme, 76 per cent have secured paid or voluntary employment, while the remainder are actively looking for work with support.

St. George’s is one of a small number of centres in the UK to offer this specialist programme.

Accessing the programme

The programme is available to patients living in London and the surrounding areas. We accept referrals from healthcare professionals, case managers, social workers, employment professionals, insurers and solicitors.

To be eligible clients must:

■ be over 16
■ independent in personal care
■ have completed all medical investigations and neuro-rehabilitation
■ demonstrate a clear commitment to returning to work.

The benefits

Rehabilitation is provided by a committed team of neuropsychologists and occupational therapists. These staff are familiar with the physical, social, cognitive and emotional consequences of neurological conditions.

With the help of our tailored and extensive programme, in addition to finding and maintaining rewarding and fulfilling employment, our clients can also take pride in their own achievements.

PHASE THREE - job support

This phase involves looking for employment and/or returning to work. Once a potential job has been identified, staff support and advise clients throughout the application, interview and induction process.

Once the client returns to work, we continue to support them in various ways, including: site visits, phone advice, further sessions at the Centre and liaising with managers and colleagues.

As an initial step, before beginning a job search clients may be advised to undertake retraining and/or voluntary work. This not only boosts their confidence, but also reintroduces them to a work routine.
Continuing support

If a client is already working, but finding it difficult to sustain employment, our support can help them gain the skills needed to remain in employment.

Our experienced and trained staff visit clients at work to conduct a job analysis and assess its requirements to ensure it is suitable for the client.

This may involve

- appraising interpersonal skills
- reporting relationships
- staff and management awareness
- job re-profiling
- redeployment in negotiation with employers.

Ongoing support takes place in the workplace and at the Phoenix Centre.

We also offer a monthly support group where clients and their employers can discuss and overcome any difficulties they are facing.

We are committed to helping patients with all levels of neuro-disability.

MISSION STATEMENT

A major neurological illness can really knock your confidence. The staff helped me regain employment living skills, which was the first stage of getting my life back.
The support I received was amazing and the staff were brilliant. They helped me see that I could reach my goals.