

Schizophrenia Ireland's Job Club
39 Blessington Street, Dublin 7
Tel: (01) 860 1610

Job clubs provide structured programmes in which unemployed people who are ready for work can come together to actively prepare for and access employment. They are a short intervention, a bridge between unemployment and employment; the focus is on developing the techniques, tools and personal resources necessary to secure employment and improve tenure. Work-relevant skills such as decision-making, confidence, assertiveness and stress-management are addressed. Both the programme itself and the group process support the development of individual strengths. The anticipated outcome of a job club is that participants will find work or go on to further training as part of a planned progression towards achieving vocational goals.

The Job Club in Blessington Street is a FAS-funded, six week programme for unemployed people who share experience of mental illness. The role of employment is particularly significant for people affected by mental illness, linked as it is to hope and a future orientation.

There is an initial assessment, in which the applicant and Job Club facilitators explore together the various vocational options, and look at whether or not the Job Club is the most effective step towards achieving the expressed goals. The applicant should feel ready in all areas of life to realistically take up employment. An individual plan of action is agreed with each participant at the beginning of the course, and developed and reviewed on an on-going basis.

The training modules are delivered in the mornings. They cover the necessary job-seeking tools such as curricula vitae, letters of application, interview preparation and role-play, and include a work-related personal health management module. They also include disability issues, such as the question of disclosure of disability to employers, equality legislation, and information about statutory benefits and schemes. Career exploration and improving awareness of vocational strengths are integral to the activities of the Job Club. Skills learned should be able to be generalised and used outside.

Afternoons are for individual work: the preparation of curricula vitae, exploring local work opportunities and applying for jobs, with the guidance of the Job Club staff. Job Club facilities include the internet, vocational guidance literature and software, newspapers and stationery. Some opportunities for work experience exist.

The Job Club offers on-going support to members in employment, and there is a bi-monthly support group. It aims to work effectively with other employment and training services, including Supported Employment and FAS Guidance Services, in order to extend the options for employment support and career development.

For further information, please phone (01) 860 1610.