Employment and Disability Policy Initiatives in the U.K.: Results and Lessons for the U.S.

A Public Policy Forum

November 8, 2007
9 am to 11 am
Cornell University Government Affairs Office Hall of States, Room 333
444 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

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The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment Policy for Persons with Disabilities is hosting a series of policy forums to explore policy alternatives to promote employment of individuals with disabilities. This forum will focus on the United Kingdom which has undertaken three innovative projects to assist individuals with disabilities who receive cash benefits to work. These programs provide important lessons as we transform U.S. policy to promote economic self-sufficiency.

Speakers

Stephen Bell, Abt Associates - Moderator
Michael Daly, Department for Work and Pensions, U.K.
Richard Dorsett, Policy Studies Institute, U.K.
Susan Purdon, National Center for Social Research, U.K.
Bruce Stafford, University of Nottingham, U.K.
David Stapleton, Ph.D., Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. - Discussant

Funding Agency

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Upcoming Policy Forums

Date TBD - Winter 2008
Review of the Final Report from the Ticket to Work Panel
Speakers & Moderators to be determined
Location - TBD

Date TBD - Winter/Spring 2008
Older Workers Who Experience Disability Onset
Speakers & Moderators to be determined
Location - TBD

Date TBD - Spring 2008
Youth Focused Panel
Speakers & Moderators to be determined
Location - TBD

Date TBD - Summer 2008
Employment Policy Options for Improving Services and Employment Outcomes for Returning Veterans with Disabilities from Iraq and Afghanistan
Speakers & Moderators to be determined
Location - TBD

For more information contact:

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**Bruce Stafford**, is a Professor of Public Policy at the University of Nottingham. Bruce has over 20 years of experience in applied social research. Before joining the School in February 2006, he was a social and policy researcher in local government and at the Universities of Birmingham, Loughborough and Salford.

Much of his work has focused on policies designed to assist members of vulnerable groups as well as their interactions with the providers of welfare services. In recent years the majority of his research has been for government departments, notably the Department for Work and Pensions. He has both qualitative and quantitative skills, and has managed a wide range of research projects.

Recently, he led the international consortium evaluating the New Deal for Disabled People. In addition, he has undertaken a review of the factors affecting the employment retention of disabled people, research on employers’ and service providers’ responses to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and a review of the incapacity benefit system in the States of Jersey. Currently, he is a member of the consortium conducting the Survey of the Experiences and Expectations of Disabled People for the Office of Disability Issues. Other experience includes extensive research on the delivery and administration of benefits, transitions from benefit to work and a review of the use of random assignment. He has also been engaged in international comparative research on the coverage of social security and on social activation and workfare.

At Birmingham and Salford universities he lectured at postgraduate level on the philosophy of science and on research methods. At Nottingham University he convenes and lectures on the research design and methods module for the Masters in Public Policy and Public Administration.

His main academic interests are focus on policy evaluations, social security in particular welfare to work, disability issues, and the implementation of policies and the delivery of welfare services.

Outside of his research work, he has been a tutor and a Director of the Department for Work and Pensions’ Summer School.
Stephen H. Bell, is a Research Fellow at Abt Associates in Bethesda, Maryland, specializing in econometric impact studies of programs to assist disadvantaged workers and families. His work with British collaborators includes two of the studies to be presented today. Over 25 years Dr. Bell has helped design many large-scale randomized social experiments and quasi-experimental analyses for the U.S. and U.K. governments, including several tests of employment assistance for people with disabilities. Other research interests include employment and training policy, cost-benefit analysis, and the effects of education and early childhood interventions. Dr. Bell is published in a number of scholarly articles and books, and recently wrote a guide for conducting rigorous policy evaluation for the U.S. Department of Labor. He holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Richard Dorsett, is a Research Director at the Policy Studies Institute, London. His main focus is on the evaluation of labour market interventions and he has led a number of major studies for the UK Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). He is currently working on three major evaluations, all for DWP:

- Pathways to Work – this is a package of measures aimed at encouraging employment among those in receipt of sickness and disability benefits. The evaluation involves impact analyses, qualitative studies, a cost-benefit analysis and a literature review of evidence from the USA. The evaluation is being carried out by an international consortium under the overall direction of Dr. Dorsett.
- Labour market programmes for the over-50s – Dr. Dorsett is leading the quantitative impact analysis of mandated participation in active labour market programmes for unemployment people aged 50 and over. Unusually for the UK, the evaluation follows a random assignment design.
- Employment Retention and Advancement demonstration - ERA represents the ‘next step’ in welfare to work policy in the UK in that it provides help (including financial assistance) to low-paid workers with the aim of helping them progress in the labour market. It is being carried out as a random assignment experiment in six Jobcentre Plus districts within England, Wales and Scotland. The evaluation is being undertaken by a consortium of research organisations led by MDRC. Dr Dorsett is collaborating on the impact analysis and visited MDRC during the period April-July 2006.

Mike Daly, is a career Civil Servant, having worked as a government statistician since leaving Cambridge University in 1980 with a degree in Mathematics and a postgraduate Diploma in Mathematical Statistics. He has worked in a wide variety of analytical posts, in fields including: consumer price indices; labour supply estimation and projection; small business statistics, analysis and monitoring of training programmes. In 1997 Mike moved to the then Employment Service to work on the evaluation of the New Deal for Young People.

Since then he has been involved in much of the evaluation activity of Welfare to Work programmes in the UK. For the last 5 years his main responsibilities have been focused on analytical support for reforms of incapacity benefit, including programme evaluation and modelling of the impact of changes to the benefit design, but he also had responsibility for the UK Employment Retention and Advancement demonstration, having been involved with this project from the outset, and was also involved in the recently completed Job Retention and Rehabilitation Pilot. He also provides consultancy support across the Department for Work and Pensions, and to other government departments, on evaluation methodology, with a particular interest in the use of random assignment – the projects mentioned above are two of the largest applications of this methodology to date in UK social policy.

Mike has also developed close links with the US labour market policy evaluation community; he has been involved in five separate projects where either the lead or a subcontractor is based in the US, and has participated in a number of US conferences.

Mike has recently moved to a new role, developing the evidence base for a unique set of benefits in the UK, which help to meet the extra costs of disability, and which provide financial support to informal caregivers.

Susan Purdon, BSc, MSc, Ph.D., is a Quantitative Methods Advisor at the National Centre for Social Research. Her research interests are in the design and analysis of sample surveys, social experiments, and quasi-experiments. Recent evaluations that she has worked on include: the design and analysis of the Job Retention and Rehabilitation Pilot; the New Deal for Lone Parents national evaluation; the ‘Withdrawal of benefits from those in breach of community sentences’ evaluation; the evaluation of the Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative; the evaluation of Activity and Learning Agreements; and the evaluation of a pilot scheme offering free early years education to disadvantaged families. Susan also works on the design of surveys, most recently having completed a project looking at the feasibility of conducting a prevalence study to measure elder abuse in care homes.