

## Promoting work-related activities in a high secure setting: exploration of staff and patients' views

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### Abstract

Introduction: Adults diagnosed with mental disorders, in particular those who have a history of offending, have low employment rates. Here we explore staff and patients' views on the importance of work and vocational activities offered at a high secure hospital. Method: Two hundred seventy-six patients and 106 staff were approached; 54.3% of the patients and 58% of staff completed the questionnaire. Results: Educational achievement in patients was low but nearly two-thirds of patients had been engaged in some form of work prior to admission. Staff and patients felt that vocational opportunities offered in the hospital should more closely resemble 'real work' and they broadly agreed on the areas of activities of potential benefit. Staff felt more strongly than patients that patients lose work-related skills during admission. Both groups recognised the importance of work for mental health and in preventing reoffending. Conclusion: Detention in such settings provides an opportunity for patients to maintain as well as expand on skills aiding their future reintegration into work settings.