

The future is in our hands: How integrating work and study in mental health centres internationally helps young people's outcomes.

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Introduction

Headspace is Australia's national youth mental health foundation and Foundry is a province wide health and wellness service for young people in British Columbia.

headspace Australia and Foundry Canada provide young people with in-person, time-unlimited and individually tailored vocational support through Individual Placement and Support (IPS), a world-recognised, evidence-based program. IPS when delivered in a mental health setting leads to improved lifelong, vocational and mental health outcomes. Join us as we share insights on how each organisation has successfully established the program in its centres.

Objectives

Our presentation will explain how the IPS program has been reliably implemented in different international settings leading to positive outcomes for young people. We'll explore the guiding principles in the IPS model that assist to establish effective vocational support in an early intervention, youth mental health service worldwide. We'll also discuss the unique aspects each organisation faced and how the program was tailored to support young people in each country.

Approach/Methods

Headspace Australia trialled IPS in 24 centres for 3 years and based on its success, recently expanded the program to 50 centres with over 100 staff. In 2021 our centres supported over 1500 young people with their work and study.

Based on the success of a pilot program in 2020 -2021, Foundry has recently expanded IPS programming to include 12 centres and a virtual service. Across the province of British Columbia, approximately 30 staff are supporting over 200 youth who have enrolled in the program, with a three-year target to reach over 1,500 youth who are not in employment, education, or training.

Both organisations use the evidence-based IPS fidelity scale which outlines key criteria for the program's success. Independently each organisation has complemented the program with a digital work and study service to assist young people in remote locations or those who may prefer an online service. We also provide personalised support for the program and gather data for research purposes to verify that the program is leading to better mental health and economic outcomes for young people. Through our partnership we've shared approaches

and gained some fascinating insights on the similarities and differences in our programs and identified some important barriers and enablers for successful implementation.

Results

This exciting program offers young people hope for their futures with practical and caring support in important aspects of their lives; work and study. Delivering the program through accessible, youth-friendly mental health services is an ideal way for young people to become involved and can assist services with providing more holistic and appealing support choices.

Conclusion

We've shown that a well-integrated vocational service can be established in centres to support young people across the world and that partnering with other organisations is mutually beneficial and strengthens the program.

