



NATIONAL COALITION *for* HOMELESS VETERANS

“A Randomized Controlled Trial of Supported Employment Among Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder”

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Quick Takeaways:

- Unemployed veterans who participated in the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) supported employment program were 2.7 times more likely to become gainfully employed than those participating in the Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VRP) at the Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center (VAMC)
- Almost 40% of veterans diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) are considered impoverished or are currently unemployed

Study:

Between 2006 and 2010, researchers at the Tuscaloosa VAMC studied the effects of IPS and VRP on veterans diagnosed with PTSD. Eight-five participants were chosen under the following criteria: diagnosed with PTSD, aged between 19-60, eligible for the VRP, currently unemployed, interested in competitive employment and planning to remain within 100 miles of this VAMC for at least 12 months.

Forty-two participants were randomly selected for the IPS program. In this model, participants were connected to an IPS specialist who worked closely with the clinical PTSD treatment team. The specialist worked with the veterans on job placement, ongoing work-based assessment and employment assistance, as needed. The IPS specialist worked with the veterans on supportive services after competitive employment was obtained.

The remaining 43 participants were assigned to the VRP. The VRP participants were connected to a VRP specialist. The specialist connected the veteran to vocational services, some community based supportive services and time-limited job search assistance. The VRP specialist did not work with participants after they obtained competitive employment. Vocational services included temporary work experience within the VA or the local community. Participants were paid based on their production.

Participants in both programs were asked to keep a job log to capture the work performed, hours worked, wages earned and missed work days. These logs were collected and analyzed in one, two, three, four, six, eight, ten and twelve month follow-up appointments.

Findings/Results:

- 32 out of the 42 participants in the IPS program gained competitive employment after program completion
- 12 out of the 43 VRP participants gained competitive employment after program completion
- IPS participants worked an average of 42% of eligible weeks compared to VRP participants who worked 16% of eligible weeks
- Participants in the IPS program found competitive employment at an average of 20 weeks into working with the IPS specialist

Source: Davis, Lori L., et al. "A randomized controlled trial of supported employment among veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder." *Psychiatric Services*. 63.5. (2012): 464-470. Web. 25 June 2014.
<http://ps.psychiatryonline.org/data/Journals/PSS/22624/pss6305_464.pdf>.