



## **NATIONAL COALITION *for* HOMELESS VETERANS**

### *“Cognitive Training for Supported Employment: 2-3 Year Outcomes of a Randomized Controlled Trial”*

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#### Quick Takeaways:

- Cognitive training used in conjunction with supported employment was associated with better employment outcomes than supported employment alone, including higher rates of employment, more hours worked, and more income earned.

#### Study:

Researchers studied the effects of cognitive training, in the context of supported employment, on competitive employment outcomes, which they defined as the total number of jobs, hours worked, and wages earned. Based on prior research showing that cognitive problems associated with severe mental illness is linked to poor employment outcomes, researchers wished to see if the effects of this cognitive impairment could be lessened through the use of computer-based cognitive training. Researchers assigned 23 subjects to an experimental group who received cognitive training and supported employment, while 21 subjects were assigned to a control group and received only supported employment. Across both groups, researchers tracked demographic factors as well as factors related to subject diagnosis and treatment. Researchers used this data to control for these factors in their analysis.

Cognitive training consisted of about 24 hours over twelve weeks, with subjects usually completing two or three sessions a week. Researchers used Cogpack 6.0, which is commercially available cognitive training software designed for use by people with schizophrenia. Cogpack trains users in a variety of cognitive functions, including concentration and attention, learning and memory, executive functioning, and psychomotor control.

Researchers regularly followed up with subjects over a 2-3 year period, with the average period of study being 26.8 months.

#### Findings:

Controlling for diagnosis and treatment factors, researchers found that cognitive training in conjunction with supported employment was associated with better competitive employment outcomes than supported employment alone. People who undertook the cognitive training worked more jobs, worked more hours, and earned more income than those that did not.

#### Conclusion:

Supported employment is an evidence-based practice which is associated with better employment outcomes. This research suggests that cognitive training in addition to supported employment may produce even better outcomes.