



**Service Priorities and Programmes**  
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**Effectiveness of Patient Retraining & Vocational Resettlement Service – A program review for patients with chronic illness**

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**Introduction**

The Patient Retraining & Vocational Resettlement Service (PRVRS) was organized by Occupational Therapy Department of Princess Margaret Hospital and funded by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) since January 1997. A client-center approach was adopted and tailor-made program to enhance vocational knowledge, skills and positive work attitude was offered to patients with chronic disease enrolled in the programme. Patients' skills, aptitudes & expectations were matched with the vacancies provided through the employer network. The ultimate target was helping the patients to return to work and lead a productive and meaningful life. In response to the ERB's initiative, PRVRS was extended to cover young patients aged 15 to 25 in 2008.

**Objectives**

The objective of the study aims at reviewing the employment status profile of our trainee after completed PRVRS. Sustainable employment is one of the outcome measures to reflect the effectiveness of PRVRS.

**Methodology**

A 6-month employment status survey was conducted for the trainee recruited between 1 October 2011 and 31 March 2013 and phone interviews were carried out for each trainee in 3-time point including upon completion of training, 3-month & 6-month post completion of training respectively.

**Result**

A total of 198 trainees were recruited with 75% females and mean age of 43. 49% of the trainees had attained the education level of Form 3 or above. The major referral sources were from Medical (32.1%), Orthopedic (18.7%) and Oncology (10.5%). 171 of them (86.3%) have successfully completed the training. 133 trainees had returned to work in a 6-month period. The job placement rate was 77.8%. Among the successful trainee, 49% of them were unemployed for less than one year and 21% were unemployed for one to three years. Three most popular job natures were clerical job (39.3%), non-skilled work (39.3%) and sales & servicing job (17.2%). 74 (55.6%)

trainees were capable to find job within 1 month (average in 15 days) and 59 (44.3%) of them were capable to sustain the same job in 6-month period. Only 6 (4.5%) of them needed to seek another job with different natures within 6 months. For those 38 (22.2%) trainees who cannot find a job successfully in the 6-month period, the two major reasons were mismatch between job market and expectation in 14 case (37.8%) and fair health condition in 13 cases (35.1%). All trainees had completed the satisfaction survey questionnaire according to the training facilities & the content of training course and 100% were satisfied with the PRVRS. Conclusion The earlier they can return to the employment market, the better sustainability of their job. PRVRS is an effective programme in helping patients with chronic illness to return to work and sustain open employment.