Supported Employment: An alternative model for vocational rehabilitation to persons with severe neurologic, psychiatric or physical disability

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Participation in paid work in competitive industry through placement in supported employment is compared and analyzed for 278 severely disabled persons. Differential outcomes are described for persons with chronic mental illness, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, and dual diagnosis of chronic mental illness and mental retardation. Results indicated that supported employment appears to be an effective means of assisting these historically unemployable individuals to acquire and retain work. Cross-disability group differences were found in areas such as hourly wages, type of employment, services provided by employment specialists, and job retention. The results represent a baseline from which to evaluate future efforts at competitive work placement for persons with severe disabilities, using the supported-employment model.

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