Department for Work & Pensions

Invitation to Tender Questionnaire

Response Template

Question 2.4.3 Claimant Journey

Wellbeing and Work Trials – Group Work

PeoplePlus Group Ltd

Merseyside

Question 2.4.3 Claimant Journey
Please provide a detailed breakdown of your proposed delivery Including: • How you propose to engage with DWP Work Coaches and single points of contact (SPoCs) during implementation phase and throughout the live running • Detail your proposals for engaging with potential participants following their referral by the work coach to facilitate and encourage their attendance at the Reception Interview within 5 days of referral: • The process for arranging and undertaking the Reception Interview including the production of an Induction Pack that will support the potential participants attending the JOBS II Group Work; • Detail your proposals for engaging with customers following the Reception Interview and how you will ensure that referred customers attend a course with 15 days of referral; • What methods you will use throughout the trial to help reduce dropout rates at all stages to maximise retention of participants whilst on the trial and keep participants engaged; • The exit management of customers from the JOBS II programme back to their DWP work coach; • How you will ensure fidelity to the recruitment, training and delivery of the JOBS II Manual and the addendum; • How will you promote and encourage claimants' participation in the 6 month and 12 month follow up interviews when the participants will be contacted by the research organisation A **2** score for this question may be considered a knock out score in relation to this competition. We reserve the right to exclude any Tender which scores 2 or less on this question from this Procurement. This methodology will be applied to ensure equitable treatment and consistency across all providers for this question. A **0** score for this question will be considered a knock out score in relation to this competition and the bid will not be considered any further.
Present your response **at the top of a new page,** within these preset margins in Arial font size 12 up to **4** sides of A4, **excluding** the question text and these instructions.

Question 2.4.3 Claimant Journey
Engagement with Work Coaches: We will appoint a dedicated **[REDACTED])** to co-ordinate interaction with DWP Work Coaches across all locally referring jobcentres. The **[REDACTED]** will be responsible for ensuring that Work Coaches are provided with regularly updated information about the JOBS II course, course dates/timings, venues, eligibility criteria, and referral arrangements. They will ensure impartiality throughout engagement, in supporting Work Coaches to make needs based referrals based on their own assessments, as opposed to petitioning to maximise referrals regardless of claimant need or suitability for Group Work. The **[REDACTED]** will also act as a conduit with Work Coaches in determining the best locations and course frequencies to always achieve optimum group sizes (i.e. an average of 15 participants) for each course. This will support Work Coaches to make potential "bulk referrals" to periodic courses in specific communities. Engagement between **[REDACTED]** and Work Coaches will include **[REDACTED]** to ensure a timely response to any queries about the pilot which Work Coaches may have. Our approach will include a concerted engagement focus during the implementation period, with the provision of communications and reference resources to ensure that Work Coaches have a full understanding of the pilot, and how to make referrals to it. Where agreed with individual jobcentres, the **[REDACTED]** will be available to attend internal Work Coach team meetings to support further engagement. Where new Work Coaches are appointed throughout, the **[REDACTED]** will be available to provide bespoke JOBS II one-to-one inductions. We will also support relationship building between our Group Work Leaders and Work Coaches through the participant referral and hand-back process. **Post Referral Engagement:** PeoplePlus has proven competency in achieving referral to start conversions on DWP programmes. Over the past year, across our 9 Work Programme contracts 80% of referrals (over 20,000 jobseekers) have been attached within 15 days, within minimum service levels. For this pilot, engagement with each participant will commence during their referral interview with a Work Coach, with our Leaders being on hand by phone to speak directly with the participant and arrange their appointment. Once a referral has been made this will be acknowledged via PRaP. We will maintain a rolling schedule of Reception Interview slots sufficient to accommodate all participants within 5 days of referral. Where possible we will afford participants a choice of slot (e.g. day / time). In most cases an initial appointment will be made within 3 working days, providing scope for a second appointment to take place within 5 days if the first is missed. Should this occur, the reasons for failed attendance will be explored with the participant to prevent recurrence. We will agree appropriate additional engagement activity with DWP where this supports attendance, but does not detract from the pilot's wider objectives (**[REDACTED].** Such additional engagement may include **[REDACTED].** **Reception Interviews:** Face-to-face Reception Interviews will take place **[REDACTED].** and will fully

comply with the Group Work Provider Guidance. The aim will be to build the participants understanding and engagement in Group Work, building rapport, and best assuring their attendance at course start. All participants attending will be issued with a specially designed induction pack containing a range of information, including details of: the aims of the course / group work; our commitment to the participant; privacy of personal information; course dates, start times and session lengths; training centre location map and local public transport travel details; expectations and arrangements upon arrival; in-centre conduct and behaviour standards; equality, diversity, accessibility and safeguarding measures; Group Work Leader name, contact details and keep-in-touch arrangements; health and safety; feedback and complaints procedure, and; the travel expenses reimbursement process. The pack will be highly visual, as simple as concise as possible, with details in Plain English, to help participants navigate and understand the contents. Tutors will provide a verbal talk-through of the pack to further support this, and to address any induction queries which participants may have. The Leader will address any questions or concerns posed about the Programme and ensure that participants are aware that their attendance in Group Work is voluntary. The participant's attendance (or failure to attend) will be registered on PRaP within 6 working days of the Reception Interview. If, following the Interview, the participant decides that they do not wish to progress to the full course, this will also be recorded on PRaP and notified to DWP's Single Point of Contact (SPoC). A register of attendance will be retained for validation purposes.

Course Attendance: We will fully engage with participants post Reception Interview to maximise attendance of referred participants on each programme. Our Group Work Leaders will apply a keep-in-touch approach with participants, helping to allay any attendance concerns, and in ensuring timely reminders to attend the first day. Again, this will **[REDACTED].** Advice will help to sustain their engagement, address any emergent participation concerns, and to plan ahead for any caring responsibilities or travel arrangements. We will apply a rolling diary of course dates, so that most participants receive an initial start date within 7 to 10 working days, to allow scope for a second date to be offered if they fail to attend. Where a participant fails to attend, this will be investigated to ascertain the reasons why, in order that these are addressed ahead of the next course start. We will advise DWP's (SPoC) of all course dates and locations in advance, and which participants have been assigned to each course, to help Work Coaches to also support attendance through their own participant engagement. We will immediately notify the SPoC (and Chief Psychologist if appropriate) on day one should there be a need to postpone due to low numbers, and will re-assign participants to the next available course in consultation with Work Coaches.

Reducing Drop-Out Rates: PeoplePlus has a proven record of participant retention, with drop-out rates (early non-completers without job outcomes) across our spread of DWP provision being less than 1%. Furthermore, we have attracted over 15,000 ESA volunteers onto our Work Programme provision to date. We achieve this by **[REDACTED].** . We will apply the same philosophy to Group Work. We are mindful that the JOBS II format is already designed to achieve on-programme retention through the application of techniques that build up relevant skills and the motivation to use them, increasing

each participant's sense of job search self-efficacy. Our implantation and roll-out will therefore be geared to ensure that these benefits are fully realised. We will equally work with DWP to identify additional measures which further support and enhance on-programme retention, which can be introduced without the pilot's parameters. For example, we will seek to include an informal celebratory event for JOBS II completers, inviting past attendees to serve as peer mentors, and sharing case studies of JOBS II "graduates" who have gone on to secure sustained employment.

Exit Management: We will agree an appropriate format with DWP for documented exit reports to be prepared by Leaders which support a "warm hand-back" to the Work Coach for each participant. This is likely to include details of: complete course sessions attended; confirmation of Day 1 / Day 5 completion of the psychological state/research instruments; identified reasons for declining participation / non-completion (if applicable), and; any ongoing employability characteristics or needs identified during the course of provision. **[REDACTED].** . We will also factor in an exit-session at the end of Session 5, to help focus on ongoing jobsearch, and retaining the lessons from the Group Work. We will work with Work Coaches to ensure that each departing participant is aware of the date and time of their next appointment with them. At the point of exit we will ensure that all applicable attendance registers and PRaP records are updated, and all applicable data validated, before closing the record for the participant in question.

Fidelity to the JOBS II Manual: Group based delivery against the JOBS II Manual, covering each of the five core sessions, will form the core of our customer journey. PeoplePlus has core competency in the application of consistent delivery against pre-defined models and service standards. We have a history of successfully delivering specific short and licensed courses to unemployed jobseekers on a multi-site basis. This includes, for example, DWP's former 2-week New Deal Gateway to Work scheme, and GOALS, a motivational training scheme developed by Goals UK, which has been widely used by many DWP providers. Our Skills Division similarly delivers hundreds of QCF accredited and vendor qualifications each year, applying delivery against common core curriculum and standards. We therefore have acute understanding of how to ensure conformity when delivering programmes with common components and requirements. This is ensured through the work of our dedicated quality assurance and compliance leads.

Building on this, we will ensure fidelity by providing all Group Work Leaders with the same comprehensive initial "train-the-trainer" programme in how to apply the JOBS II (UK Version 2015) manual and addendum. This approach is explained in detail in response to Q2.4.7. The approach will include the required 7 weeks of preparatory training, whereby each trainer will also undertake initial orientation sessions, mock JOBS II Group Work courses (in the role of both participant and Leader), and ongoing Training Forums. The approach will include detailed practice in how to apply and facilitate the six psychological state / research instruments and employment status questionnaires. Each trainer will be issued with a full copy of the JOBS II manual, and associated / printable delivery resources (hand-outs, flip charts, etc.) in common formats. All documents will also be consistently available to our trainers in a read-only format through **[REDACTED]** our team collaboration file sharing system, and a file copy kept at each delivery site. Our Group Work Supervisor,

Group Work Leader Trainers, and Quality Leads will monitor the quality of delivery by Leaders **[REDACTED].** We will apply a consistency check-list in this regard, to assess the extent to which delivery remains in-line with the JOBS II manual. Leaders who may be struggling to comply with the manual will **[REDACTED].**
We will also fully support all external monitoring visits by DWP's Policy Psychology Division's (PPD's) Work Psychologists, both announced and unannounced. We will actively follow-up and feedback and suggested suggest areas for improvement identified through these observations, with priority emphasis on any identified deviations from the JOBS II manual. We will clarify with DWP our resultant improvement actions and timescale in which any deviation will be rectified.

All subcontracted delivery of Group Work will be subject to the same compliance measures. All subcontractor trainers will be subject to the same training and induction programme, and subcontracted delivery will be subject to remedial observation by both our own Group Work Supervisor and DWP's PPD.

Supporting Follow-Up Research: During the course our Leaders will make participants aware of ongoing evaluation component of the pilot, and the details of the research organisation who will contact them at the 6 and 12 month post course point. Where possible, we will provide details of specific researchers to help build recognition with customers. We will talk participants through the format of the post provision research, providing assurance about the privacy of their personal details, and the design of research to be as convenient and accessible for them as possible (i.e. in that it replicates activity which they have already completed on course). We will take an informal gauge of each participant's intuitive desire to take part in future research, and share this with Work Coaches, in order that they can continue to encourage those identified as being less keen to take part. We will accommodate any on-site visits by the appointed research organisation where this may help to support the quality of evaluation.