

# youth futures FOUNDATION

Supporting young people with  
a learning disability and/or  
autism into employment

Understanding of provision

Cordis Bright  
October 2023



## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

- Youth Futures Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit organisation established with a £90m endowment from the Reclaim Fund to improve employment outcomes for young people from marginalised backgrounds. Our aim is to narrow employment gaps by identifying what works and why, investing in evidence generation and innovation and igniting a movement for change.
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## Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>Accessible / inclusive apprenticeships</b>	An apprenticeship designed for young people who have an EHCP. They operate in a similar way to a traditional apprenticeship but offer opportunities for young people with a lower threshold of Maths and English qualifications required.
<b>Autism</b>	The National Autistic Society (NAS) define autism as: <i>“a lifelong developmental disability which affects how people communicate and interact with the world.”</i> <sup>1</sup> Autism is a spectrum condition, which means that people are affected in different ways and some may need more support than others in different aspects of life. Some difficulties that autistic people may experience include: challenges with social communication and interaction; sensory sensitivity; repetitive and restrictive behaviours; anxiety.
<b>Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)</b>	An EHCP is a plan created for children and young people who need extra support in school than is usually provided through Special Educational Needs (SEN) support. It is a legal document drawn up by the relevant local authority, health and social care team and the family. These children and young people may have a learning disability and/or other physical disability, health care needs or social care needs. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Employability support</b>	Support that helps people to prepare for, gain and sustain employment. In this report, we distinguish between support targeted towards young people with

<sup>1</sup> National Autistic Society, *What is autism*, available at: <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/what-is-autism> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>2</sup> UK Government, *Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)*, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/extra-SEN-help> [accessed October 2023].

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Term	Definition
	a learning disability and/or autism (LDA), employers and actions taken at a system-level which are intended to help people access work.
<b>Further Education (FE) Colleges</b>	Further Education Colleges provide education to those aged 16 years and older.
<b>Learning disability</b>	<p>The Department of Health and Social Care (2001) define a learning disability as:<sup>3</sup></p> <p><i>“a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning), which started before adulthood.”</i></p> <p>Learning disabilities can vary greatly depending on the individual and therefore the level of support needed will also vary.</p>
<b>Special Education Needs (SEN) and Disabilities (SEND)</b>	SEND is a term used to refer to children and young people with learning difficulties or disabilities that make it hard for them to learn at the same speed as other children/young people their age. Sometimes the term SEND is used interchangeably with SEN.
<b>Stakeholder</b>	<p>In this report, stakeholders refers to the commissioners, providers, employers and policy experts/academics who were consulted as part of this research.</p> <p>The views of stakeholders are reported collectively, unless there were views that were specific to an individual group.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Department of Health and Social Care, *Valuing people – A new strategy for learning disability for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2001), pp. 14, available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7b854740f0b62826a041b9/5086.pdf> [accessed October 2023].

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Term	Definition
<b>Supported employment</b>	Supported employment is a model of provision designed to help a young person identify a suitable job and provide them with tailored on-the-job support, commonly via a job coach. Supported employment follows a five-stage process: (1) client engagement; (2) vocational profiling; (3) job finding; (4) employer engagement; and (5) on and off the job support. <sup>4</sup>
<b>Supported internships</b>	Supported internships are for young people with learning difficulties or learning disabilities, who need extra support to get a job. Typically, a young person spends the majority of their time on placements with an employer, learning skills for work. They also receive support from a tutor and a job coach in college or with a specialist provider. They are aimed at young people aged 16-24 with an EHCP and last a minimum of six months. <sup>5</sup>
<b>Work trials</b>	A work trial is a short period of work that can be offered to see whether someone is suitable for a job. The jobseeker must volunteer to do the work trial, which is unpaid and will remain in receipt of their benefits during this period. The work trial must be for a job that is at least 16 hours a week for 13 weeks. The work trial can last up to 30 days depending on the length of employment on offer, although it is usually five days or fewer. <sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> British Association of Supported Employment, *What is supported employment?*, available at: <https://www.base-uk.org/what-supported-employment> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>5</sup> Department for Education, *Guidance: Supported internships, 2022*, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-internships-for-young-people-with-learning-difficulties/supported-internships> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>6</sup> UK Government, *Jobcentre Plus help for recruiters: Work trials*, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/jobcentre-plus-help-for-recruiters/work-trials> [accessed October 2023].



## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Term	Definition
<b>Young people with LDA</b>	<p>In this report when we use the term 'young people' we are referring to those who are between 16 to 24 years of age, unless otherwise specified.</p> <p>We use 'young people with LDA' as an umbrella term to refer to young people with a learning disability as well as autistic young people and autistic young people with a learning disability.</p>

# 1 Introduction

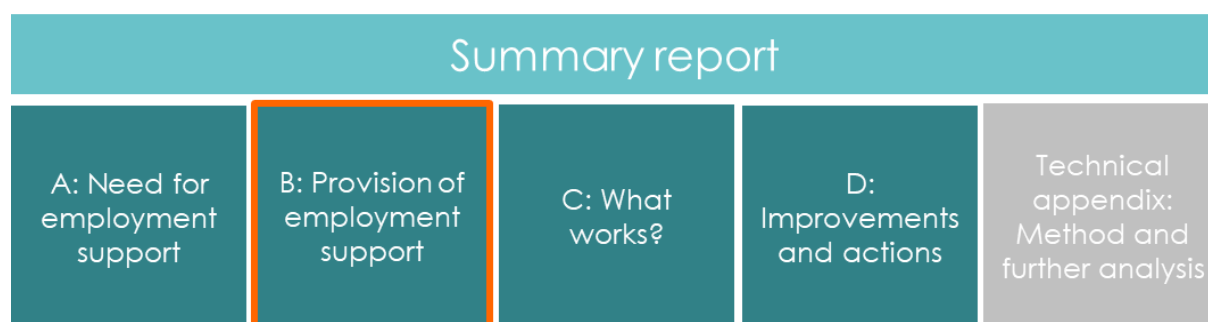
## 1.1 Overview

This report forms part of a wider research project into the provision of support to help young people (aged 16-24) with a learning disability and/or autism (LDA) into employment. The research was conducted by Cordis Bright and funded by the Youth Futures Foundation (YFF).

**This report is focused on understanding the provision of support.**

Figure 1 provides a summary of the research reports. For a summary of the research findings, read the summary report. For detailed analysis of findings, read the accompanying reports and Technical Appendix.

Figure 1: Summary of research series



### 1.1.1 Summary of research

This research project has explored the following key areas:

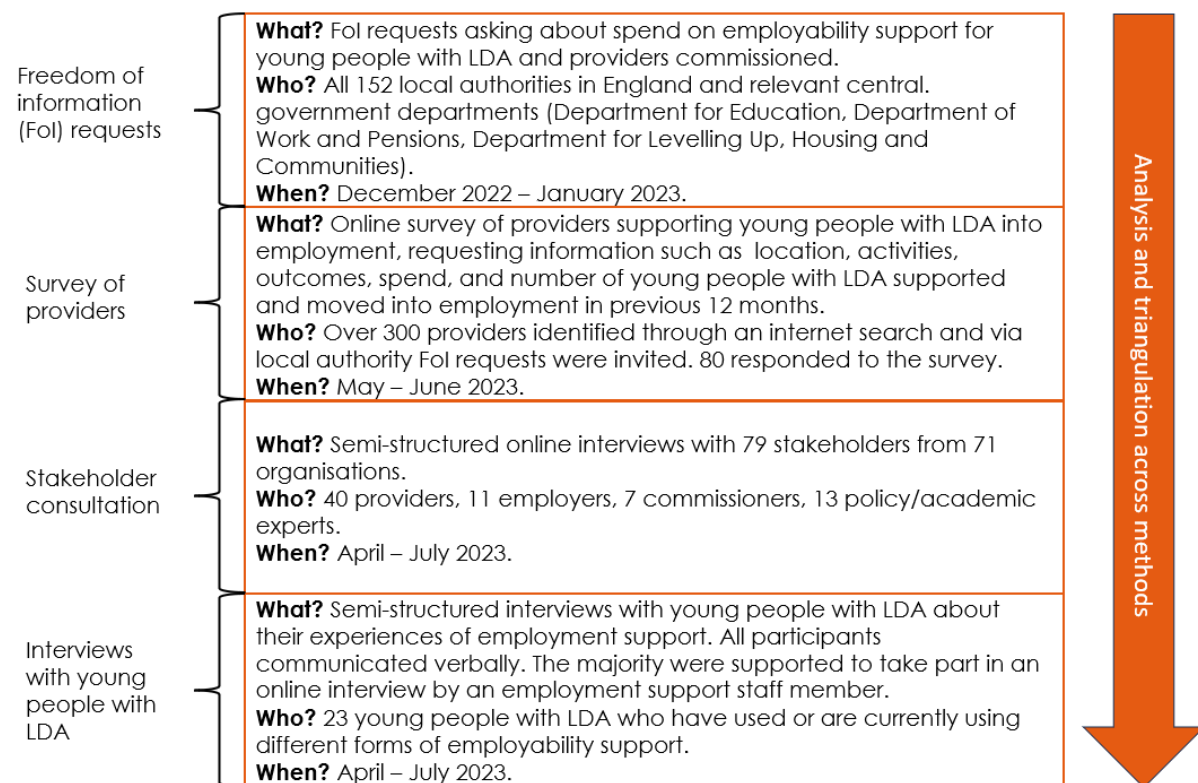
- **Need:** what is the need for support for young people with LDA into employment?
- **Provision:** what is the availability of provision that aims to support young people with LDA into employment?
- **What works:** what works and what is promising in supporting young people with LDA into employment?
- **Improvements and actions:** what are the gaps in support for young people with LDA into employment? How could these gaps be addressed?

The research is based on a mixed methods approach, summarised in Figure 2. In line with our collaborative approach, all approaches, methods and tools were design by Cordis Bright and agreed with YFF before use in the field. This report has been informed through triangulation of findings from each of these methods. While we spoke to a variety of stakeholders, they are often referred to collectively in this research because there was substantial overlap and agreement in what they said. Where groups of stakeholders held distinctive opinions, these have been identified. Typically, the key difference between groups and individuals was the level of detail they were able to provide.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

A detailed methodology can be viewed in the standalone Technical Appendix.

Figure 2: Research methods



### Definitions and terminology

Throughout this report, we often refer to young people with a learning disability and/or autism (LDA). This includes young people with varying degrees of support needs and intellectual abilities. Data sources, previous research and stakeholders often tend to address these groups together rather than differentiate between them. Similarly, eligibility criteria for some support programmes also do not necessarily differentiate, for example those that are open to young people with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). Where findings relate specifically to autistic young people, or young people with a learning disability only, or young people who experience a specific challenge in relation to their autism or learning disability, we specify.

## 1.2 Report structure

The remainder of this report provides an analysis of our understanding of the provision of employment support for young people with LDA. It covers the following:

- **Chapter 2:** Rationale for support.
- **Chapter 3:** Understanding support for young people.

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- **Chapter 4:** Understanding how support is organised.
- **Chapter 5:** Understanding support for employers.
- **Chapter 6:** Understanding systemic-level support.
- **Chapter 7:** Improvements and actions.

## 2 Rationale for support

### 2.1 Overview

This section outlines the rationale for supporting young people with LDA into employment. It is based on findings from the survey of providers and in-depth interviews with stakeholders including young people with LDA, support providers, employers, commissioners/funders of support and academic/policy experts in the area.

The following sections summarise findings including:

- The positive benefits of employment for young people with LDA.
- The positive benefits of employing young people with LDA to employers and wider society.
- How employment support can help young people to overcome different obstacles.

**Analysis of needs:** for further context about the needs and the obstacles young people with LDA experience getting into work, see *Report A: Need for employment support* or the *Summary report*. For further information on the analysis of the Freedom of Information (FoI) request and survey of providers, see the *Technical Appendix*.

### 2.2 Benefits of employment for young people with LDA

Young people with LDA want to work. The young people with LDA we spoke to recognised that employment can offer significant benefits. One young person explained:

*"I wanted employment support mainly to get me out of the house, make sure I'm contributing. It makes me feel like I'm getting active... I would like to work to help with my mental health."*

Young person

Stakeholders and young people with LDA highlighted the importance of getting and sustaining work on a range of outcomes, including:

- Achieving personal and financial independence.
- Promoting and maintaining positive mental health.
- Building new skills that can be used in work or taken into daily life, e.g., money management or travel confidence.

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- Greater social connection and role in the community.
- Broader sense of fulfilment through meaningful occupation.

Stakeholders reported that the benefits of employment for young people with LDA are no different those advantages enjoyed by any other group in society. They agreed that employment should not be inaccessible simply because a young person has LDA.

*“Employment is empowering people to make changes that empower their life. Having money creates options, a job role creates social context.”*

Provider

*“People take for granted that they can pay their bills, but it is these young people’s dreams to have money to do those things.”*

Employer

### 2.3 Employment benefits for employers and society

Stakeholders reported that supporting young people with LDA into employment brings benefits to employers, other members of the workforce and wider society. For employers, the benefits include:

- Creating a more inclusive workforce.
- Benefiting from the insights and skills of a more diverse workforce.
- Accessing a larger pool of labour.
- Reduced demand for other support services.

These benefits are discussed in more detail in the following section.

#### 2.3.1 A more inclusive workforce

Employing people with LDA can contribute to making an organisation more inclusive as a whole. Beyer and Beyer (2017) reported that employing people with learning disabilities can contribute to the social connectedness of workers.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, employers reported that inclusive recruitment has been a catalyst for having a more tolerant and inclusive work culture in general. Speaking about their experience of employing young people with LDA, an employer said:

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<sup>7</sup> Beyer, S., and Beyer. A. (2017). *A systematic review of the literature on the benefits for employers of employing people with learning disabilities*. Mencap, pp. 1-42.

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*“It has been transformational for the culture of the organisation. We are more compassionate and understanding. It has changed ways of doing things.”*

Employer

Adjustments made to recruitment processes or ways of working that help more young people with LDA to apply and be employed may also benefit other individuals who do not have LDA. Employers that had hired and/or offered work placements to young people with LDA identified improvements across their organisations in terms of awareness and attitudes towards people with neurodivergence more broadly. This positively impacted the ways in which they worked. For example, having a more inclusive work culture helped encourage other employees to be more open about their own disabilities or needs.

One employer highlighted that since employing young people with LDA, lessons learnt have been mutually beneficial to individuals with LDA and their colleagues.

*“Learning is two-way and long-standing.”*

Employer

### 2.3.2 The benefits of a diverse workforce

Employers identified the importance of having a workforce that is representative of the wider population and the role young people with LDA can play in this. They reported that it is important that the wider population sees themselves reflected in their organisations – especially where employers are providing services to their communities. This includes public, private and VCS organisations that are public facing, for example.

Employers identified that representation was not only important for building trust with communities, but also highlighted the benefits that a diverse and representative workforce brings through their insights and lived experience. As these employers explained:

*“We are very conscious that we should be representative of the local area as a public service. We can't design effective services without having those viewpoints in our organisation.”*

Employer

*“For us, it has been incredible to use the knowledge of this cohort of people to give us an understanding of our accessibility to the public.”*

Employer

In some instances, employers gave examples of roles specifically developed for young people with LDA to make the most use of their lived experiences, including roles focused on accessibility. For example, one local authority

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identified a team that had created a role for people with lived experience to provide input and advice into the design process for their Learning Disability services and are planning to pilot a role for social workers with LDA.

### 2.3.3 Access to a larger workforce

Supporting more young people with LDA to access employment increases the pool of people who could be employed, which is particularly advantageous to employers in sectors struggling with recruitment. One employer reported that young people with LDA are “*a great hidden talent pool*”.

Policy makers and support providers also noted that employees with LDA are often loyal staff, who favour the routine and familiarity of a consistent role. This supports findings from the academic literature stating that workers with disabilities were less likely to change employers.<sup>8</sup> This can be advantageous to employers as staff turnover and subsequent recruitment can be costly.

#### *Reduced demand for additional support services*

Stakeholders – especially local authority commissioners – reported that employment for young people with LDA can result in less demand for alternative forms of support. In particular, day centres and respite support are not required if a young person has meaningful employment.

While commissioners did not identify this as a primary objective, they acknowledged that it was a positive outcome if young people and families were more self-sufficient and fewer services were required as a result.

## 2.4 Benefits of support for young people with LDA into employment

### 2.4.1 Overview of ways that support can help

Stakeholders reported a range of different purpose of support that is available to help young people with LDA into employment. Stakeholders focused on support that was designed to help young people with LDA prepare for, get into and thrive at work, as summarised in Figure 3.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 3: Summary of purpose of support for young people with LDA



### 2.4.2 Benefits that support provision aims to achieve

Stakeholders interviewed and providers who responded to the survey reported that support for young people with LDA aimed to achieve a broad range of outcomes and did not narrowly define success by whether someone had achieved employment or not. Instead, providers reported that they are often focused on providing support that will bring young people with LDA closer to the job market.

Stakeholders suggested that it was important to support young people with LDA with their wider needs to help them get ready for employment and to maximise the support available. For instance, some stakeholders reported that working on personal and social outcomes, which will help them be prepared for work, but not necessarily result in employment.

This is reinforced by the social and personal outcomes that young people are expected to achieve: improved financial situation is the least frequent outcome identified by providers, suggesting that paid employment may be of lower priority than other outcomes.

The survey data may indicate that there is more support focused on work readiness than there is on supporting young people in work. Therefore, it may be that this is a gap in support, but further research would be necessary to confirm this.<sup>9</sup>

Figure 4 and Figure 5 show provider responses to the survey about the outcomes that their support aims to achieve. This shows that (of 64 providers that responded to the question on outcomes) the most frequently identified outcomes included:

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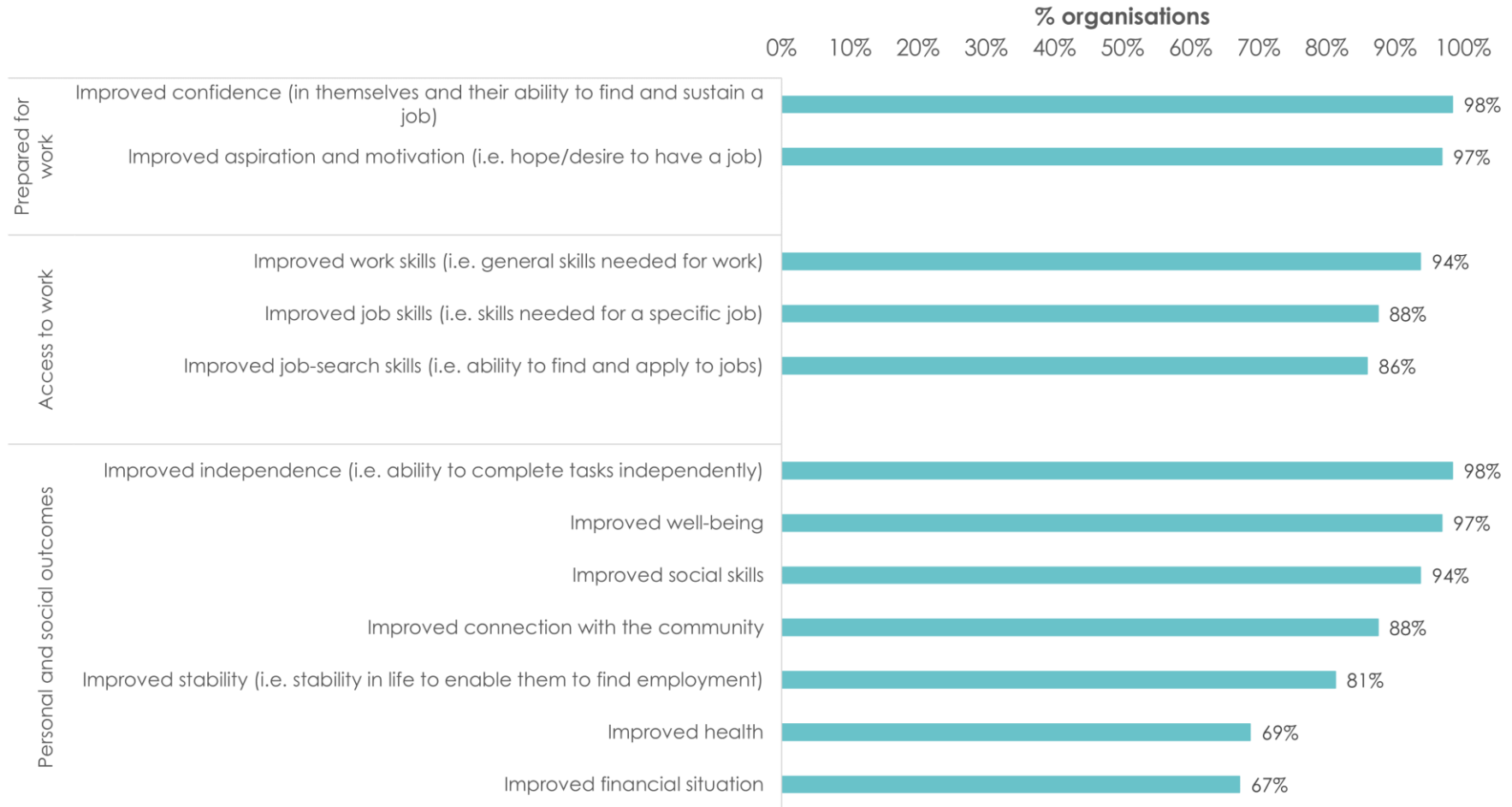
<sup>9</sup> This data shows the expected skills, personal outcomes and employment outcomes that young people with LDA should achieve that provision should achieve. It provides a perspective on what proportion of providers are focusing on each outcome. It does not show how many services or how much support is available that focuses on each outcome.

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- Improved independence (98%)
- Improved confidence (in themselves and their ability to find and sustain work) (97%)
- Improved wellbeing (97%)
- Improved aspiration and motivation (94%)
- Improved social skills (94%)

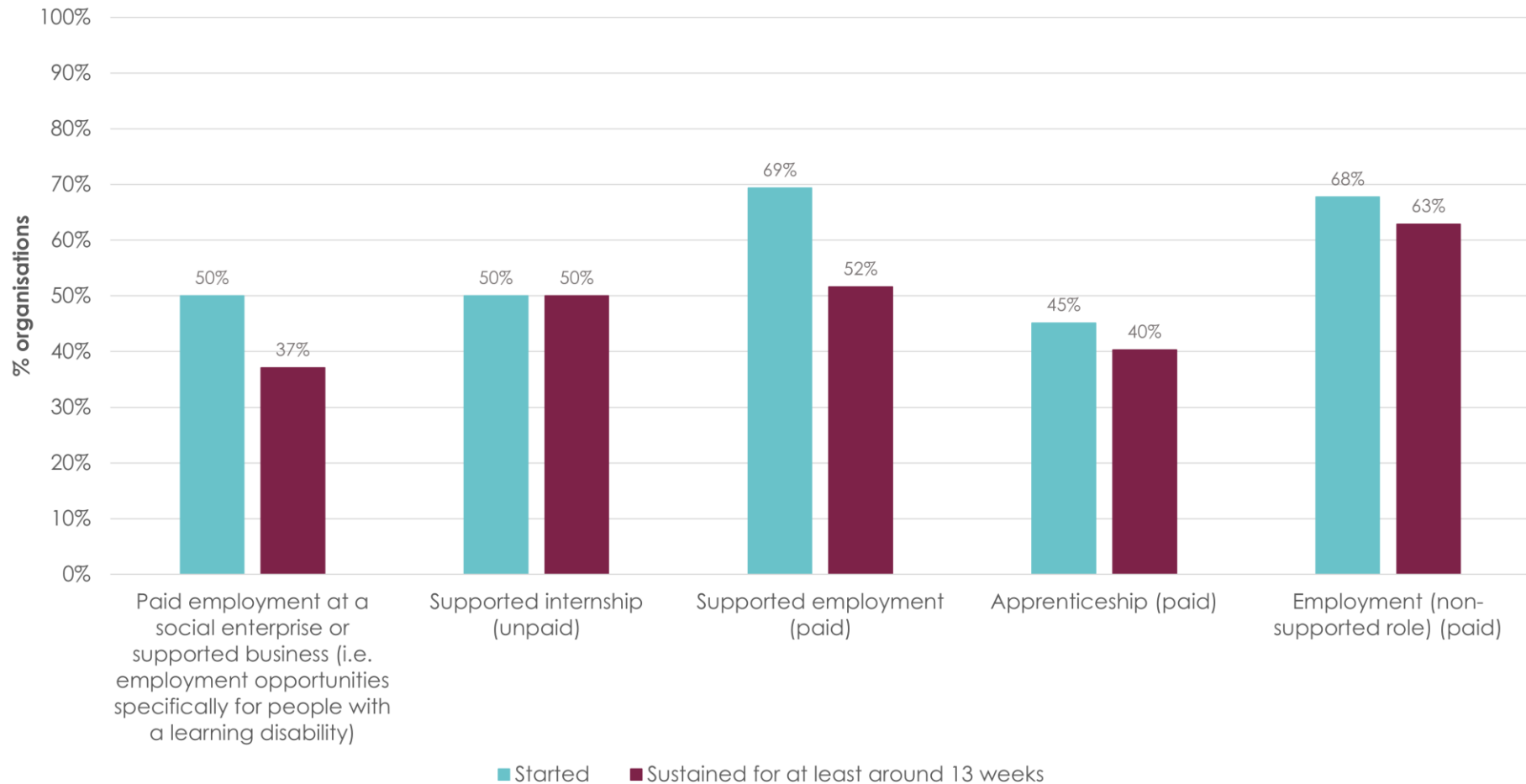
## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 4: What skills, personal outcomes should a young person with a learning disability/autism who accesses your service(s) achieve? (n=64)



## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 5: What employment outcomes should a young person with a learning disability/autism who accesses your service(s) achieve? (n=62)



## 3 Understanding the provision of support to young people with LDA

### 3.1 Overview

Stakeholders, particularly commissioners and providers who tended to have more specific insight, reported that there is a range of support available to young people with LDA in England. This includes a variety of:

- **Support activities and models:** There are a wide range of activities and models available in England, including support to prepare for work; support to get work; and support to thrive in work. There are a small number of models – such as supported internships – that have been manualised and are being delivered in multiple locations.
- **Features of support:** The approach to support is varied, including the extent to which support takes a consistent approach, support delivered across a range of different settings, to varied levels of intensity. Support may be designed specifically for people with LDA (although not necessarily young people), or it may be available to a wider group of job seekers.
- **Availability of support:** Pre-employment support and support to identify and apply for jobs appear to be the most widely provided types of support.

The above is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

*For more information on what works well when supporting young people with LDA into employment, see Report C: Understanding what works.*

### 3.2 What types of support are available?

Stakeholders reported a range of employment support options which are available to young people with LDA. This included support to:

- Prepare young people for work.
- Help young people to get work.
- Help young people to thrive in work.

The type of support that a young person needs to help them enter and thrive in employment likely varies depending on their individual support needs and may differ depending on whether they are autistic, have a learning disability or if they have both. Our findings provide an overview of the types of support on offer to young people with LDA more generally, as they are often not targeted so specifically to one group.

### 3.2.1 Preparing young people for work

Stakeholders and young people with LDA we spoke to identified a range of support that is available to prepare for employment. Activities varied and included:

- **Work experience.** This might include opportunities in supported work environments reserved specifically for people with LDA, also known as “*sheltered work*”. Several providers operated their own social enterprises, including cafes, garden centres and charity shops, where individuals could work practice shifts to develop their skills in a supported environment in order to grow accustomed to a workplace. Stakeholders noted that this not only enabled young people to practice key skills in a controlled environment, but also helps them to build a work history that they could use when applying for other roles. Providers, such as colleges, might also arrange more traditional work experience opportunities for young people with LDA, for example in a shop, office or warehouse, where they might not receive quite as much specialist in-work support as might be offered in ‘sheltered work’.
- **Skills and qualifications.** Support providers, including colleges, identified that there is a broad spectrum of training available to gain skills or qualifications, depending on the academic capabilities of the young person and their aspirations. Maths and English were particularly emphasised by stakeholders, due to their importance for young people aiming to access apprenticeships. Additionally, training is available that focuses on skills that would be useful within a particular sector or vocation, for example, gaining a relevant food safety qualification to work in catering.

Stakeholders reported several different interventions designed to specifically prepare young people for the experience of being in a workplace which focused on practicing inter-personal skills and behaviours that young people with LDA may need to navigate work environments. Some of these included classroom teaching of skills, such as practicing following instructions, working with money, or role-playing greeting members of the public/customers.

- **Support to address challenges in other areas of life.** Support providers highlighted that there may be wider challenges connected to lifestyle, health or wellbeing that young people required support with, prior to seeking work. This may include providing support directly or connecting people to necessary services. Stakeholders highlighted that young people will often need a degree of stability in different areas of life, before they will feel comfortable and confident to also take on employment of some form or another.

### Case study: an integrated approach to preparing young people for work

One service focused on creating an individual pathway to employment for each young person it works with. Broadly, it included three key aspects to this journey: pre-employment support, employment preparation and finally employment access. The pre-employment phase might typically include work to build a young person's confidence as well as seeking to address issues around their wellbeing, mental health and lifestyle. They may also signpost to other services the organisation provides, which are not specifically focused on employment.

After this, the young person would be supported to develop specific skills that they could use in the workplace, before more practical support with the application processes such as developing a CV or interview practice.

The provider highlighted that central to this service is treating all areas of the young person's life as interconnected.

*"They are more likely to succeed when they know they've got support in different areas too, rather than seeing employability as separate, it is interdependent and influenced by other things. They feel more confident when they know more aspects of their life are being supported, creating foundations for employment, not just employability skills."*

Provider

### 3.2.2 Supporting young people to get work

Stakeholders highlighted a range of support available to young people with LDA to help navigate the process of applying for a job. This includes:

- Careers guidance and support to identify opportunities, including connecting people to employers.
- Support to create CVs or to complete the application process requirements.
- Assistance with interviews and other in-person elements of applying for work.
- Supporting and facilitating conversations with employers about reasonable adjustments or other adaptations that would make a job more accessible.

Support may be specialist, tailored to meet the needs of young people with LDA (or people with LDA more generally), or more generic and aimed at anyone seeking a job.

Support at the application stage is often offered as part of a wider programme. For example, a young person might receive support prior to the application stage, to help them prepare, or further support if they are

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recruited to help them settle into their new role. (See Section 3.3 for more details.)

### **Case study: group-based support to develop CVs and role play recruitment scenarios**

A common model of support described by one provider involves assigning each young person to a personal advisor who provides careers advice.

Through regular in-person or remote meetings, the advisor supports the young person in whichever area they require to access employment. This could include looking for potential jobs, supporting with job applications, interview preparation and arranging adjustments to the interview process. One particular service also runs group support sessions on topics, such as CV writing and creating a positive first impression, which each young person can access.

This service was accessible to young people with and without LDA, but was mainly targeted more towards young people with LDA who are already fairly independent.

While most of the application support is directed towards the prospective employee, some work is also undertaken with employers. Employment support providers may engage directly with employers to explore possible adaptations to the application process or even to discuss how a role could be adapted to accommodate a young person's needs more effectively. This can include:

- Setting up a work trial rather than a job interview, so that a young person with LDA can show what they are able to do rather than explain it.
- Arranging for a taster session, during which a young person with LDA could go and look around a workplace and see what it is like.
- Agree approaches to “job carving”, so that tasks can be broken down into tasks that the young person with LDA would be responsible for.

Stakeholders suggested that often this type of support is delivered by providers who have pre-existing relationships with certain employers and therefore are able to advocate on behalf of individual applicants directly. (See Section 5 for more details.)

### **Work trials**

A work trial is a short period of work that can be offered to see whether someone is suitable for a job. The jobseeker must volunteer to do the work trial, which is unpaid and will remain in receipt of their benefits during this period. The work trial must be for a job that is at least 16 hours a week for 13 weeks. The work trial can last up to 30 days depending on the length of employment on offer, although it is usually 5 days or less.



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Stakeholders reported that work trials were promising, but not common. They can provide a young person with a better opportunity to demonstrate their readiness and appropriateness for a particular job, than they can through a traditional application and interview process.

### 3.2.3 Supporting young people to thrive at work

Stakeholders and young people with LDA we spoke to identified several forms of support which are delivered in-work. Models of in-work support can include supported internships, supported employment and apprenticeships.

Activities to support young people with LDA in-work typically included:

- **Job coaches.** Job coaches were commonly referenced as an integral part of in-work support. The role of a job coach included providing hands-on support to a young person with LDA, helping them to settle into their workplace and become accustomed to their tasks. They may help with “job carving” and can engage with management on behalf of a young person. Ultimately, stakeholders described that the aim is to decrease the amount of time their job coach supports the young person with LDA as they become more confident and comfortable with their role.

Employers can employ a job coach directly to support employees. However, stakeholders we spoke to suggested this is unusual and typically the job coach is part of a supported internship or supported employment programme.

- **Peer support.** Young people and stakeholders identified that having peer support – whether formal or informal – can help a young person with LDA settle into their work environment. Stakeholders identified examples of where young people completing supported internships (see below) were placed in pairs or small groups, so that they could support one another.
- **Supporting implementation of reasonable adjustments to work.** This could include utilising special computer software for a young person, adapting the hours when they need to work, or other, often very personalised adjustments.
- **In-work training.** In-work training might take a number of different forms. This could include training delivered to all staff or specific support for an employee with LDA. It may be directly delivered by the employer or – such as in the supported internship model – provided by a third party.

### Examples of in-work support models

Stakeholders we spoke to discussed the following examples of in-work support models:

**Supported internship:** Supported internships are for young people with learning difficulties or learning disabilities, who need extra support to get a job. Typically, a young person spends the majority of their time on placements with an employer, learning skills for work. They also receive support from a tutor and a job coach in college or with a specialist provider. They are aimed at young people aged 16-24 with an EHCP and last a minimum of six months.

**Supported employment:** Supported employment is a similar model to supported internships, which help a young person identify a suitable job and provides them with tailored on-the-job support, commonly via a job coach. Supported employment follows a five-stage process: (1) client engagement; (2) vocational profiling; (3) job finding; (4) employer engagement; and (5) on and off the job support.

Supported employment roles are permanent jobs, rather than placements, and support can be adjusted over time. Unlike other models of support that seek to help people be 'work ready', supported employment take the approach of 'place, train, maintain' – i.e. helping people to learn on the job.

**Apprenticeship:** There are a range of different types of apprenticeships, depending on the academic qualifications and aims of learners. Typically, these involve spending approximately 80% of time in a workplace and 20% studying. For many young people with LDA, the Maths and English requirements (or other qualifications) mean that certain apprenticeships are not accessible. *Inclusive Apprenticeships* are also available for young people with an EHCP, who are not in education. These require less stringent Maths and English qualifications.

### 3.3 How is support being delivered?

The approach to delivering support varies across the range of activities set out above. Providers deliver similar support or support with similar aims in different ways. Common distinctions between different models of support discussed by stakeholders are summarised in Figure 6 and included:

- Generic employment support versus support designed for young people with LDA.
- Tailored support versus manualised programmes.
- Support delivered in groups versus support delivered to individuals.

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- Short- term versus longer-term support.
- Classroom-based support versus support provided in a workplace.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 6: Summary of features and characteristics of support

Key feature	Discussion
<b>Generic vs specialist support</b>	<p>Stakeholders reported that there is specialist support available, which is designed for young people with LDA, as well as generic employment support which is available to all job seekers and as such is also an option to young people with LDA.</p> <p>Examples of specialist support might include a supported internship, whereas generic support might include assistance with CVs or applications provided by JobCentre Plus.</p> <p>Typically, stakeholders reported that specialist support, provided by staff with skills and knowledge of supporting young people with LDA is likely to better meet needs than support provided by staff or services not specifically designed for young people with LDA in mind.</p> <p>However, stakeholders recognised that depending on a young persons' need, the degree of specialist input required might vary. For instance, those with the most complex needs would likely not find generic support helpful, whereas some with mild LD might find that generic support is sufficient.</p>
<b>Manualised programmes vs tailored support</b>	<p>Stakeholders reported that there are certain providers who are offering programmes of support that have been manualised (i.e. a programme is delivered to specific guidelines and specifications) whereas other support is more flexible.</p> <p>The most commonly identified models of support that are manualised are supported internships or supported employment, where many providers follow the standards set by Project Search<sup>10</sup> or the British Association of Supported Employment (BASE)<sup>11</sup> respectively.</p>

<sup>10</sup> DFN Project Search, *Changing lives together*, available at: <https://www.dfnprojectsearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/DFN-Project-SEARCH-Overview.pdf> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>11</sup> British Association of Supported Employment, *What is supported employment?*, available at: <https://www.base-uk.org/what-supported-employment> [accessed October 2023].

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Key feature	Discussion
	<p>The manualised programmes will have a specified target cohort, with a set of activities and approaches that are repeated. Stakeholders reported that the benefit of this is that there is a stronger evidence base about what works for manualised programmes and they can be replicated at scale.</p> <p>Other models of support, often delivered by voluntary sector providers or employers on a smaller scale, are less formal. Examples could include a variety of support, including support to provide holistic assistance for a young person with LDA and their family.</p> <p>Stakeholders reported that the strength of this approach is that support can be tailored to a young person's needs. Support is more adaptable to a wider range of needs, including those who might not meet set criteria for manualised programmes.</p> <p>In reality, stakeholders reported that all programmes, including manualised support, will require certain adaptations depending on the individual young person and possibly the needs of an employer.</p>
<b>One-to-one vs group support</b>	<p>Stakeholders reported that support is provided in a mix of one-to-one and group settings.</p> <p>Certain aspects of support such as career profiling, support with application forms, or arranging for reasonable adjustments are largely conducted on a one-to-one basis. Work experience or supported employment are by their nature individual (although sometimes an employer might recruit more than one person and support them together).</p> <p>Stakeholders also noted that some actions take place in groups and it was not uncommon for programmes to combine elements of individual and group work.</p> <p>For example, a job coach will work with an individual providing some one-to-one guidance for tasks, but they are often shared between multiple interns (in the case of supported internships) and interns are likely to receive additional training from a tutor within groups.</p>

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Key feature	Discussion
	<p>Other activities, particularly preparing young people for work, were more often delivered in group settings – for example, a group session on CV writing or travel training. This may be classroom based but may also occur in a workplace or elsewhere.</p> <p>Stakeholders highlighted that the benefits of group work are occasionally overlooked, including providing opportunities to network/socialise with peers or role play scenarios. Peer group sessions were highlighted as useful for encouraging young people by sharing the successful experiences of others.</p>
<b>Classroom vs workplace based</b>	<p>There is also a variety of classroom-based and workplace-based interventions available.</p> <p>Classroom-based interventions may be used for some pre-employment group training, such as CV-writing or general workplace etiquette training. This could also include one-to-one support and advice on identifying and applying to jobs. This type of intervention may be easier and more suitable for young people who are still within education settings and those who do not feel confident enough to enter a workplace yet.</p> <p>On the other hand, workplace interventions typically involve finding a young person a placement where they can learn and practice skills in a real workplace setting. This could be in a workplace where they are supported by a job coach, either as an intern or full employee. Several organisations also have their own social enterprises where a young person can gain experience in a fully supported environment (sometimes referred to as sheltered employment).</p> <p>Some programmes also combine classroom and workplace learning, such as supported internships, which include both elements.</p>

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Key feature	Discussion
<b>Short-term vs long term support</b>	<p>Support varies in its length considerably. Survey respondents reported differences in the amount of time spent supporting each individual. Responses (n=33) varied from one hour to over 1,000 hours of support in total (highest number provided was 2,500 hours).<sup>12</sup></p> <p>There is no clear pattern in terms of the number of hours of support provided that can be pulled from the survey responses, particularly with a relatively small sample size.<sup>13</sup> Providers that responded to the survey commonly reported providing 10 hours of support or less, although almost a third reported providing over 100 hours.<sup>14</sup></p> <p>Stakeholders noted that in reality, it was often difficult to quantify the precise number of hours of support someone receives – especially in the less formalised approaches – and much depends on the goals of support. For instance, in-work support typically is delivered more intensively and over a longer period, than support for work applications.</p> <p>There was no clear conclusion about what the 'right' length of support is, but stakeholders did highlight the importance of a) allowing enough time to get to know a young person with LDA and build trust and b) to allow some flexibility, particularly after support finishes so that young people can access additional help should they need it further down the line.</p>

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<sup>12</sup> This amount is the mean calculated within a range supplied by the provider (1,000-4,000 hours).

<sup>13</sup> Several providers supplied the number of hours spent per week, which could not be used to calculate total number of hours without an indication of number of weeks spent receiving support.

<sup>14</sup> The range of support offered within the 101+ hour group is very large, from around 165 to 2500 hours.

### 3.4 What types of support do providers most commonly deliver?

The provider survey asked about the types of employment support they provide to young people with LDA. Figure 7 shows that:

- **Most providers provide a range of different types of support to young people with LDA.**
- **Most providers deliver activities that support young people with work readiness and access to work.** 98% of providers offer at least one work readiness activity and 92% of providers offer at least one activity to support young people to access work.
- **Fewer providers offer supported internships (49%) or supported employment (68%).** This may suggest there is less manualised support available and less support which is providing support in-work.

Figure 7 supports the finding that most providers support young people with LDA with preparation for and accessing work in comparison to in-work support, support for employers and supported internships and employment. It shows the most consistently reported activities involved support to identify and apply for jobs, including:

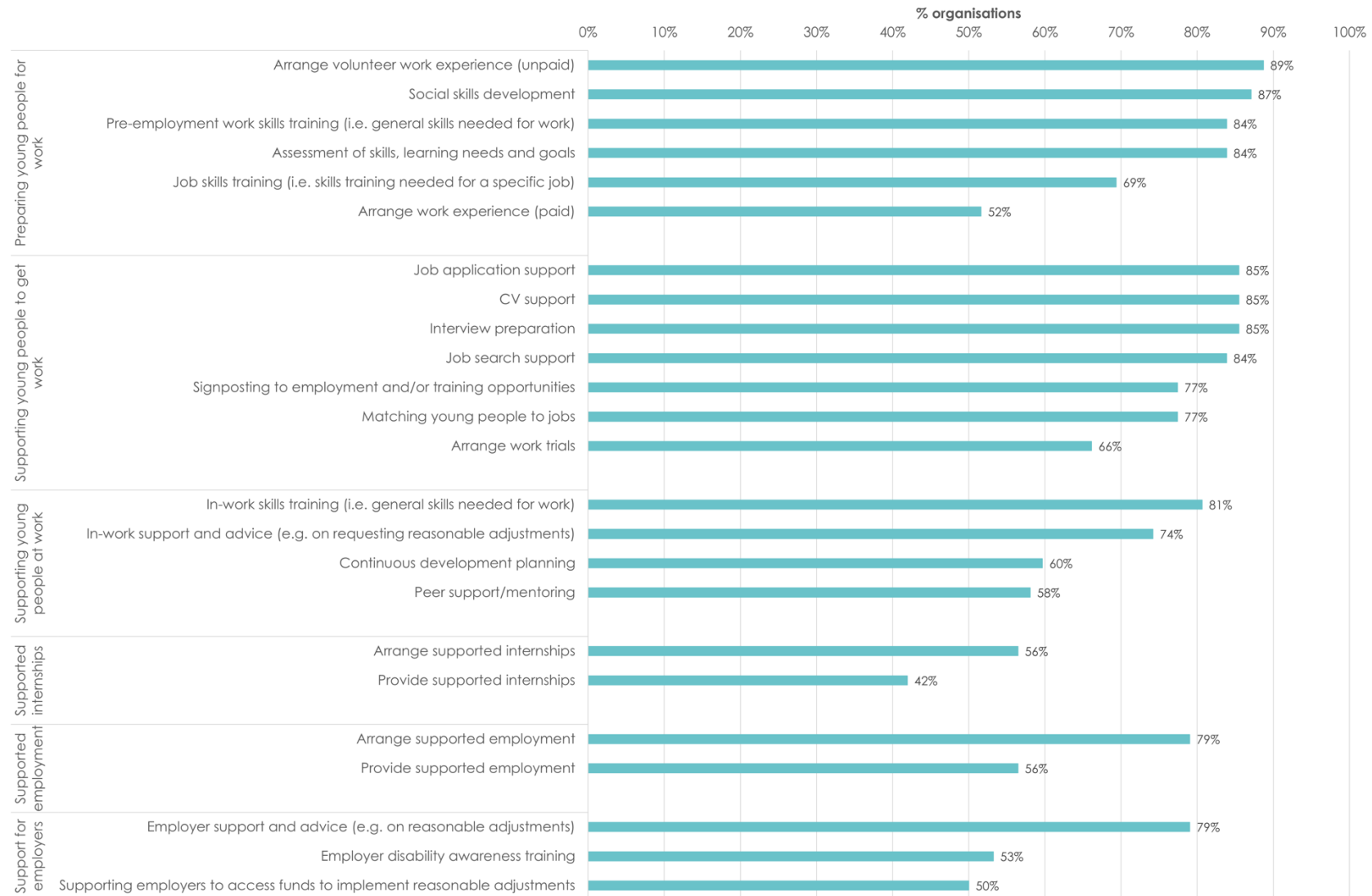
- Job search support (84%).
- Application support (85%).
- CV support (85%).
- Interview preparation (85%).

From the evidence collected in this research we cannot say how much of each type of support providers offers, or benchmark this against need. However, most providers report more support in relation to preparing and accessing work in comparison to supporting young people with LDA once they are in work and also support for their employers.



## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 7: What type of activities does your service/programme offer to help young people with a learning disability/autism into employment? (n=62)



## 4 Understanding how support is organised

### 4.1 Overview

Consultation with stakeholders, FoI request data and survey data indicate that the organisation of employment support for young people with LDA is complex. This complexity includes:

- There are multiple pathways to support, but these are poorly coordinated and challenging to navigate. Different support has different eligibility criteria, however there is not a single pathway within which different levels of need can be met.
- Providers of employment support to young people with LDA are a diverse group of public, voluntary and community and private sector organisations of different sizes, focuses and operating in different parts of the country.
- A mix of funding sources and commissioners of support, including a range of non-recurrent and recurrent funding streams. Funding sources include national and local government, but also non-governmental expenditure.

Further research including system mapping would be helpful to provide a more nuanced understanding of what services precisely are being delivered and how these are funded.

### 4.2 How is support accessed?

Stakeholders reported that young people with LDA access support into employment via a range of different routes, with different criteria for different types of support. They highlighted there is typically not a 'single front door' that connects to available services.

Often families navigate the system based on local contacts and informal connections. Services may operate self-referrals or take referrals from different professionals.

Many organisations that provide employability support also provide other support, such as housing support and care. Young people with LDA, or their families, may become aware of employment support through another service offered by the same provider.

Stakeholders reflected that this approach is often suboptimal and leads to young people with LDA missing out on opportunities simply because neither they nor someone in their network was aware of it. This was reflected in interviews with young people with LDA who reported that they had not

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

considered and typically were not aware of alternatives to the support that they were taking part in.

### 4.2.1 What are the access criteria for support?

There are a variety of different requirements to access employment services. Some programmes include strict criteria whereas others were significantly more flexible. Common criteria discussed by stakeholders included:

- **EHCP:** Having an EHCP was a requirement to access a number of schemes. For other programmes, like supported internships, it was required by providers because it allowed them to access specific funding to deliver the placement.
- **Mathematics and English qualifications:** Some programmes, such as apprenticeships, required formal qualifications.
- **Programmes open to learners from a specific school, college or programme:** Some employers have relationships with an individual school, college or voluntary and community sector-led programme. Stakeholders gave the example of an arrangement between a national charity and a national supermarket chain, which allows the charity to place young people with LDA from their programmes with the employer. It was suggested that other programmes struggled to place people with the same employer.

Stakeholders reported that they had concerns about the existing eligibility criteria, especially the use of an EHCP as a requirement. They raised concerns about the following groups whose circumstances meant they may miss out on accessing support:

- **Young people who do not have a formal diagnosis of LDA** and therefore do not have an EHCP. This includes those who have only received a diagnosis later in their life, by which time they may miss out on the opportunity for an EHCP.
- **Girls**, many of whom receive diagnoses later in life, for example late diagnosed autism, or only for particularly high levels of need.
- **Young people who struggle to engage with statutory services**, who may not be assessed for an EHCP as a result, and therefore miss out on eligibility.

One local authority commissioner reported that historically, they “*have tried to be more inclusive and therefore given out fewer EHCPs*” and as a result, there are young people who might benefit from a supported internship who cannot access them. Other stakeholders were more critical in their assessment:

*“It seems random who does and does not get an EHCP.”*

*Funder/commissioner*

### Eligibility criteria for different national schemes

Supported internships: to be eligible for a supported internship, the young person must be aged between 16 and 24 and have an EHCP.<sup>15</sup>

Apprenticeships: to be eligible for an apprenticeship, the young person must be 16 year of age or older and not in full-time education.<sup>16</sup> They also need to meet minimum requirements for English and Maths.<sup>17</sup>

Inclusive apprenticeships:<sup>18</sup> to be eligible for these apprenticeships, the apprentice must have or previously had an EHCP, a statement of SEN or a Learning Disability Assessment. The provider must have conducted an evidenced assessment concluding that without adjustment the apprentice would not be able to achieve the minimum requirements in English or Maths, but reasonably expect them to achieve all other aspects of the apprenticeship requirements.<sup>19</sup>

## 4.3 Who provides employment support?

### 4.3.1 What types of organisations provide employment support?

#### *Different sectors*

Figure 8 shows that in the survey of providers the majority of respondents categorised their organisation as being voluntary and community sector (56%), followed by education providers (23%, including secondary and further education), local authority (14%) and private sector (5%).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Department for Education, *Guidance: Supported internships*, 2022, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-internships-for-young-people-with-learning-difficulties/supported-internships> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>16</sup> UK Government, *Become an apprentice*, 2023, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/become-apprentice> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>17</sup> Department for Education, *Acceptable current and prior equivalent qualifications for English and maths minimum requirements in apprenticeships standards and frameworks at level 2 and above*, 2022, available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1111056/Apprenticeship\\_standards\\_English\\_and\\_maths\\_list-Oct2022.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1111056/Apprenticeship_standards_English_and_maths_list-Oct2022.ods) [accessed October 2023].

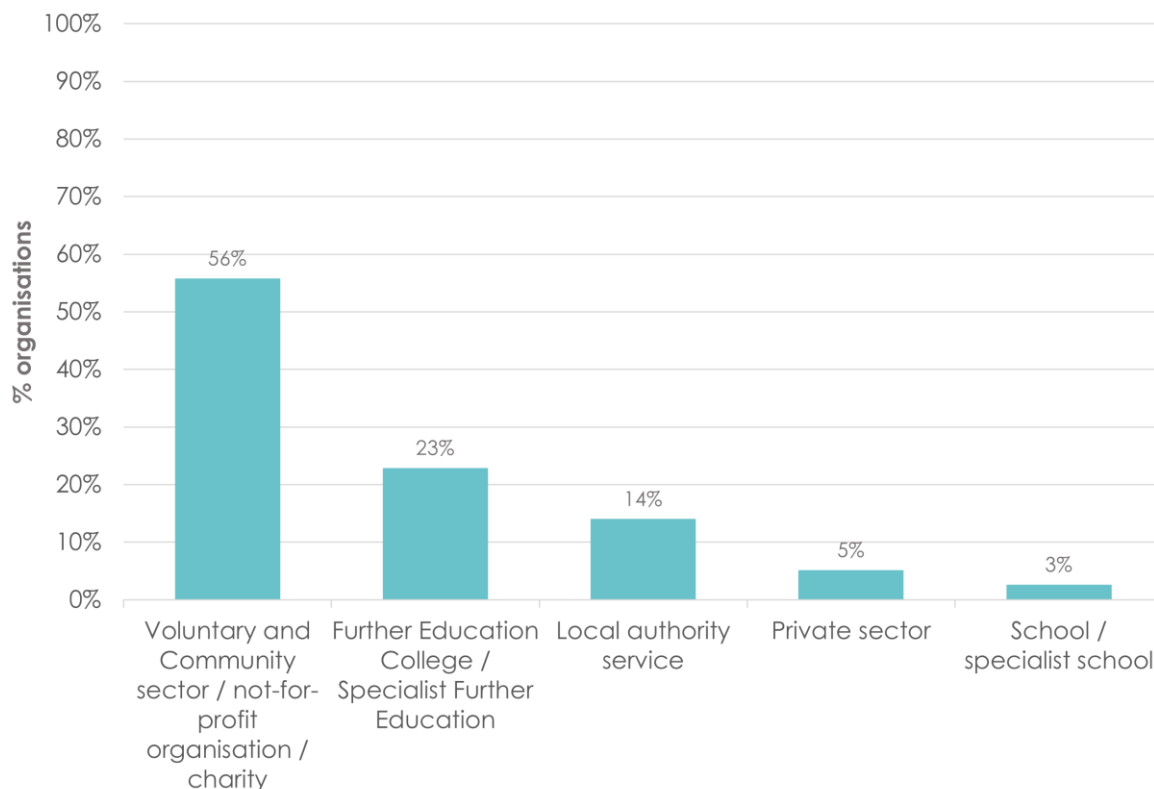
<sup>18</sup> This is when providers will be allowed to consider adjusting minimum requirements to Entry Level three in English and Maths.

<sup>19</sup> British Association of Supported Employment, *Inclusive apprenticeships*, 2023, available at: <https://www.base-uk.org/inclusive-apprenticeships> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that this is a survey of support providers only and therefore, if an employer operates a scheme, but would not identify as a provider of employment support, they will not have been captured (e.g., an access programme operated by a building firm would not be included). Therefore, the role of the private sector may be underestimated.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 8: Which of the following best describes your organisation? (n=79)



Moreover, qualitative consultation with providers and commissioners highlighted that the delivery of support is often complex and involves more than one partner. For example, in programmes such as supported internships, a young person may receive support from their college and a voluntary and community sector partner, while placed in a private sector company.

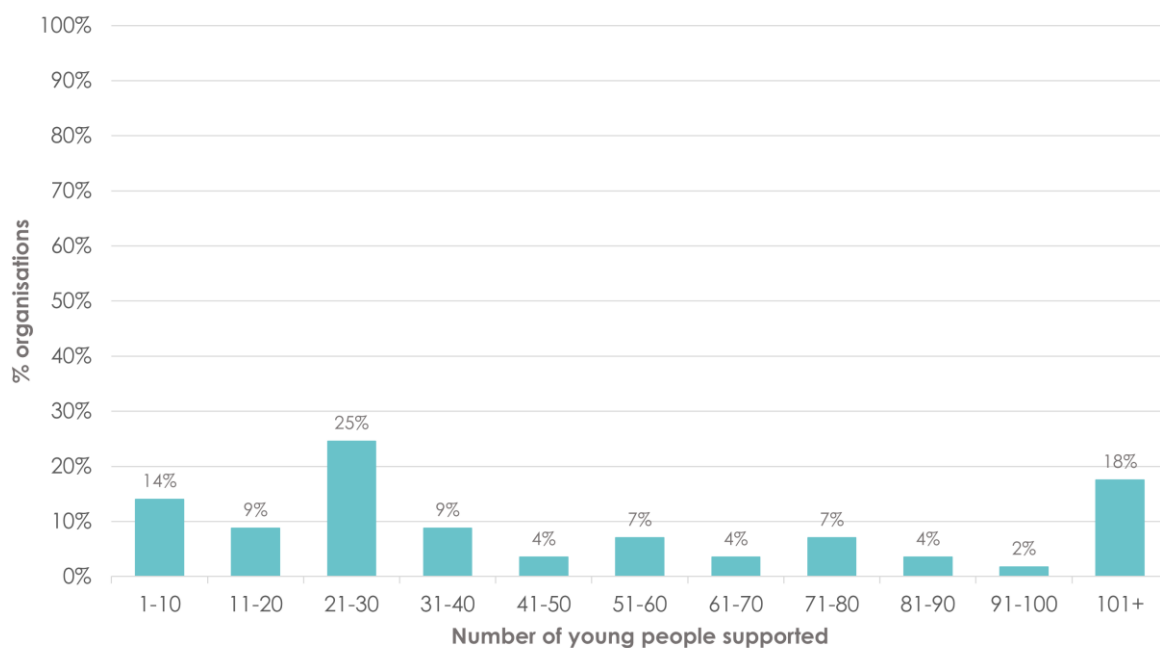
### How many young people do providers reach?

When asked in the survey about the number of young people with LDA they had supported over the past year, providers' **responses varied from just three up to 540**. Figure 9 shows that in the past 12 months:

- The largest proportion of organisations worked with between 21 and 30 young people (25%).
- 18% of organisations supported more than 100 young people with LDA.
- 14% of providers worked with 10 or fewer people.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 9: Approximately how many young people with LDA has your service(s)/programme(s) worked with in the last 12 months? (n=57)



Support providers reported that in the voluntary and community sector there are national providers operating multiple services around the country and smaller providers that typically operate within a single local authority area.

What proportion of a providers activities focus on employment support also varies, according to stakeholders. Some providers offer many different types of services – especially the larger, national voluntary sector providers – whereas some providers specialise only in employment support.

### 4.3.2 Where are support providers operating?

Figure 10 shows that based on our survey of providers there is likely a 'postcode lottery' when it comes to support provision for young people with LDA across England to help support them into employment. Providers were asked in which local authorities (of all 153) they operate a service which supports young people with LDA into employment. Survey responses (n=69) showed that:

- On average, local authorities had 2.5 providers operating in their area. This ranged from 11 in one local authority, to just one provider in 48 local authorities.
- Every local authority had at least one provider who reported working in their area.
- Taking a regional view, Figure 10 shows that there is a greater concentration of providers offering support in the South East of England and London. The fewest number of providers reported operating in the West Midlands, North East and North West. Around half of the providers (33

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

out of the 69 that responded to this question, 48%) operate only within a single region.

Figure 10: Number of providers offering employment support services for people with LDA in at least one local authority in each region of England (n=69)<sup>21</sup>



We do not know the size of each service offered in each area and therefore cannot make definitive links between the number of providers operating in a local authority or region and the extent to which this meets need or not. However, it does suggest that the South East and London are more likely to be better served than, for example, the North East.

### 4.3.3 Who do providers work with?

Data shows that most providers work with a broader range of clients than only young people with LDA. The provider survey shows:

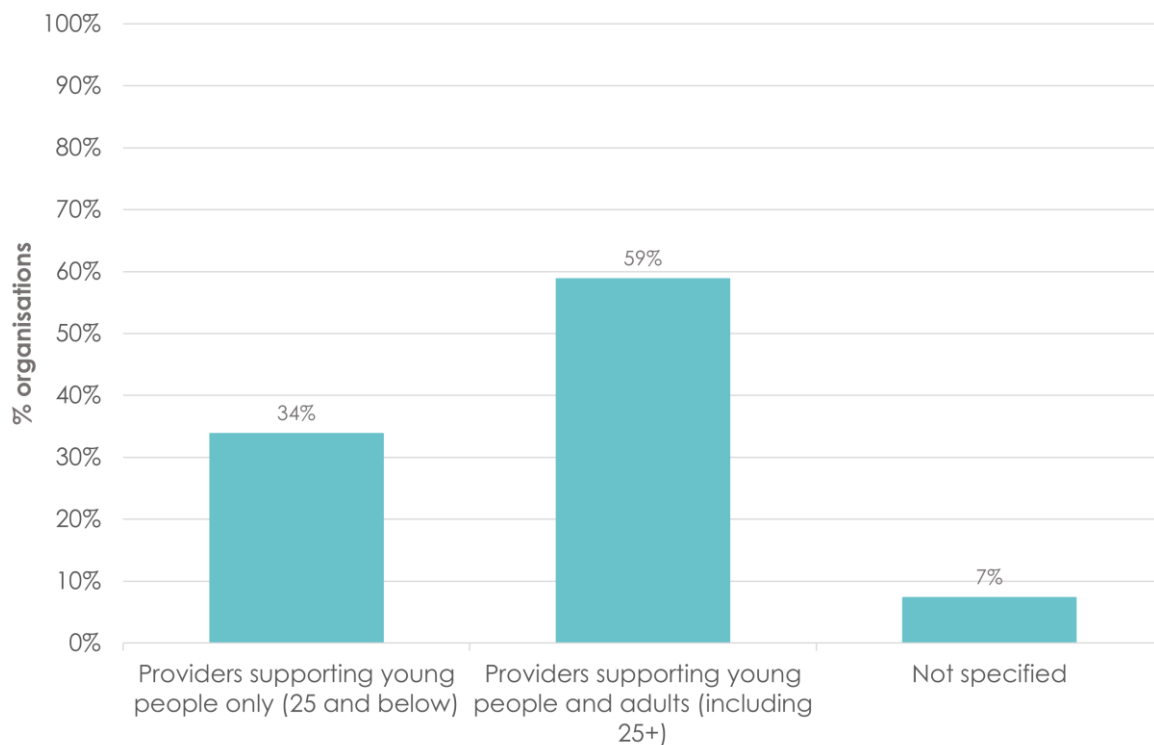
- **The majority of organisations do not provide support just for young people with LDA specifically.** 59% of responding organisations (n=79) stated that they provided support for both young people with LDA and young people without.
- **A minority of services are specifically targeted towards young people with LDA,** with most services supporting all adults (including those over 16 or 18)

<sup>21</sup> Analysis is based on providers indicating that they operate in at least one local authority that falls within a particulate region of England. Providers may operate across multiple regions, which is why the percentages do not add up to 100%.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

with LDA. Figure 11 shows that a majority of providers work with people aged over 16 or over 18 year old (59%). Around a third (34%) of organisations work exclusively with young people aged 25 and below.

Figure 11: What is the age range for people you provide support to? (n=68)<sup>22</sup>



These findings are consistent with stakeholder consultation, where stakeholders often referred to a range of support that was for young people with LDA specifically (e.g. supported internships, which are for people aged 18-24 with an EHCP) as well as other support that might be open to people with a range of cognitive or other disabilities. Stakeholders also highlighted provision, for example in Job Centre Plus, which is available to all unemployed people.

In terms of needs, Figure 12 highlights findings from our survey which suggest that providers work most commonly with those with moderate and mild learning disabilities, rather than severe/profound or multiple learning disabilities.

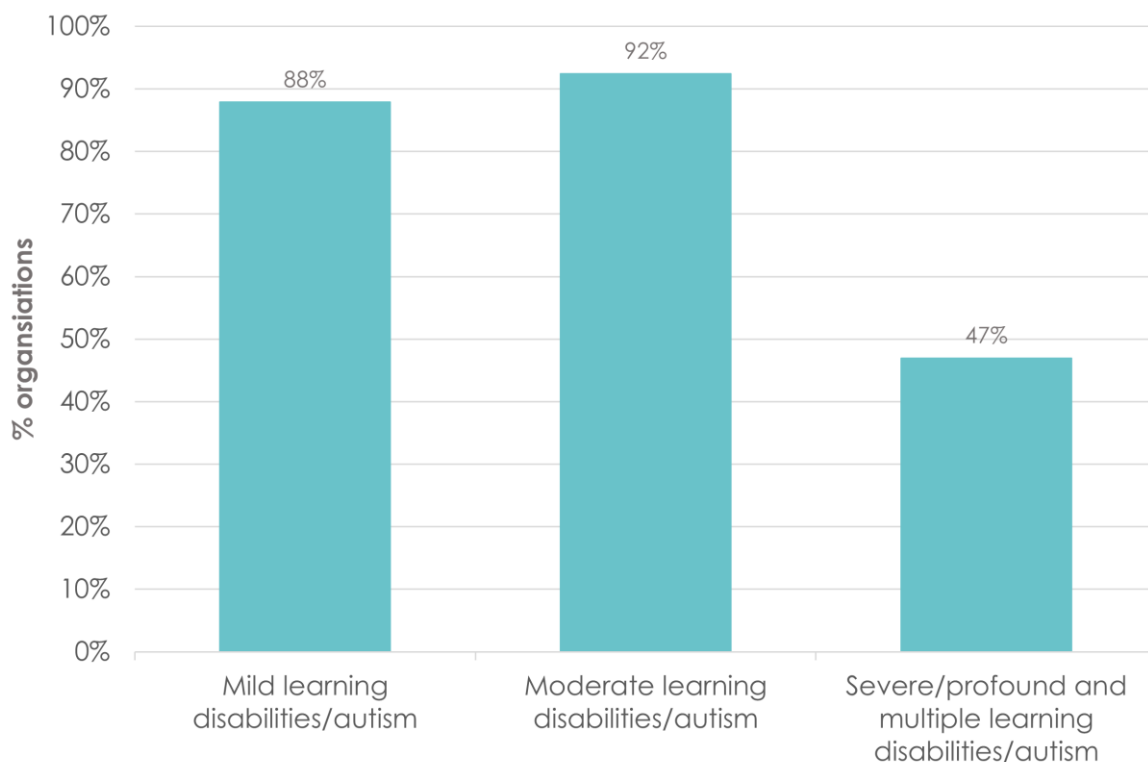
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<sup>22</sup> Organisations could write in their responses to this question. These were then grouped as relevant, with these groups formed to reflect common responses.



## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 12: Which groups of young people with a learning disability does your service(s) primarily work with? (n=66)<sup>23</sup>



This is also consistent with stakeholder consultation which suggests that providers tend to offer support to young people with less complex needs. Stakeholders reported:

- **The most common forms of support are not designed with complex disability/needs in mind.** For example, a young person will need to be at a certain level of work readiness before they could access an apprenticeship, stakeholders report.

*“Because of how provision is designed and delivered, it focuses on easier people to support, with less complex needs.”*

*Funder/commissioner*

- **More structured and formalised programmes may be difficult to adapt to complex support needs.** The supported internship model, for example, is specifically aimed at those young people who are closer to achieving employment already, with the aim that they will go into a paid role at the end of the year-long scheme. Interns are selected based on whether, with the right support, they could enter a work environment at the point the internship begins.

<sup>23</sup> Providers were able to select multiple categories in response to this question.

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*“Supported internships are only a yearlong programme so we only work with people who are nearly work ready.”*

*Employer*

- **‘Cherry picking’ young people that are ‘easiest’ to get into employment.** Some projects are funded on a payment by results basis, which encourages services to ‘cherry pick’ young people with lower levels of need in order to more quickly improve their employment outcomes and therefore secure funding. Providers who had been funded in this way, tended to be critical of this as a model.
- **Commissioners are less likely to fund support for people with complex needs.** A stakeholder reported that services may struggle to obtain funding due to a reluctance on the part of commissioners to spend money to support people to get into employment who may not then be able to enter higher paying jobs. This could particularly impact those with higher levels of need as it may not only take longer for them to enter work, but they are also more likely to work part-time and in lower paid jobs than those with less significant support needs.

*“There’s reticence to put levels of economic investment into somebody who is probably going to stay on lower level earnings and not put that back into the economy.”*

*Funder/commissioner*

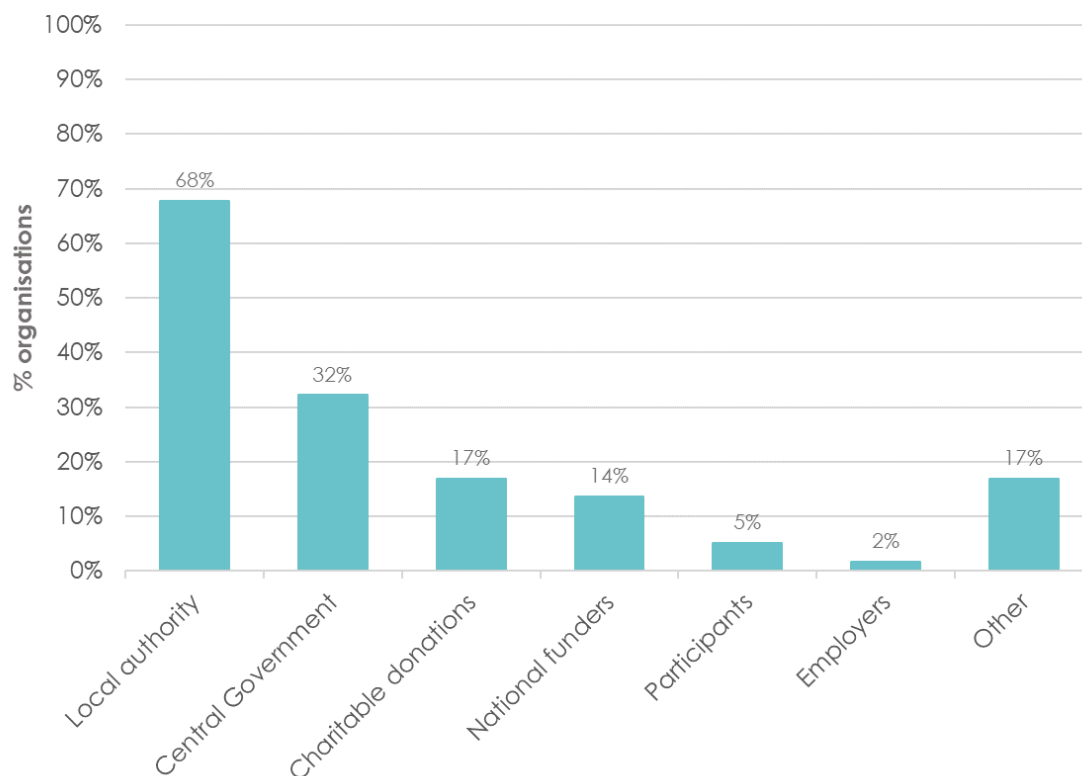
### 4.4 How is support commissioned and funded?

Stakeholders reported that when it comes to commissioning and funding of employment support for young people with LDA, there are a range of different funding sources and commissioners operating across England.

The survey of providers shows that the most common source of funding for most support providers is the local authority (68%), followed by central government (32%), charitable donations (17%) and other national funders (14%). Please note that the survey did not ask questions about the volume of funding received from each funding source.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 13: Who is the primary funder of your service(s)/programme(s)? (n=59)<sup>24</sup>



As detailed below, we do not know precisely how much money is spent on support for young people with LDA in relation to employment. This is because often providers receive funds from multiple funding streams and/or are operating services which assist multiple groups including young people with LDA. Therefore, we cannot easily separate out expenditure by funding stream. This is a gap which requires further research for a more nuanced understanding of total spend in this area and where the funding originates.

### 4.4.1 Who commissions and funds provision?

#### *Local government*

Data from the survey, FoI requests and stakeholder consultations indicate that local authorities have a key role in funding and commissioning support for young people with LDA into employment.

Stakeholders reported that many of their services are funded by local authorities, including services supported via the education budget (see the supported internships example below) and services commissioned and/or funded by other local authority departments.

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<sup>24</sup> Survey respondents could tick multiple boxes which explains why the percentages in the graph do not add up to 100%. Please note, national funders are non-governmental operators such as The National Lottery, the Youth Futures Foundation or other such bodies.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

However, stakeholders reported that the role of local authorities varies significantly. Providers and commissioners/funders identified that certain local authorities take a proactive leadership role and undertake proactive steps to shape and organise their local support provider market, whereas others have limited involvement in this space. This is corroborated by the FoI responses from local authorities regarding expenditure, which, as shown in Figure 14 and Figure 15 varies significantly including:

- 99 local authorities provided data, of which 89 reported expenditure and 10 local authorities reported no spend on employment support for young people with LDA.<sup>25</sup>
- Of the 89 local authorities that reported a spend, investment ranged from £404 to £2,952,188 by local authorities, including a total spend of £27,843,078.
- The average expenditure among local authorities who provided data (including those who spent £0.00) was £281,243.
- Local authority data by region indicates that East of England has the highest average expenditure on this type of support and Yorkshire and the Humber has the lowest.

Figure 14: Local authority expenditure by region

Region	Total expenditure	Average expenditure
East of England (n=8/11)	£4,500,403.00	£562,500.38
South East (n=11/19)	£3,756,352.96	£341,486.63
South West (n=11/15)	£3,724,779.03	£338,616.28
East Midlands (n=6/10)	£1,639,135.07	£273,189.18
London (n=21/33)	£5,427,890.25	£258,470.96
West Midlands (n=8/14)	£1,874,644.45	£234,330.56
North East (n=9/12)	£2,095,335.73	£232,815.08

<sup>25</sup> 5 local authorities did not respond to the FoI. A further 48 were unable to provide data. See the technical appendix for further details. Several local authorities provided estimates for their expenditure including figures which cover services that support young people with LDA into employment, but not exclusively. These figures were included, but the total expenditure figures should be treated with caution.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Region	Total expenditure	Average expenditure
North West (n=13/23)	£2,824,892.84	£217,856.95
Yorkshire and the Humber (n=13/16)	£1,999,645.07	£153,818.85
Total (n=99/152)	£27,843,078.40	£281,243.22

Based on the qualitative responses to the Fol request, there is some evidence that local authorities may have struggled to identify all funding sources and disentangle spend on young people with LDA from other groups. Further research would be required to generate a more nuanced understanding of this.

### Funding supported internships

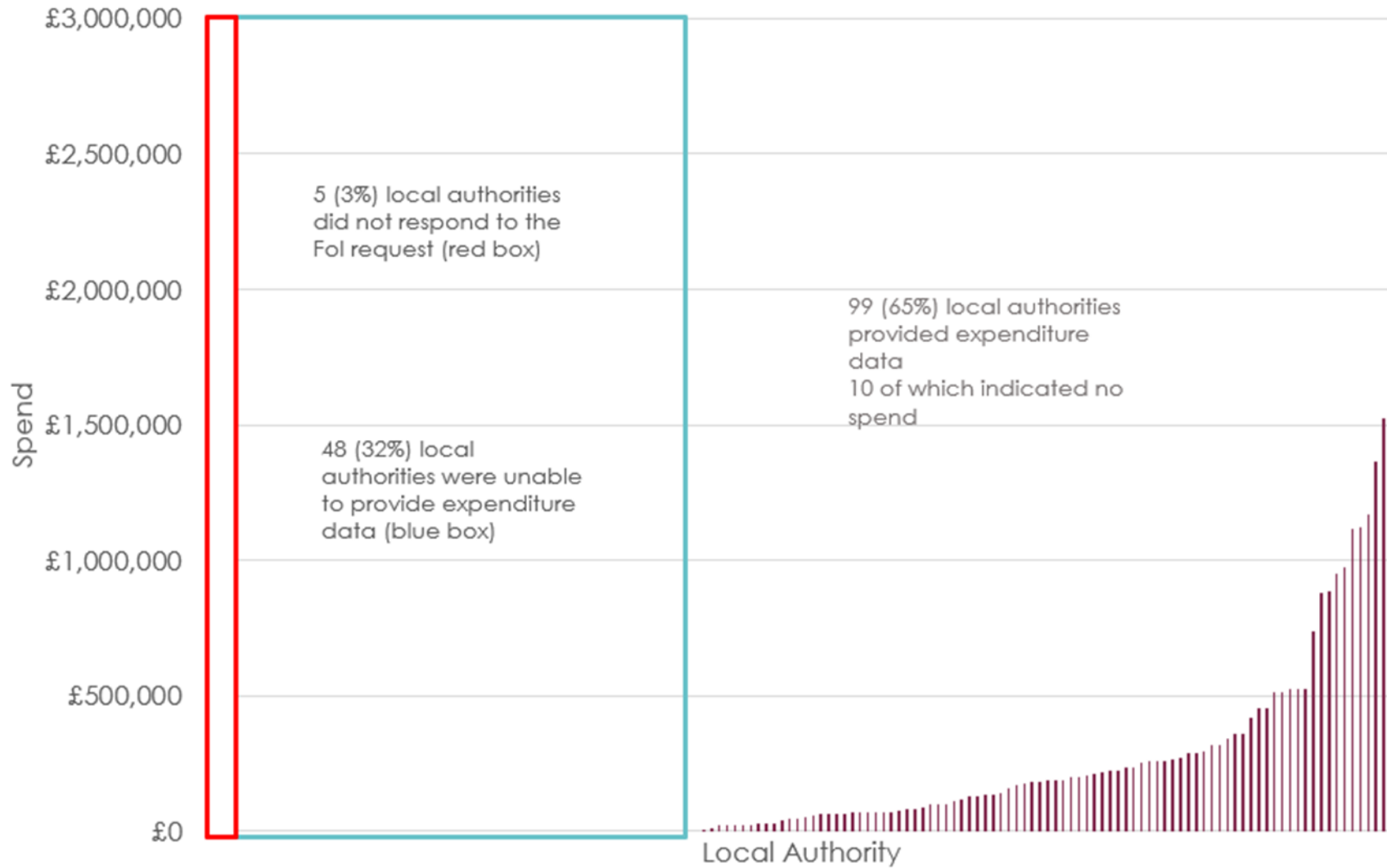
Supported internships are an example of a programme that receives funding from multiple sources. They are funded using a mix of local and national funds, in the same way that an educational course would be funded for a young people with an EHCP.

A college or voluntary sector organisation (the provider) will receive some funds, either directly from the Education Skills Funding Agency or via the local authority (depending on their governance arrangements). This includes Element 1 (basic funding for all pupils) and Element 2 (an additional £6,000 per high needs place). Element 2 funding is provided to a provider based on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR), where each provider will submit a report of the needs of the learners they support.

A young person who needs more support – such as someone with an EHCP – will be eligible for an additional top-up of funding (Element 3) which is paid to a college with agreement of the local authority. This is agreed on a place-by-place basis.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 15: Local authority expenditure on employability support 2021-22



## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

### National government

Stakeholders reported that there is a range of funding which is available directly from national government. They most commonly discussed Access to Work funding, which provides support to individuals with physical or learning disabilities, or mental health conditions in employment. In 2022-23, 4,150 people with a learning disability received a payment from Access to Work (including people of all ages), totalling over £16million.<sup>26</sup> The level of expenditure on people with a learning disability has almost doubled from £8.7million in 2018/19 to 2022/23. Stakeholders reported that they use Access to Work funds to support young people with things such as reasonable adjustments and equipment, but it can also be used to pay for a job coach.

#### Access to Work<sup>27</sup>

Access to Work is an employment support programme funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It aims to help people with physical or learning disabilities, or mental health conditions in employment.

Individuals can apply to receive financial and practical support for starting a new role or to help them maintain employment. How much each individual receives will depend on the specifics of what they need it for. Examples of support that Access to Work can fund include:

- Equipment in the workplace.
- Money towards extra travel costs to and from work if an individual is unable to use public transport or needs adjustments to their vehicle.
- Other practical help at work, such as a job coach.

To be eligible, the individual will need to be in a paid role, about to start a role, have an interview for a job or be about to begin a work trial or start work experience under the Youth Contract arranged through Jobcentre Plus. This funding cannot be used for prospective employees carrying out pre-employment training or applying for jobs. Employers can also access advice and guidance through Access to Work can also give to help them to understand their employees' disabilities.

#### Challenges with Access to Work

Access to Work funding scheme was frequently highlighted by stakeholders as lacking in effectiveness. Although many stakeholders use

<sup>26</sup> Department for Work and Pensions, *Access to work statistics: April 2007 to March 2023*, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/access-to-work-statistics-april-2007-to-march-2023> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>27</sup> Department for Work and Pensions, *Access to work: Factsheet for customers, 2023*, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-factsheet/access-to-work-factsheet-for-customers> [accessed October 2023].

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Access to Work funding, the application process was described as slow and very difficult to use. Stakeholders discussed:

- **Complexity of applications.** Stakeholders reported that the process is too bureaucratic, requiring a significant amount of time and work to apply. This process is very inaccessible, particularly for a service whose target group include people with LDA.
- **Slow response.** Stakeholders reported that there is a significant time lag between the submission of applications and when funding is received, meaning that providers, employers, or the young people themselves may have to pay for the service/equipment they require to work in the meantime and await repayment. Examples were also given of situations when a young person had to decline a role because of the amount of time it took for them to receive the funding to support them to get into work or carry out their role.

There are other national programmes operating which fund support for people with LDA into employment. These include national, non-recurrent schemes designed to boost the uptake and delivery of specific support. Unlike the support by local authorities, stakeholders reported that many of the funding streams available from national government are one-time, non-recurrent funds and often change. Recent examples of programmes discussed by stakeholders include:

- **Supported Internships Programme – Internships Work:**<sup>28</sup> This is a programme funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and being delivered by a collaboration between BASE, DfN Project SEARCH and the National Development Team for inclusion (NDTi). By 2025, approximately £18 million will be invested, aiming to double the number of internships per year to support young people with an EHCP. Up to £3 million will be spent to pilot the supported internships with young people with LDA who do not have an EHCP. The programme will:
  - Support local authorities in England to develop SEND Forums.
  - Provide an internship model and guidance to support providers and employers.
  - Develop and establish processes to ensure quality supported internships, including the Supported Internship Quality Assurance Framework (SIQAF).
  - Train over 700 job coaches to set standards.

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<sup>28</sup> For more information see NDTi, *What is Internships Work?*, available at: <https://www.ndti.org.uk/change-and-development/internships-work> [accessed October 2023].



## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

- **Careers advice and guidance:**<sup>29</sup> In 2021-22, the DfE provided The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) with £28 million in grant funding in the financial year 2021-22 to provide careers guidance to schools across England<sup>30</sup>. This includes guidance for young people with SEND in mainstream and specialist schools. Schools can also work with local providers to help arrange work experience for students. It is unclear what proportion of funds goes towards careers guidance for SEND students.
- **Local Supported Employment:** In 2022, the DWP provided grant funding for approximately 20 local authorities to take part in a pilot to boost the roll-out of local authority-led supported employment programmes in their area.

### Non-governmental funding

Figure 13 shows that only 17% and 14% of providers reported receiving charitable or non-governmental national funding respectively. Only a minority of providers referenced these funding sources when we spoke to them.

They reported that sometimes these funds, which might come in the form of a grant, had a greater degree of flexibility and therefore could be used to try new forms of support.

#### 4.4.2 How can funding and commissioning be improved?

Stakeholders reported that when it comes to funding, providers find it challenging to access:

- Sufficient funding
- Flexible funding
- Sustainable and reliable funding.

Stakeholders reported that many funding streams tend to be short-term, such as funding for a two-year programme. This can make it difficult to plan long-term provision, retain services and requires regular re-applications for funding. There were also concerns that changing agendas and priorities may impact a programme's ability to continue.

*“Policy vacillating is a pain – services begin and then withdraw, never quite long-term.”*

*Policy/academic*

Additionally, there are often restrictions about how the funding can be used, which stakeholders find challenging. They were concerned about the

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<sup>29</sup> For more information see Department for Work and Pensions, *Local supported employment: Guidance for local authorities*, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-supported-employment-guidance-for-local-authorities> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>30</sup> Information gathered from Fol request to DfE.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

number of programmes that were targeted towards young people with an EHCP only, that may exclude other young people with LDA.

Lastly, stakeholders reported that funding was often insufficient. Providers reported finding it challenging to deliver high quality support within the funding available. They highlighted that certain staff, such as job coaches, were highly skilled but often this was not reflected in the salaries available. This leads to high staff turnover or vacancies in key positions.

*“The role of a job coach is a difficult one. They have to wear so many hats. It’s a complex and skilled job and the pay rate is not great. Therefore you have to expect you’re not going to get a job coach if you’re recruiting for one, you’ll have to train them.”*

*“If you want to create great support, we need to create opportunities to become great job coaches and pay well.”*

*Providers*

## 5 Understanding support for employers

### 5.1 Overview

Stakeholders identified a range of different support that is intended to aid employers in recruiting and supporting young people with LDA into and at work. Stakeholders identified that support is typically designed to:

- Boost skills, confidence and awareness of supporting young people with LDA.
- Support an employer to successfully recruit and help a specific young person with LDA.

Stakeholders reported that there is insufficient data available to understand what support employers are accessing. However, they stated that it was likely not to be enough.

Additionally, there is a desire to see more done to raise awareness and understanding across all employers about employment support for people with LDA. Stakeholders reported that there is likely too much responsibility and activity falling on individual local authorities, service providers and/or colleges to build a relationship with an individual employer or even member of staff.

*For information on what works in terms of supporting employers, see Report C: Understanding what works.*

### 5.2 Rationale

Stakeholders identified that support for employers was typically designed to achieve one of the following:

- Improve organisational understanding, awareness, skills and confidence so that they could successfully recruit and employ young people with LDA.
- Provide direct support to an employer and employee with LDA to support them to be successful in their work.

### 5.3 What support is available for employers?

A range of support available to employers were outlined by stakeholders. These include:

- Direct support or access to funding to support individual young people with LDA (for example, Access to Work funding).
- Events and promotional activity to raise knowledge of young people with LDA who could be employed.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

- Workforce training/support with policies.

### *Support for individual employees*

Stakeholders reported that employers can access support to help them assist individual young people with LDA.

Support could include funding to implement reasonable adjustments.

Support could also come in the form of a job coach. For employers participating in a supported employment or internship programme, a job coach would be a part of the programme. An employer could also recruit a job coach directly. Job coaches can provide employers with a range of support – alongside the support they provide to a young person – including:

- Giving managers advice about how to divide up tasks (*job carve*) to make them manageable for a young person with LDA.
- Improving skills and confidence of staff when communicating with young people with LDA, especially those who have speech or language difficulties.
- Support and guidance to problem solve if a young person encounters a challenge. This might include providing additional supervision for a young person with LDA and helping them to resolve challenging situations as they encounter them.

### *Raising awareness of employment opportunities*

Stakeholders reported that a key activity involves providers, commissioners and often colleges and schools, making employers aware of the options to support young people with LDA.

Providers and commissioners/funders reported that this typically involves contacting and explaining opportunities to individual employers. This work commonly relies on effective relationship and network building between the organisations working with young people with LDA and employers in their communities.

Providers and commissioners reported that they tend to focus on companies where they know an individual has a particular interest in supporting people with LDA – for example, a director with family experience.

This process is often one of persuasion and reassurance, as much as it is about supporting employers, as one provider described:

*“We go into employers and talk about Access to Work, supported internships, job coaches – show how it's possible to employ young people with LDA and how it can enrich their workforce. Having people looking at things in a different way*

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

*can be key to helping businesses look at things in different ways.”*

*Provider*

Examples of this being done at greater scale were identified: for example, one national voluntary sector provider was highlighted for its work in building connections with other national employers (including supermarkets, construction firms and pub chains) and establishing agreements to connect young people with LDA to opportunities set aside for them.

Other examples of engagement at scale include local authorities, colleges, or voluntary and community sector organisations hosting “reverse job fairs”. Like the name suggests, a reverse job fair is a job fair where the roles are swapped. Employers are invited to attend to meet different young people with LDA who have stands where they can explain their skills, strengths and interests. The aim of these events is to increase potential employers’ awareness of what this cohort can offer and may initiate conversations and processes for linking young people with LDA to employers.

### *Workforce training and accreditation*

Employers and support providers reported that training and accreditation programmes are also available to organisations. Training can include:

- **Formal**, teaching staff about neurodiversity and neurodevelopmental conditions and how people with LDA can be best supported into and in work.
- **Informal**, such as information sharing and advice giving. For example, providers identified examples of offering employers advice about developing their recruitment policies to be more inclusive, accessing funding, offer reasonable adjustments and more. This is generic training or advice, not specific to an individual.

Lastly, stakeholders identified that they could seek accreditations, which set out standards and guidance about how to be more effectively supporting people with LDA. The most identified was the UK Disability Confidence Scheme (see below) – which is not specific to learning disability or autism – but does include guidance on accommodating those and other disabilities.

#### **Disability confidence scheme<sup>31</sup>**

This is a government-led scheme, enabling employers to qualify through three different levels of ‘disability confidence’. It aims to increase understanding of disabilities and challenge attitudes towards them, while

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<sup>31</sup> Department for Work and Pensions, *How to sign up to the Disability Confident employer scheme*, 2019, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disability-confident-how-to-sign-up-to-the-employer-scheme> [accessed October 2023].

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

ensuring that people with disabilities have opportunities to 'fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations'.

The scheme is based on self-assessment. There is no external regulation for the first two levels:

### Level 1: Disability Confident Committed

Employers sign up for level 1 by agreeing to the scheme's commitments and identifying one action that they plan to carry out to make a difference for disabled people. The commitments are relatively general and include 'inclusive and accessible recruitment' and 'providing reasonable adjustments'.

The actions include provision of work experience, paid employment and internships for disabled people. However, at this level, the employer only needs to identify one which they will aim to carry out.

### Level 2: Disability Confident Employer

Employers can only progress to level 2 once they have signed up for level 1. Organisations are then required to self-assess around two themes: 'getting the right people for their business' and 'keeping and developing their people'.

### Level 3: Disability Confident Leader

In order to reach this level, the employer must have their self-assessment validated by someone outside of their business, show what they have done or will do to support their status as a Disability Confident Leader, confirm they are employing disabled people and report on disability, mental health and wellbeing within the organisation.

## 5.4 How could support for employers be improved?

Stakeholders identified two main areas support for employers could be improved:

- Improved availability of learning disability and/or autism specific training.
- More coordinated awareness raising to promote opportunities, conducted at scale.

There is limited data available to assess what proportion of employers are accessing some form of support to employ young people with a learning disability.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

### 5.4.1 Limited training available

Stakeholders reported that there was not enough direct training and support available, including training with a focus on supporting young people with LDA.

They noted that if an employer participates in a scheme such as a supported internships programme, they will receive direct support to implement changes within the organisation and provide suitable work experience opportunities. However, outside of these schemes, there is less available.

Some stakeholders reported that they – or other employers had – felt the Disability Confidence Scheme would play a greater role in this respect. However, stakeholders reported that in their experience it fell short of achieving real education and engagement of employers with this issue. In particular, they stressed that because the scheme does not have external assessment or regulations before level three that in-practice, employers with this certification were not actually confident in how to employ or recruit young people with LDA.

This was echoed in some interviews with employers on the scheme who had very little knowledge of available support to employ young people with LDA. One employer emphasised that more centralised encouragement and guidance for this is key. Speaking about a disability confidence scheme, one employer said:

*“We thought we would get more support actively to engage with work, but actually it's more just signing up and a badge.”*

*Employer*

### 5.4.2 Awareness raising is at small scale and poorly coordinated

Stakeholders reported that efforts to promote opportunities to recruit young people with LDA by providers or local authorities and colleges were too often taking place at too small a scale and were poorly coordinated.

Stakeholders involved in building these relationships acknowledged that often the work to sign-up a single provider could be painstaking and that the approaches adopted were not particularly strategic.

Examples were given of local authorities that had found it difficult to encourage other branches of their services to accept placements or supported employment opportunities.

Providers reported examples where they had sought to engage with regionally significant employers but had been knocked back because several neighbouring local authorities had also already sought to set up programmes.

Stakeholders suggested that there were opportunities for a more strategic approach to engagement including working with partners at local and

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

regional levels to be better coordinated, but also actions that should be taken nationally to promote opportunities.



## 6 Understanding system-level support

### 6.1 Overview

Stakeholders we spoke to outlined action taken at a system level which was intended to enable better outcomes for young people with LDA.

The aims of system-level support included improving the knowledge about supporting young people with LDA into employment (e.g., developing best practice, improving system intelligence about supply and demand) and improving the coordination and availability of support through greater system leadership and market shaping.

However, it was identified that too often there is limited activity taking place at a system-level to create the conditions for young people with LDA to achieve better outcomes. Stakeholders highlighted the need for a clearer set of responsibilities and duties, as well as resources, to enable this work to be delivered.

Lastly, commissioners in a small number of local authorities reported exploring complex system approaches to improving their employment support offer locally. This work is at an early stage and further evidence about what it involves and how it works could be valuable.

*For information on promising system-level responses to improve employment of young people with LDA, see Report C: Understanding what works.*

### 6.2 Rationale

The aims of system-level support, according to stakeholders, included:

- **Promoting knowledge and understanding of good practice:** Stakeholders reported that there is a limited evidence base for “what works” to support young people with LDA into employment and that often, it is not well understood what support young people are actually receiving. To improve outcomes for young people with LDA, they argue that there needs to be a greater focus on evidence-based practice. Stakeholders recognised the need for a stronger evidence-base in this area and the need to generate it, share it and mobilise it.
- **Improved understanding of the need for and supply of support:** Stakeholders, but particularly commissioners and providers, reported that they are undertaking work to improve the understanding of the need for, and supply of, support – typically at a local authority level.
- **Raising the issue of low employment rates for young people with LDA:** Stakeholders reported actions to raise the level of understanding and focus on employment challenges experienced by young people with LDA.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

- **Improving the coordination and accessibility of support:** Stakeholders reported that action at system-level includes work to better coordinate support and ensure that pathways are clear and accessible.

Stakeholders summarised the aims of work at a system level as trying to create the conditions for better outcomes, including making pathways simpler, removing duplication and addressing gaps.

### 6.3 What actions are being taken at a system-level?

Stakeholders identified a range of activities and actions that that are being undertaken at a system-level. These include:

- Developing local strategies and providing system leadership.
- Connecting and convening partners.
- Improving understanding of the local system.
- Evaluation and sharing best practice.

#### *Developing local strategies and providing system leadership*

Local authority commissioners identified that a key role that they can fulfil is to provide leadership within their local system. They identified the following actions linked to this, including:

- **Developing clear strategies for improving employment rates of young people with LDA:** The extent to which different local authorities have developed strategies for improving employment outcomes is varied. Some reported the importance of having clear objectives so that it remains on the local authority agenda. They also highlighted how, by having a clear strategy which sets out what support is required, commissioners can signal to providers what support they should develop and what support commissioners are seeking to fund. However, others had less strategic focus in this area and tended to recommission the same services.

Some stakeholders suggested that part of the local authority leadership role is setting an example for other employers. A small number of commissioners reported that their local authority has offered supported employment or placement opportunities to young people with LDA. They reported that it was important to provide opportunities, but also demonstrate to others that it was possible and beneficial. As one stakeholder reported:

*“We think this is a key area for the local authority to set the tone and lead by example. We encourage employment of people with learning disabilities and autism in the council. One of our schemes has created roles for people with learning*

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

*disabilities and autism as lived experience experts to critique and guide social care practice for people with similar needs."*

*Commissioner/funder*

### *Connecting and convening partners*

Stakeholders identified that steps have been taken by some local authorities and other agencies to bring together stakeholders interested in supporting young people with LDA into employment.

For some local authorities, this has begun with coordinating the support that different departments commission or deliver. As one stakeholder explained, there might be adult social care, children and education services and economic development teams which all have an interest or role in this support, but sometimes the approaches taken are not linked strategically so may not be as effective as they could be.

In addition to this work, local authorities and other actors have created forums and partnerships designed to bring together the people needed to support young people with LDA into employment. This includes families, schools and colleges, providers, commissioners and employers.

Some local authority commissioners reported that they had staff or teams focused on employment support who coordinated this type of work. They highlighted the importance of relationship building and knowing who is doing what to bring about effective change.

*"You have to know your community stakeholders and what is going on in the area."*

*Provider*

### *Improved understanding the local system*

Stakeholders reported the importance of achieving a greater understanding of the local system in relation to employment support for young people with LDA.

One approach to achieving this understanding is system mapping as part of a wider needs assessment. A small number of local authority commissioners reported that they had undertaken system mapping exercises to improve their understanding of the supply of support and when combined with a needs assessment, can help identify the obstacles that young people with LDA experience and potential solutions.

Stakeholders reported that conducting needs assessments, including system mapping exercises, help them to identify overlapping and gaps in provision and can inform commissioning decisions.

Stakeholders also identified that using system maps has helped them to better understand the pathways to accessing support that young people with LDA follow. One stakeholder reported:

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

*“We mapped out services in our area. There was a lot but none talking to each other, so they are trying to bring together organisations to refer and direct people between them where relevant.”*

*Funder/Commissioner*

### *Developing and sharing good practice*

Stakeholders reported that there are multiple agencies that are seeking to develop and promote good practice. While some of this work happens at a local level, stakeholders also pointed towards groups such as BASE<sup>32</sup> and DFN Project SEARCH<sup>33</sup> who have developed specific models of support and are involved in gathering evidence and promoting these models around the UK and Ireland (the Project SEARCH model is used internationally).

There are also examples of programmes funded by central government such as DWP’s Local Supported Employment programme<sup>34</sup> or DfE’s Internships Work<sup>35</sup> programmes which offer non-recurrent funding to local authorities and providers to introduce new models of support.

## 6.4 What are the areas for improvement in system-level support?

Stakeholders reported that there are several areas that system-level support could improve.

At present, stakeholders felt that there are not enough resources put into coordinating support effectively and building the type of relationships and networks that can facilitate evidence-led commissioning strategies.

Stakeholders report that this results in lots of siloes, which is creating a risk of overlapping provision and can make it challenging for young people with LDA to be connected to support that would suit them best. It also misses the opportunity for good practice to be shared and services improved and made to function more effectively with other local provision (e.g. through referral pathways). One provider stated:

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<sup>32</sup> British Association of Supported Employment, *What is supported employment?*, available at: <https://www.base-uk.org/what-supported-employment> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>33</sup> DFN Project Search, *Changing lives together*, available at: <https://www.dfnprojectsearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/DFN-Project-SEARCH-Overview.pdf> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>34</sup> Department for Work and Pensions, *Local supported employment: Guidance for local authorities*, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-supported-employment-guidance-for-local-authorities> [accessed October 2023].

<sup>35</sup> NDTi, *What is Internships Work?*, available at: <https://www.ndti.org.uk/change-and-development/internships-work> [accessed October 2023].

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

*“No one really talks to each other to figure out what's right for an individual. It's not a lack of support, but a lack of knowledge of support that's available.”*

*Provider*

Stakeholders reported that where local authorities are doing more work, it is commonly because local political leadership has specifically prioritised employment support for young people. However, they reported that there are not clear duties on councils to support young people with LDA into employment, especially those without an EHCP or who do not qualify for support from Adult Social Care.

Furthermore, stakeholders reported that many local authorities face funding challenges which means that they have limited resources to invest in support that goes beyond their statutory duties. As a result, employment support for young people with LDA is often not prioritised.

## 7 Areas of improvement and actions

The above sections of this report outline stakeholders' understanding of the provision of employment support for young people with LDA. However, stakeholders reported a range of areas for improvement and actions in relation to provision.

Figure 16 **provides a summary of improvements and actions in relation to the understanding of provision.** It highlights the importance of:

- Building a clear and nuanced understanding of existing provision through improved data collection and system mapping.
- Ensuring that provision is available and accessible to people with different needs across the country.
- Building on existing programmes to encourage more providers to offer in-work support.
- Considering how changes to funding and the way local systems operate could provide more effective support.

For information on other areas of improvement and actions, see *Report D: Improvements and actions*. For information on what stakeholders indicate works well when supporting young people with LDA into employment, see *Report C: Understanding what works*.

**Suggested audience:** To improve support to help young people with LDA into employment, there are a range of partners that will need to play a role. Different actions will require the input of different combinations of stakeholders. We have identified which stakeholders we think actions might be most relevant to, with a focus on policy makers, commissioners and funders, providers, and employers. This is not a comprehensive list but reflects our interpretation of which stakeholders are best placed to progress the actions recommended by the participants of this research.

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Figure 16: Summary of improvements and required actions in relation to the understanding of provision

Improvements	Actions informed by discussions with stakeholders	Relevant to:
<p>Improve understanding of existing provision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop system maps to help all parties understand existing provision which aims to support young people with LDA into employment, as part of a robust national and local needs assessment. Ensure the system response is rooted in evidence for young people with LDA in relation to employment outcomes.</li> <li>● Document, protocolise and, where possible, manualise their programmes of support so that successful initiatives can be replicated, scaled and spread if they are found to be effective.</li> <li>● Review and improve the effectiveness of how information about provision to support young people with LDA in relation to employment is shared across the system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Commissioners</li> <li>● Employers</li> <li>● Policy makers</li> <li>● Providers</li> </ul>
<p>Improve accessibility of employment support for young people with LDA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review the eligibility criteria to programmes to ensure that they are open to young people with LDA who need the support. Consideration could be given especially to young people with LDA but without an EHCP and whether alternative assessment of need could be used.</li> <li>● Review how referrals are made to different support and examine whether the pathway to support can be simplified and better joined-up between different providers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Commissioners</li> <li>● Employers</li> <li>● Policy makers</li> <li>● Providers</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure equitable provision of employment support for young people with LDA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build on improved understanding of local provision and review how available provision compares to local needs. Ensure that resources are targeted towards local areas and regions where there may be insufficient availability of support.</li> <li>● Map the current eligibility criteria of support and give consideration to whether the support that is available provides options which meet the requirements of young people with LDA with different levels of need. Give</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Commissioners</li> <li>● Employers</li> <li>● Policy makers</li> <li>● Providers</li> </ul>

## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Improvements	Actions informed by discussions with stakeholders	Relevant to:
	<p>particular attention to those with complex needs or those who do not have an EHCP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure providers have the skills, capacity and funding to collect robust service level monitoring data which takes into account the action above, i.e., including data on young people's demographic backgrounds. This could aid commissioners to better understand whether needs are being met equitably.</li> </ul>	
<p>Ensure the availability of support for young people with LDA in work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on existing programmes to promote in-work support (such as supported employment and supported internships).</li> <li>• Engage with providers who offer other employment support – and therefore may be well placed to deliver in-work support – to explore any barriers to entering this sector.</li> <li>• Promote and encourage more employers to consider participating in supported internship, supported employment or other programmes that offer in-work support. This should include explaining and promoting the support and benefits for employers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioners</li> <li>• Employers</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>
<p>Ensure appropriate support for employers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the availability of support for employers nationally and locally, to ensure that the support is sufficient and meets the different needs that they have.</li> <li>• Review and improve the effectiveness of how information about provision to support young people with LDA in relation to employment is shared with employers, including information about what the benefits are to employers and what support is available to them.</li> <li>• Review how commissioners/funders and providers are recruiting employers and explore whether more action can be taken collectively and at scale, rather than targeting employers one at a time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioners</li> <li>• Employers</li> <li>• Policy makers</li> <li>• Providers</li> </ul>



## Supporting young people with LDA into employment: Understanding of provision

Improvements	Actions informed by discussions with stakeholders	Relevant to:
<p>Create local systems that prioritise and support young people with LDA to access employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarify the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in relation to supporting young people with LDA into employment, with a focus on the role of schools/colleges and local authorities.</li> <li>● Encourage local authorities to develop local strategies which outline how they will improve the rate of employment of young people with LDA in their area, to promote the salience of this issue and provide greater accountability.</li> <li>● Ensure that local authorities have the skills and resources to play a full role in coordinating local provision in their areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Commissioners</li> <li>● Policy makers</li> </ul>
<p>Make funding effective and sustainable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider longer-term funding for provision which aims to support young people with LDA into employment. This will also help support recruitment and retention of the workforce.</li> <li>● Review the availability of funding to ensure that it is sufficient to recruit and retain staff with the necessary skills and expertise to deliver high quality support.</li> <li>● Review the criteria associated with national and local funding streams that aim to support young people with LDA into employment. Make funding sufficiently flexible so that providers and employers can access resources to meet the full range of needs of young people with LDA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Commissioners</li> <li>● Policy makers</li> </ul>

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