

I have worked in the DES program for 18 months and before this worked in training as a trainer and assessor for DES and JSA providers.

Whilst working in training I trained for a lot of JSA providers. When the tender came up for JSA I noticed the enormous discomfort of clients who were told they would be transferring to a new provider and therefore a new Employment Consultant. This caused major disruption to the progress of these clients. I also noticed that a lot of experienced consultants were deciding to leave the Employment industry due to the disturbance it caused to them.

Working in DES is a rewarding career, being able to help those clients with a disability move towards their goals is satisfying. Clients on my caseload have stressed the importance to me of having one case manager during their time in the DES program as to not have to explain their circumstances to a new consultant and feel like they are starting all over again just when their goals were in reach.

Mental Health is a contributing factor to the DES program and once a client with mental health feels comfortable with the consultant it is detrimental to their plans of employment and only pushes them back if they are forced to go to a new provider and new case manager. Taking away someone's chance of reaching their goal is simply not right.

Employment Consultants do not work in this industry for the money. This is a rewarding career which takes a special person to be able to do the job. Taking away staff's safe employment and creating uncertainty results in experienced, capable and simply good consultants out of the industry.

I strongly feel that DES providers who have 3 stars or less being put up for tender is just not right. Think of the enormous amount of GREAT staff who will decide to leave the industry and more importantly think about the disability services code- put our clients first and do not make them go through the anxiety and uncertainty of a new DES provider and a new case manager.