



Ensuring Vision Rehabilitation Specialists are professionally registered

Professional register now Professional Standards Authority-approved

In May 2016 ADASS issued a [position statement on vision rehabilitation](#). The statement outlines the purpose of vision rehabilitation and its role as a preventative and enabling service in the context of the Care Act (2014). The statement also stresses the importance of securing qualified Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (also known as Rehabilitation Officers, Visual Impairment or ROVIs).

In 2019, the professional body for Vision Rehabilitation Specialists, the Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network (RWPN), established a register of qualified practitioners. This register has now been accredited by the Professional Standards Agency (PSA) to join the PSA's UK-wide [accredited register scheme](#).

Safeguarding blind and partially sighted service users

All professional Vision Rehabilitation Specialists who are registrants with RWPN must

- have achieved the appropriate professional qualifications;
- must undertake mandatory Continued Professional Development as a condition of registration.

These requirements enable them to teach the specialist service people need after losing their sight. These skills help people to navigate the built environment, use public transport, maintain a safe and habitable home and retain the ability to prepare and cook food. All these activities can be risky for people with visual impairment, and professional Vision Rehabilitation Specialists are essential to enable people to cope with activities that could otherwise put them in danger and allow people with sight loss to live the lives they choose.

Registration offers assurance to employers because most vision rehabilitation work (like Social Work and Occupational Therapy) is undertaken on a one-to-one basis in people's homes. The risk of poor

assessment, poor service delivery and professional malpractice can create the potential for harm, neglect or abuse.

The government believes the benefits of accredited registers for employers and service users are [clear](#).

ADASS endorses this register as best practice in ensuring its members' workforce is fit for purpose in safeguarding the public. It expects that:

- employers and commissioners of Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (directly or under contract) will understand the benefits of employing this specialist service and understand its inherent risks
- employers will want to ensure its workforce is registered and will expect that new employees will be registered as a condition of employment

Appendices

1. [RWPN register of professional practitioners](#)
2. Information about [RWPN professional standards](#), including National Occupational Standards; Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct; CPD scheme.
3. [About Professional Standards Authority accreditation](#)

