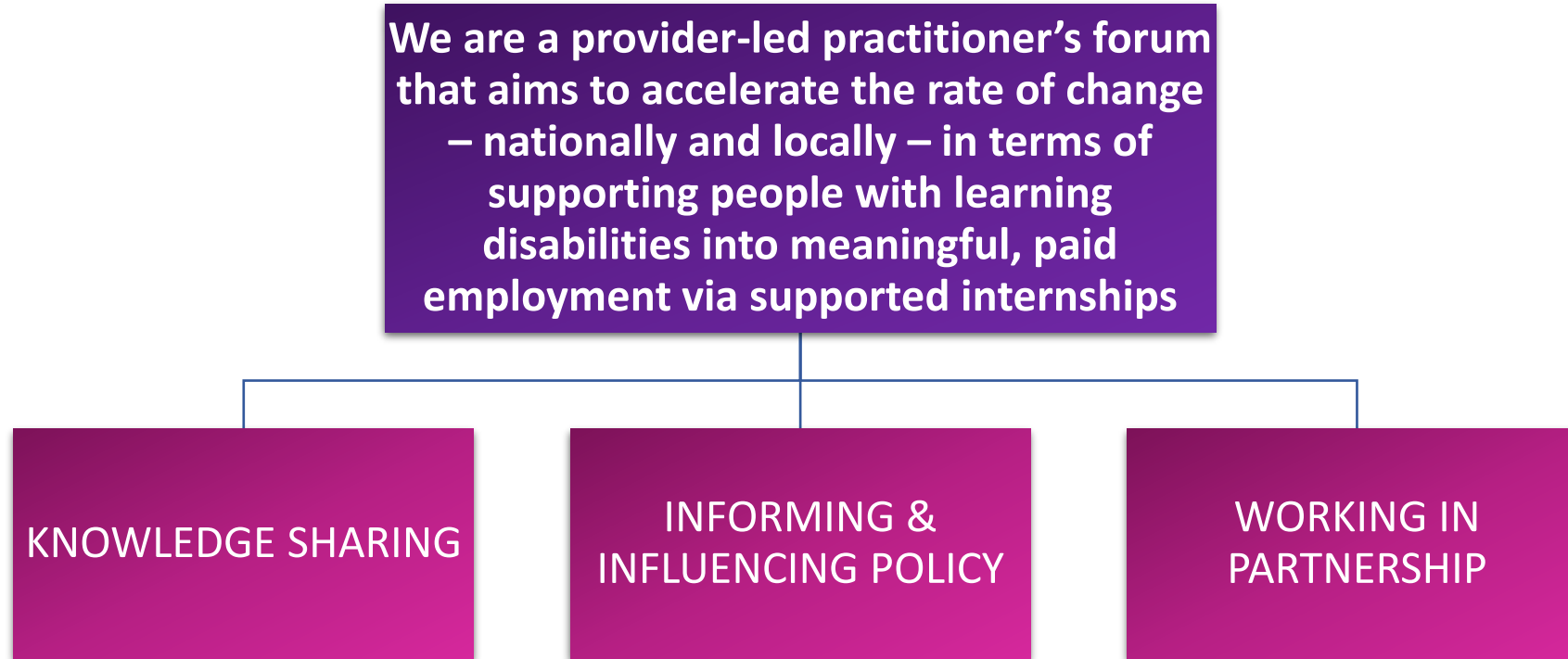




SE PfA Network

Louise Saunders,
Secretary for
NSEF

Who is NSEF?





National SEND Employment Forum

Over 250 members

Monthly meetings (academic
year)

Running for over 8 years

We are a provider-led practitioner's forum that aims to accelerate the rate of change – nationally and locally – in terms of supporting people with learning disabilities into meaningful, paid employment via supported internships

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

INFORMING &
INFLUENCING POLICY

WORKING IN
PARTNERSHIP

Most English local authorities
& councils represented

Links to government (DfE &
DWP)

WORKING IN
PARTNERSHIP

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Internships
WORK

Improving supported internship
provision in England.



The £18m DfE investment into the Internships Work Programme has resulted in:

- More young people accessing supported internships and gaining paid employment.
- More trained job coaches.
- More providers improving the quality of their programmes by assessing themselves against the supported internship quality assurance framework (SIQAF).
- More employers acting as ambassadors and advocates for supported internships.
- Improved local partnerships via Local Authority SEND Employment Forums.
- Non-EHCP pilot programmes.

A further £12m invested into a further year of Internships Work Programme:

- Local Authority grants.
- Free SIQAF peer reviews.
- Free job coach training (targeted).
- Continuation of employer ambassador training.
- Continuation of non-EHCP pilots.

Our members have continually shared their challenges of the ATW process, covering a wide range of issues that include:

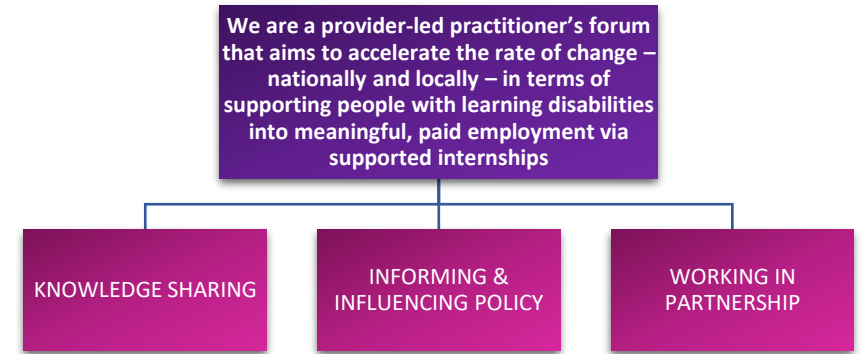
- Inconsistency in response/advice given regarding claims.
- Delays in processing claims.
- Outdated, paper-based process.
- The time it takes to make a claim.
- Backlog of claims, putting the future of some organisations at risk who rely on funding to pay job coaches.

During the 2025/26 year, the DWP introduced a reduction in claimable weeks for ATW from 39 to 26 weeks

- NSEF asked the DWP to attend our forum meeting to listen to our members concerns. We were asked to provide questions which were submitted in April 2025.
- To date, we have yet to receive responses, although have received assurance they are working on them.

Proposed change in the condition of funding for maths and English for the 2025/26 academic year:

- Original proposal was to set a mandatory 4 hours maths and 3 hours English tuition per week which would be a challenge to timetable for supported internship programmes wishing to meet the requirements of the Supported Internship Quality Assurance Framework (SIQAF).
- After consulting with and listening to NSEF members, they changed the guidance to 100 hours for both maths and English (200 hours total) to be delivered across the year. For the remainder of 2025/26 year, providers were told to continue with best efforts to deliver extra teaching time totalling an additional 35 hrs.



In Summary:

- NSEF will continue to represent the voices of the supported internship community, celebrating successes, continuing to knowledge share and collectively improving the numbers and quality of supported internships, as well as challenging policy, where this doesn't support the successful delivery of programmes.