

**Evidence Check**

# Supporting people in social housing gain and maintain employment

An **Evidence Check** rapid review brokered by the Sax Institute for NSW Family and Community Services.

March 2018.

**This report was prepared by:**

Chris Leishman, Andreas Cebulla and Kirstie Petrou.

March 2018

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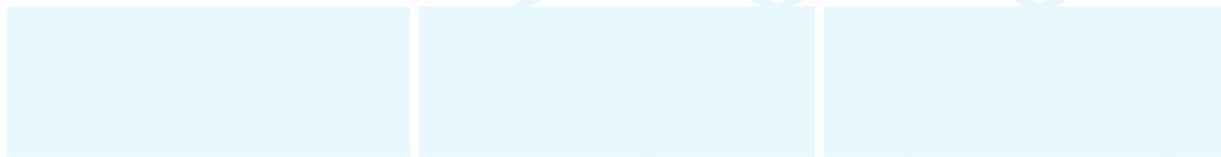
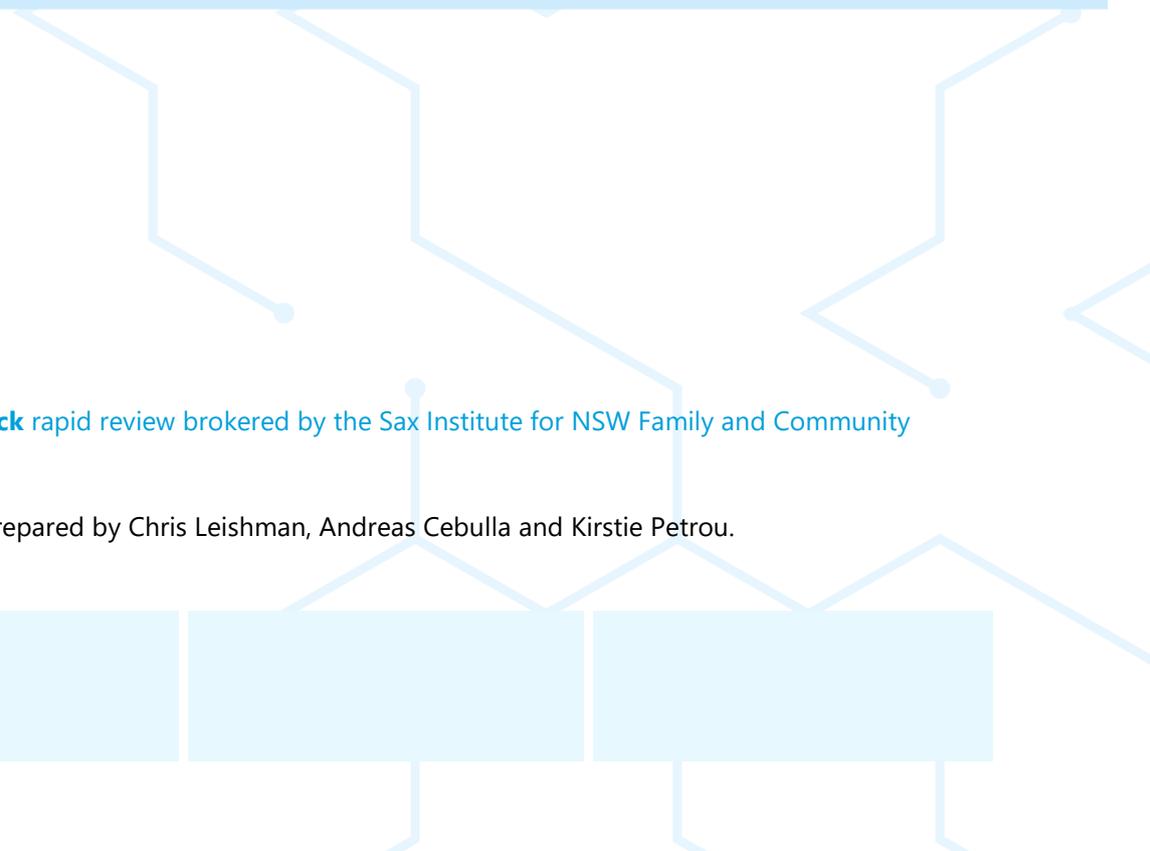


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# Executive summary

## Background / Purpose of the review

The NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) commissioned this Evidence Check review to develop a model for the delivery of services and interventions to people living in social housing to assist them to gain and sustain employment. The Evidence Check questions are broadly defined and concern the effectiveness of models and programs aimed at social housing clients (tenants and their family members), with a particular interest in young people. In commissioning this Evidence Check review, FACS is responding to Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW. This sets out the NSW Government's vision for social housing over a 10-year period from 2016, and concerns housing quality and supply; tenant experience; and opportunities for people to avoid entry to, and transition out of, social housing.

## Review questions

This review aimed to address the following questions:

**Question 1:** For social housing clients, what models/programs have been effective in improving access to and sustaining employment?

**Question 2:** Of the models/programs identified in Question 1, what key elements, program components, activities or other program characteristics (i.e. model, location, setting, staff, duration, intensity, etc.) contributed to the models' effectiveness?

For reasons explained later in the report, the initial scope was widened slightly during the research process, and Question 1 was reconsidered through a number of more detailed but related questions.

## Key findings

In this section we summarise the key findings, noting that to earn the status of 'key finding' we required evidence either to be based on robust estimates from well-designed quantitative or qualitative analysis, or more descriptive quantitative analyses whose findings were mirrored in several other published studies or evaluation. In total, using a combination of generic as well as specific web and literature searches, we identified 22 evaluations or summaries of evaluations of programs concerned with affecting employment participation of social housing tenants that were of sufficiently robust quality to warrant inclusion in this report. Quality assessments examined the studies' methodologies and design, and followed the guidelines prepared by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

### Question 1

Identifying a central discovery or shared conclusion was difficult, if not impossible. With only a small number of methodologically robust evaluations available, evidence was often patchy and difficult to compare. Most of the thoroughly evaluated interventions have combined a mix of individualised support/case management, incentives or penalties, and/or social and community support systems. Evaluations often did not differentiate between the effectiveness of individual components on outcomes of interest. In general, however, we found that:

- Programs that include social support and financial incentives or sanctions appear to be more effective than those based on support services or case management approaches alone<sup>1</sup>
- Programs based on support services alone assist between 25-40% of participants to successfully transition to work.
- It is easier to return tenants to employment than to affect retention or advancement, as measured in increased earnings of currently employed program participants.<sup>1,2</sup>

## Question 2

While detailed examination of factors driving program success or failure was still the exception, some general themes are emerging. These are:

- Complete and timely implementation of programs, including efforts to generate and sustain community buy-in, can be critical to the success of work activation programs for social housing tenants<sup>3</sup>
- Programs that are found to have limited or no impact may have failed to address social barriers to work participation, such as notable low levels of education or caring responsibilities.<sup>4</sup> More intensive case management support may help to address these additional barriers<sup>5</sup>
- There is some evidence that financial disincentives (sanctions) are effective in persuading program participants to engage with employment programs, and that the significance of these exceeds case management or support services<sup>1</sup>
- Support services appear to be more effective in assisting public housing tenants to move into unassisted rental housing or home ownership than moving into employment<sup>6</sup>
- Back-to-employment programs linked to social housing are more likely to be effective when a battery of services are provided, including work-focused training, on-site employment services, personal advisors/mentors, financial incentives and guarantees of follow-on employment<sup>7</sup>
- In a reverse perspective, housing advice programs that also include an element of training or employment advice may have positive employment effects, although the evidence is weak<sup>8</sup>
- Being single and not having parental responsibilities increases the probability of becoming financially self sufficient, but sole parents are also often and effectively helped back into work, provided that childcare issues are addressed<sup>2, 4</sup>
- Alienation from unsupportive people can be an important factor in moving towards self-sufficiency through employment<sup>4</sup>
- In the UK, area-based initiatives that capture social housing tenants have had mixed effects. While the New Deal for Communities perform better in improving (perceptions of) the urban environment and/or prevalence of crime and victimisation than affecting personal outcomes such as employment<sup>9</sup>, the Working Neighbourhoods Pilot (WNP) reported positive employment effects.<sup>10</sup> We attribute this to the greater individualised support and work activation focus of the WNP, relating to the more community focused NDC. This would be supported by evidence that emerged from a recent US Jobs Plus program evaluation, which showed that participants preferred individualised case worker supports over community networking<sup>11</sup>
- Family-based interventions in the UK<sup>12</sup> and in Australia<sup>13</sup> demonstrated positive social and behavioural effects, but only in Australia did the intervention also appear to increase employment participation. An intensive classroom-based program that sought to educate social housing tenants about home ownership was found to have significant positive effects on participants' propensity to move into private rented accommodation, becoming home owners and/or increasing earnings.<sup>14</sup>

## Gaps in the evidence

- The specific socioeconomic, demographic and individual characteristics associated with success or failure of employment programs are somewhat vague and under explored
- There is very little evidence on longer-term outcomes of social housing/employment programs
- There are gaps in understanding which program components contribute the most to positive participant outcomes (e.g. in Jobs Plus).

# Background

The NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) commissioned this Evidence Check to inform the development of a model for the delivery of services and interventions for people living in social housing, to assist them to gain and sustain employment. Employment participation and economic independence in turn contribute to a range of other outcomes such as empowerment, health, social engagement and housing independence.<sup>1</sup>

The Evidence Check questions are broadly defined and concern the effectiveness of models and programs aimed at social housing clients (tenants and their family members), with a particular interest in young people. In commissioning this evidence check review, FACS seeks to ensure programs developed under Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW are informed by the highest quality and most up-to-date evidence available. Future Directions sets out the NSW Government's vision for social housing over a 10-year period from 2016, and concerns housing quality and supply; tenant experience; and opportunities for people to avoid entry to, and transition out of, social housing.

This Evidence Check was commissioned to identify proven approaches to support social tenants who are willing and able to negotiate the challenge of gaining greater independence by gaining and maintaining employment and, where appropriate, transitioning out of social housing. The review focused on evaluated interventions or approaches (summarily referred to as 'models') that:

- Target social housing clients (i.e. people living in public, community or Aboriginal housing and people on a social housing wait list);
- Address the level of individual risk and protective factors, which has proven to be effective in increasing or improving clients' social capacity and readiness to work, gain employment, stay in employment longer, and increase hours and consistency of employment;
- Could be localised, focussing on countries which may have likely applicability for the NSW setting, including UK, New Zealand and Canada; and
- Are English language publications, published from 2012 onwards.

The latter condition was relaxed early on as it became apparent that many relevant studies, including those delivering the most robust evidence, dated from before 2012.

In addition to the above focus, client-centred models, case management and coordination models, brokerage services and peer-based support models were of specific interest.

Studies that identified models/programs operating in rural and regional (as well as metropolitan) locations offering private rental assistance as a program element; that have been effective for people aged 18 to 25 years or other FACS priority groups (e.g. Aboriginal people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds), if available, were to be flagged.

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<sup>1</sup> As described in the Human Services Outcomes Framework

# Methods

## Search strategy and outcomes

At an early stage in the research process it was decided that the scope of the Evidence Check review was such that academic literature databases were unlikely to provide much of interest, and this was confirmed by carrying out a set of preliminary searches. Evaluation studies focused on labour market/work programs linked to social housing provision or tenancy are central to the scope, and these are likely to have been commissioned by central, state, regional, local government, or third sector (community housing organisations). As such, these studies are likely to be in the public domain, for reasons of accountability, but not necessarily easily accessible or identifiable through web or academic search engines.

Our search strategy focused on the following terms:

1. "Housing" AND "Youth housing" OR "Young adult housing" OR "client focused" OR "Aboriginal housing" OR "Indigenous housing" OR "social housing" OR "public housing" OR "community housing" OR "supported housing" OR "temporary" OR "registered social"

AND

2. "Employment" OR "activation" OR "work" OR "welfare" OR "labor" OR "labour" OR "voucher" OR "rental assistance"

AND

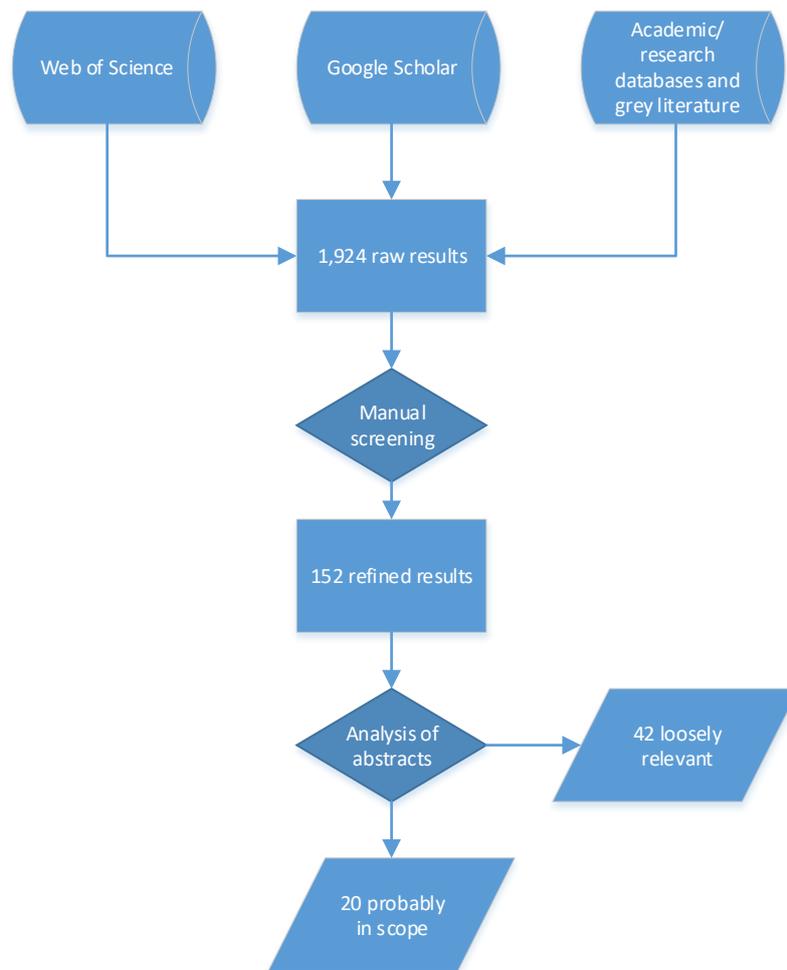
3. "assessment" OR "review" OR "evaluation"

Additional searches included variants of "client focus", "client centred" and "case management" as search items.

Searches of the following databases and institutional websites generated a list of 826 references:

MEDLINE with Full Text / Embase / Scopus / PsycINFO / PsycARTICLES / PsycBOOKS / PsycEXTRA / Cochrane database of reviews / CINAHL with Full Text / Global Health / Australia-New Zealand Reference Centre / Business Source Complete / Health Business Elite / EBSCO eBook Collection / EmeraldInsight / Informit APAFT (Australian Public Affairs Fulltext) / Family & Society Studies Worldwide / AGIS Plus Text / Libraries Australia / Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute / UN / World Bank / WHO / OECD Library

An additional 108 results were obtained from Web of Science, and 990 from Google Scholar, thus giving 1924 total initial search results. These were screened manually with studies that were obviously out of scope being identified and removed, in addition to any duplicates being removed. This reduced the list of possible studies to 152, each of which was scrutinised in more detail (meaning, in effect, that an electronic copy of the actual publication was obtained and added to EndNote, together with title and abstract). The research team then examined these remaining 152 publications manually and collaboratively, taking collective decisions on whether articles were potentially in scope, or not, and this resulted in a final list of 42 publications that were probably not strictly in scope, but worth a further read and assessment, and a list of 20 publications that appeared to be at least approximately in scope (Appendix A). Our findings and narrative (synthesis of the literature) are based on these publications.



**Figure 1: Search strategy and process**

### Evidence grading

In reviewing the robustness and reliability of the evidence identified in the searches, a two-stage process of assessment of individual studies was adopted, following the guidance provided by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

The initial assessment considered the methodological approach or study design adopted in the original research. Studies were rated according to their level of evidence as outlined in Table 1:

**Table 1 NHMRC evidence hierarchy: designations of 'levels of evidence'**

<b>Level of Evidence</b>	<b>Study Design</b>
I	A systematic review of Level II studies.
II	A randomised controlled trial.
III-1	A pseudo-randomised controlled trial (i.e. alternative allocation or some other method).
III-2	A comparative study with concurrent controls (i.e. non-randomised experimental trials, cohort studies, case-control studies, interrupted time series studies with a control group).
III-3	A comparative study without concurrent controls (i.e. historical control study, two or more single arm studies, interrupted time series studies without a parallel control group).
IV	Case series with either post-test or pre-test/post-test outcomes.

*Source: NHMRC (undated), after Table 3*

Following this initial designation, the studies were examined for their robustness, notably research sample sizes and any risk or evidence of bias as far as this was possible to determine from the reports. Further assessments considered the quality of the research conduct and the transparency of reporting.

In our overall assessment, we were looking for consistency of findings and demonstrated capacity of interventions to achieve intended outcomes (impact) across all eligible studies, allowing for differences in the weight given to individual studies according to their respective evidence level.

Our concluding discussions reflect on the generalisability of findings given their population focus and that of interest to NSW policymakers (as per our research specification), and their applicability to the specific NSW policy context.

# Findings

## Q1: For social housing clients, what models/programs have been effective in improving access to and sustaining employment?

### a. Programs targeting social housing tenants

The rapid Evidence Check uncovered nine studies, including three drawing on quasi experimental methodology (Bloom et al.<sup>3</sup>; Riccio<sup>15</sup>; Santiago et al.<sup>14</sup>), that are central to the scope in the sense that they evaluated programs targeted at social/public housing tenants, and were concerned with employment or earnings outcomes.

Bloom et al.<sup>3</sup> presented the findings from a quasi experimental evaluation of the original US Jobs Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families piloted in randomly selected public housing developments in Baltimore, Chattanooga, Dayton, Los Angeles, St. Paul and Seattle between 1998 and 2003. The pilot program sought to help working-age residents to find work, earn more and improve their quality of life. It was delivered in collaboration with local organisations and provided:

- Employment-related services (job search help and referrals to education programs, vocational training and support services, such as child care and transportation assistance);
- Rent-based work incentives that allowed residents to keep more of their earnings; and
- Activities to promote mutual support for work in the neighbourhoods through encouraging information exchange via social networks.

The evaluation compared residents' outcomes with those of tenants living in matched pairs or triplets of public housing developments in the areas. It recorded sustained positive earnings and employment effects in three (Dayton, Los Angeles, St. Paul) of four sites that had implemented the Jobs Plus program in full. Earnings effects are particularly strong among male immigrants. Sites with weaker or no evidence of impact had not fully implemented the program, which required significant structural and cultural changes in the affected housing authorities as well as local community support.

In a subsequent update, Riccio<sup>15</sup> summarised findings from an extended analysis of impacts now covering seven years of data for the three most successful Jobs Plus sites. Across these sites, the intervention was found to have led to a 16% increase in average annual earnings, with gains continuing during the three years after the demonstration had ended, helping residents to find and sustain work, and/or increasing hours and wages. While no formal cost-benefit analysis was undertaken, Riccio estimates the operating costs for the services, rent incentives, and community supports offered under the program at about \$1800 per person and year.

More recently, Tessler et al.<sup>16</sup> undertook a very early review of the national (US) rollout of the Jobs Plus Demonstration (or pilot) Program reviewed by Bloom et al.<sup>3</sup> and Riccio.<sup>15</sup> Focused on early implementation, the authors comment on the diversity of public housing authorities' approaches to operating the program in the local setting, including three broad areas of activity: employment-related services and activities (e.g. literacy and maths skills, childcare, transportation); rent-based financial incentives to help make work pay; and community support for work. While not concerned with outcomes for participants, this study sets the foundation for an intended longer-term impact evaluation that, given the current relative scarcity of evidence, may warrant inclusion in any future update of this rapid review.

An additional, not dissimilar intervention in the US is the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program. It seeks to assist residents of public housing and participants in the Housing Choice Voucher program to become economically self-sufficient through education, training, case management and other supportive services

(e.g. child care). The original evaluation by Ficke et al.<sup>17</sup> used regression analysis to compare outcomes for FSS program participants and non-participants in public housing agency projects, while controlling for differences in population characteristics. It found that, over the four years between 1996 and 2000, participants' median income had increased by 72% over their baseline and, in doing so, grown at twice the rate of non-participants' median incomes. A growing and, in comparison to non-participants, greater proportion of this income was received from earnings.

A second evaluation observing FSS program outcomes between 2005 and 2009 confirmed the positive effect of the FSS program on participants' employment rates and earnings; unlike the previous study, comparisons were made between public housing residents completing the FSS program ('graduates') and others who had exited the program earlier ('exiters', who also forfeit their escrow account accumulation).<sup>18</sup> Whereas FSS graduates' average annual income had increased by 67%, FSS exiters' average annual incomes had increased by 2%.

A variant of the FSS is the Enhanced FSS, which added participation in a Home Ownership Program to existing program activities. Santiago et al.<sup>14</sup> undertook a quasi-randomised experiment with nearest neighbour matching (a statistical technique to identify people with similar characteristics), and had treatment and control groups of 234 individuals in each group. Those in the treatment group participated in a Home Owners' Club, which comprised attending nine of 12 classes, a full-day seminar and passing a final exam set by the housing finance authority. The authors defined attaining economic security as moving out of the local area, entering higher education, moving into private rental or home ownership, or becoming disqualified for housing assistance as a result of significant improvement in earnings. Three outcome variables were measured: mean annual earnings, entering home ownership, and economic security at exit from the program. The treatment groups saw statistically significant improvements in all three outcomes compared to the control group.

While the above studies do not report on any sub-group effects, Anthony et al.<sup>19</sup> examined the factors leading to successful transitions to employment for an aggregate of 135 US FSS program participants. Their data analysis, using logistic regression, differentiated between three age groups, including a young age group of some interest to the present study: those 'under 25'. This sub-group was found no more likely to successfully transition to employment than over 40 year olds; whereas those aged 25 to 40 had statistically significantly higher odds of exiting to work.

In another less recent study, Garshick-Kleit and Rohe<sup>4</sup> examined the US Gateway self-sufficiency program to identify predictors of success in self-sufficiency programs, using a less robust panel survey approach (n=129) combined with life history interviews (n=6). Based in the US, the Gateway program aimed to transition public housing residents to home ownership through a two-stage process:

- During the remediation stage, participants attended education or training courses while retaining welfare benefits until their family incomes exceeded 50% of the local area median
- During the transitional stage, participants worked on their employment skills, receiving support in developing skills and strategies to increase incomes and save for home ownership.

In total, 36% of participants surveyed completed the program and subsequently received assistance to find a house in the private market. Panel survey data analysis found no evidence that the support program impacted on income or work histories, once socio-demographic differences among participants were allowed for. In-depth interviews, however, revealed individual variations in motivations for achieving goals, and pointed to the importance of alienation from unsupportive people in moving towards success. The same interviews identified caring responsibilities and a lack of education as major constraints on participants' ability to achieve financial self-sufficiency.

Rohe et al.<sup>1</sup> carried out an evaluation of another suit of policies putting into effect mandatory work requirements for public housing tenants in the US under the long-term federal Moving to Work demonstration (or pilot) program. Their analysis was based on tenants of a single public housing authority in North Carolina, using a sample of (n=247) participants in a control group and (n=123) in a treatment group. The analysis used propensity score matching (PCM) followed by difference-in-difference (DID) analysis. PCM is a statistical method of comparing people with similar, if not identical characteristics, while DID calculates the difference in change over time in an outcome of interest (i.e. employment) between a group subjected to an intervention and a control group (matched using PCM) not exposed to the intervention. All else equal, the difference is an estimate of the impact or effectiveness of the intervention. The authors defined two treatment groups:

- A group of tenants who were given on-site case management support, and
- A group who received on-site case management support, but were also given rent subsidy sanctions (including the threat of eviction) if they did not comply with a requirement to work 15+ hours per week.

The DID for the first treatment group that only received case management support were not significant, whereas case management combined the work requirement was estimated to have reduced the non-employment rate among program participants by a statistically significant 16 percentage points.

#### **b. Programs targeting populations likely to include social housing tenants**

Given the limited number of studies that were found to be strictly in scope, the inclusion criteria were relaxed slightly during the evidence search process. By considering studies that were likely to concern social/public housing tenants rather than being specifically targeted at them, this yielded a further eight studies of relevance, of which two concern the US experience, five concern the UK, and one concerns Australia.

Although a review article rather than evaluation in itself, Shlay<sup>6</sup> offers one of the first comments on a growing trend in US policy of seeking to promote economic self-sufficiency in addition to simply providing subsidised housing opportunities. In her definition of family economic self-sufficiency Shlay<sup>6</sup> argues that low wages coupled with housing affordability issues means that moving low-income families entirely out of welfare dependency is not a realistic target. Instead, she argues, policies should be concerned with moving people in the direction of greater financial stability and economic mobility. In her conceptual framework she defines increasing employment, developing greater human capital and increasing family income as the critical aspects of this process.

Shlay points out that housing has been linked to policy efforts to improve family economic self-sufficiency in four principal ways: neighbourhood, location, home ownership and housing costs:

- Neighbourhood and location emphasise barriers to achievement and concentration of poverty, proximity to amenities and employment opportunities. Neighbourhood programs generally had indirect and longer-term benefits, such as increasing participation in training, raised self esteem and greater aspirations, but reportedly did not lead to different economic outcomes in the early years of intervention.
- Similarly, transitional housing programs aimed at homeless families with children had often not helped participating families to become fully economically independent. They did, however, demonstrate improvement in families' direction of travel, with higher employment and educational aspirations and fewer difficulties in paying rent.

Shlay<sup>6</sup> reports that one of the location programs – the Gautreaux Program – showed clear evidence that low income African American households having been moved out of inner city concentrations of poverty and

into more affluent suburban areas, had higher employment rates, and their children were more likely to remain in school, secure employment and had higher earnings.

Also in the US, Wiseman and Riccio<sup>2</sup> undertook a secondary analysis intended to identify evidence on which aspects of programs designed to improve employment outcomes for recipients of housing assistance were most effective or influential in achieving these outcomes. This was done by focusing on randomised trial data from the evaluations of five demonstration programs. The authors point out that the number of studies they consulted was too small to carry out robust meta-analysis, but offer three 'impressions' from the reviews.

- First, financial incentives and support services have the potential to raise employment rates and average earnings by counteracting work disincentives arising from rental subsidies;
- Second, outcomes depend partly on household circumstances, and are most powerful for single parent households. They recommend that strategies should be flexible to household circumstances;
- Third, it is easier to move people from non-employment into jobs than it is to affect retention and advancement.

Additional evidence of programs at least incidentally targeting social housing tenants emerged from the UK. There, Dewson et al.<sup>10</sup> evaluated the Working Neighbourhoods Pilot (WNP), a scheme that tested new ways of offering intensive support to the unemployed (both welfare claimants and non-claimants) in order to help them find and stay in work. Between two thirds and three quarters of residents in the pilot sites reportedly lived in social rented properties. The WNP was established in 2004, and covered 12 pilot sites across England, Scotland and Wales, which were characterised by very high levels of unemployment and deprivation. Interventions catered to local conditions and varied between pilot sites. Three broad categories of intervention were identified:

- The distributed model (a dedicated community office where work-focused interviews, adviser meetings and action planning occurred, with other services outsourced to external providers);
- The hub and spoke model (the WNP office acted as a community hub with most services offered on-site); and
- The 'Jobcentre in the community' model (a job centre was established in the outreach location offering basic services, with other services available at other locations).

WNP programs were characterised by a one-on-one relationship between advisers and participants, and many sites provided bonus payments for participants who moved into and retained work. The evaluation used secondary administrative data, a face-to-face survey of 1201 program participants, and 40 in-depth interviews as well as detailed case study work with stakeholders in pilot and comparison areas. Results showed that:

- In total, 35% of WNP participants had moved into employment and of these:
  - 55% had held work for at least 13 weeks;
  - 37% had been in work for 26 weeks or more.
- The job entry rate in the pilot sites was 13% higher than in comparison sites.

Area outcomes were more difficult to determine, but stakeholders agreed that the WNP was unlikely to have altered the wider 'culture of worklessness' after only two years of operation.

Also an area-based initiative, the UK's New Deal for Communities (NDC) sought to enhance the physical, social and economic conditions of 39 disadvantaged neighbourhoods, operating between 1999 and 2008. The program's evaluation was conducted between 2001 and 2007 and, based on six neighbourhood case studies, examined the worklessness strategies adopted in neighbourhoods through partnership arrangements that linked job service providers, training and educational institutions, neighbourhood centres (e.g. youth projects) and employers (via emerging development projects or business expansions), and/or the

promotion of business start-ups or social enterprises. The evaluation found evidence of improved coordination of activities, inter-organisational relationships and general mutual appreciation of effort, but no robust evidence of employment impacts in the program areas.<sup>9</sup> Statistically, relative to a set of comparison areas, residents in the NDC areas were significantly more likely to report improved mental and general health, and greater participation in training between 2002 and 2008.<sup>20</sup>

Arguably, such health improvements as found in the NDC areas may eventually enhance a person's capacity to work in the longer term. The greater employment impact reported for the WNP, however, is likely to reflect the greater and more individualised work activation focus of that program when compared to a more diverse, community-oriented approach of the NDC.

Another UK program of interest was the Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers. Between April 2009 and October 2010, a consortium of three specialist housing and planning research teams assessed the effectiveness of this UK government program that offered housing advice to people with low, medium or acute housing need.<sup>8</sup> This service was linked to advice about training, employment, financial management, and access to social security benefits. Altogether 42 programs were implemented in different parts of the UK and contributed in various ways to the evaluation. The programs had considerable freedom in designing their approach, including defining and targeting eligible populations and the services provided. The resultant diversity made an aggregate assessment difficult, as did the inconsistent level of collaboration by program providers. The evaluation was further hampered by the absence of a comparison group of non-participants. The evaluators did, however, record a doubling in the proportion of working age program clients undertaking part-time or full-time work within six months of first approaching the service.

Taking a broader view of social housing in the UK, Wilson et al.<sup>7</sup> analysed what worked in terms of UK housing association policies helping tenants to move back into work. Using UK Labour Force Survey data, the authors examined the characteristics of out-of-work social housing tenants, and provide a typology of barriers to returning to work. They identify different social housing tenant groups' key barriers to work and conduct a simulated benefit-cost appraisal for five support options, concluding that work-focused training combined with work experience (with guaranteed job interview); or a saturation approach of on-site employment services, personal adviser support, peer mentors and temporary financial incentives were likely to generate greatest net benefits.

The Evidence Check also identified one particularly relevant Australian study. The study by Moskos et al.<sup>13</sup> also illustrated the application and potential benefits of case management approaches described and tested in some of the above US and UK studies. Moskos and her team examined the impact of an intensive family support program, Building Family Opportunities (BFO) delivered via not-for-profit organisations in three local government areas in South Australia (Playford, Port Augusta and Port Adelaide Enfield) between June 2010 and December 2013. The intervention built upon:

- A minimum of 13 hours of strengths-based intensive case management work with jobless families who were experiencing complex social, economic and personal (e.g. health) needs; and
- Goal setting to encourage families' engagement in learning, training and employment.

BFO primarily provided advice and guidance, but staff also worked with other institutions, for instance, to secure funding that would allow jobseekers to undertake training. Support was provided for up to 18 months.

The evaluation found that about a quarter of jobseekers had found work while participating in the program. Administrative data based on all families participating in BFO suggested a *higher* employment outcome rate of 36%. In total, 44% of BFO jobseekers took up education and training. While program participants experienced multiple forms of social and economic disadvantage, we have no information about their housing status/tenure.

Lloyd et al.<sup>12</sup> evaluated a similar family-focused intervention in the UK, the Family Intervention Services (FIS), which targeted families experiencing or displaying antisocial behaviour (ASB), youth crime, inter-generational disadvantage and worklessness. FIS assigned dedicated key workers to individual families in order to work with them on overcoming social and economic problems through a multi-agency approach involving various central and local government functions. The vast majority (96%) of the more than 12,000 families participating in the program lived in rented accommodation, including two thirds in public or social sector housing. Two thirds also had no adult member in employment, education or training. The evaluation found that incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour halved in the course of the intervention, while reported physical and mental health improved. Worklessness reduced from affecting 68% of families to 58%; this change, however, was not statistically significant when compared to that of a comparison group of 56 families not served by FIS.

### **c. Programs and evaluations reporting on people experiencing / at risk of homelessness, youth and/or other disadvantaged populations**

By relaxing the search criteria further – to include studies aimed at preventing homelessness, programs aimed specifically at young adults, and those targeting social deprivation via housing projects – an additional five studies came into scope. In general, the evidence base, however, was weak, suffering from low evidence level methodological approaches.

One of the identified studies connected, albeit tangentially, the alleviation of the risk of homelessness with the provision of and support for work and/or education and training. The evaluation by Rintoul and Rintoul<sup>21</sup> of the Bridge Housing 'Hands Up' rent arrears management pilot program in New South Wales examined the potential benefits of enabling social housing tenants with rent arrears to pay off their arrears by committing to volunteer work, educational courses or health-related treatments. Although only 10 tenants took advantage of this opportunity, the study showed that, by complying with program conditions, they were able to cancel 29% of their accumulated debt, while participating in 480 hours of activities. Consequently all participants were able to retain their accommodation, avoiding eviction. Unfortunately, the study does not provide any further information about the activities undertaken by the tenants and any longer-term benefits. While not an employment activation program, this intervention illustrates capacity for engaging disadvantaged social housing tenants in work activity with appropriate incentives in place.

Another Australian intervention is the Victorian YP4 program, which trialled coordinated services for homeless job seekers aged 18 to 35 years. Grace and Gill<sup>5</sup> were concerned with assessing the effectiveness of the case management approach adopted by YP4 in improving outcomes for young adults. To do so, they used a combination of data collected from case managers and administrative data from Centrelink covering a three-year period. Of the 224 YP4 participants (146 male, 78 female), 75% were aged 25 years or under. Participants lived across both metropolitan and regional areas, and belonged to a number of ethnic groups. Measuring the number of contacts participants had with case managers led Grace and Gill to conclude that those with a higher number of contacts (21 to 40 contacts and 41+ contacts) had more positive outcomes relating to reducing homelessness and increasing employment. By contrast, those who demonstrated low engagement with the program (zero to five contacts and six to 21 contacts) showed little or no change in their housing or employment status.

Finally, Bartlett et al.<sup>22</sup> conducted a five-year evaluation of the BoysTown's (BT) model of using social enterprise to provide paid supported employment to young people with poor literacy and low levels of educational achievement, often from CALD or Aboriginal background. The BT social enterprise model for young people operated in locations in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia. A combination of staff and participant surveys at entry, mid point and program exit, and in-depth interviews suggested improved wellbeing; including self esteem, as well as increased participation in education, training and employment. Program completers were found to have had better self esteem when

joining the program; had been referred by a friend or relative; were without a prior juvenile justice system record and less likely to be Indigenous.

## **Q2: Of the models/programs identified in Q1, what key elements, program components, activities, or other program characteristics contributed to the models' effectiveness?**

Our Evidence Check yielded no evaluations that assessed different delivery models comparatively. One partial exception was a follow-up study of the US Jobs Plus program by Greenberg et al.<sup>11</sup> The authors ask the interesting question of what happens when an intervention that had previously been shown to be effective is replicated in a different location and after a considerable lapse of time (namely between 2011 and 2014). Although this study was primarily focused on program implementation, the authors did observe that social housing estate residents participating in the replication programs primarily took advantage of job search and finding services, but not the neighbour-to-neighbour networking that the program also promoted. Any employment gains would therefore have been attributable to the former services alone. Job gains were typically in low wage work, while services aimed at progressing residents already in work were largely ineffective. At least in part this was a self-inflicted deficiency of the program, as providers focused services on the unemployed (rather than low wage earners) and failed to advertise program incentives among the already employed.<sup>11p. 37</sup> Greenberg et al. also estimate that the Jobs Plus replication programs cost \$672 per household per year to deliver in the Bronx and \$503 in San Antonio.

Implementation variations in multi-site evaluations were not explored in sufficient detail in the published reports to yield immediate insights, which makes a comparative assessment of effectiveness of differential program contents at this stage impossible.

Nonetheless, some generic insights can be reported:

- There is some evidence that financial disincentives (sanctions) are effective in persuading program participants to engage with employment programs, and that the significance of these exceeds case management or support services<sup>1</sup>;
- Being single, and not having children, increases the probability of success in terms of transition to self-sufficiency, but sole parents are the most easily influenced household types in terms of returning to employment, provided that childcare issues are addressed<sup>2, 4</sup>;
- Alienation from unsupportive people can be an important factor in people moving towards self-sufficiency through employment<sup>4</sup>;
- Acquiring new skills and training are associated with higher probability of success in transitioning to self-sufficiency.<sup>19</sup>

### **Gaps in the evidence**

In light of the sometimes rather patchy evidence based on capacity building and employment engagement programs for social housing tenants, a number of obvious gaps can be identified. First, as is frequently the case for even the most robust policy evaluations, the specific socioeconomic, demographic and individual participant characteristics associated with success or failure on employment programs are somewhat vague and under explored. In particular, there are no studies of outcomes specifically for adult children of social/public housing tenants, or of policies aimed at assisting adult children of social housing tenants into the workforce.

Second, our knowledge and understanding of which program components contribute the most to outcomes (e.g. in Jobs Plus) are not well developed. For example, studies tend to give little qualitative detail on the range and depth of support services offered to assist participants into work. Nor are organisational cultures or policy delivery principles systematically explored. Studies tend to focus on the success or otherwise of the program overall rather than the specific program components that might lead to success.

Third, most studies do not use randomised experiments with controls, as a result of which the quality or level of the evidence is typically low, except for some of the US studies, which have a very different welfare and governmental context to New South Wales. Lack of comparison groups, small sample sizes or a reliance on self-reported perceptions and opinions as the primary source of evidence undermine the value of many evaluations.

Fourth, a 'long view' is often missing. Impact studies typically observe policy impacts only over the short term or indeed limit their reviews to a single point-in-time outcome measurement. With the exception of the US Jobs Plus program, robust longitudinal evidence is not available.

# Discussion/synthesis of findings

There is a steadily growing interest in employment policies and programs in Australia, linked to housing generally, and often linked specifically to occupation of public or community housing. Gurran et al.<sup>23</sup> argued that housing markets can make an impact on economic productivity in four principal ways: through labour market mobility; labour market participation; costs associated with urban congestion; and reduced competitiveness through high housing costs. Empirical support for the notion of reduced mobility for private renters and social housing tenants was shown by Whelan and Parkinson.<sup>24</sup>

Dockery et al.<sup>25</sup> employed a battery of econometric approaches and found, using difference-in-differences modelling, that moving into public housing has a significant positive effect on the probability of moving into employment (11% and 5% increased probability of employment for males and females respectively). They point out that it is difficult to distinguish whether this arises from a negative effect of lock-in of the maximum income threshold imposed on applicants waiting to be housed (thus limiting scope for employment take up or progression), or a positive enabling effect of public housing. Their analysis was based on 27,880 individuals in Western Australia from 1999 to 2006.

However, there is by no means a consensus that public housing is associated with lock-in effects, or voluntary withdrawal from the labour market or under employment. Feeny et al.<sup>26</sup> argue that public housing is an in-kind benefit, supplied as a one-off bundle, and that this weakens the argument that it acts as a work disincentive. They also reviewed a range of studies that produced only weak evidence that receipt of housing assistance reduces earnings and/or labour market participation. They found evidence in the literature of positive labour market outcomes for people leaving assistance programs. Regarding their own analyses of HILDA data, they found no evidence of either positive or negative impacts of housing assistance on labour market outcomes. They attribute this to the fact that Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) is unrationed, whereas US housing voucher programs operate through queues, which create an incentive to keep income low while waiting. It is also worth noting that the Productivity Commission<sup>27</sup> found that the housing stability arising from occupation of public housing may lead to higher employment rates of tenants compared to applicants (people on waiting lists).

At the aggregate level, Cigdem-Bayram et al.<sup>28</sup> found that housing assistance to private rental and public housing tenants has a negligible impact on employment, stating that removing CRA would only reduce the probability of continued employment by 0.3 percentage points. Their analysis was based on HILDA, 2001-2010, using random effects and multinomial logit models. They describe the use of a sample and a matched control sample (propensity score matching).

This rapid Evidence Check has shown that employment-related services related to assistance into employment programs can be wide ranging and may include assistance with searching for work, referrals to training or education, and referrals to support services including childcare and counselling. However, evaluations tend to focus on assessing the success of programs overall. At best, some studies have examined whether employment and related services are more or less effective when applied in conjunction with financial incentives. But the Evidence Check yielded no studies that were sufficiently sophisticated to disaggregate individual elements of employment and related services in order to determine specifically which aspects are most influential in assisting participants into work, or retain work.

We uncovered one evaluation of a public housing social intervention<sup>15</sup>, which had a relatively long time horizon allowing it to conclude that benefits of the program under evaluation persisted for three years or more. However, in general, most of the studies we examined had much shorter horizons, and there is a

general lack of evidence on the medium to long-term impacts of programs. Some of the evidence we reviewed suggests it is easier to assist people into work than it is to keep them there; most beneficiaries of program interventions had previously been jobless<sup>2</sup>, while generic studies of retention program highlight their particular challenges and limited impacts.<sup>29</sup> This is potentially a very significant fact, but it is not possible to validate to a high level of confidence given that most studies examined have a short time horizon.

There is evidence that removal of negative influences (negative externalities) is of potential benefit to the chances of success program participants. This operates in at least two ways: area-based programs helping social housing tenants to leave their housing estate or neighbourhood for a socially more mixed environment away from spatially concentrated deprivation have reported improved quality of life, although evidence of positive employment effects typically only emerged for the second generation of movers.<sup>30</sup> In addition, program participants have been shown to have greater chance of success when their connections to individuals with a negative influence have been weakened.<sup>4</sup>

Evidence from a wider case of the literature search suggests that frequency of contact with case managers is influential in reducing homelessness and increasing employment.<sup>5</sup> There is a sense from the literature that the information and direction, but also pressure and threat of sanctions that come with personalised support and case management are important promoters of welfare to work transitions, and that these transition propensities may be improved through training, education, counselling and general engagement with the support services on offer.

Finally, the gaps in the evidence identified above are significant. In terms of population or groups of interest, there are few studies that have specifically examined young adults, or adult children of social housing tenants, nor their participation in employment programs. The evaluation studies that we did review tend to have focused on program success overall, rather than the specific program attributes that may have contributed to success. As a result, relatively little is known about the relative importance of specific program features, or the circumstances in which they succeed, or the interactions with program participant characteristics that might be important.

# Conclusion

Australian housing and social policy makers, housing and support service providers are increasingly becoming interested in the possible opportunities offered by labour market participation and earnings programs. This can be seen as part of a wider debate in which social justice and wellbeing societal objectives come together with constraints arising from pressure on public finances. There is a growing recognition that policies designed to assist people into work, retain work, re-train, supplement earnings and eventually transition out of social housing and housing assistance, deliver on both social justice and economic objectives.

Young adults living in social/public housing, either as tenants or as adult children of tenants, are an important but under studied sub-group of the population. It has been shown in other countries, notably the UK, that young adults (aged 18-25) have borne a disproportionate share of the burden arising from welfare reforms.

This rapid Evidence Check has sought to review, evaluate and identify gaps in the literature on employment programs linked to social/public housing. The emphasis has been on methodologically robust evaluation studies, but the literature discussion has commented on a much wider selection of studies than meets this description. The discussion has also examined all relevant employment program reviews and evaluations, whether they were closely related to the provision of social/public housing or not. Similarly, our approach did not exclude studies that did not explicitly concern young adults, but the discussion has picked out the young adult dimension of the studies where identifiable.

Our conclusion overall is that employment programs targeted to social housing tenants and other recipients of social housing assistance would appear to have potential individual economic and wellbeing benefits, in addition to wider positive economic impacts. Programs that combine several forms of support services including on-site support, case management and mentoring, appear to be more effective. Yet, programs that also include social support and financial incentives appear to be more effective still.

There is evidence that different types of individuals or categories of recipient are not uniformly affected by intervention. Being younger, single and childless are all associated with higher probability of successful transition to self-sufficiency.

Yet there are significant gaps in the evidence. Above all, there is insufficient detail on the characteristics of programs/policies and how these might interact with individuals' characteristics, including age and socioeconomic background. Thus, this evidence check will, at best, offer helpful direction to organisations considering the design of employment programs for young adults in social/public housing, but primary research would be needed in order to provide robust evidence on the key ingredients for success of such programs.

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# Appendix A: Alphabetical list of included studies

Study, year, location	Policy / setting	Objective	Level	Study group	Information on 18-25s?	Outcomes
Anthony, 2005, US <sup>19</sup>	US family self-sufficiency programs	To determine the factors leading to successful vs unsuccessful transition to employment for 12+ months	IIII-2	Rockford, Illinois, N=135	Author included an 'under 25' variable in their logit model and found that under 25s were more likely to 'succeed' than over 40 year olds, but the odds ratio for the 25-40 group was higher still	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those without a high school diploma at the point of entry to the program were much less likely to succeed in their transition. Being single increased the probability of success</li> <li>• A higher proportion of those succeeding had stayed in the program for two or more years; a much higher proportion of the successfuls had acquired one or more new skills while in the program</li> </ul>
Batty et al., 2010, UK <sup>20</sup>	<p>The New Deal for Communities (NDC): program designed to transform 39 deprived neighbourhoods by achieving change in crime, community &amp; housing &amp; the physical environment.</p> <p>NDC partnership developing own regeneration models.</p>	Synthesis of evidence from other final reports conducted 2001-2010	III-2	Deprived neighbourhoods in the UK	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change in worklessness</li> <li>• Improved self-reported health, satisfaction with local area among residents in policy compared with treatment area</li> <li>• Reduced victimisation (crime)</li> <li>• Shadow pricing methods indicate that the program has provided good value for money</li> </ul>

Study, year, location	Policy / setting	Objective	Level	Study group	Information on 18-25s?	Outcomes
	Spend: £1.71 billion to deliver 6900 projects/ interventions between 1999-2000 & 2007-2008. Other sources contributed a further £730m					
Beatty et al., 2009, UK <sup>9</sup>	The New Deal for Communities (NDC), a program designed to transform 39 deprived neighbourhoods by achieving holistic change in crime, community & housing & the physical environment	Evidence report on the effectiveness of measure to reduce worklessness in 6 NDC neighbourhoods	IV	Deprived neighbourhoods in the UK	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved coordination of support activities (job search, placement, job promotion)</li> <li>Evidence of direct placements (without impact net calculation)</li> <li>Community appreciation of effort</li> </ul>
Bloom, Riccio, Verma; 2005; US <sup>3</sup>	The Jobs Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families: multi-site support program for public housing tenants, aiming to increase employment, earnings and to improve quality of life. Supports included employment-related services, rent-based work incentives, neighbourhood work information networks	Final report of evaluation of demonstration projects conducted in six US cities between 1998 and 2003	III-1	Residents in public housing estates	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program implementation took two years</li> <li>Positive impacts in four of the six sites</li> <li>Significantly increased earnings</li> <li>Higher employment rates</li> <li>Greater impact across estates if residents remained and did not move out</li> </ul>
de Silva et al., 2011, US <sup>18</sup>	Family support (self-sufficiency) program implemented by public housing agencies	Description and four-year outcome assessment of families' outcomes selected from a	IV	181 families. Comparison of program completers ('graduates') with early exiters	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program graduates more likely to be employed than other exiters or the still-enrolled participants</li> <li>Program graduates also had higher incomes at both, the enrolment and completion stage</li> </ul>

Study, year, location	Policy / setting	Objective	Level	Study group	Information on 18-25s?	Outcomes
		sample of 100 agencies				
Dewson et al., 2007, UK <sup>10</sup>	Working Neighbourhoods Pilot (WNP): tested new approaches to offering intensive support to help people find and stay in work. Pilot was targeted towards welfare claimants as well as unemployed non-claimants	Evaluation of the success of the pilot program. Pilot program tested very local approaches to overcoming unemployment	IV	97% of participants were welfare claimants.  12 sites across England, Scotland & Wales	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interventions varied across 12 pilot sites. Three models of intervention used: distributed model, hub &amp; spoke model, 'Jobcentre in the community' model, all of which employed varying case management designs. One-to-one relationship between adviser &amp; customer was shared feature</li> <li>• Many sites used bonus payments for participants who moved into and stayed in work</li> <li>• 35% of WNP participants had moved into employment. 55% of those who were employed had been in their job for at least 13 weeks. 37% had been in work for 26 weeks or more</li> <li>• Job entry rate in pilot sites was 13% higher than in comparison sites</li> </ul>
Ficke et al., 2004, US <sup>17</sup>	Family support (self-sufficiency program for families in subsidised housing	Description of program and of change in self-sufficiency among program participants between 1996 and 2000	III-2	Families in subsidised housing	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater income increase among program participants compared with non-participants</li> <li>• Greater proportion of income from earnings</li> </ul>

Study, year, location	Policy / setting	Objective	Level	Study group	Information on 18-25s?	Outcomes
Garshick-Kleit & Rohe, 2005, US <sup>4</sup>	Gateway self-sufficiency program: aimed to transition public housing residents to home ownership	To determine predictors of success in self-sufficiency programs	IV	Women who participated in the Gateway program.  Life history interviews n=6 Survey data n=129 Comparison group n=57	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36% of those surveyed graduated from the program</li> <li>• Difficult to predict who would become self-sufficient and who not through survey data. Little variation between graduates and dropouts in initial attributes</li> <li>• In-depth interviews revealed variations in motivations for achieving goals</li> <li>• Alienation from unsupportive people was vital to success</li> <li>• Income, work history &amp; other sociodemographic variables were not good predictors of success</li> <li>• Single mothers without education and training experienced the most difficulty</li> </ul>
Grace and Gill, 2016, Australia <sup>5</sup>	"YP4" program: a trial of joined-up services for homeless jobseekers	Assessing effectiveness of case management approach in improving outcomes for young adults experiencing homelessness & unemployment. Determine effects of amount of case	IV	75% of participants aged 25 years or less.  Range of ethnic groups and metro/regional place of residence (Victoria). N=224 (146 male, 78 female)	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High contact groups (21 to 40 contacts &amp; 41+ contacts) had more positive outcomes relating to reducing homelessness and increasing employment</li> <li>• Low engagement (zero to five contacts) and low-medium engagement (six to 21 contacts) groups showed minimal or no change</li> </ul>

Study, year, location	Policy / setting	Objective	Level	Study group	Information on 18-25s?	Outcomes
		management on key outcomes				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients with most complex needs required more than 24 months of service.</li> </ul>
Hayden et al., 2011, UK <sup>8</sup>	Enhanced housing options program. Local government agency operated. Often open access, but also targeted population. Very diverse	Formal evaluation of three phases of the program running in 2009 and 2010. The program focused on housing needs/ management of housing stock, tackling worklessness and improving customer service	IV	Evaluation of policies in eight trailblazer areas	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the eight trailblazer areas studied, the proportion of working age people in work nearly doubled during the evaluation period</li> <li>• The enhanced housing options program, and its parent policy, was ended early due to a change of government, so the study period was shorter than anticipated</li> <li>• The evaluation study reports net savings of £1.3m in relation to the rent bond scheme, £349k from the supported bond scheme and £247k through the employment brokerage service</li> </ul>
Lloyd et al., 2011, UK <sup>12</sup>	Intensive case management family intervention services aimed at supporting disadvantaged families experiencing worklessness and anti-social behaviour	Evaluation of program, including impact using comparison group	III-2	Socially and economically disadvantaged families	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in anti-social behaviour and crime</li> <li>• Improved reported mental and physical health</li> <li>• Reduction in worklessness, but in line with that identified among not-treated comparison group</li> </ul>
Moskos et al., 2014; Australia <sup>13</sup>	Strength-based case management aimed at assisting socially disadvantaged families to improve family life and access to work		IV	Families with a dependent aged 24 years or less; one or both parents on income support; no	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 393 jobseekers; 85% with previous labour market experience, 63% with five years or less in paid work, 32%</li> </ul>

Study, year, location	Policy / setting	Objective	Level	Study group	Information on 18-25s?	Outcomes
				earnings in previous 12 months		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>unemployed for six years or more during working life</li> <li>Over 2.5 year evaluation period, 27% of jobseekers (108) got jobs</li> </ul>
Riccio, 2010, US <sup>15</sup>	Jobs Plus Community Revitalization Initiative for Public Housing Families: multi-site employment service/financial incentive program for residents of public housing estates	Summary of findings from a seven-year impact analysis	III-1	Residents of public housing estates (three sites)	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16% earnings impact</li> <li>Impacts shared across different population groups (e.g. Hispanic men; Southeast Asian women)</li> <li>Annual operating costs approx. US\$1800 per person</li> </ul>
Rintoul and Rintoul, 2017, Australia <sup>21</sup>	Rent arrears management program piloted by social housing provider in NSW, enabling tenant to pay off arrears through voluntary work, participation in training or education, or in health-related programs	To evaluate effectiveness	IV	13 tenants accessing Bridge Housing program; 10 became active participants	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life skills programs (46%); Health treatment and support (26%); Employment support and education (25%); Financial counselling (3%)</li> <li>29% accumulated debt cancelled as a result of tenants participating in 480 hours of activities</li> </ul>
Rohe, 2016, US <sup>1</sup>	Work requirements for public housing tenants in US	Evaluation of mandatory work requirements for public housing tenants in US	IV	247 participants in a control group and 123 in a treatment group. Propensity score matching, then difference-in-difference analysis	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The authors defined two treatment groups: (i) tenants who were given on-site case management support; (ii) tenants who additionally were given rent subsidy sanctions if they did not comply with a requirement to work 15+ hours per week</li> </ul>

Study, year, location	Policy / setting	Objective	Level	Study group	Information on 18-25s?	Outcomes
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No statistically significant employment impacts for the first treatment group</li> <li>Statistically significant impacts for the second treatment group, with the number of tenants not in work falling by 16%</li> </ul>
Santiago, 2017, US <sup>14</sup>	Enhanced FSS program	Evaluation of an enhanced family self-sufficiency program	III-1	Treatment and control groups of 234 individuals in each group. People enrolled in the Home Ownership element of the Enhanced FSS program	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three outcome variables were measured: mean annual earnings, entering home ownership, and economic security at exit from the program</li> <li>The treatment groups saw statistically significant improvements in all three outcomes compared to the control group</li> </ul>
Shlay, 1993, US <sup>6</sup>	Review of family economic self-sufficiency policies through literature review and analysis of a small number of evaluation studies	Generic review	IV	N/A	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbourhood programs were generally described as having indirect and longer-term benefits, such as increasing participation in training, raised self-esteem and greater aspirations</li> <li>The Gautreaux Program showed that low-income African-American households moved into suburban areas had higher employment rates</li> </ul>
Tessler, 2016, US <sup>16</sup>	Evaluation of the Jobs Plus Demonstration program	Implementation process review	IV	The evaluation report focuses on the early stages of	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Jobs Plus program was specifically aimed at people living in public housing and intended to</li> </ul>

Study, year, location	Policy / setting	Objective	Level	Study group	Information on 18-25s?	Outcomes
				program implementation		<p>improve residents' employment, earnings and wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were three broad areas of activity: employment-related services and activities; rent-based financial incentives to help make work pay; and community support for work</li> <li>• The main financial incentive was the Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard</li> <li>• The report focuses primarily on process issues rather than measured outcomes for participants</li> </ul>
Wilson, 2015, UK <sup>7</sup>	Housing association policies designed to help tenants move back into work	Summary of evidence on 'what works'	IV	N/A	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The authors define 10 groups of tenants who were out of work, and provide a descriptive analysis of the composition of these groups based on the Labour Force Survey</li> <li>• Nine policy options are narrowed down to five and are then assessed in a 'what works' format.</li> <li>• The five options are skills academies, jobs-plus, pathways to employment, intermediate labour markets and return to work incentives</li> </ul>

Study, year, location	Policy / setting	Objective	Level	Study group	Information on 18-25s?	Outcomes
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They identified a particular problem with 'payment by results' funding as, for people furthest from the job market, this lead to systematic under funding for service providers</li> </ul>
Wiseman and Riccio, 2015, US <sup>2</sup>	Secondary analysis intended to identify evidence on which aspects of programs designed to improve employment outcome for recipients of housing assistance	N/A	IV	Secondary analysis of data from randomised trials for which MDRC was the evaluator	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial incentives and support services have the potential to raise employment rates and average earnings by counteracting work disincentives arising from rental subsidies</li> <li>• Outcomes depend partly on household circumstances, and are most powerful for single parent households</li> <li>• It is easier to move people from non-employment into jobs than it is to affect retention and advancement</li> </ul>