

Implementing work for your benefit in the UK

It is likely that a 'Work for Your Benefit' scheme for the long-term unemployed will be introduced in the UK. As a result, this timely report brings together a wide range of sources both international and domestic to explore exactly how such a scheme would function within the UK's welfare system, and what effects it would have upon the unemployed.

Based upon Reed in Partnership's wide experience within the employment and skills sector, it is hoped that the conclusions of this study will influence the current policy debate and contribute to the ongoing development of the UK's welfare system.

Reed in Partnership Limited
4th Floor, Anna House
214-218 High Road
South Tottenham
London N15 4NP
Tel: 0208 275 4193
www.reedinpartnership.co.uk

WORKFARE

Welcome from Chris Melvin

Over the past ten years, welfare-to-work programmes in the UK have been transformed. Previously a largely passive welfare state dealt with benefits and provided limited support to help people get back into work. Today, we have a new model of provision with Jobcentre Plus and a wide range of private and third sector providers playing an active role in helping people move from benefits into work.

Whilst there have been considerable improvements in helping the long-term unemployed into work, there are real challenges ahead given the current economic climate. The knowledge base and skills of the welfare-to-work sector have rapidly improved in recent years. With a more challenging economic climate, these foundations will be crucial in helping the UK avoid the long-term effects on unemployment that we have seen in previous recessions.

Both the Labour Government and Conservative Party have signalled an intention to introduce a 'Work for Your Benefit' type programme in the UK. However, there is significant opposition to the proposal from trade unions and other organisations active within the anti-poverty field.

What is indisputable is that a Work for Your Benefit programme would have a radical impact on the current welfare and employment system. It is important that this reform is discussed in the overall context regarding the success of welfare-to-work provision. The UK has one of the best performing welfare-to-work sectors with successful provision across the public, private and voluntary sectors. This means that the introduction of a workfare programme, based on existing trends, should only affect a small percentage of all unemployed claimants.

Reed in Partnership has considerable experience of working with the long-term unemployed and helping to break down some of the most difficult and persistent barriers to work. As a private sector provider, we are interested in the impact that a Work for Your Benefit type programme would have on the customer groups we currently support into work.

This report is based on research with the long-term unemployed and our own team of Personal Advisers. Although this is a small research project, it provides evidence for the likely impact of introducing a Work for Your Benefit type programme along with recommendations for how it could be introduced whilst protecting the most vulnerable groups.

Chris Melvin
Chief Executive
Reed in Partnership

Contents

Welcome from Chris Melvin, Chief Executive	2
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	6
Chapter 1 The International Experience	9
Chapter 2 Understanding the customer groups	15
Chapter 3 Constructing a scheme in the UK	22
Chapter 4 The impact of workfare	29
Summary	35
Appendix A Reed in Partnership products	36
Appendix B Research Methodology	37
Bibliography	38

It is important to place the discussion about workfare in a wider context of existing welfare-to-work provision in the UK. Currently, around half of all Jobseeker's Allowance claimants leave the benefit within three months, and three-quarters leave within six months. As the remaining claimants move onto more specialist programmes, many more of these people move into work. This success is down to the combined expertise of the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Whilst there are obviously areas for improvement, workfare should be seen as an intervention for a small group of people who have experienced long-term unemployment. It should not be viewed as a policy intervention to cure high levels of unemployment.

This report draws on a review of the existing evidence base for workfare programmes in the US and Australia. We also undertook primary research involving case history analysis and discussion groups with the long-term unemployed. This was supplemented by a survey of Personal Advisers and follow-up interviews. The full research methodology is explained in Appendix B. The report recommendations are based on both the evidence from the literature review and the primary research.

International experience

1. There are a number of international examples of workfare programmes, with the most frequently cited coming from the US states of Wisconsin and New York along with programmes in Australia.
2. There is a surprising lack of academic research looking at the specific impact of workfare programmes. This is because many programmes were introduced at the same time as other welfare interventions, making it difficult to isolate individual effects. However, the introduction of workfare in the US and

Australia coincided with falls in the number of unemployed claimants. There is some research which points to this fall as being partially the result of the workfare programme.

Customer groups

3. The project identified the different customer groups that would be likely to take part in a workfare type programme. The four groups identified by our research were: people with serious employment related barriers; individuals not committed to finding work; people with unrealistic job goals; and people with drug and alcohol dependency.
4. The majority of unemployed customers were opposed to the introduction of the workfare programme. The reasons included: the feeling of being treated like a criminal; hostility towards the type of jobs that workfare might involve; and opposition to the idea of blaming the unemployed for economic conditions. However, some people were supportive of the proposals believing that it could be a useful way of gaining additional skills and helping them enter the labour market.

Defining success

5. Work for Your Benefit should be based on the principle of helping people enter employment by giving unemployed people the opportunity to gain essential additional skills to enter and be competitive in the labour market. It should also signal a clear expectation that people with long-term claims will be expected to work for continued receipt of benefit. The success of the programme should be measured against these two factors.

Constructing a workfare programme

6. The workfare process should start for claimants who have completed 12 months of support through the Flexible New Deal (FND) without finding paid work. This means that in most cases participants would have been on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for 24 months. The programme's focus should mirror employment opportunities in the local labour market without replacing existing paid jobs, eg supplementing existing local authority and voluntary activities.
7. Customers should not be paid additional benefits for taking part. However, any specific costs such as travel should be reimbursed.
8. The workfare programme should fill 20 hours of activity per week with 15 hours allocated to job search activity, training or skills development. It should be continuous for those with two years of JSA claims.
9. The workfare programme should be flexible in order to help move customers into work. It should be part of a continued programme of job search assistance and barrier removal anchored by a Personal Adviser.
10. It is essential that the government addresses any loopholes or get-out clauses that would allow people to avoid taking part in the workfare programme. This will ensure fairness for those completing their workfare obligations whilst also sending a signal to claimants not committed to finding work.
11. The government should pilot different models of workfare and ensure there is a full evaluation strategy in place.

Impact of workfare

12. Our research indicated that workfare should reduce the benefit count. This is through two main causes: firstly, it will provide greater incentives for people to look for work; and, secondly, it should help long-term unemployed claimants get the skills and work experience needed to enter employment.
13. Workfare would impact on the customer groups that would be most likely to take part in a Work for Your Benefit programme in the following ways:
 - People with substantial and enduring employment barriers: A properly constructed programme would provide this group with the skills, confidence and experience needed to enter work. However, a programme based more on punishment could exacerbate their barriers to work.
 - People not serious about finding employment: It would make it difficult for people making fraudulent claims to stay on benefit. Individuals avoiding work would be forced to either participate in employment-based programmes or undertake community work.
 - People with unrealistic job goals: Workfare would make this group more focused on looking for work that is available as they would not wish to take part in a workfare type programme.
 - People with drug and alcohol needs: Workfare would not be appropriate for this customer group who instead require supportive drug and alcohol intervention strategies.

The introduction of a Work for Your Benefit type programme is likely to be a reality within the next two years. This new employment programme will represent a major change in the way the welfare system addresses the problem of long-term unemployment.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in the Green Paper *No one written off: reforming welfare to reward responsibility* announced an intention to run pilots in a number of Jobcentre Plus districts from 2010. These pilots will require participation by claimants who finish their period with a Flexible New Deal provider without finding work.¹ This policy direction has continued in the recently published DWP White Paper *Raising Expectations and Increasing Support*, which said that Advisers would also have the potential to refer claimants onto Work for Your Benefit earlier in the claim process where this would be beneficial to the individual.

Similarly, the Conservative Party in its *Work for Welfare* Green Paper said that it would introduce time limits on out of work benefit claims. Under the Conservative proposals, those claiming unemployment related benefits for more than two years out of three would be required to work for their dole on community programmes.²

The political agenda has moved in favour of introducing a workfare type programme for a number of reasons. Firstly, this is a continuation of the more stringent welfare reforms that have been implemented since the early 1990s. Secondly, there is concern amongst policy makers about the entrenched levels of benefit dependency in some communities which has not been significantly reduced during the past ten years of economic growth. In response to this social problem, it is felt

that greater interventions need to be introduced to break this cycle of dependency with stronger incentives to work.

Finally, there is public concern regarding welfare payments. This concern has increased over the past two decades. For instance, the British Social Attitudes Survey found that the percentage of people saying they agree strongly or slightly with the statement 'many people falsely claim benefits' has increased from the high 60s in the late 1980s to over 80% in the 2006 survey.

The increased levels of public concern about economic conditions and the rate of unemployment is likely to make government more aware of the need to portray workfare as a beneficial intervention rather than a programme aimed at stigmatising the long-term unemployed.

This report begins with a brief look at the international experience of existing Work for Your Benefit type programmes. The literature review was supplemented by research amongst the long-term unemployed, involving analysis of case histories, focus groups and interviews. At the end of the report we bring together the two research strands to look at the lessons that can be learned by those charged with developing the UK programme.

What is Work for Your Benefit?

Work for Your Benefit is more commonly described as workfare and has its origins in the US. Workfare is best described as a system that makes the payment of benefit conditional on performing various forms of work.³ In some international literature the term has a much broader meaning and is used to describe measures designed to encourage welfare recipients into

the workforce, such as training and job search activity.⁴ In this report, we use the term workfare to describe formal work activity that has to be undertaken in order for the individual to continue receiving benefit.

Over the past 15 years the US and Australia have introduced the requirement on benefit claimants to participate in full-time workfare programmes. In the UK, there has been increasing compulsion on people to comply with work-based programmes. Currently, all Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants have to be actively looking for work with failure to provide evidence resulting in benefit sanctions. After being in receipt of JSA for 18 months, claimants are referred to more intensive help through programmes such as the New Deal and Employment Zones (EZ).

The new Work for Your Benefit type programme will place a much greater responsibility on benefit claimants. It will lead to out of work benefits being seen as something you have to earn rather than receive as an automatic right. Indeed, this principle is being built into the welfare system even before Work for Your Benefit would kick in. With the onset of Flexible New Deal, claimants will experience a four week Mandatory Work Related Activity, which will see them take part in employment activities aimed at boosting their experience and soft skills.

The changes that are being introduced are not without their opponents who are concerned about the impact that workfare could have in terms of poverty and social exclusion. The spectre of workfare has attracted opposition from the Trades Union Congress⁵ and anti-poverty organisations such as the Child Poverty Action Group⁶. In many ways the onus is on the government to ensure that it listens to genuine concerns and has the right

foundations for any programme that is introduced.

Key research areas

There is a surprising lack of academic research into international experiences of Work for Your Benefit type programmes. There is also very little research looking at the possible impact of such a programme here in the UK.

This small research project aims to contribute to the debate about the introduction of a Work for Your Benefit type programme and provide evidence for its likely impact on the long-term unemployed. It is not intended to be an exhaustive report and does not seek to provide all of the answers about the potential impact of workfare. However, it is hoped that the small scale findings can start a real debate about the impact of workfare and the type of programme that would be most effective in the UK.

The report begins with a short literature review setting out the international experience of these programmes. We then move on to discuss our key research findings with recommendations for how a programme could be successfully introduced here in the UK.

The key research questions that have been investigated are:

- What is the international experience of Work for Your Benefit type programmes and what can the UK learn from these examples;
- What type of customer groups would be likely to participate in a 'Work for Your Benefit' type programme;
- What impact will such a programme have on these customer groups; and

¹ Department for Work and Pensions, *No one written off: reforming welfare to reward responsibility* (Accessed at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfarereform/>, July 2008) p43.

² The Conservative Party, *Work for Welfare: Real welfare reform to help make British poverty history* (Accessed at http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Where_we_stand/Welfare_and_Pensions.aspx), p.8

³ Adam Bogdanor, *Not Working: Why Workfare Should Replace the New Deal* (London: Policy Exchange, April 2004) p37.

⁴ Alex McKenzie, 'Workfare: The New Zealand Experience and Future Directions' in *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand* 8, March 1997.

⁵ Brendan Barber, the General Secretary of the TUC, said in a statement on 10 December 2008 that: 'The introduction of workfare will unfairly stigmatise unemployed people without having any impact on their chances of finding jobs.'

⁶ Kate Green, the Chief Executive of CPAG, in a Press Release published on 10 December 2008 said: 'Work for benefit proposals undermine the right to a fair day's pay for an honest day's work. If the Government can find a person a full time job then they should be paid a wage, not a benefit. Otherwise they reinforce ideas that work does not pay, or that it is acceptable for employers not to pay a fair wage.'

- How could a programme be constructed which gives people the skills they need to enter the labour market.

The research findings are based on five main sources:

- Desk research looking at the implementation of workfare programmes in Wisconsin, New York and Australia;
- Case history analysis of 86 long-term unemployed people in Doncaster, London and Liverpool;
- Four focus groups with the long-term unemployed;
- A survey of 76 Personal Advisers working in our Employment Zone offices; and
- Follow-up interviews with 15 Personal Advisers working with the long-term unemployed.

Further information on the process and the demographics of these research tools are detailed in [Appendix B](#).

Chapter 1

The international experience

There are a number of examples internationally of where workfare programmes have been introduced. The most frequently cited are from the US states of Wisconsin and New York, as well as programmes in Australia. In this section we present a brief description of the three systems, the main differences between them and the research findings that have emerged from relevant evaluation work.

Despite the cost of operating workfare programmes, there is a lack of formal evaluation work and little academic evidence of their effectiveness. Here in the UK, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) recently commissioned a report on the success of workfare programmes. The report, undertaken by Richard Crisp and Del Roy Fletcher, examined four state-based programmes in the US as well as the programmes in Australia and Canada.

Workfare programmes have usually been introduced in parallel with other changes in employment programmes. This makes it difficult to disentangle the individual impact of workfare. As Crisp and Fletcher noted, 'there are few systematic evaluations that isolate the impact of workfare from other elements of welfare-to-work programmes'.⁷

Wisconsin (USA)

The Wisconsin state government led the way in reforming welfare-to-work in the US and internationally. The series of reforms in Wisconsin started in 1988 with a programme called JOBS designed to support and monitor unemployed claimants making the transition into employment. In 1993 tougher rules were introduced that put time limits on benefit claims. This programme, called Work Not Welfare, was deemed to have been a success and in 1997 the state government introduced a new programme called Wisconsin Works which placed further obligations on jobseekers.

Wisconsin Works aimed to encourage self-sufficiency through work participation and personal responsibility. Tommy G Thompson, the Governor of Wisconsin who led the welfare reforms, said when the programme was introduced:

*'No one will receive cash from the government of Wisconsin any more. He will receive a paycheck either from a private employer or for a community service job. If he does not work, he will not get paid. It is that simple and that straightforward.'*⁸

The intention of introducing workfare was to make the receipt of public money contingent on performing work that would benefit the wider community, and in the process help develop 'work habits that would lead to real jobs'. The vast majority of programme participants were women with dependent children. As part of Wisconsin Works, every claimant was moved into one of four different types of work support:

- Unsubsidised employment: Claimant supported into employment in the private sector.

⁷ A comparative review of workfare programmes in the United States, Canada and Australia, Richard Crisp and Del Roy Fletcher, DWP Research Report No 533, 2008, p5.

⁸ The Good News about welfare reform: Wisconsin's success story by Governor Tommy Thompson, 6 March 1997.

- Trial Job: The state subsidises employers to take on additional members of staff through the programme.
- Community Service Jobs: Claimants required to undertake 30 hours a week of state-based employment with ten hours a week for job search.
- Transitions: People with severe barriers to employment such as mental health and drug and alcohol dependency receive specialised help and support.

As part of the programme, each claimant was helped into the most appropriate and cost-effective route. However, in reality the state subsidised very few job trials and over 40% of all claimants took part in Community Service Jobs.

Wisconsin has received considerable attention from politicians and policy-makers as a result of the dramatic reduction in welfare caseloads that took place. When Governor Thompson left office in 2001 he announced that during his tenure, welfare rolls had been reduced by 94% with 80% of these people having left welfare for unsubsidised work. In addition, the state's figures indicated that child poverty levels had been reduced by 20%.

However, the legal evaluation of Wisconsin Works in 2001 identified a number of problems with the programme. This report found that the programme's 'success in achieving economic self-sufficiency for participants has been mixed'. It found that the programme was suffering from a high number of returnees at 26%, with the probable cause being the level of poverty suffered by those who had returned to work.

In addition, the evaluation found that among the 2,129 participants who had left the project during the first three months of 1998, 1,377 had filed

Wisconsin tax returns. Of those who filed tax returns, 53.3% had incomes below the federal poverty level after earned income tax credits were included.

The principles of the Wisconsin Works programme have remained relatively constant since its introduction along with the number of people participating in the programme. This is largely the result of continuing public and political support for the programme within the state.

New York (USA)

Although the Wisconsin programme has received far more academic attention, New York's Work Experience Programme (WEP) introduced by Mayor Giuliani in 1995 should be regarded by policy-makers as an example of how a widespread workfare programme can be introduced.

In the words of Giuliani's welfare advisor, the aim of the WEP was to ensure that: 'If the government is going to provide a benefit, it has the right and obligation to ask for something in return.'⁹ It was also believed that through the WEP, welfare recipients would learn the skills needed to enter paid employment – such as turning up on time, following directions and working co-operatively.

A further reason for the implementation of the reforms in New York was the widespread belief that systematic fraud was taking place in the benefits system. For instance, when Mayor Giuliani introduced fingerprinting for benefit claims more than 37,000 people were either caught cheating or failed to turn up. After the city began tightening eligibility rules and placing more obligations on claimants, more than 280,000 people dropped off the rolls.¹⁰ The range of welfare changes and interventions taking place at the time make it difficult to distinguish the individual impact of the WEP.

As part of the WEP, claimants were required to undertake 20 hours of mandatory work experience and 15 hours of mandatory participation in 'work skills or educational development and/or treatment with a continuous job search component'.¹¹ The requirement was less stringent for single parents with young children. The types of jobs included basic municipal positions such as sweeping the streets, cleaning public buildings and looking after the city's parks.

When the package of welfare reforms was originally introduced, the unpaid work experience element was a significant part of the programme. As Douglas Besharov pointed out: 'At its peak, in December 1999, New York City's Work Experience Program (WEP) was more than seven times larger than Wisconsin's; it had about 21,933 TANF/Family Assistance (FA) recipients and 15,320 state-funded Safety Net Assistance (SNA) recipients in various work activities. This compares to just 5,434 adults in its work experience program and only 7,408 adults in any work-related activity at the high point in the Wisconsin scheme.'¹²

At the time of its introduction, the workfare programme attracted a lot of attention and faced challenges from trade unions as the programme was seen as replacing city employees with a cheap source of labour. There were also issues regarding the inflexibility of the programme, as the equivalent of three days' labour was actually carried out every weekday morning. This meant that some people had to drop out of training or college courses.

The New York programme is an example of where an extremely large number of workfare places were created at a relatively low cost to the state government. Between 1995 and 2001, WEP provided a mixture of mandatory work experience

supported by an array of remedial and treatment services to more than 250,000 recipients. According to Besharov, the annual average cost of the WEP placement was \$9,048 although this does not include any costs for the 15 hours of mandatory job search or training provision that was also provided.

Today, the New York welfare programme still retains a strong element of compulsory workfare. However, the numbers of people taking part in only workfare activities has fallen considerably from the height of nearly 40,000 people in 1999. At the end of August 2008, the number of people receiving family assistance payments on the WEP was just 2,788 and the number of people receiving cash assistance on WEP was 10,020. Many of these people were undertaking WEP in combination with other interventions reflecting a move away from the more hard-line workfare approach taken in the late 1990s.

Today, a range of different measures count towards work-related activities such as job search and job readiness assistance, job skills training directly related to employment and educational courses. As Andrew Bush, former Human Resources Administration Executive Deputy Administrator, said:

*'As we developed our program, WEP itself became just part – one of the tools – of what our reforms were about (and a declining part of those reforms)... Thus, as we became more employment oriented – moving up job search to the application period and before WEP, and doing job search concurrently with just about everything, our reliance on WEP declined, both numerically and as a percentage of caseload.'*¹³

The New York programme presents the most significant example of a workfare programme in

⁹ Senior Adviser to Mayor Giuliani, quoted in Judith Havemann's 'New York's Workfare Picks Up City and Lifts Mayor's Image' in *Washington Post*, 13 August 1997.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Douglas J Besharov and Peter Germanis, *Full-Engagement Welfare in New York City: Lessons for TANF's Participation Requirements* (accessed at http://www.welfareacademy.org/pubs/welfare/nyc_hra.pdf, August 2004) p5.

¹² Ibid, p5.

¹³ Ibid, p37.

terms of the sheer number of people engaged. It reflects the ability of government to create workfare type jobs which have some wider social benefit and also, based on the available evidence, helped to contribute to a reduction in welfare claimants. However, critics have pointed to the way that the programme created a pool of low-paid workers trapped on benefit without the support and the time needed to move into paid employment. Any UK programme should aim to avoid this situation.

There have been limited systematic evaluations of New York's WEP programme. As the mandatory element of workfare was also combined with active job search interventions, it is difficult to disentangle the impact that WEP had in helping people move into paid employment. However, given the similarities between the jobs undertaken by people on the WEP with real jobs in the economy, it is possible to claim that the programme would have given people some of the skills and experience that would have helped them move into the labour market.

Australia

The Australian Government introduced its Work for the Dole (WfD) programme in 1997. The programme was initially aimed at 18-24 year olds who had been unemployed for more than six months, but has since been extended to all unemployed jobseekers up to the age of 50. It was introduced at the same time as a range of other changes to the welfare system, including the establishment of Centrelink and greater welfare-to-work support and intervention.

The WfD programme was centred on the obligation of jobseekers to work for their benefit and give something back to the community. John Howard, former Prime Minister, said in 1999 that 'people need to give back something to the community in return for assistance in times of

need'. The main focus in terms of individual jobseekers was not on using WfD as a vehicle to move people into the labour market – instead the focus was on giving people experience of work and improving their soft skills such as timekeeping.

The WfD programmes are typically run by councils, charities and community groups and involve people undertaking work in sectors such as the environment, heritage, arts, community care, tourism and sport. One of the principles on which the programme was based was on not replicating existing paid employment so as to displace existing paid workers. This aspect of the programme was criticised by the OECD which concluded that:

*'The requirement that under Work for the Dole programs jobs must not compete with paid employment in the regular labour market remains a problem as it favours unskilled work with little opportunity for training which may impede the integration of the unemployed into gainful work.'*¹⁴

With the mutual obligation policy, which previously kicked in after six months of unemployment, jobseekers take part in a range of activities such as voluntary work, job search training, career counselling, literacy and numeracy training, part-time study and Work for the Dole. Participants typically spend six months on the programme at a level of between 24 and 30 hours a fortnight, with around 64,000 WfD placements available. People taking part in the project receive an additional \$20.80 a fortnight – equivalent to around £4 per week.

In 2006, those unemployed for 12 months or more and who had been assessed by their Job Network Advisor as having a 'pattern of work avoidance' could be referred to Full Time Work for the Dole. This increased the required total

participation time to 1,100 hours, with a minimum of 50 hours per fortnight.

The new Australian Government has kept the WfD programme but changed the criteria so that individuals now have to be unemployed for 18 months before being eligible for workfare. They have also placed a greater emphasis on training and removed some of the sanctions for non-compliance. Previously, there was an automatic eight-week benefit sanction for those failing to take part. The new provisions mean that people only lose their benefit for the period of time they have missed, with the option of gaining this financial support back through increased hours on the programme.

The evaluation research has provided mixed findings regarding the effectiveness of WfD. An official evaluation¹⁵ in 2006, which looked at the net impact¹⁶ of WfD, found that it had an impact of 7.3% in terms of people being in employment 12 months after they started on the programme. The report went on to conclude that: 'While it should be noted that Work for the Dole does not have the objective of improving employment outcome levels, it nonetheless does have good employment outcomes.'

Currently only around one third of people completing WfD are in employment three months later. The poor performance has led the new Australian Government to focus on the need to improve and broaden the scope of the programme.¹⁷ Academics have also criticised the programme's success levels in helping people move into sustained employment with some such as Jeff Borland and Yi-Ping Tseng (2003) claiming

that it stops people looking for work due to the time constraints.

The employment reforms made in Australia in the early 1990s, of which WfD was part, can be seen to have been a success if measured strictly against the unemployment rate. The unemployment rate in 1998 stood at 7.5% and today stands at 4.3%.¹⁸ However, there is much disagreement between academics and politicians over the specific impact of WfD.

Learning the lessons from international experience

The workfare programmes in the US and Australia had very different objectives. The New York and Wisconsin programmes were developed on the understanding that the presence of workfare would act as a catalyst for unemployed people to look more intensively for work. In comparison, the Australian programme was founded on the basis of reciprocal rights, and the need for unemployed claimants to put something back into the community – though with the clear intention that workfare should act as an incentive for people to find paid work.

It is important for the UK to learn lessons from these international examples. The research by Crisp and Fletcher (2008) was broadly negative about the impact of workfare. It reported that 'dramatic reductions in welfare caseloads cannot be attributed to workfare alone', and that there was 'little evidence that workfare increases the likelihood of finding work'. It also found that workfare had a 'deterrent effect which stops people claiming or encourages them to leave

¹⁵ Customised Assistance, 2006.

¹⁶ Net impact reflected the improvement in outcomes a programme delivers and is based on comparing employment outcomes following participation with those that would have occurred in the absence of such participation.

¹⁷ <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24768194-5013871,00.html>

¹⁸ <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/6202.0Main%20Features3Nov%202008?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=6202.0&issue=Nov%202008&num=&view=>

¹⁹ A comparative review of workfare programmes in the United States, Canada and Australia, Richard Crisp and Del Roy Fletcher, DWP Research Report No 533, 2008, p5.

welfare before the workfare phase'.¹⁹ These problems can partially be attributed to the ways that the workfare programmes were constructed in both the US and Australia, particularly in the early days of the programmes.

The UK Work for Your Benefit programme will need to be very different from the programmes that operate in Australia and the US. The DWP proposals in the White Paper Raising Expectations and Increasing Support show how the UK will pilot its workfare programme. One of the most significant differences will be the point at which workfare starts. In the US claimants were moved onto workfare from the first day of their claim, whereas in Australia workfare previously started after six months on benefits. However, in the UK, the vast majority of claimants will only move onto full-time workfare after two years of receiving JSA during which they will have been provided with intensive assistance with job search, skills development and other activities aimed at removing employment barriers.

Whilst it is difficult to isolate the specific impact of the workfare programmes, it is possible to say that in both the US and Australia, workfare had a role as part of a broader package of welfare reforms in accomplishing their respective objectives, whether in reducing benefit claims or providing an incentive for people to look for employment. This suggests that, if constructed effectively, workfare could have a positive role within a range of active welfare interventions aimed at helping people into the labour market and providing an incentive for work.

Chapter 2

Understanding the customer group

Introduction

The research project looked at the customer groups that would be likely to take part in a Work for Your Benefit type programme if it were introduced into the current UK welfare-to-work system. As part of this research, we undertook detailed analysis of the case histories of 86 people who had been unsuccessful in finding employment after completing Employment Zone (EZ)²⁰ provision. The issues investigated included the individual barriers to employment, attitudes towards finding work, training opportunities undertaken, the number of interviews secured and the feedback from employers.

The research group had all been unemployed for at least 18 months. As JSA claimants, they received assistance from Jobcentre Plus and, having failed to find employment after 18 months, were referred to an EZ programme. Despite the support provided through the EZ, the customers did not succeed in moving into paid employment. There are a number of changes to employment support programmes for the long-term unemployed being proposed by the government, which largely focus on increased personalisation of services accompanied by greater obligations on claimants to look for work. The clear aim of these changes is to increase the number of long-term unemployed moving into the labour market.

The analysis carried out in this research project is focused on JSA claimants who have experienced the existing welfare-to-work regime. The new changes being introduced, particularly around increased personalisation and conditionality, should mean that some of the customers included in this study would under the new system move

into employment before becoming eligible for workfare.

Supporting people into work

As part of the current EZ programme, over a six-month period each customer receives a tailored package of support designed to address their individual needs and barriers to work. This is co-ordinated through the support of a Personal Adviser who the customer meets on a weekly or fortnightly basis. After the initial meetings, the customer and the Adviser agree a full programme of support.

The support provided to customers can take many forms and is personalised around their needs. Within the case histories that were analysed, interventions ranged from help with job search techniques, assistance with creating a CV, interview coaching, referral to external skills provision and also participation in the range of Reed in Partnership employment programmes such as Journey, Essentials and Motivate. These courses are described in more detail in Appendix A. Some of the customers were also referred to specialist agencies with expertise in drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

One of the core components of most welfare-to-work programmes is the need to build the confidence and self-esteem of customers. In undertaking the case history analysis, the individual level of motivation for each customer was studied throughout their time on the EZ programme. There are a number of people who join programmes with very low levels of self-esteem and confidence. They are hostile to looking for work largely because they do not believe they will be successful and therefore construct personal barriers to hide potential failure. For these people, the role of welfare-to-work providers is to build confidence and motivation with the aim of empowering the

²⁰ Employment Zones (EZs) were introduced in April 2000 in areas of the UK with high concentrations of long-term unemployment with services provided by the private sector. EZs target unemployed individuals aged 25 and over who have been claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for at least 18 months, young unemployed people aged 18-24 returning to New Deal and lone parents in receipt of Income Support (IS). Participation is voluntary for lone parents.

individual to take more control over their job search activities. The Personal Adviser model with individualised support is effective because it builds trust and helps the customer develop confidence and motivation to take control over their job search activities.

The UK Government is currently implementing significant changes in the employment support provision for JSA claimants. The changes will ensure that the long-term unemployed receive integrated jobs and skills support through a revised Flexible New Deal (FND) programme, which will replace the current mandatory New Deals and EZs. The new programme will strengthen existing support by providing: a stronger framework of rights and responsibilities; referral to the programme after 12 months' unemployment; 12 months for providers to work with customers; a more personalised approach; four weeks of Mandatory Work Related Activities which will be a short workfare taster; and job sustainability targets of 26 weeks.

The combination of people being referred to FND after just 12 months' unemployment and the increase in time that providers have to work with customers from six to 12 months means that the service should be more personalised and provide the longer-term support that those with multiple

barriers need in order to move into employment. The FND services will largely be provided through a partnership approach involving public, private and third sector organisations and a large number of partners and subcontractors providing specialist services.

What were the barriers to employment?

Our case history analysis showed that over two thirds of the customers unable to find work during the programme were classified, at initial diagnostics, as those furthest away from the labour market. The people within this category had significant barriers to work including: a lack of spoken and written English; problems with drug and alcohol misuse; homelessness; aggressive behaviour or previous criminal convictions. The vast majority had multiple barriers to employment.

The remaining third were classified as potentially close to the labour market with either minor employment related barriers or issues around motivation. The most common reason why these customers had failed to find work was unrealistic job goals or an unwillingness to look for work.

A common issue across customer groups was the fear of moving from benefits into work. The

Customer Group	% of all customers	% attending appointments	% with positive attitude	% securing an interview
Serious barriers to employment	46%	95%	74%	92%
Not committed to finding work	16%	64%	7%	36%
Unrealistic job goals	19%	50%	25%	69%
Drug & Alcohol needs	19%	50%	38%	44%

'benefit trap' can create disincentives for people to look for work and act as a real barrier in terms of motivation and commitment. Many people are fearful of looking for work because they don't want to risk losing their benefits and the safety net this provides. They are also fearful of moving into work for a short space of time and then having to reapply for their benefits, with particular worries around housing benefit. Other people see the financial incentives of employment as not worth leaving benefits for.

Based on our analysis, there were four distinct customer groups that fail to find employment after at least two years on JSA. The table on page 16 represents the analysis of the four customer groups who completed the EZ without finding paid employment along with some of the key statistics regarding the percentage regularly attending appointments with their Personal Adviser, having a positive attitude to the support being provided and securing an interview.

The case histories were selected randomly and reflect the range of customers on our EZ contracts. The sample is unlikely to be representative of all long-term unemployed claimants and, given the contract locations, there is likely to be an over-representation of people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. However, the case studies and the evidence contained in them provide a robust analysis of a small group of long-term unemployed people that could be used as a starting point for further research in this field.

Serious employment related barriers to employment

Based on our sample, 46% of people were genuinely motivated to find work but were unsuccessful due to significant and multiple barriers to employment. These barriers included a lack of basic skills (36%), criminal convictions (31%), ESOL needs (24%), lack of any previous experience in work (23%), lack of identification

making it difficult for employers to recruit (15%), severe confidence issues (13%) and personal health and hygiene issues (10%).

The majority of the customer group were very motivated in terms of attending meetings with their Personal Adviser, turning up at skill development events and applying for jobs. Some of the customers, by the end of the programme, had become very motivated to find a job and were spending a lot of time sending out CVs and application forms to employers.

Most people in this category secured job interviews but none was successful despite help with interview preparations and coaching. It is important to consider that a number of these customers secured interviews as a way of building confidence and self-esteem. Many individuals had never previously had a job interview and therefore the process of applying and being interviewed was part of the learning and development process. The feedback from employers reflected some of the barriers faced by the customers, with comments including lack of relevant work experience, poor English language skills and low confidence.

It is also important to acknowledge the impact of discrimination faced by some of the people within this customer group, particularly people from ethnic minority backgrounds, individuals with health barriers and people with criminal convictions. These claimants are often motivated to find work but have difficulty securing a job as employers are reluctant to take a risk or fearful of employing people with specific needs. A lot of the work of welfare-to-work providers is in identifying the right employers and working with other employers to break down potential barriers and establish the business case for diversity.

Case Study 1: The customer had a criminal record and no recent employment experience. After spending time with a Personal Adviser, he became keen to work and more enthusiastic about the support being provided. He took part in development courses to improve basic skills and received support from a provider specialising in assisting ex-offenders. The customer received intensive help with preparing for interviews and was pre-screened for a number of vacancies. He was successful in securing interviews but failed to secure employment, despite performing well, because the employers were not prepared to take the risk.

Case Study 2: This customer did not speak any English. ESOL training was provided but the poor language skills were still a problem at the end of the six months. The Personal Adviser spent time looking for jobs with employers in the customer's own community and arranged two interviews. However, the employers felt that the customer's lack of experience of working in the UK was too much of a barrier for them.

The case studies above reflect the fact that the individual claimants within this group were motivated to find work and received intensive assistance to move them closer to the labour market. Many people with similar needs are successfully helped into work but customers differ in terms of the pace at which they move through training and ESOL provision, the level of job vacancies available in their chosen sectors and the length of time it takes to build their confidence and self-belief before they begin actively applying for jobs.

As previously discussed, the changes to Jobcentre Plus provision and the introduction of FND will result in increased support for JSA claimants. One

of the key features of FND will be the fact that providers will have 12 months to work with customers, as opposed to the six months under the EZ provision and customers get referred after 12 months' unemployment rather than the current 18 months. These changes will be accompanied by other reforms including four weeks of Mandatory Work Related Activity, which will give the customers experience of the workplace along with better integration between employment and skills. These improvements should result in more personalised and longer-term support for the customers with the most serious barriers to employment and therefore result in more of those people moving into the labour market.

Not committed to finding work

From our analysis, 16% of people concluding the EZ programme were not serious about looking for work. This group included people who failed to turn up for appointments, missed interviews and failed to take job search activities seriously. Only 7% of this group had a positive attitude towards finding work with 64% regularly attending appointments. This group had the lowest percentage of people securing interviews at only 36%. Despite the low number of people who secured a job interview, three people were offered positions. However, none of them started employment citing personal or family reasons.

The people within this category were often very hostile in regards to looking for work and created numerous obstacles and barriers even after securing employment. Our analysis has shown that one of the main reasons this group of people are not committed to finding work is because they have become dependent on benefits and see no incentive to work. A number of the Personal Advisers also felt that some customers were working illegally whilst claiming benefits and therefore resented having to take part in the EZ programme.

Case Study 3: This customer frequently missed appointments and was not committed to finding a job. The Personal Adviser arranged training including Reed in Partnership's Journey programme, but the customer had a poor attendance record. A number of job interviews were arranged and the customer was offered a position but turned it down for 'personal reasons'.

Case Study 4: This customer had been unemployed for some time and had no qualifications. She would only consider administrative vacancies but had no experience and did not know how to use a computer. The customer was not interested in training opportunities around administration and IT. The Personal Adviser worked with her to look at very basic administrative positions and secured an interview. However, at the interview the customer said that she only wanted to work part-time and would only work after dark if the employer paid for a taxi home.

There are already a number of powers available to Jobcentre Plus to sanction customers for not complying with the terms of their benefit. Some of the customers in the research group who failed to turn up for appointments on time would have been referred back to Jobcentre Plus in order to be sanctioned. This may have resulted in a temporary loss of benefit. However, many of the people who are not committed to finding work comply with the minimum requirements of JSA and therefore avoid sanctions.

The government stated in the White Paper Raising Expectations and Increasing Support that it intends to reform the sanctions regime by giving customers a clearer understanding of what is expected of them and the impact of non-compliance. Many of the changes being introduced were recommended in the recently completed Gregg Review into

conditionality, which stated that in order to drive behaviour, the sanctions regime needs to be clearer, more transparent and better understood. This will be a key part in the process of making people take greater responsibility for looking for work and fully engaging with the support being provided.

Unrealistic job goals

Many welfare-to-work providers spend a lot of time working with claimants to either develop their concept of a dream job, building on their existing skills and experience, or looking at the customer's interests to see what kind of jobs might suit. Many people may have job goals that require specific skills or greater levels of experience than they have. This requires a real integrated approach to employment and skills.

This approach has been used with many of the customers who have been helped into initial entry-level jobs with an identified learning and skills route that allows them to progress. Recent success stories from our EZ programmes include people helped into the role of teaching assistant and then supported into teacher training programmes or people helped into the catering field with a career progression route to become a chef. This approach requires flexibility on the part of the customer and the provider and a willingness to see a potential job as a first step on the employment ladder.

In our sample 19% were classified as having persistent unrealistic job goals. Based on previous research, this is a common reason why some people with qualifications end up in long-term unemployment.²¹ The people in this category either wanted higher level jobs than were available or had unrealistic expectations of what salary they could achieve. Whilst people need support to get the right job, it is important to recognise that these customers had not secured

²¹ For instance a report by Estyn, *The New Deal in Wales: Effectiveness of Job Search Activity and Job Outcomes* (July 2003) found that a number of customer have unrealistic job expectations which act as a barrier to employment. Similarly DWP research reports have focused on the importance of welfare-to-work providers working with customers to identify realistic job goals and salary expectations.

employment after at least two years on JSA.

Despite the work of the Personal Adviser in challenging expectations and looking at other job goals, the customers were fixed on wanting to work in a specific sector. The Personal Advisers working with these customers felt that some were using their job goals as a reason not to work and remain on benefits.

In total, 69% of this group secured an interview but none led to a job. Feedback from employers showed that the candidates did not present themselves well, lacking motivation and enthusiasm. This is despite support being provided in terms of interview preparation and mock interviews.

Case Study 5: The customer had no recent employment history and a criminal record. She had a positive attitude towards the EZ and very good attendance levels. However, she would not consider any vacancy with a take home pay, after tax and national insurance, of £250 a week. The customer was not successful in securing a job interview.

Case Study 6: This customer had excellent qualifications including a doctorate. He had been on unemployment benefits for a number of years but had done little active job search as he would only consider jobs in his chosen scientific field. However, there were no local vacancies and unlikely to be so, given the local labour market. The customer would not consider other job opportunities, despite interventions from his Personal Adviser. The customer was put forward for two vacancies but was not successful.

The FND process and the planned changes to the conditionality regime will place a greater onus on this customer group to consider alternative jobs. Customers will need to undertake Mandatory Work Related Activity which could involve a

range of work based activities in order to improve skills and give them experience of being in work. It is likely that for customers who persist with unrealistic job goals, the MWRA would be used to broaden the options being considered presenting an opportunity to help focus the customer on more realistic job opportunities.

Drug and alcohol dependency

Based on our analysis, 19% of the sample face difficulties finding employment due to problems with drug and alcohol misuse. The customers were identified either through disclosures or through the observations of their Personal Adviser. Those with serious drug and alcohol issues were referred to agencies that could help address their problems. However, for many people the problem was so severe that little progress could be achieved on the six months of the EZ programme. Many people within this category also had significant housing barriers, including homelessness.

Many drug and alcohol dependent people want support to tackle their problem and get into employment. Alongside external specialist support, these customers will continue to receive employment related support from the EZ. Often customers find that receiving help with finding a job can be a powerful motivator when moving through rehabilitation programmes.

The fact that 44% of this group were successful in securing a job interview demonstrates that a number of these customers were motivated to look for work and actively made job applications. Many of these interviews were for part-time positions to give the customer an opportunity to build up their hours as their condition improves. Other interviews were organised to give the customer real interview experience and a confidence boost.

analysis were motivated to find work but suffered from significant employment related barriers.

To create an effective Work for Your Benefit type programme, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the type of people most likely to end up on it. The research undertaken for this project is a step in helping to identify the distinct customer groups and the range of interventions that would be most beneficial in order to support these customers into work before the need for workfare. Although there is no claim that the people identified in this project are representative of all long-term unemployed people, the sample does provide some robust evidence of the type of customers who complete our mandatory employment support programmes without finding paid work.

Building upon the customer groups identified above, the next chapter examines the views of the long-term unemployed towards workfare, and investigates the impact that Personal Advisers believe the proposals would have on the long-term unemployed.

Case Study 7: The customer had negative attitudes towards work and the EZ programme and felt it was a waste of time. The customer had an alcohol problem which resulted in missed appointments. He refused the option of being referred to an external agency for help. The Personal Adviser helped him create a CV and secured an interview for him in a part-time, entry-level position. However, he was unsuccessful as he had been drinking before the interview.

Case Study 8: The customer was homeless and had alcohol and drug misuse problems. He was referred to external partners for help with his alcohol and drug dependency and for help with finding housing. At the end of the programme he was more actively looking for work and had secured a couple of job interviews.

In the future customers with some of the most serious drug dependencies will have access to improved levels of support with the expectation that they will take up this treatment. The government has stated its intention to create a new drug and employment support programme which will aim to stabilise the claimant's drug problem, improve self-esteem, tackle barriers to work such as housing and debt and provide the intensive employment support needed. This personalised and combined approach should hopefully support more people with drug and alcohol dependency issues into work.

Conclusion

This chapter has identified four distinct customer groups and the very different needs and barriers to work they face. It is important for the debate around long-term unemployment not to become one about 'work-shy' individuals and 'benefit cheats'. As can be seen from our research, a significant number of people in our case history

Impact of workfare

This chapter will explore the impact that a Work for Your Benefit programme would have on unemployed claimants, and the factors that need to be considered when constructing such a programme in the UK.

To investigate these issues we used a range of qualitative and quantitative methods including the case history analysis utilised in the previous chapter, focus groups with the long-term unemployed, and a survey of Personal Advisers with follow-up interviews. The full range of research tools used is detailed in Appendix B.

The mix of research methods used brought together a range of perspectives in order to investigate the potential impact of a Work for Your Benefit programme. The focus groups with the long-term unemployed allowed us to question and probe the attitude of these customers towards workfare and discuss the impact the programme would have on their own behaviour. It was important to seek the views of Personal Advisers, as these front-line professionals spend every day supporting and challenging the long-term unemployed. Their opinions, gathered through a quantitative survey and follow-up interviews provide a second reference point regarding the potential impact of workfare.

Reactions to workfare

In the focus groups, the subject of Work for Your Benefit programmes created a very lively debate amongst our unemployed customers. The majority were implacably opposed to the introduction of a workfare programme with initial views including the feeling of being treated like a criminal; hostility towards being forced to do some of the jobs that workfare might involve; and opposition to the idea of being blamed for economic conditions. Comments included:

'It's just another form of community service. They'd be treating us like criminals.'

'I'd be demoralised having to do it. When would I have the time to look for a job?'

'It would make me feel awful but I'd have to do it. I couldn't survive without benefits.'

However, some people in the focus groups were supportive of the proposal, believing that it reflected the need for unemployed people to give something back to the community. Others felt that if used correctly the programme could be a useful way of gaining additional skills and assisting with entry into the labour market. One customer said:

'I'd feel more proud about myself. I'd actually be working for my benefits and nobody could take that away from me. Nobody could say that I was scrounging.'

There were strong views regarding the need for the programmes to give people time to look for work. Comments included:

'I'm spending four days a week here [at the Employment Zone office]. I'm trying my hardest to find a job. How would this help?'

'I don't want to be on the dole. I can barely survive on benefits. If they made me do this every day, I'd never be able to get a job.'

In contrast, the Personal Advisers were overwhelmingly supportive of a workfare programme being introduced. Over 90% felt that it was a good idea to make people who have been receiving JSA for two years take part in a Work for Your Benefit type programme and 74% felt that workfare could help people to get the skills they need to enter paid employment. In the follow-up interviews, we explored some of the reasons behind the initial responses from Personal Advisers. Comments included:

'I feel this would shake up the benefit system in a positive way as the customers would be more motivated to get employment. It would also catch out those who are already working, and would provide the harder to help with the skills necessary.'

'It would be a good idea to introduce the Work for Your Benefit scheme. It will give the customers first-hand work experience and spur them on to find paid employment.'

'This scheme will go a long way to giving customers back their self confidence and belief in themselves.'

The main reasons why there was so much support amongst Personal Advisers for a Work for Your Benefit programme was the perception that there needs to be more sanctions in the JSA regime; the belief that the programme would help to more quickly focus the minds of the long-term unemployed and make them address issues rather than putting them off; and finally the feeling that the concept of having to work for benefits would be a useful way of stopping an increase in benefit dependency, particularly during a recession.

Type of work undertaken

In the focus groups, the unemployed had an accurate view of the type of work undertaken in similar US programmes. They were opposed to the idea of being forced to pick up litter and take part in environmental projects. Comments included:

'It is community service. It can't feel different.'

'It will just be crap jobs like picking up dog mess.'

As the discussion in the focus groups progressed, there was a softening of opinion amongst some who had been opposed. They expressed a need for choice in the system so that people could take part in activities that they were interested in and which would help lead to employment. Without

the element of choice, there was a consensus that the programme would be more about punishing people rather than providing support. However, when probed on the type of choice they would want to see, there were few actual suggestions and the discussions came back to being forced to do jobs that nobody else wanted to do. One exchange included:

'It should be in a field you want so you have some choice.'

'It'll be in a field, a proper field, picking up dog mess!'

We also asked the Personal Advisers about the types of activities that should be carried out by people on workfare programmes. Most felt the work should be about supporting local community projects with elements of choice built into the system. Many spoke about people being involved in projects to improve local parks, tackle graffiti and support community regeneration projects. There were other suggestions such as working in charity shops, providing directions in hospitals and other public buildings and helping with after-school clubs. Many Personal Advisers felt that people on the workfare programme should not be used as a form of cheap labour to replace existing employees.

Implications of implementing a Work for Your Benefit programme

Whilst the views of unemployed customers and Personal Advisers were divergent in terms of their support for introducing a workfare programme, there was a convergence of opinions regarding the impact that the programme would have on levels of unemployment.

In the focus groups, even those most opposed to workfare said that it would make them more actively look for work. This view was reflected in the 90% of Personal Advisers who said that the

workfare programme would provide greater incentive for people to look for work.

The majority of unemployed people said that the presence of workfare would force them to consider jobs previously disregarded. They spoke about how they would have to lower their horizons and look at occupations previously ruled out, such as working in a shop, bar work and labouring. This change was in part due to the embarrassment they would feel at being forced to take part in a workfare programme. Others felt that they would rather take any job than lose complete control over their lives through a Work for Your Benefit type programme.

The focus groups also discussed the impact that the programme would have on people who were working whilst claiming benefits. In general, there was hostility towards people regarded as benefit cheats with some blaming this group of people for the introduction of programmes such as Work for Your Benefit. At the same time, there was some sympathy for people working a few hours in the black economy in order 'to get by and support their kids'. Comments included:

'It would make it harder for the benefit cheats. They'd be worse off.'

'If the objective is to stop the benefit cheats then it

	More focused on looking for work	No impact	Less focused on looking for work	Don't know
People with serious barriers to employment	72%	11%	7%	8%
People who are not committed to looking for work	71%	13%	11%	4%
People with unrealistic job goals	80%	7%	8%	2%
People with alcohol and drug problems	25%	45%	15%	12%

will work.'

One of the wider social issues discussed included the perception that the programme would lead to a rise in criminal activity. As indicated in the previous chapter, many people who currently reach the end of EZ provision without finding work have a criminal conviction. These customers were represented in the discussion groups with some comments including:

'I've been to jail and this is just another punishment. If they did this they should build more jails because a lot of people would have to turn to crime.'

'I wouldn't take a shop job or pick up litter. I'd fall off benefits and go back to crime.'

Impact on different customer groups

The previous chapter identified the four customer groups that would be likely to end up on workfare type programme. The table below shows the results from the Personal Adviser survey regarding the impact they believed workfare would have on these groups.

People with serious employment barriers

Our research indicates that the impact of workfare on people genuinely committed to finding work would be varied. Out of the Personal Advisers, 72% felt that it would make this customer group more focused on finding work, 11% believed it would have no impact and 7% believed that it would make the customers less focused. In the survey and interviews, Advisers spoke about the need for the workfare programme to be able to adapt to the needs of this customer group without making them more disillusioned about their prospects of finding work. Comments included:

'It would give people first-hand work experience and spur them on to find paid employment.'

'It would enhance the customer's experience. It would manage their expectation, it would let them see what employers are expecting from them and allow them to understand work culture.'

'It would help those with barriers get work experience, a routine, references and take away the fear factor of working.'

In the main, Personal Advisers felt that workfare would act as a positive intervention by giving the long-term unemployed the experience of doing a job and an opportunity to gain pride and confidence. As part of the Flexible New Deal model, it will be expected that customers will take part in a four-week programme of Mandatory Work Related Activities. Whilst this early intervention will be helpful for some customers, for those with a long history of unemployment it will not last long enough to really change attitudes.

Most people within the four focus groups were genuinely trying to find work, but not succeeding. One customer required intensive ESOL provision and another had been out of work for some time

and needed to resolve confidence and motivational obstacles. For workfare to be successful as part of a broader programme of employment support, it has to give people experience of the workplace, boosting confidence and be fully integrated with additional skills and training provision.

There was concern amongst Personal Advisers that this claimant group could become disillusioned and socially excluded if forced to take part in a workfare programme seen as a form of community service. However, it was felt that this problem could be mitigated by integrating choice into the system alongside continuing job search support and time for skills and training provision. In addition, a continuing emphasis on skills development and confidence building would be necessary to help the individual enter paid employment.

It is also important to consider the additional support that will be provided through Flexible New Deal. The 12-month programme of support will give customers time to focus on skills development, improve levels of qualifications and build confidence, motivation and self-esteem.

People not serious about finding employment

In the focus groups, there were people who openly admitted that they had not been serious about trying to find work. One customer spoke about how due to family issues he had not applied for jobs, had missed appointments with his Personal Adviser and had declined training opportunities. Another customer spoke about how he had started in a number of jobs but had left quickly because he disliked his manager, the pay structure or the hours.

Both customers had extremely negative reactions to the workfare proposal and were opposed to the thought of having to take part in the programme.

However, when the discussion developed, they both believed that the presence of the programme would focus minds on more actively looking for work.

In broader terms, amongst Personal Advisers there was the widespread belief that workfare would have a real impact on people who were not serious about finding work and particularly on those making fraudulent claims. In the survey, 71% of Personal Advisers felt that a workfare programme would make this customer group more focused on finding work while only 13% believed it would have no impact. Many believed that a properly constructed Work for Your Benefit programme would result in a number of people leaving benefits as they would not be able to sustain their job in the black economy.

One of the main reasons for the extremely high level of support amongst Personal Advisers was the belief that workfare could lead to a change in the way people regard benefits and job search activity. Personal Advisers commented on the fact that many people see benefits as an entitlement without any reciprocal responsibilities. It was felt that the introduction of workfare would provide a wake-up call to people who had become complacent and unwilling to find a job. Comments included:

'In the main they wouldn't like it as most of them feel that they are entitled to their benefits without having to put anything back into the system. Some customers are third and fourth generation unemployed.'

'I think the programme is a great idea. A lot of the people who are in receipt of benefits end up feeling down about themselves and it is a hard trap to get out of. It will also teach all the youngsters in schools that you have to earn your money no matter what, so it is better to work hard at school and get good qualifications.'

'I run the intensive job club and have 24 customers a day that I see for job-searching. I believe the scheme would be very good as some people genuinely do want help but others have the opinion that they can live off benefit forever and it doesn't matter if they get sanctioned as they can always apply for crisis loans and just get a "rap" on the knuckles and then it's back to being on benefit with no pressure etc.'

People with unrealistic job goals

As can be seen from the table on page 24, the Personal Advisers believed that workfare would have the greatest impact on people with unrealistic job goals, with 80% believing it would make this customer group more focused on finding work. These findings confirm the results from the case history analysis regarding the lack of current incentives for this group to find work.

In the follow-up interviews, the Personal Advisers spoke about how people with unrealistic job goals would be forced into adopting more realistic ones. One Adviser noted:

'Customers with unrealistic job goals would have to re-think their job goals quicker as they wouldn't want to be in a situation where they do a job which is "below them". Working for the dole would hopefully encourage them to apply for jobs that are currently available on the market and not wait forever for their ideal role.'

It was not only Personal Advisers who believed that workfare would have a real impact on this customer group. The viewpoint was also reflected in the discussion groups and in the case history analysis.

In the focus groups customers spoke about how they would have to reassess their job goals and look at positions they had previously discounted. Many of these individuals had focused on a particular sector and then refused to engage with

other options. One participant had never previously worked: his chosen career goal was to be a music promoter but had previously shown no initiative in pursuing this career. The Personal Adviser had worked with the customer to look at other job opportunities, but he had shown no interest despite the threat and subsequent use of sanctions. This individual said he would drop off benefits rather than participate in a Work for Your Benefit programme.

If we consider the case histories in the previous chapter, it can be seen that some individuals would have extremely negative reactions to being obliged to work for their benefit. For instance, the person discussed in Case Study 5 would be likely to reconsider the financial incentives of work if they were forced to spend 20 hours a week on a workfare programme.

Even if the person in Case Study 5 did stay on JSA and take part in workfare programmes, they would at least be contributing to the benefits they are receiving. However, it is more likely that the introduction of a workfare programme would shock this customer group into reconsidering their options and the type of work available in the local labour market.

People with drug and alcohol needs

The final customer group identified were people with drug and alcohol needs. The Personal Advisers felt that this group would not be suitable for a standard workfare type programme. Considering the impact that workfare would have on this customer group, 45% of Personal Advisers said that it would make no difference, 25% said it would result in more focused job-seeking and 15% said it would make this group less focused.

In our sample, the majority of people with drug and alcohol dependency issues led chaotic lives. Without support to tackle these barriers the workfare programme would in effect become a

form of punishment. Based on the international research conducted for this paper and our experience of working with this customer group, we do not believe that workfare would be an effective solution to tackling the barriers to employment faced by people with these issues.

The case studies illustrated on page 21 provide some evidence of the negative impact that workfare could have on these people. For the individual in Case Study 7, the presence of workfare would be unlikely to change his behaviour or dependence on alcohol and could, if benefits were withdrawn, lead to homelessness and greater social problems. However, a proper strategy of intensive support for individuals with drug and alcohol problems linked to receipt of their benefit might be one way to help them resolve these issues.

The DWP is currently considering changes to the way that people with a drug addiction are dealt with in the welfare system. We believe that for this customer group an active and supportive intervention strategy would be more successful than a regime based primarily on sanctions. For many of our customers, the possibility of finding employment and being able to get their lives back on track is a real motivating factor in helping them move through drug rehabilitation programmes. Therefore, clear linkages between rehabilitation programmes and employment support are needed. However, the suitability of individual people and the benefits that could result from participation in a workfare programme would need to be considered on a case by case basis.

Conclusion

The results from our focus groups, surveys and case history analysis have shown consistency of opinion across our unemployed customers and Personal Advisers. There was broad agreement on the impact that a workfare programme would have on the different customer groups, as well as

similar views concerning the need for choice within the system.

This research very firmly suggests that a properly constructed workfare programme would have a positive impact on the behaviour of unemployed customers and lead to a reduction in levels of unemployment. This conclusion is based on four primary findings:

- Although the number of fraudulent claims is very small, a workfare programme would make it much harder for these people to get away with cheating the system.
- People with unrealistic job goals would be forced to decide whether to consider an available job or take part in a workfare type programme. The research indicates that many would choose the former option.
- An effective workfare programme would give people with real employment barriers the confidence and skills needed to move into paid work.
- Finally, the existence of a workfare programme would send a signal to claimants regarding their entitlement to benefits and the personal responsibility they have to find work.

However, a successful programme would also need to adopt a sensible approach to people with drug dependencies, providing them with proper support and potentially exemption from the workfare activity. Furthermore, it is important that the claimants who join the workfare programme are given a range of work options. This will serve to increase the effectiveness of the programme in developing the skills necessary for the claimant's return to work, and will improve dedication to the programme. Without choice, the workfare programme is more likely to be seen as a punitive measure, and will be less effective in its goal of helping people to enter paid employment.

The following chapter looks at how a workfare programme could be constructed to achieve the goal of supporting individuals into paid employment.

Chapter 4

Constructing a workfare programme

Given the political impetus from both the government and the opposition, the introduction of a workfare programme is likely to become a reality within the next couple of years.

Based on our research, we believe that a properly constructed and flexible workfare programme would help to reduce long-term unemployment. For the programme to have a lasting impact, it would have to be part of a range of interventions designed to correspond with the existing structure of welfare-to-work provision. This chapter brings together the key findings of this research project and identifies the building blocks of how a successful Work for Your Benefit programme could be introduced.

Principles and foundations

The workfare programme should be based on the clear principle of mutual obligation in a similar way to the Australian model. The aim of the programme should be to support people into paid employment by providing customers with an opportunity to develop soft and hard skills, whilst at the same time signalling a clear expectation that people with long-term claims will be expected to work for their benefit.

The success of the workfare programme will be evaluated according to whether unemployment, and most importantly long-term unemployment, has been reduced. There are two significant ways in which a properly constructed workfare programme would help achieve this. Firstly, it would impact on behaviour by acting as an incentive for people to look for work and by making it difficult for people making fraudulent claims to remain on benefit. Secondly, it would help people gain the skills they need to enter paid

employment. The following sections will discuss the practical ways in which the programme could operate.

Communicating the proposal

It is likely that politicians will sell the principles of workfare through the language of mutual responsibility and cracking down on those who are playing the benefits system. Indeed, this is already prevalent in the way the DWP has labelled the programme 'Work for Your Benefit'.

The way the programme is communicated to the public and particularly the long-term unemployed will be important. As noted in the introduction, the current economic conditions and the increased levels of unemployment have created public uncertainty over the economy. This public concern means that workfare should be presented as a positive and beneficial intervention that will support those furthest from the labour market. The government has to ensure that those with genuine needs and barriers are not further demoralised, as this will exacerbate levels of social exclusion and make it more difficult for these claimants to eventually enter employment.

However, when Work for Your Benefit is in place, its success will rest on the experiences gained by the long-term unemployed who are taking part in the programme. A workfare programme focused on giving people skills and genuine opportunities will be far more effective than a programme organised on the basis of punishment and community service.

Key characteristics

Based on our research, we identified eight key elements of a successful UK Work for Your Benefit programme. These elements are listed below with specific sections detailing how each of these recommendations could be implemented.

1. The workfare process should start for claimants completing 12 months of support through FND without finding paid employment. This means that most customers will have had 18 months to two years in which to find employment. There should be the option for Personal Advisers to refer a customer to Work for Your Benefit where this would be beneficial to the customer.
2. The programme should replicate paid employment without replacing existing jobs, eg community work supplementing local authority and voluntary activities.
3. Customers should not be paid additional benefits for taking part. However, any specific costs such as travel and a food allowance should be reimbursed.
4. The workfare programme should involve 20 hours of activity per week alongside 15 hours allocated to job search activity, training or skills development. The programme should be continuous for those with two years of JSA claims.
5. The workfare programme should be flexible and part of a continued programme of job search assistance anchored by a Personal Adviser.
6. There has to be real choice built into the system so that the programme can effectively engage participants. The programme cannot be seen as a form of community service.
7. The programme has to be run in a creative

and imaginative way. The work must involve beneficial activities that are seen as worthwhile by the participants.

8. It is essential that the government addresses any loopholes or get-out clauses which would allow people to avoid taking part in the workfare programme.

Starting on workfare

The UK programme should have very different characteristics from the programmes originally introduced in the US and Australia. The element of workfare in the UK should start for those customers who complete a programme of Flexible New Deal without finding paid employment. This means that people will have received 18 months to two years of job search assistance from Jobcentre Plus and private and third sector providers before taking part in a workfare programme. We do not believe that it would be effective or beneficial in wider policy terms to introduce workfare earlier in the benefits claims process.

This recommendation is based on the fact that the UK already has a range of welfare interventions that successfully move people from benefits into paid employment. Currently, around half of all Jobseeker's Allowance claimants leave the benefit within three months, three-quarters leave within six months and as the remaining claimants move onto more specialist programmes, many more of these people move into work. Based on our estimates, only around 4% of all new JSA claimants on current figures would take part in a workfare programme, although if the presence of workfare did impact on behaviour the figure would be lower.

Making workfare part of the final stage in existing provision would ensure that the programme acts as an incentive for those on benefits to find work, whilst providing those who have been out of the

labour market for some time with the skills and structure that would help them become work-ready again.

It is right and appropriate that workfare does not start as a day-one intervention. The current UK model is based on giving people the support and flexibility they need in order to move into sustained employment. Forcing people into the wrong jobs right at the start of a benefit claim would not be an effective way of dealing with unemployment as it would exacerbate the number of 'revolving-door' claimants and result in lower levels of in-work retention.

For example, one of the people who participated in the focus groups had been supported to re-train as a plumber and wanted to enter that profession despite it being hit by the economic slowdown. He would not consider other options such as retail or warehouse work. A few days after the focus group, he got a job with a plumbing company. His employment retention and time out of benefits is likely to be considerably increased as a result of moving into his chosen occupation. A workfare programme from day one would have been unlikely to achieve this positive outcome and would have limited the re-training opportunities. Although this is just one example, in our experience it is likely to be repeated across the claimant group.

Another reason workfare should be regarded as the stage after FND is the cost involved in running the programme. We currently have a successful model for moving people from benefits into work through JCP and external providers. The cost of providing a quality workfare placement for six months will be higher than the fees paid to providers for helping move an individual from benefits into sustained employment as part of Flexible New Deal. Therefore, workfare has to be used appropriately and at the right intervention point.

Replicating paid employment

To genuinely help the long-term unemployed, the workfare programme should mirror the world of paid employment. This should be reflected in the type of jobs undertaken and the way the programme is structured in terms of attendance, punctuality and satisfactory performance.

However, workfare should not replicate existing paid jobs within the labour market. It should not be used as a way of reducing government and business costs through the use of cheap labour paid below the minimum wage. The problems of such an approach were apparent in New York, where the workfare programme faced strong opposition from trade unions, as it was seen to be an inexpensive way of replacing city workers.

If Work for Your Benefit is to be successful, it is essential that placements are regarded as meaningful. There are a number of creative and imaginative ways that placements could be used as a way of improving local communities and developing the skill set of the individual customers. This approach could be achieved by supplementing the community work carried out by local authorities and voluntary organisations through environmental work or community cohesion projects.

Payments and reimbursements

We do not believe that people taking part in workfare placements should receive additional benefits. Increasing benefit payments for participants would remove the essential element of mutual obligation: the time on the programme should be seen as time spent earning the benefit. One of the Personal Advisers made an important point:

'Presently, if told they will be £30 better off working 30 hours a week, they see it as being paid £1 an hour. If they were left with less free time and

forced to engage in activities, they would see full-time employment – in any role – as a more profitable use of their time. It will cut down on people working illegally and claiming benefits. If marketed correctly it would be seen as an opportunity and not necessarily perceived as punishment.'

We believe there is a rationale for piloting bonus payments for people who excel during the programme. This would be a useful way of building confidence and motivation. Also, there is clearly a need for anyone engaged in a workfare programme to have their travel costs paid in advance along with reimbursements for any work clothes or uniform required and a food allowance.

Length of programme

It is our recommendation that unemployed customers, without significant obstacles to participating in workfare, should be expected to take part in 20 hours of workfare activity each week. This should be supplemented by the expectation that the individual will engage in at least 15 hours of job search or training activities each week. This recommendation is based on the way that the US and Australian programmes have been revised to accommodate continued skills and job search activity. A full-time Work for Your Benefit programme would be unlikely to take people out of welfare dependency.

It is crucial that the programme is flexible to enable people to fulfil their workfare commitment whilst enabling them to attend training courses, skills development or job interviews. One of the positive aspects of the workfare programme is the routine that it would give to participants. Participants would also need to travel outside of their local community in order to take part in the programme. One of the common issues when dealing with the long-term unemployed is how horizons can narrow and people can refuse to consider opportunities that might involve

travelling more than a few minutes from their home. The workfare programme could be a useful way of overcoming this barrier.

As part of this research project, we considered the issue of how long people should have to participate in the programme. The key question was whether workfare should be a time-limited programme for a few months or whether, as in the US and Australian programmes, benefit payment should be linked indefinitely to participation in workfare.

It is our recommendation that the Work for Your Benefit programme should not be time limited. The workfare programme should be based on the principle of continuing mutual obligation rather than something to be endured for a few months. We believe this continuous approach would have a significant impact on motivating customers to find employment and would stop people moving from workfare back into the black economy.

Flexibility, training and skills development

A continued role for a Personal Adviser should be integral to this process by monitoring performance on the programme and continuing to provide assistance with job search activity. One of the problems with the workfare programmes in the US and Australia lies in the lack of flexibility. In constructing the UK programme, we should avoid creating a system which makes it difficult for people to continue undertaking courses such as ESOL provision due to the workfare time requirements. There will also be a need to evaluate whether there should be differential requirements for lone parents who are being moved into the JSA regime and also for customers with particular health needs.

Similarly, for people with severe drug and alcohol needs, there should be a flexible model which allows time spent on rehabilitation programmes

either to be offset against workfare commitments or give the Personal Adviser discretion over whether the individual would benefit from the programme.

Enabling customer choice

Unemployed customers and Personal Advisers were agreed on the need for choice in the workfare programme. If the programme is to successfully engage people and provide real developmental opportunities, then people need to be able to choose between different types of activities. This level of personalisation is the foundation of the new welfare-to-work programmes being developed by the DWP, and this individual approach to service delivery should continue in the way that workfare is developed.

In the earlier chapters, we discussed some of the possible activities that could be undertaken by people on a Work for Your Benefit type programme such as environmental projects, social enterprises and community support. There will need to be a range of programmes that can respond and adapt to local communities and this will require flexibility and localisation in the way that the programmes are constructed.

The role of customer choice in driving workfare is crucial in avoiding the programme being regarded as a form of community service. The individual should leave Flexible New Deal with a higher level of confidence and motivation than when they started and be more empowered to actively look for work. If they then move to a workfare programme in which they have little choice or control, it will undo some of the progress made earlier into the customer journey and turn the customer back into a passive recipient of welfare and employment support.

Creativity

In line with the recommendation regarding the need for choice within the system, there is also a

need for the programme to be run with imagination and creativity. The programmes need to engage with a whole range of community, voluntary and third sector organisations in order to create the type of provision that can respond to individual needs and circumstances and be relevant and beneficial to individual customers.

The projects should be managed by people who are enthusiastic about the work being undertaken, so that customers can see the workfare programme as a useful and beneficial use of their time, rather than another government mandated programme over which they have no control.

Closing loopholes

It will be essential that the government properly considers any loopholes that might allow people to avoid taking part in the programme. In the focus groups, people asked whether they could avoid taking part if they could get a doctor's note and discussed other ways of playing the system. This issue could be avoided by making participation in the programme continuous so that workfare becomes the default position for the long-term unemployed. The other issues that will need careful consideration by the DWP include people signing off benefits for a couple of weeks in order to avoid workfare and then going back onto JSA with a new claim. There will be a need for clear rules to avoid these issues.

Closing loopholes is about creating a fair system for everyone. In the focus groups, one of the worries was that some people would be able to get out of taking part in the Work for Your Benefit scheme. It was felt that these were the same people who cheated the system – and that it was ordinary people who were unemployed because of economic circumstances who get penalised.

A further area of consideration is the process for responding to individual needs. Some people have personal reasons why particular types of work are

unsuitable; others, such as single parents, may need a reduced workfare commitment. The process for responding to these issues needs to be streamlined to avoid lengthy and bureaucratic appeals procedures.

Conclusion

The workfare programme should be an integral element of the welfare-to-work system, and as such will require adequate levels of government funding and investment. A workfare programme introduced without proper funding would be unlikely to have a significant and prolonged impact on the behaviour of the long-term unemployed and indeed could have negative consequences on some claimant groups.

From our research findings, Work for Your Benefit would act as a real incentive for people to look for work, and it would focus customers at an early stage in their JSA claim. Furthermore, if operated effectively it would provide customers with soft and hard skills that would be beneficial in helping them into work. However, an ineffective programme could have very negative personal and social consequences on people who are genuinely wishing to move into work.

The framework above presents a model for how workfare could be successfully constructed in the UK and lead to improved outcomes for both the individuals concerned and the taxpayer.

Summary

There is no doubt that a workfare programme will represent a significant change in the expectations placed on benefit claimants. This report has sought to contribute to the policy debate on whether and how a Work for Your Benefit type programme could be introduced in the UK.

In the introduction we stated there were four main questions that would be investigated: the international experience of workfare; the type of customer groups who would be likely to participate; the impact on these groups; and finally how the programme could be constructed to give people the skills they need to enter the labour market. The research, views and conclusions reached in the preceding chapters have hopefully helped to move forward our understanding and provided some tentative answers to these four questions. However, it is clear that further research is required before any programme is introduced on a national basis.

The core recommendation of this report is that Work for Your Benefit must not be used as a policy instrument by which to stigmatise and blame unemployed people for receiving benefits. Many of the people who would be most affected by the introduction of this type of programme are individuals with genuine and often multiple barriers to employment. A programme regarded as little more than a form of punishment or community service would be likely to have a negative impact on the self-esteem and confidence of these people, lead to further social disengagement and ultimately make it less likely they would enter work.

The discussion about Work for Your Benefit has to be placed in the wider context of welfare-to-work provision in the UK. Our approach to supporting individuals to move from benefits into sustainable employment has been effective across all of the major customer groups.

The workfare programme should be seen as an extension of this supportive process and therefore as a way of giving people confidence in their abilities, and experience of being in a workplace. This can only be achieved by creating a programme which seeks to engage with the customer group by giving choice over activities whilst also ensuring adequate time for continued job search assistance.

Most people who register on JSA move into employment within their first year of claim and just need some assistance with finding a new job. Indeed, our research shows that the majority of long-term claimants have genuine barriers to employment and sometimes face discrimination from employers. The public's view of the level of benefit fraud and of the type of people who are long-term unemployed is not an accurate reflection of reality – workfare should not be used as a way of further undermining support in the benefits system.

The government is right to want to trial the Work for Your Benefit programme before looking at a wider implementation. The programme will need to be piloted with different approaches and a proper evaluation of success against the type of objectives identified in this report. The evidence in this report suggests the programmes that will be most successful are likely to be those that provide a range of creative approaches to engaging and supporting customers into work.

Appendix A

Reed in Partnership Courses

Reed in Partnership through its Service and Innovation team has developed a number of specific courses to help the long-term unemployed move into work. A description of each of the skills development courses is provided below.

Motivate

Motivate is a two-day motivation and confidence building course designed to support long-term unemployed people. It uses small group activities to boost confidence and explore thoughts and feelings about values, anger, motivation and planning. The course helps customers build an action plan for development so they can focus on how to change their lives in a positive way.

The Journey

The Journey is a tailored three-week job development programme developed by Reed in Partnership. The model uses a self-discovery approach to build client empowerment and employability. It provides tools and confidence to help clients apply for jobs, secure them and then progress at work. Reed in Partnership has been running Journey since 2006 with a national average of 49% of clients gaining work within eight weeks of completing the programme.

Essentials

Reed in Partnership has developed a suite of courses (Essentials) which embed the development of Literacy, Numeracy and Language skills within the context of Employability. Activities are largely focused around group work and oral/kinaesthetic learning styles with worksheets for self-study appealing to visual learners. We aim to give learners the skills to acquire and retain work, and the belief that they can achieve their goals by continued development in work. We

are accredited by City and Guilds to deliver the National Skills for Life qualifications up to and including Level 2. All our trainers are fully qualified Skills for Life trainers.

Appendix B

Research Methodology

In compiling this report, we used a range of research tools in order to fully understand the issues and build our set of recommendations.

Literature review

A review of current literature examining the implementation of workfare programmes in Australia and the US states of Wisconsin and New York was undertaken. This involved academic research and official government reviews.

Case history analysis

We undertook a detailed case history analysis of 86 customers who had failed to find work after completing EZ provision. The analysis was based on a detailed questionnaire completed by Personal Advisers from across our contracts. The questionnaire asked for information on all aspects of the customers' journey and covered objective issues such as missed appointments, training courses attended, the number of job interviews secured and feedback from employers. There were also some subjective questions regarding attitude and motivation.

The case studies were produced on a randomised basis and forms were completed from across our Doncaster, Glasgow, Liverpool and London programmes.

Focus groups with the long-term unemployed

We undertook four focus groups with long-term unemployed customers reaching the end of their time on the EZ programme. The participants were selected by Senior Personal Advisers with the aim of being broadly representative of customers on the EZ programme. In total, 15 people on our London EZ programmes took part in the focus groups.

Survey of Personal Advisers

The Personal Advisers working in the EZ offices interact with a large number of unemployed customers and typically have a caseload of around 30 customers at any one time. Therefore, they have real expertise in understanding the customers and how policy can potentially impact on behaviour and motivation to find employment.

The Personal Advisers in our EZ offices were invited to take part in a survey on workfare via email. In total 74 Advisers from across our contracts in Doncaster, Glasgow, Liverpool and London completed the questionnaire, which was a mix of closed and open questions.

Follow-up interviews with Personal Advisers

The survey was supplemented with 15 interviews with Personal Advisers on the EZ programmes. The interviews were carried out in order to more fully investigate some of the issues raised in the survey. The Advisers were chosen randomly from those who had completed the survey.

Bibliography

Administration for Children and Families, *Office of Family Assistance*. Accessed at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/opa/fact_sheets/tanf_factsheet.html, updated in October 2006.

Benjamin, Alison. 'A false reasoning is driving benefit cuts' in *The Guardian*, August 13, 2008.

Besharov, Douglas J, and Peter Germanis. *Full-Engagement Welfare in New York City: Lessons for TANF's Participation Requirements*. Accessed at http://www.welfareacademy.org/pubs/welfare/nyc_hra.pdf, August 2004.

Bogdanor, Adam. *Not Working: Why Workfare Should Replace the New Deal*. London: Policy Exchange, April 2004.

Borland, Jeff and Tseng, Yi-Ping. *Does 'Work for the Dole work?'* University of Melbourne, April 2005.

Clinton, Bill. 'How We Ended Welfare, Together' in *The New York Times*, 22 August 2006.

Crisp, Richard and Del Roy Fletcher. *A comparative review of workfare programmes in the United States, Canada and Australia*. Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research for the Department of Work and Pensions, Research Report No 533, 2008.

Department of Children and Families, Wisconsin. *Wisconsin Works (W-2) Overview*. Accessed at <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/w2/wisworks.htm>, updated in June 2008.

Department for Work and Pensions. *No one written off: reforming welfare to reward responsibility*. Accessed at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfarereform/>, July 2008.

Department for Work and Pensions. *Raising expectation and increasing support: reforming welfare for the future*. Accessed at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfarereform/>, December 2008.

Department of Workforce Development. *An Evaluation: Wisconsin Works (W-2) Program*. Madison: Joint Legislative Audit Committee, April 2001.

Estyn, for Jobcentre Plus Wales. *The New Deal in Wales: Effectiveness of Job Search Activity and Job Outcomes*. July 2003.

Havemann, Judith. 'New York's Workfare Picks Up City and Lifts Mayor's Image' in *Washington Post*. 13 August 1997.

Lamar, Jacob V, Jr 'From Welfare to Workfare' in *Time*, 3 February 1986.

MacFarquhar, Neil. 'Worker's Death Prompts Calls for Workfare Review' in *The New York Times*, 6 August 2008.

Martyn, Tim. *Training for work is more effective than Working for the Dole*. London: Uniya Jesuit Social Justice Centre, March 2006.

McKenzie, Alex. 'Workfare: The New Zealand Experience and Future Directions' in *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand* 8, March 1997.

Ravallion, Martin. *Appraising Workfare Programs*. Washington, DC: Poverty and Inequality Advisory Unit, September 1998.

Tilly, Chris. 'Workfare's Impact on the New York City Labor Market: Lower Wages and Worker Displacement' in *Russell Sage Foundation Working Paper #92*, March 1996.

Timmins, Nicholas. 'Workfare revolution to be costed by Major', in *The Independent*, 26 July 1996.

Torjman, Sherri. *Workfare: A Poor Law*. Ontario: The Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1996.

About Reed in Partnership

Reed in Partnership exists to change people's lives for the better.

We have an unrivalled experience of working with employers drawing on nearly 50 years of the Reed family of businesses' recruitment experience. By understanding the needs of employers we create tailored recruitment and retention solutions that successfully move people into the labour market. We have worked with over 10,000 employers ranging from local businesses to large multi-national corporations.

As a people led business, we know that everyone's situation is different. That's why our programmes create individually tailored routes into employment. We break down barriers to work by giving people the skills, confidence and knowledge they need to find lasting employment; using the most creative and innovative methods in our sector.

Our approach consistently delivers excellent results. So far we've helped over 85,000 people move from welfare into employment and assisted many more people gain the skills they need to enter and progress within the labour market.

Above all, we're summed up in one word and that's partnership. In co-operation with Jobcentre Plus, specialist agencies and local partners we find lasting solutions that change lives and local communities.