What can we learn about the potential effects of a Universal Basic Income from studies of similar interventions?

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What is basic income?

- Universal
- Unconditional
- Not affected by other income
- Paid to individuals
- Subsistence level
Understanding the effects of a ‘full’ basic income

- **Universal**
  - Would affect demand for labour
  - Universal payments could lead to wider effects at a community level.

- **Permanent**
  - Decisions about employment might be different if payments were permanent
  - Other effects may take a long time to manifest, or change over time

- **Extremely challenging to design an adequate study**
Finding relevant evidence

- **Scoping review**
  - Systematic search methods
  - Objective account of study findings

- **We searched for**
  - Unconditional payments to individuals or households
  - Payments could be targeted, affected by other income, or below subsistence
Identified studies

• 28 studies of 10 interventions

• Very diverse = increased transferability

• All met basic income criteria to varying degrees
## Basic income criteria

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<th>Intervention</th>
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<th>universal</th>
<th>permanent</th>
<th>subsistence</th>
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<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
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</table>

### Basic income criteria:
- no
- yes
- it depends
How do unconditional payments affect employment?

- Very little impact on labour market activity
- Reductions only observed in certain groups
- Employment increased for some groups
Education and employment for young people

- Working decreased for young people and children
- Large increases in educational participation/retention
- Educational performance findings less consistent
The health effects of unconditional payments

- Large positive impacts on some health outcomes
- Findings not always consistent
- Some evidence of adverse effects
Other outcomes reported

- Marriage and parenting
- Crime and social conflict
- Other economic effects
Potential wider effects

- Alaska: increased consumption = higher demand for labour
- Native American casinos: improved economic outcomes for non-Native Americans
- Indonesia: expenditure increased for non-recipients
- Canada: hospital admissions reduced in saturated site
- Canada: peer effects on staying in education
- Tribal casino: health effects grew stronger over time
Conclusions

• The evidence does not suggest strong effects on labour market participation

• There are strong positive effects on some health and educational outcomes

• There is some evidence of potential wider effects in many areas
Universal basic income

A scoping review of evidence on impacts and study characteristics

Marcia Gibson, Wendy Hearty and Peter Craig

Available soon at:

http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/publications/universal-basic-income-scoping-review-of-evidence-on-impacts

Project partners

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