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SPRC NEWSLETTER

Social Policy Research Centre

CASE MANAGEMENT FOR THE UNEMPLOYED DOES IT WORK?

BY TONY EARDLEY

In a recent international literature review for the New Zealand Department of Labour, SPRC examined the effectiveness of case management in employment programs. In particular, the review looked at Australian case management which is arguably the first large-scale, national program of its kind.

'Case management' in employment assistance for long-term unemployed people was a key element of the previous government's Working Nation policy. The concept originated mainly from experiments in delivery of human services in the United States in the late 1960s, and is based on the principle of fitting services to the needs of clients rather than, as is often the case, the reverse. The theory is that by receiving assistance and referrals tailored to their particular

needs and aspirations, disadvantaged job seekers can expect to improve their position in the labour market even where employment is scarce.

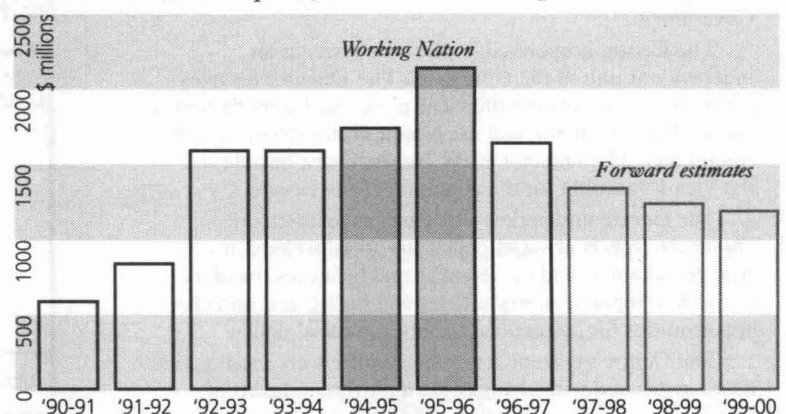
WORKING NATION: FEAT OR FAILURE?

Since the Budget, however, it is all change in the world of employment services in Australia. The Working Nation framework is largely being dismantled, with most of the labour market programs on which it was based being abolished or 'cashed out'. Part of the funds released will follow unemployed clients to new 'employment placement enterprises' (EPEs). The EPEs will eventually include a fully corporatised and competitive version of

the public case management service (formerly Employment Assistance Australia or EAA). This represents a major extension of the contracting out of case management to the private sector which began in 1995. EPEs will have more flexibility in designing packages of assistance, but after a transitional period, funding will depend largely on their achieving direct employment outcomes for their clients.

Cont'd page 3

Program funding for labour market and training assistance, 1990-91 to 1999-2000 (at 1996 prices). Source: Ministerial Budget Statement 1996



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FEATURE

Case management for the unemployed.
Does it work?

SPRC examines the effectiveness of case management in employment assistance for long-term unemployed.

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THE SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH CENTRE

was established in January 1980 (originally as the Social Welfare Research Centre) under an agreement between the University of New South Wales and the Commonwealth Government.

The Centre is operated by the University as an independent unit of the University. The Director receives assistance in formulating the Centre's research agenda from a Board of Management, and in periodic consultation with the community. The Director of the Centre is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the operation of the Centre.

The Centre undertakes and sponsors research on important aspects of social policy and social welfare; it arranges seminars and conferences, publishes results of its research in reports, journal articles and books, and provides opportunities for postgraduate studies in social policy.

The Centre's current research agenda covers social policy issues associated with changes in employment; levels of social and economic inequality including poverty and the measurement of income and living standards; the changing structure of the mixed economy of welfare and the roles of state, market, household and non-government sectors in meeting social needs; in policies and programs in social security, taxation and the labour market, and in community services policies and programs.

The views expressed in this Newsletter, as in any of the centre's publications, do not represent any official position of the Centre. SPRC Newsletter and all other SPRC publications present the views and research findings of the individual authors with the aim of promoting the development of ideas and discussion about major concerns in social policy and social welfare.

STAFF AND VISITORS UPDATE

JENNY CHALMERS has joined the Budget Standards Unit as Senior Research Assistant. Formerly with the Reserve Bank and the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Jenny has most recently been engaged in doctoral studies at the ANU.

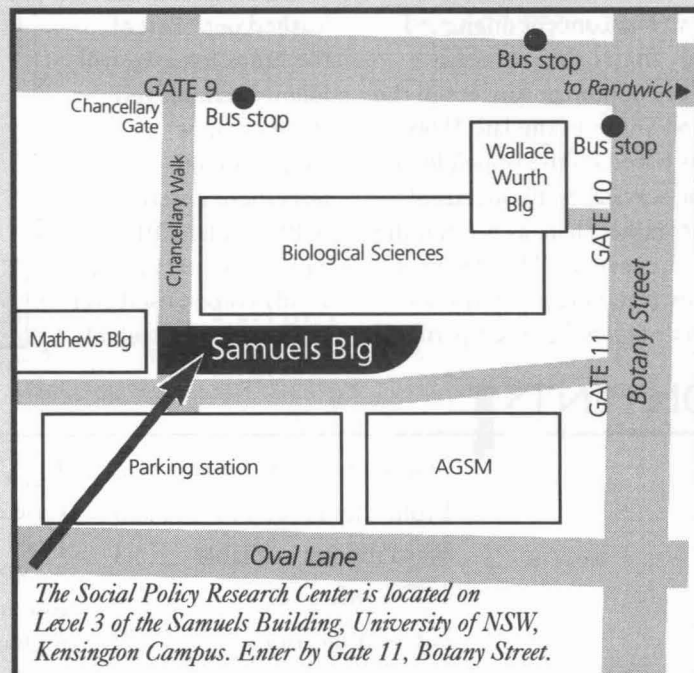
DENISE THOMPSON has also joined the Unit after completing her doctoral research. Welcome to both.

JULIA MARTIN left the Centre in September, after four years as its Publications and Information Officer. During this time she brought the Centre's publishing activities into the modern age. This included computerising the management of publication sales and distribution as well as the more creative work of design and presentation. Julia is now with the Community Services Commission and we wish her every success.

ANNE COOK left the Centre in September after making contributions to the publications area including helping to set up the web site, editing publications, and dealing with sales, mailing and stock control. We wish her well in the future.

We send congratulations to DR GINA STEWART, who received a doctorate degree for her thesis on *Making People in Poverty a Poverty Issue* at the University's October conferring of degrees.

PROFESSOR ROBERT PLOTNICK will visit the Centre from February to May of next year. Professor Plotnick is from the Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Washington, Seattle, USA.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Research findings can have no effect if they go unread; disseminating the findings of research is almost as important as the actual investigation and analysis. More importantly, the facts produced in research never stand alone or speak for themselves. Their meaning and implications emerge only through discussion and debate among a variety of publics.

This means that research reports must find their readers. SPRC research reaches the public through all the usual academic and community channels, in books, journals and newsletters. Most often, however, it makes its first appearance in one of our own publications – in an SPRC Newsletter article, as a Discussion Paper, or in a volume in the Centre's Reports and Proceedings or Research Resources series. One by one, these publications are being given bright, new, colourful covers. We owe a debt to Julia Martin and Social Change Media for their logo and design work.

But new covers are the least of the story. In communicating research findings to the public, price probably matters more than appearance. SPRC publications have always been provided at the lowest possible cost, and most of our publications are currently made available without charge.

Most exciting of all, with Reports and Proceedings No. 129, *'Mortgaging Our Future?, Families and Young People in Australia'*, we are

moving to make selected SPRC publications available through the Australian Government Publishing Service bookstores in all capital cities as well as through SPRC mail and telephone orders. This represents an important step in making the findings of publicly funded research readily accessible to the citizens who have paid for it.

Research is disseminated by the spoken as well as the written word. This issue of SPRC Newsletter carries the Call for Papers for our biennial National Social Policy Conference, to be held at the University of New South Wales in July next year. This is one of the SPRC's most important activities, and we welcome contributions from all sections of the social policy community. The back page carries a repeat notice of our Interstate Conference for 1996, jointly sponsored with the Department of Social Work and Social Policy, University of Queensland, on the theme of Poverty in Australia, Dimensions and Policies. Finally, readers may not be aware that the Centre's (usually) Tuesday lunchtime seminars are open to the public. Contact Jenny Doyle on 9385 3836 for information about upcoming seminars.

Sheila Shaver
Acting Director

CASE MANAGEMENT FOR THE UNEMPLOYED: DOES IT WORK?

CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 1

'Intensive employment assistance' (which replaces case management in the new terminology) will be available to people unemployed for over 12 months, or assessed as at risk of becoming such, but only where they are judged as being likely to benefit. This new 'capacity to benefit test' is a response to silting up of previous case management with people facing disadvantages too severe to achieve an outcome. While some people judged too hard to help may be moved on to other benefits without activity tests, it is unclear what will

happen to the rest.

EPEs will also be in the market for labour exchange services. The CES unemployment registration and activity test functions will take place from a new 'Service Delivery Agency' (SDA), incorporating the DSS payments network. Here, job seekers will be assessed both for benefits and the type of employment assistance needed, and will have access to various self-help services. Access to the computerised job vacancy network will be through the EPEs, who will compete for quotas of vacancies.

The key argument put forward for these radical changes (*Vanstone, 1996*) is that Working Nation failed to deliver the promised reduction in long-term unemployment. Short-term impact studies show that while participants' prospects did improve, impacts varied widely, with the more expensive brokered placement schemes tending to be the least effective (*DEETYA, 1996*). They were used more because it was easier to find places in them for disadvantaged clients. The main result, however, was 'pack shuffling' of people unemployed for different lengths of time.

"Targeted job search assistance can be effective, but in the absence of substantial job growth the main impact is still to redistribute opportunities among the unemployed."

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CASE MANAGEMENT FOR THE UNEMPLOYED: DOES IT WORK?

CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 3

Information on longer-run outcomes is still awaited. The original Working Nation evaluation was planned as a long-term project, but policy rarely stays still long enough to satisfy the needs of researchers!

PROBLEMS WITH CASE MANAGEMENT

Overall, case management was viewed positively by most of those involved, but a number of factors limited its effectiveness. These included weaknesses in the instruments used to assess and classify clients; financial pressures for short-term outcomes; insufficient skills and experience among case managers, particularly those in the public sector; excessive caseloads in EAA; difficulties in managing the relationship between EAA and the contracted case managers; and conflicts over the role of case managers in sanctioning clients for breaches of activity agreements. Client complaints about treatment by some case managers were also highlighted in a recent Ombudsman's report, while there

have been reports that violence against case managers by frustrated clients has been increasing.

The new arrangements are designed to deal with some of these problems, by creating a genuinely 'contestable' market in employment services and giving case managers more flexibility to assist their clients.

Yet they also take us further down the road of individualised relations of welfare which critics suggest is undermining previous rights of entitlement.

So what does examination of experience from other countries tell us about the likely effectiveness of this approach or of case management more generally? First, it should be said that few countries apart from the US, and more recently New Zealand, have adopted explicit case management techniques into their labour market programs, although forms of individualised and intensive job search assistance are more common – with examples in Canada, the UK and a number of other European Union countries.

Secondly, it is difficult to

isolate the case management elements from broader packages of policy. Rarely, except in a few instances in the US, has the effectiveness of different models of case management been tested against counterfactuals through randomised experimental trials.

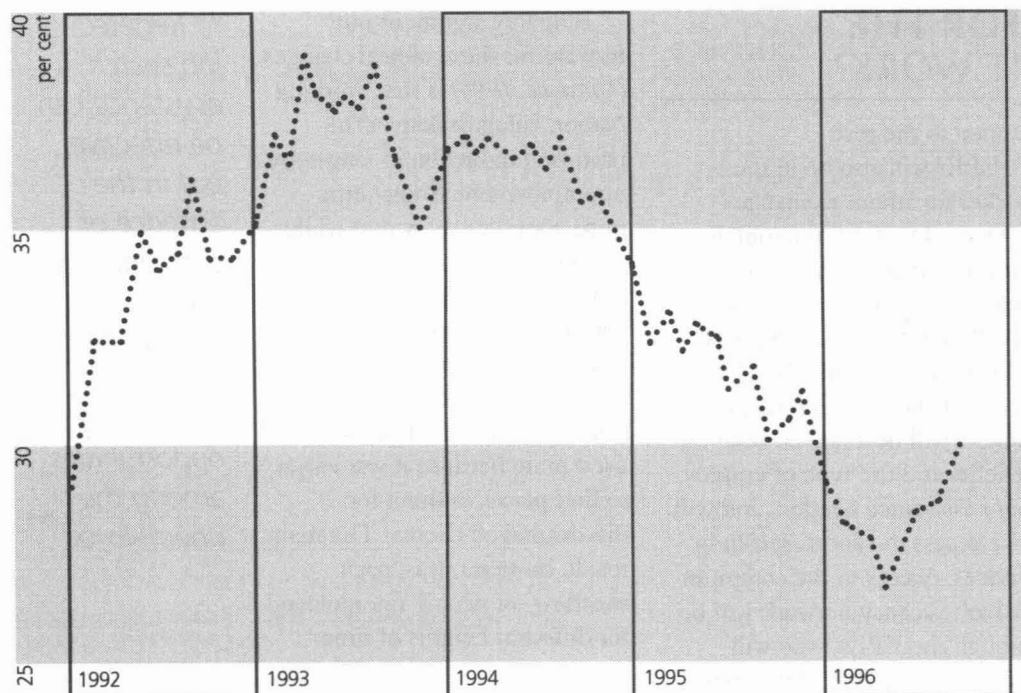
The literature does offer support for the idea that targeted job search assistance can be more effective for the costs involved than some other types of labour market program. However, its major impact, in the absence of substantial job growth, is still to redistribute opportunities among the unemployed. This is not necessarily a negative result. Helping people to avoid slipping into long-term unemployment may be a legitimate aim of public policy. What is less clear is when in unemployment duration intervention works best for different types of client.

GETTING RESULTS

Individually-tailored assistance seems to achieve its results in a number of ways. The first is through client assessment and profiling. Initial assessments are important if they can identify those who might be at risk of becoming long-term unemployed. They can also help to minimise 'deadweight' by screening out people likely to find work unaided. A second stage of assessment aims to categorise the level of disadvantage faced by clients judged to be in need of intensive help. This can help both in the allocation of resources and as a way of minimising 'creaming' of easier-to-assist clients.

During the Working Nation period, the proportion of people unemployed for a year or more fell to late 1991 levels. Since May 1996 it has been rising again.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labor Force Australia, Catalogue 6303.0. Figures for 1995 onwards are seasonally adjusted.



but the measures involved need to be sophisticated. The instruments used in Australia up to now have been less than perfect and it may be that lessons can be learned from extensive research carried out in the US.

The second, more controversial, way in which personalised schemes operate is through deterrence and policing of compliance with activity tests. Evidence from a range of programs, including Restart in the UK, France's Project 2000, New Zealand's Job Action, the US welfare-to-work schemes, and case management in Australia, shows that at least part of the expenditure savings are achieved by these means. This may be seen as a positive effect if it catches the genuinely 'work-shy', though excessive activity testing can actually divert effort from effective job seeking. Little is known about the overall effect of punitive sanctions. The more sophisticated and deliberate work avoiders can often manage to jump through the necessary hoops, while it may be the more disorganised who are caught out. Some of those deterred will also be people with a weaker attachment to the labour market, such as married women, where the effect in some cases may be to intensify poverty within families. Case management requires a degree of reciprocal trust to work properly. Reconciling the watchdog and counsellor roles can thus be problematic, especially where case management is contracted out to non-government providers.

This brings us to the final way in which case management works. Action plans can be effective if they are developed cooperatively with clients according to their individual needs, in ways that encourage appropriate referrals to other services or job placements and help clients to 'own' their plans. Comparative review of employment schemes in Europe suggests that action plans should

still aim to keep clients routed towards the goal of unsubsidised employment, even if only in the longer term. Otherwise people may be continually recycled around dead-end or segmented special schemes.

The evidence is less clear about the value of the 'any job is better than none' approach. The US experience suggests that this may produce welfare savings, but clients often end up trapped in poverty-level employment. Some UK evidence, however, suggests that getting into even a poor job may still be helpful as a spring-board into a better one.

As to how case management is best organised, the evidence is scarce and inconclusive.

The OECD has argued for competition in employment services, though there are few relevant examples on which to draw. Some US programs are run by private industry bodies, but these schemes are mainly voluntary and selective. Australia has provided the first major national test of contracting-out policy, but the jury was still out even before the whole system was recast once more. Long-term unemployment has been rising again and the job vacancy picture is looking bleak.

Establishing an effective new structure of employment assistance against this background will be an immense task both for the public and non-governmental sectors – a task which will be watched with intense interest both here and overseas.

REFERENCES

- Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (1996), *Working Nation: Evaluation of the employment, education and training elements*, EMB Report 2/96, Canberra.
- Vanstone, Senator the Hon. Amanda (1996), *Reforming Employment Assistance – Helping Australians into Real Jobs*, Ministerial Budget Statement, 20 August, [gov.au/budget96/budget_statement/minstindex.html].

WARDS REPORT AVAILABLE

"I thought I'd be free as a bird when I wasn't a ward any more. But as it works out, I'm still in a refuge and not much has changed."

Former NSW State Ward

A recent SPRC study of the experiences of NSW state wards during and after leaving care raises issues of service delivery, departmental practice and the need for more research.

Since the report was accepted by the Department, there have been several significant developments in relation to substitute care for children and particularly for young people leaving care. In particular, the government announced the allocation of \$1.2 million to fund leaving care and after services for young people leaving care, not just wardship. Tenders have been called for these services and are now being assessed.

The full report of the study, conducted by Judy Cashmore and Marina Paxman, has now been published by the NSW Department of Community Services.

Wards Leaving Care: A Longitudinal Study

can be obtained from the Department of Community Services by contacting Phil Smith on
(02) 9716-2607.

1997 NATIONAL SOCIAL POLICY CONFERENCE

STATES, MARKETS, COMMUNITIES: REMAPPING THE BOUNDARIES

16-18 JULY 1997

SPRC invites readers to submit papers to next year's National Social Policy Conference, *States, Markets, Communities: Remapping the Boundaries* to be held 16-18 July 1997.

This theme encapsulates a set of arguments about the shifting contours of economic and social welfare in Australia and about the respective roles and responsibilities of different sectors. These debates have been going on for some time in the context of the globalisation of Australia's economy, but have been given an extra urgency following the change in the political landscape. Changes in family taxation and the financing of child care, devolution of responsibilities for aged and disability services, proposed reforms to wage bargaining structures, compulsory superannuation, full-scale contracting out of services to the unemployed and a recasting of subsidies for low-income housing are just a few of the areas in which shifts are taking place in the traditional boundaries between the state, at different levels, markets, communities, families and individuals. The Conference will provide an opportunity to discuss all these contested arenas of change, through both individual presentations and discussion in plenary sessions and forums.

States, Markets, Communities: Remapping the Boundaries also invites engagement with wider theoretical and practical debates about citizenship and the inter-relation between civil society, the economy and the 'post-bureaucratic' state in constructing workable social policies for the millennium. We hope this theme will also invite debate about remapping the boundaries of theory as well as policy.

The format of the 1995 conference seemed to work well overall, so the structure for next year will be a similar mix of plenary sessions, forum discussions and contributed papers in parallel sessions. The aim, as before, is to include the widest possible range of contributed papers, while allowing plenty of time for comment and discussion from the floor.

PLENARY SESSIONS

Three distinguished speakers have agreed to address the Conference in plenary sessions.

BELINDA PROBERT

The Professor and Head of the Department of Social Science at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology is to present the Keynote Address. She is widely known for her research on post-industrial society in Australia and the way people are experiencing its effects on their lives at work and at home.

JOHN MYLES

The Director of the Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy at Florida State University, will present a second Plenary Address putting the themes of the Conference in comparative perspective. His work in recent years has dealt with employment and income, class and gender, and the reform of retirement income.

ITO PENG

The Assistant Professor at Hokusei Gakuen University, Japan will present the third Plenary Address. Her paper will discuss the way Japanese policy makers are approaching the issues of an ageing society and growing needs for long-term care.

FORUM SESSIONS

As in 1995, the Conference will feature Forum Sessions which are designed to provide opportunities for active exchange of argument and opinion about topics on the contemporary policy agenda. For each forum we are inviting a number of speakers to open discussions with short presentations aimed at stimulating contributions and debate from the audience.

Current suggestions for Forum Sessions include the following:

- Gender issues in social policy: has 'generation-f' got a new agenda?
- The contracting state: balancing the budget, privatisation and the new welfare.
- Solutions to unemployment: what works and what doesn't?
- Funding services and evaluating performance.
- Supporting families: what directions for policy?
- Commonwealth or State? Remapping the boundaries of responsibility.

GENERAL INFORMATION

As in previous years, the Conference will be held at the University of New South Wales, in the Clancy Auditorium and the Matthews Theatres. It will run from midday Wednesday 16 July to the Friday afternoon of 18 July. Accommodation on campus will be available at reasonable rates.

The cost of registration has had to increase this time, in line with charges made by UNSW for the use of the buildings. An 'Early Bird' registration fee of

\$175 will be available, which includes lunch for all three days of the Conference, and as usual there will be a lower rate for students and pension and allowance recipients. The Conference Dinner will be held on Thursday, 17 July, at a venue to be announced at a later date.

Information about registration for the Conference will be provided in future issues of the SPRC Newsletter.

CONTRIBUTED PAPERS

Presentation of new research and discussion papers across the range of social policy fields is always central to the success of the Conference.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The 1997 National Social Policy Conference theme is States, Markets, Communities: Remapping the Boundaries.

Contributed papers will form a central part of the Conference, and we are now inviting offers of papers from researchers, teachers and practitioners of Australian social policy. Papers may present the results of research, discuss conceptual approaches, describe work in progress, or raise new issues for debate.

Conference discussion will be organised around the following five social policy areas. These are broadly unchanged from those of the previous conference, as they continue to cover the main areas of debate. As before, there will also be an Open section for papers on other subjects of interest and importance.

1 WORK AND WELFARE

Employment, historically the centre of Australia's 'wage earner's welfare state', is undergoing profound changes. The 'future of work' is much debated, while unemployment has been stubbornly resistant both to job growth and to expansion of active labour market policies. Although the full effects of the Working Nation package have only begun to be evaluated, we are entering a new era of 'contestable markets' in employment services, the outcomes of which are difficult to predict. The effects of proposed changes to industrial relations legislation are yet to be seen. All these put new demands, including the threat of new forms of 'working poverty', on the social safety net. It is an appropriate time to reflect on the changes which the social security system has itself undergone in recent years, and on the implications of changing patterns of employment for the welfare of individuals, families and communities.

2 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES

Indications are that social and economic inequalities in Australia are continuing to grow, along a number of dimensions. While this trend is not new, and not unique to Australia, its dimensions and their consequences are not yet fully understood. Recent trends identified have pointed particularly to increasing geographical concentrations of disadvantage and divisions in major cities along spatial lines. There are differences of opinion about its consequences for men and women and younger and older people. Indigenous Australians continue to

experience disadvantage, while support for policies to address these inequalities appears to be weakening.

There are also calls for new approaches to taxation, to broaden the revenue base and to deal with inefficiencies and distortions, but there are conflicting views on what would be an equitable distribution of tax liabilities.

3 FAMILIES, THE LIFE COURSE AND SOCIAL POLICY

Few areas of society have experienced such rapid change in the second half of the twentieth century as family relationships. The strict division of labour according to gender into 'providers' and 'home-makers' has been supplanted by dual-earner families. Marriage is more fragile, the birthrate is low and families are postponing the birth of the first child. Increasing longevity, and early retirement together with more years of education have shortened the years of working life, changed the meaning of 'youth', and increased the significance of the post-retirement years. The state has relied, and continues to rely heavily, on the care provided by family members to each other, whether it be parents caring for children, relatives for people with a disability, elderly spouses for a frail partner, or inter-generational care but can this continue? Who is advantaged and disadvantaged by various social policies?

4 SERVICES AND SERVICE PROVISION

Community and social services are the frontline of welfare provision. They are at

once the main mechanisms of intervention and assistance in human development, and significant employers of labour. Governments have often proposed a greater reliance on principles such as 'community care', but at the same time community organisations are subject to increasing pressures to contain costs. This has resulted in demands for demonstrated efficiency, greater accountability and increased flexibility in dealing with a more diverse range of clients. How these changes have affected community organisations and their capacity to provide services is a key issue for social policy.

5 CITIZENSHIP AND THE PUBLIC/PRIVATE WELFARE MIX

In the past few decades there has been an increased call for applying the logic of the market to the provision of welfare services. Markets, some say, provide choice, and competition promotes better quality and more cost-effective services. In practice welfare in Australia is provided by a mixture of public, private and community organisations. At present policy makers are considering how to optimise this mix, raising issues about the balance between public and private methods of service delivery, the coordination of these elements and the effects of changes.

6 OPEN

The Conference will have an 'Open' section providing for discussion of topics not included in any of the areas described above, and we welcome papers for this section.

SELECTION OF PAPERS

Acceptance of papers for presentation at the Conference is necessarily competitive. Selection is the responsibility of the SPRC and will be based on abstracts.

Criteria for selection will include academic quality and relevance to the conference theme. We welcome papers presenting all points of view.

If you wish to offer a paper, please send us the title and an abstract of no more than 200 words. Please specify which thematic strand you feel your paper falls into, although we reserve the right to place it elsewhere, where appropriate, in the interests of balance.

The closing date for the submission of abstracts is 14 March 1997. Please send your submission to:

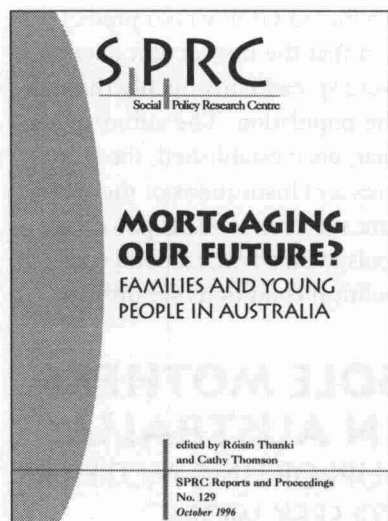
**1997 Social Policy Conference Papers
Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales
Sydney NSW 2052**

or by fax to
(02) 9385 1049

or by e-mail to
sprc@unsw.edu.au

Telephone enquiries about papers or the Conference should be directed to
**The Conference
Organiser, 9385-3833.**

NEW PUBLICATIONS



MORTGAGING OUR FUTURE? FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA

SPRC Reports and
Proceedings No.129

*Róisín Thanki and
Cathy Thomson (eds)*

This volume contains five papers presented at a one day seminar hosted by the Social Policy Research Centre on 19 July 1996.

A broad overview of the changing circumstances of young people in Australia and the problems they face was presented by Peter McDonald in his paper 'Young People in Australia Today: A Socio-Demographic Perspective'. The paper by Stein Ringen and Brendan Halpin, 'Families, Children and Consumption Resources' examines the effect of children on disposable income and consumption produced in families. Peter Travers in his paper 'Deprivation Among Low Income DSS Australian Families: Results from a Pilot Survey' reports on the findings of a recent research project which

examined the feasibility of measuring differentials in the levels of deprivation among Department of Social Security clients. The paper 'Wards Leaving Care' by Judy Cashmore and Marina Paxman discusses the results from a study which examined the circumstances, experiences and needs of a group of young people leaving wardship in New South Wales. In 'Juvenile Delinquency and Relative Deprivation: An Empirical Test and Conceptual Reformulation', Mark Lynch, Michael Emmison and Emma Ogilvie test the usefulness of the theory of relative deprivation in explaining juvenile delinquency in young people in Australia.

Mortgaging Our Future? Families and Young People in Australia is available at AGPS Bookstores as well as by direct order from the SPRC.

COMMUNITY CARE THE EFFECTS OF LOW LEVELS OF SERVICE USE.

SPRC Reports and
Proceedings No.130

Karen Turvey and Michael Fine

What is the value of providing small amounts of formal assistance to frail aged people who require only low levels of support to remain in their home? To answer this question, a study was undertaken based on a comparison of the outcomes of up to one and a half hours help with housework each week for a group of service recipients with a matched group of non-recipients. The results suggest that low levels of basic assistance are effective,

leading to superior residential outcomes and marked improvements in the longer-term perceptions of residential security amongst the recipients. Publicly organised assistance was effective and was preferred to other forms of help to which most respondents had access. This report sets out the policy background to the study, the details of the research methods and the final results, as well as discussing their implications for further policy development.

SUCCESSFUL CARING ARRANGEMENTS FOR EMPLOYED CAREGIVERS

SPRC Reports and
Proceedings No.131

*Cathy Thomson, Karen Turvey
and Michael Fine*

Withdrawal from the workforce can have far reaching consequences for government, employers and caregivers. This report examines how family networks, workplace conditions and service interventions affect the ability of caregivers to remain in paid work while simultaneously providing care to disabled or elderly people.

Themes emerging in the literature are documented in this report.

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Beginning with
*Mortgaging Our Future? Families
and Young People in Australia (SPRC R&P 129)*
selected volumes in the Reports and Proceedings
and Research Resource series will be available
at AGPS Bookstores as well as by direct
order from SPRC

The results of a small scale qualitative study, based on a series of focus groups with employed and job seeking caregivers of disabled and elderly people, are presented. Recommendations for long-term strategies to assist employed caregivers to manage the demands of work and caregiving are also discussed.

DOES CASE MANAGEMENT HELP UNEMPLOYED JOBSEEKERS?

SPRC Reports and Proceedings No.132

*Tony Eardley and
Merrin Thompson*

Case management is intended to improve assistance for people disadvantaged in the labour market by making services 'client centred' rather than 'program centred'. This report, based on a consultancy for the New Zealand Department of Labour, reviews the literature from the United States, Europe and other industrialised countries on individually tailored labour market initiatives for the long-term unemployed. It also surveys the principles and methodological options for evaluation of labour market policies and identifies the issues which inhibit a clear understanding of the effectiveness of case management. Particular attention is paid to Australian case management under Working Nation, which was arguably the first program of its kind instituted on a national basis. The report synthesises what is known about how far and in what way individually tailored assistance seems to work, while concluding that the specific case management elements of labour market programs are frequently

hard to isolate from broader packages of policy.

REDISTRIBUTION BY THE STATE IN AUSTRIA

SPRC Discussion Paper No.69

Alois Guger

Although the size of the public sector in Austria is large, its redistributive impact is limited. In the 1980s, when interest rates and capital revenues increased at the same time as usages shrank, the distribution of income became an issue for debate. This paper summarises and discusses the results of two studies commissioned by the Austrian Government to examine the redistributive effects of taxes and public expenditures. The studies looked particularly at the progressivity of the revenue side of the public sector and the redistributive effects of various expenditure categories.

ECONOMIC CRISIS AND SOCIAL POLICY IN FINLAND IN THE 1990S

SPRC Discussion Paper No.70

Hannu Uusitalo

The paper discusses the social policy consequences of the severe recession which hit Finland in the 1990s. It describes Finland's economic performance in a comparative perspective, outlines government definitions of economic and social policy goals and examines changes in opinions about the welfare state during the recession. It also looks at the welfare outcomes, focusing on

income levels, income distribution, poverty and social and health services. The study concludes that Finnish households overall have suffered economic losses which are smaller than the decline in GDP would predict and that the impact of reductions were spread fairly evenly through the population. The author argues that, once established, the structures and institutions of the welfare state can work as powerful tools even when economic and political conditions are difficult.

SOLE MOTHERS IN AUSTRALIA: SUPPORTING MOTHERS TO SEEK WORK

SPRC Discussion Paper No. 71

*Marilyn McHugh and
Jane Millar*

This paper explores the issue of sole motherhood and employment, with a particular focus on examining the relationship between social security policies and current discourses on the role of women in Australian society, including the perspectives of sole mothers themselves. The paper brings together an analysis of the dominant political and popular conceptions of motherhood, of the nature of the state welfare regime and the support offered by social security, child support and child care policies. This provides a context for understanding how different groups of sole mothers negotiate their social identity as mothers and as workers.

'ALL ELSE CONFUSION': CHANGING GENDER EQUITY AT HOME.

SPRC Discussion Paper No.72

Michael Bittman

Back in the nineteenth century the poet, Lord Alfred Tennyson, believed only an arrangement of men as 'providers' and women 'homemakers' accorded with nature and reason, and declared 'all else confusion'. Now that women are also responsible for 'providing', opinion is divided as to whether husbands will accept increased responsibilities for home and family. Some argue that women are being obliged to work a 'second shift', while others argue that men and women will share domestic responsibilities equally. Jonathan Gershuny's theory of 'lagged adaptation' proposes a theoretical framework capable of reconciling these apparently opposed views. This paper

examines the evidence for both short-run lags, and long-run lags. While finding some support for Gershuny's theory, it concludes that women's adaptations have been empirically more important than men's.

DEVELOPMENT OF INDICATIVE BUDGET STANDARDS FOR AUSTRALIA: PROJECT OUTLINE AND RESEARCH METHODS

Budget Standards Working Paper No. 1

Peter Saunders

The paper provides an overview of the Development of Indicative Budget Standards for Australia Project and its research methodology. The budget standards approach is a direct method of measuring a standard of living. Budget Standards will be determined for 12 basic household types at two distinct standards of living: 'modest but adequate' and 'low cost'. After reviewing the history of budget standards research and the limitations associated with it, this paper outlines the methods which will be employed in developing indicative budget standards for Australia. A key element of the research strategy is the use of focus groups to ensure that budget standards correspond to Australian community standards.



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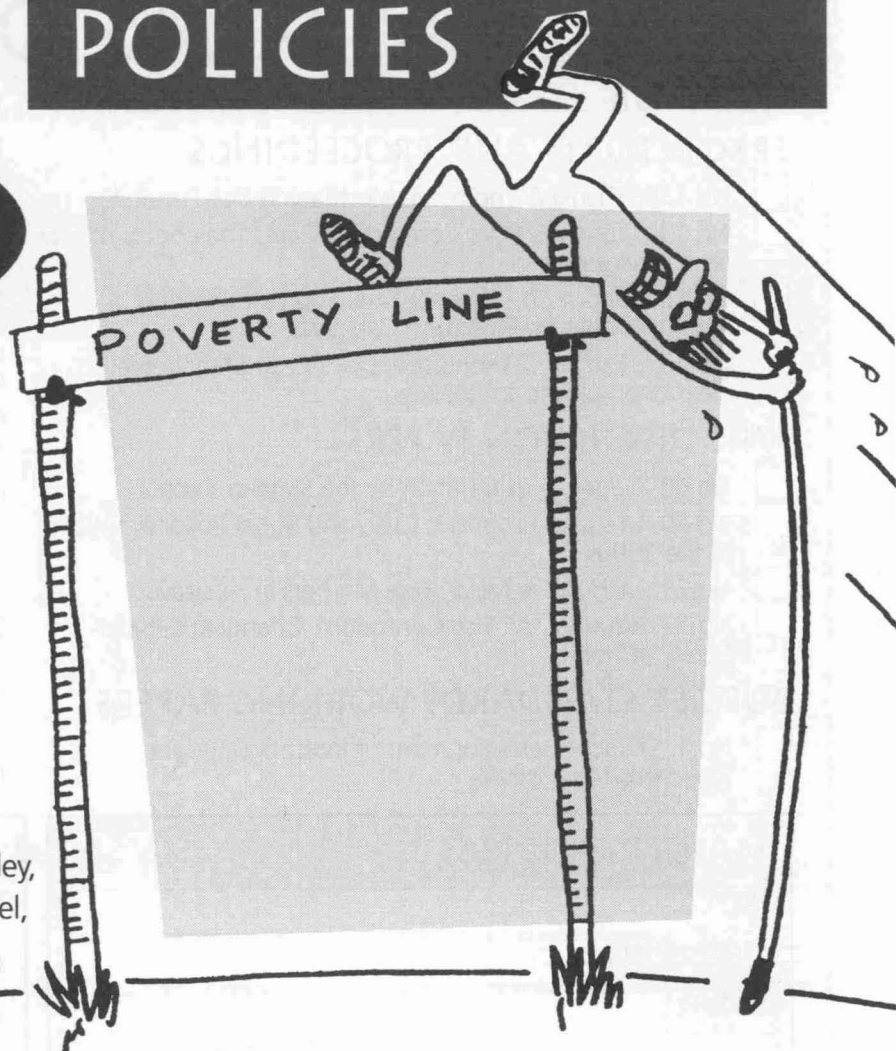
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