



Try, Test and Learn Fund

Initiative: *The Opportunity Account*

Location: Queensland

Using insights from the Priority Investment Approach, the Try, Test and Learn Fund is gathering evidence on new or innovative approaches to addressing barriers to work.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund will help achieve the objectives of welfare reform—that is, to develop a modern welfare system that increases the capacity of individuals, reduces the risk of welfare dependency and maintains a strong welfare safety net.

What are we trying to achieve?

This project aims to support at-risk young people in Cape York, together with other members of their communities, to improve their capability and motivation to manage and earn money, and attend to their health and education needs.

What is *The Opportunity Account*?

This project designs and trials a digital platform that uses behavioural drivers and incentives to encourage participants to improve their life circumstances.

The project has undertaken an extensive engagement phase with young people in the local community to co-design a digital platform. Findings from the design phase determine the behaviours that will be incentivised and the drivers that will be used to encourage those behaviours. This includes sending out text message nudges or providing vouchers to encourage young people to use relevant available health services or to attend school.

Participants are also encouraged to access existing Cape York Institute facilities including financial management, employment and case management services.

What does the evidence tell us?

- Young unemployed people face a variety of barriers to further education and employment. While some will face minimal barriers to engaging in further education or taking up employment opportunities, others will face a number of challenges to making a successful transition.
- If nothing changes, it is estimated that 45 per cent of 16-24 year olds residing in regional or remote Queensland who are currently receiving income support will be receiving income support payments in 10 years, and 35 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.

How is this initiative new and innovative?

This project integrates behavioural drivers and incentives into a digital platform that aims to encourage participants to make positive choices and improve their life circumstances.

Fast facts

Priority group: At-risk young people

Target participant number: 100

Locations: Five communities in Cape York

Trial period: 24 months

Total funding: \$2.13 million

Service provider: Cape York Institute

Potential future saving: The purpose of these initiatives is to test whether an intervention works to reduce long-term reliance on welfare. If around 26 per cent (26) of participants move off income support because of this project, the savings to the welfare system are likely to outweigh the costs of the project.