



Try, Test and Learn Fund

Mentoring 2 Work

Using insights from the Priority Investment Approach, the \$96.1 million Try, Test and Learn Fund is trialling new and innovative approaches to assist groups of people at risk of long-term welfare dependence.

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 does the evidence tell us?

- 22 per cent of all current 17-19 year olds receiving student payments are expected to be on income support in 10 years.
- From 2003 to 2012, there were 7,160 vocational or university students who started receiving a student payment aged 17 to 19; then experienced more than 12 months on unemployment payments; and were receiving unemployment payments in 2015-16. On average, all of these former young students who transitioned directly to unemployment payments are expected to receive income support in 33 years of their future lifetimes.
- If nothing changes for these former young students, 39 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 10 years, and 30 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.

What is *Mentoring 2 Work*?

Participants will be paired with a mature volunteer mentor with strong business and workplace connections.

The mentoring will take place through both group sessions and one-on-one mentoring over a six-month period. Each week will focus on different activities to prepare participants for employment. Mentors will guide and support participants through the employment process.

What are we trying to achieve?

Improvement in participants' job readiness and their chances of accessing and sustaining employment.

Fast facts

Priority group: Unemployed former students

Recipient numbers: 240

Location: Perth

Trial period: 24 months

Total funding: \$2 million

Co-designers: Council on the Ageing Western Australia (COTA WA), United Way, Department of Training and Workforce Development, Wanslea, Anglicare WA, MercyCare, Volunteering WA, Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA, CSI UWA, ORS Group, AJ Grant Group, and Australian Childcare Alliance WA

Service provider: COTA WA

Potential future saving: The purpose of these initiatives is to test whether an intervention works to reduce long-term reliance on welfare. It is not possible to predict success rates in advance—this is the purpose of testing new approaches. If 9 per cent of participants (32) move off welfare, the savings to the welfare system are likely to outweigh the costs.

How is this initiative new and innovative?

This initiative proposes a unique partnership model to create an ecosystem of support which assists participants to identify and address a diverse range of barriers and challenges in attaining and maintaining employment.

How will this initiative be evaluated?

This initiative will be tracked using a range of evaluation methods, such as surveys, participant interviews and actuarial analysis.