



*Centre for the
Study of Living Standards
Centre d'étude des
niveaux de vie*

Innovative Practices in Mainstream Jurisdictions

Andrew Sharpe

Centre for the Study of Living Standards

Presented at

Expert Forum on First Nations Social Assistance Reform,
Assembly of First Nations, Ottawa, Ontario

September 3, 2019

Recent Innovations for Social Assistance

Pilot Projects:

- Self-Sufficiency Project (SPP) and SPP Plus
- Action Emploi
- Community Employment Innovation Project
- Manitoba Guaranteed Annual Income
- Ontario Basic Income
- PEI Secure Income Pilot

Disability Programs :

- Alberta Assured Income for Severely Handicapped
- Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability

Nova Scotia Innovations:

- Educate to Work
- Career Seek
- Harvest Connection

Pilot Projects

Self-Sufficiency Project (SPP)

- New Brunswick and British Columbia (1992-1999)
- Single parent welfare recipients received an earnings supplement if they found full-time work and left welfare
- SPP Plus combined the earnings supplement and job search assistance
- SPP Plus participants more likely to earn above minimum wage and less likely to receive social assistance

Source: Foley, 2015, *Do Active Programs Work in Welfare in Canada*

Pilot Projects

Action Emploi (AE)

- Quebec (2001-2005)
- Long-term welfare recipients received a wage subsidy if they found full-time work
- Largely based off SPP
- Fixed monthly supplement, independent of income
- Lasting increases in labour force participation for single parents and women

Source: Thomas Vigneault, 2013, *Analyse de l'Efficacité D'Action Emploi par Régression Discontinue*

Pilot Projects

Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP)

- Nova Scotia (1995-2005)
- Unemployed persons received subsidized wages while working on community-based projects
- Presented as an alternative for Employment Insurance (EI) and Income Assistance (IA) recipients
- Positive impacts on self-assessed health and satisfaction, no long-term economic improvements

Guaranteed Annual Income Experiments

Manitoba (1974 – 1979)

- Negative income tax for 3 years
- Winnipeg, Dauphin (saturation site) and several rural communities
- Mincome recipients less likely to be hospitalized for physical and mental health
- Slight decrease in labour force participation

Source: Simpson, Mason and Goodwin, 2017, *The Manitoba Basic Annual Income Experiment: Lessons Learned 40 Years Late*

Guaranteed Annual Income Experiments

Ontario (2017-2019)

- Monthly basic income payments for 3 years
- Hamilton, Thunder Bay and Lindsay
- Designed to measure food security, physical and mental health, housing stability, employability and labour market participation
- Cancelled in March 2019

Guaranteed Annual Income Experiments

Prince Edward Island (2020)

- Secure-income pilot planned for January 2020
- Currently \$225,000 invested in project
- Targeting 80% of MBM for all PEI residents

Permanent Disability Programs

Alberta - Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)

- Income Assistance program for persons with a severe and permanent medical condition
- No medical treatment, therapy, rehabilitation or training is available
- Monthly living allowance, child benefit, health benefits and additional personal benefit
- 96 % of MBM in 2017

Permanent Disability Programs

Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID)

- Income support program for persons with “significant and enduring disabilities”
- Composed of living income, disability income and exceptional need income
- 81 % of MBM in 2017

Source: Government of Saskatchewan, *Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID)*

Education Programs

Educate to Work

- Tuition and books covered for social assistance recipients enrolled at Nova Scotia Community College
- Recipients allowed to retain benefits while enrolled

Career Seek

- Allows social assistance recipients to attend a post-secondary institution for more than two years and continue receiving benefits
- Tuition, books and child care covered for first year

Harvest Connection

- Employment support program which allows social assistance recipients to keep up to \$3,000 earned from seasonal harvest work
- Includes harvesting of field produced crops (berries, vegetables and apples) and Christmas trees
- Earnings do not affect income assistance payments