

# Overcoming barriers to employment: A white paper wish list

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# Background

- Those at-risk of persistent disadvantage in employment often face multiple barriers
  - Vocational barriers: education/qualifications, work experience, equipment/transport cost
  - Non-vocational barriers: discrimination/unconscious bias, health issues, caring responsibilities, housing
- Consistent with McClure (2015) recommendations on welfare reform, these individuals require an 'investment approach'
  - High upfront costs to build individual capacity, informed by strong evidence on what works

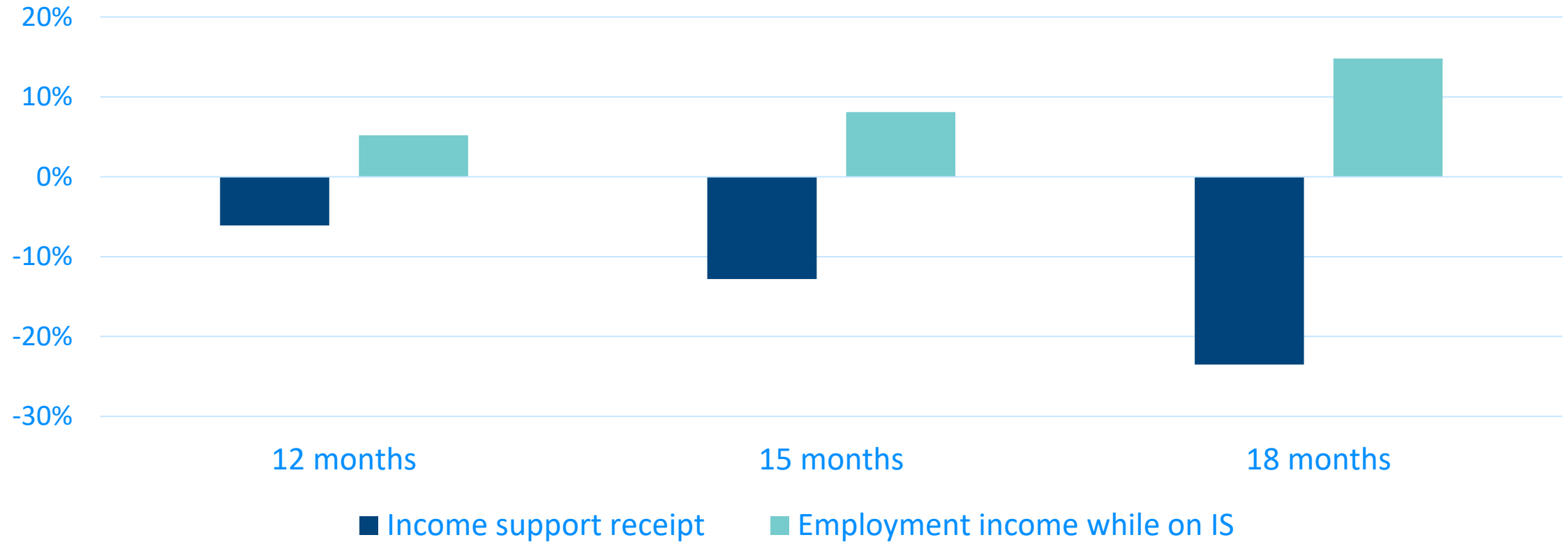
# What works? Findings from Try Test and Learn

- \$95.4 million, 52 co-designed programs for 8 'at-risk' groups
- Among programs where clients were 'job ready', the most effective programs:
  1. Dealt with non-vocational barriers first e.g. childcare, housing, health
  2. Provided a clear pathway to a job of interest to the jobseeker e.g. internship
  3. Offered training relevant to the job with wrap-around support e.g. mentoring
- Outcomes for employer demand-led model, e.g. In-school Parent Employment (IPES), were a particularly exemplar

# Employer demand-led model

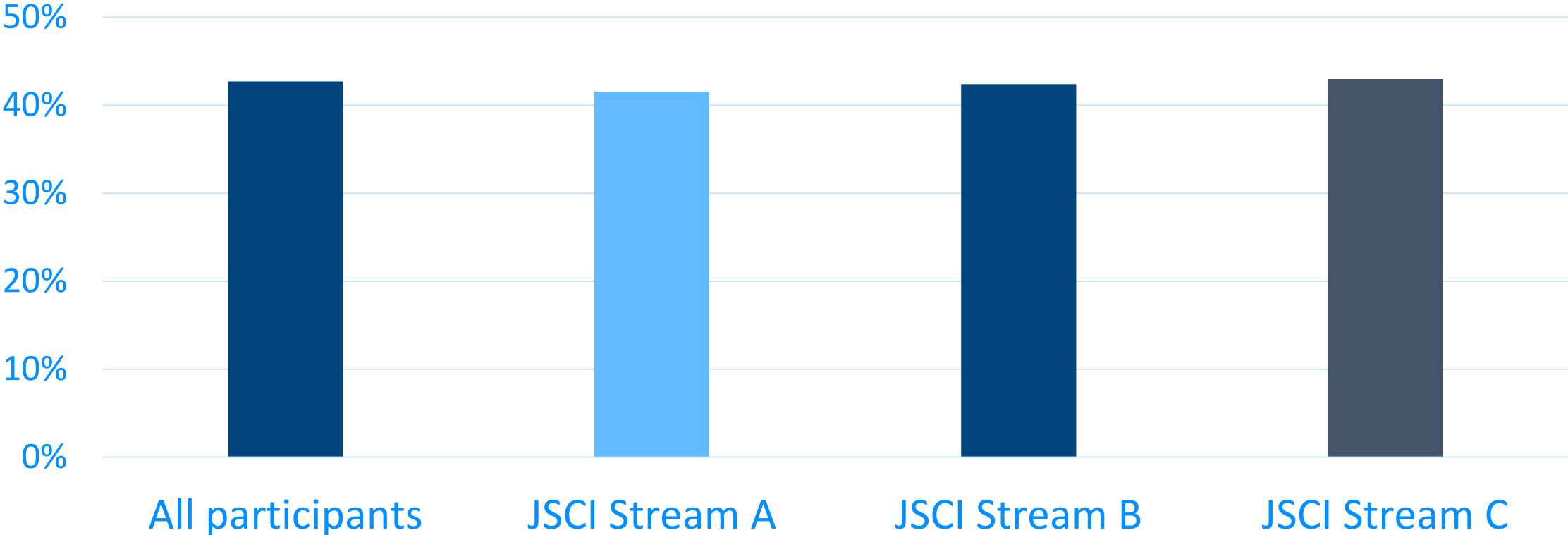
- Employer demand-led services are complementary services offered by community groups:
  1. **Start with a job:** Sympathetic employers register positions that need filling
  2. **Primacy of match:** Identify suitable job seekers, based on their preferences/interests
  3. **Fill skill gaps:** Individualised training to prepare for job
  4. **Wrap-around services:** Address non-vocational barriers
  5. **Ongoing external support:** Provide support to job seeker and employer after work placement

## Difference in outcomes of IPES participants relative to 'like' group of young parents on income support



All differences are statistically significant at 95%

Difference in rate of 26 week placement for VTEC participants relative to 'like'  
Indigenous job seekers under standard employment services



All differences are statistically significant at 95%

# White paper wish list

- We need a re-commitment to the investment approach for ‘at-risk’ groups
  - Tight labour market provides a good environment to invest
  - Programs need to address vocational and non-vocational barriers first
  - Trial scaling-up of employer demand-led programs, including IPES
- Consistent with McClure (2015) this also means a commitment to evaluate what works
  - Robust evaluation framework embedded in program design
  - Fill serious administrative data gaps: employment services data & Indigenous businesses
- Assistance for transition from VTEC to Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP)
  - Ensure expertise and know-how is transferred to community employment services