



# What can we learn about the potential effects of a Universal Basic Income from studies of similar interventions?

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**#PHINS2018**





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# What is basic income?

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- **Universal**
- **Unconditional**
- **Not affected by other income**
- **Paid to individuals**
- **Subsistence level**

# Understanding the effects of a 'full' basic income

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- **Universal**
  - Would affect demand for labour
  - Universal payments could lead to wider effects at a community level.
- **Permanent**
  - Decisions about employment might be different if payments were permanent
  - Other effects may take a long time to manifest, or change over time
- **Extremely challenging to design an adequate study**

# Finding relevant evidence

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- **Scoping review**
  - Systematic search methods
  - Objective account of study findings
- **We searched for**
  - Unconditional payments to individuals or households
  - Payments could be targeted, affected by other income, or below subsistence

# Identified studies

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- **28 studies of 10 interventions**
- **Very diverse = increased transferability**
- **All met basic income criteria to varying degrees**

# Basic income criteria

Intervention	unconditional	universal	permanent	subsistence	fixed
North American NIT (5)	y	n	n	y	n
NIT saturated site	y	y	n	y	n
Alaska dividend	y	y	y	n	y
Iran cash transfer	y	y	y	y	y
Native American casinos	y	y	y	varied	y
India BIG pilot	y	y	n	n	y
Indonesia cash transfer	y	y	n	n	y

no
yes
it depends

# How do unconditional payments affect employment?

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- **Very little impact on labour market activity**
- **Reductions only observed in certain groups**
- **Employment *increased* for some groups**



# Education and employment for young people

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- **Working decreased for young people and children**
- **Large increases in educational participation/retention**
- **Educational performance findings less consistent**

# The health effects of unconditional payments

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- **Large positive impacts on some health outcomes**
- **Findings not always consistent**
- **Some evidence of adverse effects**

# Other outcomes reported

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- **Marriage and parenting**
- **Crime and social conflict**
- **Other economic effects**

# Potential wider effects

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- **Alaska: increased consumption = higher demand for labour**
- **Native American casinos: improved economic outcomes for non-Native Americans**
- **Indonesia: expenditure increased for non-recipients**
- **Canada: hospital admissions reduced in saturated site**
- **Canada: peer effects on staying in education**
- **Tribal casino: health effects grew stronger over time**

# Conclusions

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- **The evidence does not suggest strong effects on labour market participation**
- **There are strong positive effects on some health and educational outcomes**
- **There is some evidence of potential wider effects in many areas**

## Universal basic income

A scoping review of evidence on impacts and study characteristics

Marcia Gibson, Wendy Hearty and Peter Craig

Available soon at:

<http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/publications/universal-basic-income-scoping-review-of-evidence-on-impacts>

Project partners



MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit



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