

# **A systematic rapid evidence assessment**

**Interventions to improve the coordination of service delivery  
for High Cost High Harm Household Units (HCHHHU)**

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## 1. Review question

This document provides a summary of the methods, results and implications of a Systematic Rapid Evidence Assessment (SREA) carried out between June and September 2006 by the EPPI-Centre and the Government Social Research Unit for HM Treasury. Details of the reports available can be found at the end of this summary.

The review question was

*How effective are interventions that aim to improve the delivery of services to High Cost High Harm Household Units (HCHHHU) through integration/co-ordination mechanisms at producing improved outcomes (broadly defined)?*

The following definitions were employed:

**High Cost High Harm Household Units:** These are taken to be household 'units' in which members are subject to (and have been, with little success, for more than one generation) multiple forms of intervention to address multiple problems which might include (but are not limited to) more than one of the following: antisocial behaviour; offending; addiction problems; child-welfare problems; lack of education/employment; poor health.

**Interventions:** In this context 'interventions' refers to initiatives or programmes which aim to redesign, reconfigure, co-ordinate, or integrate (referred to from hereon as co-ordination) the delivery of services to HCHHHU.

## 2. Identification and selection of studies

The EPPI-Centre tools and guidelines for undertaking systematic reviews were used throughout the conduct of the review in order to limit bias at all stages. The Systematic Rapid Evidence Assessment is a focused limited-search review. In this approach:

- the SREA question was very specifically focused on a particular subgroup and particular type of intervention for this subgroup only;
- the search was restricted in scope - bibliographic databases were searched using only a limited range of search terms rather than extensive search of all variants, and only a limited search for grey literature was undertaken;
- a simple descriptive map of included studies was produced to aid decisions on finalising the scope for the in-depth review.

Identified studies were screened for inclusion against pre-specified inclusion criteria:

- The 'evidence' must be a report of an evaluation of an intervention with data or outcomes (of any kind).
- The subjects of the intervention must be:

service providers or services that are targeted specifically or have the aim of providing services to target group (see HCHHHU definition above); OR

HCHHHU in which members are subject to multiple forms of intervention to address various problems which might include more than one of the following: antisocial behaviour; offending; addiction problems; child-welfare problems; lack of education/employment; poor health; OR communities or localities in which HCHHHU are present.

## 2 Interventions for HCHHU

- The intervention must be the co-ordination of multiple services and or agencies.
- The study must be published in English.
- The study report must have been published after 1992.
- The study must not report on an evaluation of a project aimed at preventing children from developing problems of any kind even if targeted at so-called 'high risk' families and involving co-ordination/integration of services. (Early years education projects and universal school-based prevention projects would come under this heading.)

### *Criterion for the in-depth review:*

- The 'target group' for the service provision in the study did NOT explicitly include families in which 'problems' or 'poor outcomes' span two or more generations of secondary school age or above. (NB Studies that referred to the younger of the two generations as youth, juvenile, adolescent, or teenager were included.)

## 3. Studies identified

Total number of papers identified = 3,441

Total number of studies identified as meeting inclusion criteria = 89

Number of linked items (N=28) and unavailable items (N=7) = 35

Total number of studies coded for map = 54

Total number of studies included in the in-depth review = 10

## 4. Summary of results from the in-depth review

- Overall the quality of the reporting of the studies was poor. Eight studies were given a low overall weight of evidence (WoE), one medium and one high.
- The pattern of results suggests that the co-ordination intervention led to positive effects on attendance at school, but no clear pattern emerged on the other educational outcomes measured (three studies: one high WoE, one medium, one low).
- The pattern of results suggests that the co-ordination intervention led to positive effects on self-reported antisocial behaviour and delinquency (five studies: one high WoE, one medium, three low).
- No clear pattern of results emerged on the other outcomes measured: family relationships, mental health, economic wellbeing.
- Results suggest clients that perceive such interventions as acceptable.
- The studies that included economic analysis found cost savings associated with these interventions but the quality of the economic analysis was low.

## 5. Summary of implications

The results suggest that interventions to co-ordinate services targeted at this group may hold some promise in reducing antisocial and delinquent behaviour and increasing attendance at school. However, it is not clear how generalisable these results are, as they based on only two studies of reasonable quality.

Studies that evaluated other outcomes of integrated or co-ordinated interventions were insufficiently robust to confidently establish cause and effect relationships.

Any continuation or extension of policy developments targeting HCHHHU should be preceded by additional secondary research and accompanied by rigorous large-scale evaluation.

## 6. Reporting of the SREA

The SREA is reported in four parts

- Briefing Summary (1 page)
- Executive Summary (3 pages)
- A Report which details the main findings of the SREA

Newman M, Bangpan M, Brunton J, Tripney J, Williams T, Thieba A, Lorence T, Fletcher A, Bazan C (2007) *Interventions to improve the co-ordination of service delivery for High Cost High Harm Household Units (HCHHHU)*. A systematic rapid evidence assessment. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

- A Technical Report which provides details of the methods used in the SREA and a detailed summary of the studies included in the SREA

Newman M, Bangpan M, Brunton J, Tripney J, Williams T, Thieba A, Lorenc T, Fletcher A, Bazan C, (2007) *Methods and study characteristics in the Systematic Rapid Evidence Assessment: Interventions to improve the co-ordination of service delivery for High Cost High Harm Household Units (HCHHHU)*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.

The SREA is divided into four parts

**BRIEFING  
SUMMARY**

A 1 page summary that has key findings from the review

**EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY**

A 3 page summary that has a summary of the methods used in the review and the key findings

**REPORT**

A report which details the main findings of the SREA

**TECHNICAL  
REPORT**

A Technical Report which provides details of the methods used in the SREA and a detailed summary of the studies included in the SREA

All documents are available from <http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=2312>

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