

Who is in YP⁴?

Participant profile and circumstances in
the twelve months prior to entry

Marty Grace
Deb Batterham
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2006

Joining up services for young homeless jobseekers



YP⁴ outcome evaluation series
Report two

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**Participant profile and circumstances in the
twelve months prior to entry**

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Executive summary

This is the second report of the YP⁴ outcome evaluation. It describes circumstances in the lives of YP⁴ participants in the year preceding their entry into the YP⁴ trial. In this report we focus on the housing, employment, education and training, and health and wellbeing circumstances of YP⁴ participants, as well as information about their use of community services and their connectedness to community. The guiding question for the YP⁴ outcome evaluation is: By joining up services and programs, does YP⁴ assist participants to progress along a pathway that will achieve more sustainable employment and housing outcomes than would current interventions and if so, do these outcomes persist over time? In subsequent reports, the outcome evaluation team will be able to comment on how participants have fared in these areas during and after their participation in the trial. The information presented in this 2006 report will be used as a baseline for assessing participants' outcomes.

YP⁴ was designed as a randomised controlled trial with the 414 participants assigned to one of two groups; J group (228 participants who would receive services in a joined up way); and S group (186 participants who would receive services in the standard way). The participants, young people aged 18 to 35 years experiencing both homelessness and unemployment, were recruited between January 2005 and January 2006, primarily by local Centrelink Customer Service Centres in Central Melbourne, Bendigo, Cheltenham and Frankston. This report's findings are drawn from two administrative data sets (Centrelink and SAAP NDCA¹), and from interviews conducted with 135 of the 414 participants.

Profile of the YP⁴ participants

We compared YP⁴ participants with benchmark population estimates for young people experiencing both homelessness and unemployment (Grace et al. 2005). The YP⁴ participants are similar to the benchmark estimates in terms of gender and Indigenous status. However, our participants are more likely to be ex-offenders and have lower levels of educational attainment than this population generally. These characteristics identify the YP⁴ participants as particularly disadvantaged, even among others experiencing homelessness and unemployment. The average age of participants at entry to the trial was 23 years, with 51 per cent being 21 or under at entry, and 74 per cent being 24 or under at entry. J group participants were more likely than S group participants to be male, ex-offenders, and identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. J group participants had lower levels of educational achievement than S group

¹ Supported Accommodation Assistance Program data is gathered and analysed by the National Data Collection Agency of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

participants. These differences will be taken into account in future analysis of differences in outcomes achieved.

Participants' housing in the twelve months prior to entering the trial

Just over one third of participants left their family or guardian's home under extremely difficult circumstances including the family or guardian experiencing homelessness, extreme family disruption, and/or violence or sexual abuse. Conflict was the most common reason participants who were interviewed gave for leaving accommodation (23%), followed by finding other accommodation (16%), family conflict and other family issues (13%), being evicted or asked to leave (12%), that the accommodation had been short term (11%), and affordability (10%).

In the twelve months prior to entry participants moved frequently, with substantial variation in the number of moves made. Some participants had not moved (17%) while one participant reported moving 30 times. Most participants had moved between two and six times. Participants had most commonly stayed with friends (84%), in private rental (48%), slept rough (42%) and stayed with immediate (52%) and extended family (29%). However, participants did not stay long at each place and did not expect to be able to stay long at the accommodation they were in at the time of interview. A small number of participants had been in prison (9%) or in a drug treatment service (10%) in the year prior to YP⁴ entry.

Just over a quarter of the participants who were interviewed rated their present housing situation as unsuitable to some degree, and only eight per cent indicated they were happy with their current arrangements. For many participants it was either not easy or really difficult to see friends (28%), see family (39%), access shops (17%) or access services (31%). When asked about their accommodation aspirations, participants gave modest responses. Typically, they wanted a specific number of bedrooms (31%); to live in a unit, flat (29%) or a house (18%); for their accommodation to be close to services, transport and jobs (18%); and for it to be their own (22%).

The proportion of participants' income spent on rent was alarming. Participants spent a median of 55 per cent of their income on rent with some spending all their income and a small minority spending more than their income. Many participants (43%) who were interviewed received financial support of some kind to maintain their housing in the year before entry. Thirteen per cent of participants rated their current accommodation as unaffordable.

Despite the demonstrated homelessness of this group only 36 per cent had used SAAP services.

Participants' employment, income, education and training, past and present

Almost all participants had been employed at some time in the past, and around half had been in paid employment in the past twelve months. Participants had most commonly been employed in hospitality (44%), retail and customer service roles (42%), labouring (32%), factory work (23%), trades (19%), farming and agriculture (19%) and personal or health care roles (11%). Participants were typically looking for work similar to what they had done in the past. When asked, participants were most commonly looking for 'any kind of work' (21%).

A vast majority of participants who were interviewed reported experiencing barriers to gaining employment, the most common being transport (30%), homelessness (18%), physical health (17%), education and training (14%), and mental health issues (11%). Just over one quarter indicated that the location of their current accommodation was a barrier to gaining employment.

Most participants who were interviewed had prepared a resume (89%) and used services that provide links with employment opportunities (81%), while just under half had changed their personal presentation in order to increase their employment prospects. The diversity of participants' employment aspirations for the future was striking, and generally modest.

Most participants had been in receipt of Newstart (55%) or Youth Allowance (61%) in the year prior to entry, however some had also received Parenting Payments, Carer's Allowance, Abstudy or Austudy. A small number had made unsuccessful applications for the Disability Support Pension.

There was substantial variation in participants' average fortnightly and annual incomes based on Centrelink records. Participants' median income from Centrelink, including Commonwealth Rent Assistance was \$304.18 per fortnight or \$7930.33 per year. Eleven per cent of participants were breached during the past twelve months and received reduced payments as a result. Participants' median earnings from employment were \$29.17 per fortnight, accounting for 13 per cent of their overall income. Including earnings from employment, participants' median income was \$328.62 per fortnight or \$8567.53 annually.

Consistent with their mutual obligation requirements, participants engaged in a number of Centrelink approved activities, the most common type being job search (97%). However, over one third had been exempt at some time during the past twelve months from looking for paid

employment due to personal crises or incapacity (38%) - more than had been involved in employment programs or education and training (23% and 16% respectively).

Participants were more educationally disadvantaged than expected, with over two-thirds indicating that year 11 or below was their highest level of education completed. A majority of participants were considering further education or training at the time of interview (63%), with most (70%) nominating secondary school or a specific course at TAFE. Just under a quarter indicated that the location of their current accommodation was a barrier to participating in further education or training.

Participants' experiences with community services, past and present

As expected in a trial specifically for people experiencing homelessness and unemployment, the most commonly used services were Centrelink and the Job Network (97% and 70% respectively at the time of the interview). Many of the participants used housing services (40% of those interviewed) and health services. About two-thirds saw a general practitioner in the year prior to entering the trial, and 41 per cent used a public hospital. Over one quarter used a generalist counselling service, and a quarter used a community health service. Many participants used mental health services (8%), drug treatment services (12%), other employment services (13%), and youth specific services (19%) in the year prior to trial entry.

Only 27 per cent of participants who were interviewed indicated that community services met their needs really well. A further 43 per cent rated community services as being OK. Only five per cent gave a rating of 'really badly'. Forty per cent agreed that services appeared to be working together to help them. About one third stated that services did not work together. Twenty-two per cent reported that services appeared to be working together to some extent.

Over one quarter of the participants encountered difficulties accessing services in the three months prior to trial entry. Key issues mentioned included long waiting times, low responsiveness of services, unavailability of meaningful assistance, and geographical access difficulties. Services that were noted as difficult to access included housing services (such as public housing and crisis accommodation), employment services (such as Centrelink and the Job Network) and health services (such as community health services, general practitioners, and drug rehabilitation services). Half of the participants waited for services in the year prior to trial entry. Almost a quarter reported that they had no case workers. About half of the participants had one case worker, 11 per cent had two case workers, 9 per cent had three, and 4 per cent had four or five case workers.

Participants' health and wellbeing, past and present

Only forty per cent of the participants who were interviewed rated their overall health as good or very good. This is well below the Australian average of 56 per cent (ABS 2006b). Thirteen per cent rated their health as not good or poor. Thirty-nine per cent reported no change in their health in the previous year, while 33 per cent said that it had become worse. Only 28 per cent reported an improvement in their health.

We asked about things that had happened that might have affected their health in the past twelve months. About 90 per cent of the participants reported money problems. Around 80 per cent reported stress associated with unstable accommodation, being involved in stressful relationships, and eating junk food. About two-thirds of participants reported illness, and over half reported that they had slept rough. Untreated health problems were reported by half of the participants and over one-third reported having an injury. One-third reported not taking medication. Participants also reported alcohol and/or drug use, sleeping problems, mental health and legal issues, child and pregnancy related issues, weight loss, being in prison, and problems with transport (combined total of 18%).

Generally, participants reported undertaking healthy activities such as regular exercise (71%), healthy eating (65%), and, to a lesser degree, receiving healthcare and/or treatment (59%). One quarter reported receiving drug treatment, and about 40 per cent reported that they had reduced their drug use. More than one third reported they had been sleeping better than in the past.

Thirty-four per cent of the participants rated their wellbeing (defined as mental and emotional health) as good or very good, 36 per cent rated their wellbeing as average and 30 per cent rated it as not good or poor. When asked about what had affected their wellbeing, nearly two-thirds of the interviewed participants indicated that relationship issues affected their wellbeing. About 43 per cent cited accommodation issues associated with homelessness as affecting their wellbeing. Financial difficulties and unemployment were also mentioned by many (26% and 24% respectively). Physical health, alcohol and drug use, psychological health, and emotional problems also had an effect on wellbeing. A small percentage cited problems with education and/or training, and with transport.

Participants' connection to community

More than half the interviewed participants did not feel connected to a community. Only 39 per cent said they felt connected to either a local community or a network of people with similar interests. Fourteen per cent participated in community activities such as sports, clubs, or organised groups. About 80 per cent of the participants had someone who was outside their family (not a worker in an agency) who they could talk to if they were worried about something. Three-quarters had someone they could ask for help if practical assistance was needed, for example assistance with lifting something heavy if moving house. These levels of community connectedness are much lower than in the broader community, where 98 per cent of young people had someone they could talk to, and 93 per cent had someone they could ask for assistance (ABS 2006a). More than 70 per cent of the YP⁴ participants said that they use community facilities such as parks, libraries and swimming pools. The most popular facility to be accessed was parks (43%), followed by swimming pools (29%) and libraries (28%). Some participants reported using only one of these facilities while others reported using two or three.

Conclusion

This second outcome evaluation report provides an extensive profile of the YP⁴ participants and their experiences with accommodation, employment, community services and their health and community connectedness. It reveals a picture of multiple disruptions and intersecting experiences of disadvantage. In the face of such adversity, persistence and effort are common among YP⁴ participants. While the profile is specific to YP⁴ participants and its purpose is to provide a baseline for assessment of outcomes, it provides the most detailed profile to date of a group of young Australians experiencing both homelessness and unemployment.

The outcomes of the YP⁴ trial are not yet available. However, many agencies, workers, and policy makers are enthusiastic about the idea of joined up services for people experiencing both homelessness and unemployment. This report identifies the typical issues for people aged 18 to 35 who are in this situation. It is not easy for services to attend simultaneously to so many different issues, but this is clearly the task for those seeking to assist young people such as the YP⁴ participants to achieve their modest aspirations of a job and a home.

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Glossary

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
CRN	Centrelink Reference Number
CSC	Customer Service Centre
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DSP	Disability Support Pension
EEAG	YP ⁴ Ethics and Evaluation Advisory Group
FACSIA	Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
HEF	Housing Establishment Fund
IACC	YP ⁴ Inter Agency Coordinating Committee
ISCA	Intensive Support - Customised Assistance
JNM	Job Network Member
JPET	Job Placement and Employment Training
NDCA	National Data Collection Agency
PSP	Personal Support Program
RCT	Randomised Controlled Trial
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TAFE	Technical and Further Education

Part 1: Background and research design

YP⁴ is a trial of joined up services for young people experiencing both unemployment and homelessness. In this report we describe the YP⁴ participants and compare them with the broader population. We present early findings about the participants, their circumstances and experiences.

This report is the second in a series of YP⁴ outcome evaluation reports. The first was the *Benchmark report* (Grace et al. 2005), and further reports will be published annually until 2009. The *Benchmark report* provided the background for the YP⁴ trial, presenting our detailed estimates of numbers of young people experiencing homelessness and unemployment in Australia, Victoria, and the YP⁴ trial sites. This 2006 report sets the scene for future research into the impacts and outcomes of joining up services for young people experiencing both unemployment and homelessness. As far as possible, this report conforms to the Consort Statement guidelines (Moher et al. 2001) for reporting randomised controlled trials. We report on the design and implementation of the trial and on administrative and interview data gathered during 2005/6 about the YP⁴ participants.

About YP⁴

The YP⁴ trial (formerly known as the Young Homeless Jobseeker Trial) examines whether joining up a range of services and programs in a client-centred manner will result in more sustainable employment and housing outcomes for young people experiencing both homelessness and unemployment. The 'YP' represents young people. The '4' refers to the four 'p's: purpose (a job), place (a home), personal support (the service on offer) and proof (the evaluation). The number '4' in the name also represents the number of partner agencies and the number of sites for the trial. YP⁴ is an initiative of four community organisations: Hanover Welfare Services, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Melbourne Citymission and Loddon Mallee Housing Services.

The four partner organisations were concerned about the poor outcomes they were achieving with service users who were both homeless and unemployed. They reflected on their practice experience, and reviewed relevant literature (Campbell et al. 2003). They found that existing services were fragmented and linear, largely because of government funding arrangements

(Campbell et al. 2003). Services continue to be determined by programs and funding arrangements rather than the real-life circumstances of real people. Instead of demonstrating need, workers have to demonstrate eligibility for particular programs. It is up to front-line workers, or service users themselves, to try to find their way through the rules of each service.

The partner organisations developed an alternative model of service delivery and decided on a project that would go beyond case management and service coordination to challenge the funding arrangements at political and systems levels (Horn 2004; Grace 2006). They obtained political support and funding to trial joined up services for people aged 18 to 35 years experiencing homelessness and unemployment.

YP⁴ has inspired a remarkable level of organisational and political commitment and cooperation.

The parties involved include:

- four large non-government organisations;
- five government departments across state and federal jurisdictions;
- three peak bodies involved in YP⁴ governance;
- a federal interdepartmental committee to coordinate a whole of government contribution and response to YP⁴; and
- three universities involved in evaluation.

YP⁴ was designed as a randomised controlled trial (RCT) with eligible participants to be randomly assigned to one of two groups. One group (J group) would receive their services in a joined up way, and the other (S group) would receive services in the standard way. As an RCT, YP⁴ has two arms: a service delivery arm and a research arm. The research arm includes three separate research streams: the outcome evaluation, the financial evaluation and the process evaluation. This report is part of the outcome evaluation.

The service delivery arm of YP⁴ represents a new approach to assisting people who are experiencing both homelessness and unemployment, in recognition that existing forms of housing and employment assistance are fragmented, linear, ineffective and inefficient for these people. YP⁴ offers a single point of contact to address employment, housing, educational and personal support goals in an integrated manner over a two-year period, early 2005 to mid 2007.

The key components of YP⁴ service delivery are:

- resourced case management available for approximately two years;
- access to a flexible pool of resources;
- timely, individualised assistance;
- negotiated pathways to employment, which could include mentoring, work experience, vocational training and/or subsidised employment; and
- commitment to secure and affordable housing and a living wage.

An Ethics and Evaluation Advisory Group (EEAG) (see Appendix 1) provides expertise and advice to the Inter Agency Coordinating Committee (IACC) for YP⁴, regarding all evaluation and research processes and outputs of the trial. An evaluation framework was prepared and formally approved by the Ethics and Evaluation Advisory Group in 2004. The Principal Investigator for the outcome evaluation, Dr Marty Grace of Victoria University, was appointed in February 2005.

This report has been prepared by the YP⁴ outcome evaluation team during 2006, following completion of recruitment of participants into the trial. It follows the first report (Grace et al. 2005), which provided a demographic profile of young homeless job seekers, both nationally and in Victoria using data from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

This report describes the research design and procedures in the remainder of Part 1. Part 2 compares the YP⁴ participants with our earlier demographic profile; and reports on YP⁴ participants' accommodation, employment, education and training experiences during the twelve months prior to entering the trial. Participants' use of community services, their health and wellbeing, and sense of community connectedness are also reported.

Research design

YP⁴ is a randomised controlled trial (RCT), with participants randomly allocated to one of two groups². J group participants receive joined up services and S group participants receive standard services. We prefer not to use the terms 'treatment' (J group) and 'control' (S group), although the random allocation to groups and the intention to compare outcomes for the two groups makes it appropriate to designate them in this way. Our preference for 'J group' and 'S group' rests on our belief that the trial partners are not in fact 'experimenting' with young people's lives. Both groups of participants are entitled to and can actually receive the same services. It is the style of service delivery that distinguishes the two groups. As noted previously, the trial sets out to assess whether delivering services in joined up ways results in better outcomes for participants than would standard service delivery. In the absence of good benchmark data, the evaluation of the trial will rest heavily on comparison of outcomes for the two groups - those receiving services in a joined up way, and those receiving services in the standard way.

The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that what is learned from YP⁴, including future implications for program design and practice, is well documented, analysed, shared and realised both within this project and beyond. The guiding question of the YP⁴ outcome evaluation is:

By joining up services and programs, does YP⁴ assist participants to progress along a pathway that will achieve more sustainable employment and housing outcomes than would current interventions and if so, do these outcomes persist over time?

In answering this question, the evaluation is structured around the documented objectives of the project to:

- improve the housing situation of trial participants (in terms of stability/security, affordability, appropriateness and accessibility);
- enhance participants' employability and reliance on income from work;
- join up housing, employment and personal support services for trial participants;
- improve participants' health and wellbeing; and
- better integrate trial participants into their communities.

² Please note that the use of reserve places and the limitations of randomisation are discussed later.

Accordingly the outcome evaluation will track changes in participants' housing, employment, their use and experience of community services, health and wellbeing and community connectedness over time.

YP4 participants

To be eligible for YP⁴, participants needed to be:

- currently homeless or with a history of homelessness;
- aged 18 to 35 years at the time of entry;
- in receipt of either Newstart or Youth Allowance;
- eligible for at least one of: Intensive Support Customised Assistance (ISCA), the Personal Support Program (PSP) or Job Placement Employment Training (JPET); and
- living or receiving services in one of the four trial sites: Central Melbourne, Cheltenham, Bendigo and Frankston.

Recruitment

Planning for the YP⁴ trial anticipated recruitment of 520 participants. This sample size was determined by the practical consideration of how many people could receive joined up services given the funding level for the trial. Following slow recruitment as detailed in Grace et al. (2005), the recruitment period which commenced in January 2005 was extended from March to December 2005. In practice, the YP⁴ participants were recruited over a thirteen-month period, January 2005 to January 2006, primarily by local Centrelink Customer Service Centres. Preparation for recruitment by Centrelink staff included site visits, consultations with Centrelink staff, and preparation of information sheets and consent forms. In broad terms, the recruitment process involved the following steps:

- identifying and contacting potentially eligible individuals;
- providing information to these individuals;
- securing consent to participate;
- randomly allocating participants to J group or S group;
- making a referral (for J group only) to a YP⁴ service provider.

Each of these steps required specific actions which will now be described in more detail.

Identifying and contacting potentially eligible individuals

Three of the four YP⁴ partners had a specific focus for recruitment at their respective sites, affecting both J and S groups:

- Loddon Mallee Housing Services in Bendigo sought to engage a quota of indigenous people (25%)
- Melbourne Citymission in Central Melbourne accepted only those aged 18 to 25 years
- Hanover Welfare Services in Cheltenham targeted families
- Brotherhood of St Laurence in Frankston did not target any subgroup of the population

The partner agencies expected that recruitment to YP⁴ would be simple and straightforward, given their experiences with homeless unemployed people. However, the process of recruiting participants into YP⁴ was not as smooth or as quick as expected. The recruitment process was highly complex, slow, and it changed over time. Recruitment processes varied slightly for each of the four YP⁴ sites, depending on the infrastructure of local Centrelink Customer Service Centres (CSCs), the alignment of Centrelink catchment areas to trial sites, available resources, personal preferences of those involved in each site, and recruitment experiences to date.

Contacting potential participants was time-consuming and difficult. Attempts to increase the rate of recruitment between March and October 2005 included:

- better aligning the Centrelink catchment areas with trial catchments. For example, recruitment undertaken by Cheltenham CSC was expanded to include Oakleigh and Windsor CSCs (representing a tripling of Centrelink referral points for that site). This expansion did not represent an expansion of the YP⁴ catchment area;
- early in 2005, Centrelink arranged proactively to identify and contact eligible participants on its system, using the number of accommodation moves in the past twelve months as the identifying variable;
- DEWR's data system was used to identify eligible people with mobile phone numbers, and invitations were issued via SMS to all those so identified. This strategy met with extremely limited success, with only 16 participants recruited;

- targeting of subgroups of the population was relaxed (for example at Cheltenham there was a lessening of the focus on families);
- successful advocacy for Centrelink to allocate additional resources for YP⁴ recruitment. A fulltime temporary worker was dedicated to YP⁴ recruitment activities from 24 October to 31 December 2005. This was arguably the most successful recruitment strategy.

Information provided and informed consent

Once individuals were identified as eligible and contacted, information sheets were provided to them, and consent to participate was sought. Participants' initial consent to participate in YP⁴ included permission to request and join up information about them from Centrelink, DEWR and SAAP (see Appendix 2). Information about participants from DEWR was not received in time for inclusion in this report. However, we anticipate that this information will be available for future reports of the YP⁴ outcome evaluation. Participants' consent to be interviewed was obtained separately (see Appendix 3). All procedures, consent forms and interview schedules were approved by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee (HRETH.007/05; HREC05/034).

Randomisation

The process for randomly allocating participants to J group or S group varied by site as well as over time. The trial manager worked with Centrelink staff at each recruitment site to devise a system of random allocation that would work for them. The random allocation procedure for each site is detailed below, followed by a discussion of limitations.

Central Melbourne

Initially, it was planned that the first five participants would be placed in J group and the second five in S group. However, recruitment was slower than expected, and batches of five were reduced to batches of approximately two participants.

Bendigo

In Bendigo, group allocation was based on the day of the week. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday recruitment was for S group, while on Tuesday and Thursday recruitment was for J group. It was agreed that the days would be rotated periodically to ensure ongoing randomness of allocations. However, in practice there was no rotation of the days.

Cheltenham

At Cheltenham, allocation to group was scheduled by day of the week. However in practice recruitment was predominantly for J group in the early months. Once information about potentially eligible YP⁴ participants was made systematically available (through querying the Centrelink database), names of all potentially eligible people were placed in a hat, and drawn out alternately as either S or J group. J group nominees were followed up in the first instance, which resulted in sequential recruitment to J then S groups.

Frankston

Initially in Frankston recruitment to YP⁴ was planned in batches of ten. The first ten participants consenting to participate were to be placed in J group, and the second group of ten in S group. However, given recruitment was slower than originally anticipated, the number of participants to be recruited to each group in a batch was reduced to five.

Limitations of random allocation

Random allocation to J and S groups was limited by two factors, the use of reserve places within the trial, and variations to the random allocation procedures.

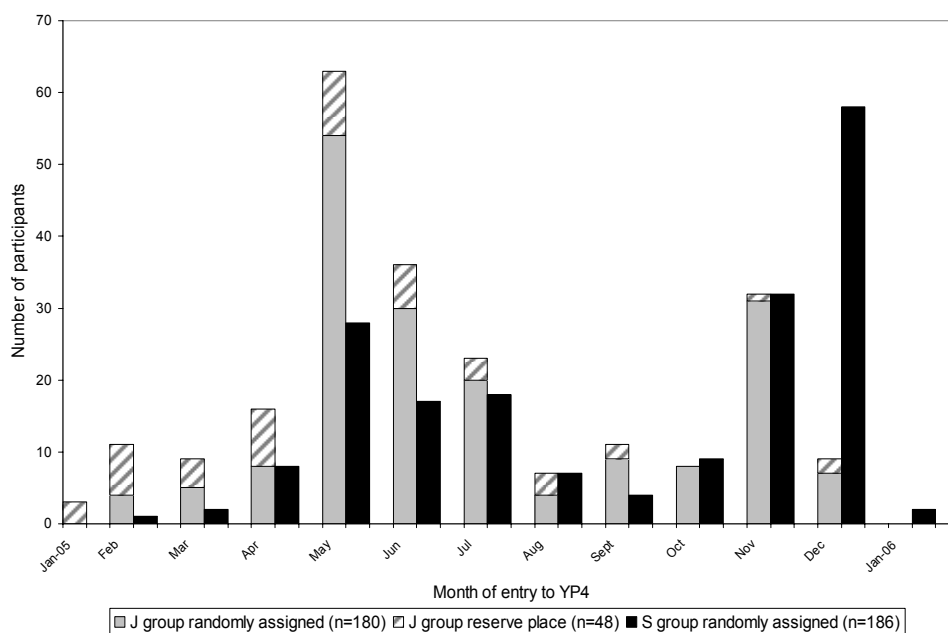
At the beginning of the trial, a small number of places (48) in the J group were 'reserved' in order that YP⁴ service providers could engage existing service users who were eligible for the trial directly into the J group. This arrangement was important in order to make good use of the resources earmarked for reallocation to YP⁴. It also helped to facilitate the building of relationships with other local service providers. We considered excluding these 'reserve place' participants from analyses given that they were not randomly assigned to a group. However, a preliminary check revealed that five of the 48 reserve place participants were Indigenous. Removing them would substantially alter the representation of Indigenous people in our sample from 19 identified Indigenous participants to 14. Given that the removal or inclusion of the reserve place participants had a negligible impact on the distribution of other characteristics (+/- 1%), all of these participants were retained in our sample.

Across all sites, front-line staff varied the random allocation procedures from time to time. In the first half of the recruitment period, more participants were allocated into J group than S group. At this time case managers were already employed at each trial site and both they and their employers were eager to begin the service delivery component of the trial with J group

participants. Centrelink staff were in regular contact with these case managers and their employers. This knowledge, combined with some staff's belief that being in J group would be 'better' for participants than being in S group, contributed to an early bias in recruitment towards J group (Coventry & Pedrotti in press). As the number of participants in J group grew in proportion to those in S group, the latter phase of the recruitment effort became more focused on recruiting participants into S group. This pattern of recruitment is shown in the following figure.

Figure 1.1 shows the allocation into J and S groups throughout the recruitment period, including the impacts of both the use of reserve places and the variations in random allocation procedures.

Figure 1.1: Recruitment and group allocation by month



Source: YP⁴ research database (n = 414)

Details of the characteristics of the J group and S group participants are included in Part 2 of this report.

Referral to a YP4 service provider

After group allocation, a referral was made for each J group participant by Centrelink to a YP⁴ service provider. Once the referral was accepted, Centrelink assisted these participants to complete an updated Preparing for Work Agreement. Centrelink referral sites took responsibility for the completion and forwarding of all paperwork to the Evaluation and Research Officer. A YP⁴ case manager was informed of the referral with participant's contact details, current job network membership information and any other relevant information. The YP⁴ case manager then took responsibility to contact the participant and begin case work with him/her.

Outcome of recruitment

The recruitment effort was finally completed in January 2006 with a total of 445 people being referred to YP⁴ across the four sites. Twenty-three of these participants were found to be ineligible for the trial or did not complete the appropriate trial documentation. Excluding these participants, 422 were recruited into YP⁴. At the time of writing, eight participants had withdrawn their consent to participate in YP⁴. The remaining 414 participants constitute the sample discussed in this report³. The number of these participants by site and group is shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: YP⁴ participants by group and trial site

Site	J Group	S Group	Total
Frankston	50	40	90
Cheltenham	52	49	101
Bendigo ⁴	62	53	115
Central Melbourne	64	44	108
Total	228	186	414

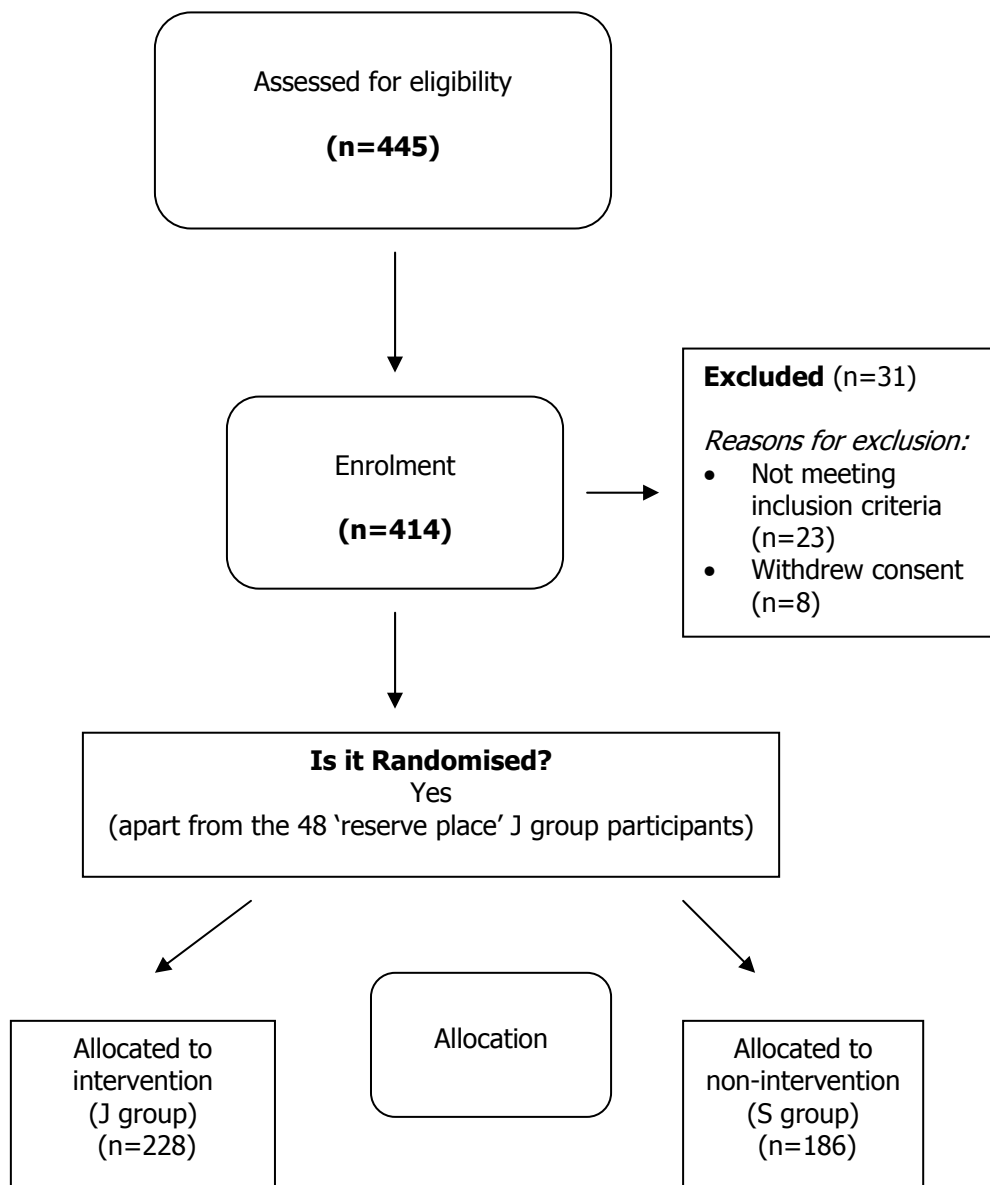
Source: YP⁴ research database

³ The number of participants in YP⁴ can and will vary over time. Some participants will withdraw their consent to participate, and others who may have not yet completed appropriate paperwork may subsequently re-engage and will be included in the trial.

⁴ Please note that Bendigo did not achieve its indigenous quota of 25 per cent; instead achieving four per cent (n=115). Frankston achieved the highest proportion of indigenous participants with seven per cent (n=90) of its sample being indigenous.

The YP⁴ recruitment process is shown as a Consort flowchart (Moher et al. 2005) in Figure 1.2

Figure 1.2: YP⁴ recruitment process based on the Consort flowchart



Data sources and analyses

This report draws on two administrative data sets (from Centrelink and SAAP NDCA), and interviews carried out specifically for the YP⁴ evaluation (see Appendix 4 for the interview schedule). For each individual, administrative data was requested for the twelve months prior to his or her personal joining month. The YP⁴ zero-month interviews also referred to the twelve months prior to entry and were conducted within 90 days of each participant's entry to the trial.

Data preparation included coding and data entry of interview responses; importing Centrelink data into SPSS, inserting appropriate codes, adding additional variables from the YP⁴ research database and calculating some additional variables; and liaising with NDCA who carried out the analysis of SAAP data. We carried out extensive descriptive analysis. Data from all sources (except the SAAP NDCA data) were split on each variable to examine differences between J and S groups, men and women and across the four trial sites. Any differences discovered were tested for statistical significance using a difference of proportions test set at 95% confidence level. Only those differences which were testable and statistically significant at a confidence level of 95% are reported in the text of this report (with a summary presented in Appendix 5). In the main, we have reported descriptive statistics.

YP⁴ research database

The YP⁴ Evaluation and Research Officers keep a YP⁴ research database that includes information about participants such as: gender, date of entry, date of birth, site and group assignment, case manager, participant status, information received and outstanding, and additional contact details. For this report, information from this database was used to examine participant profile information, and the numbers of participants recruited.

Administrative data

Centrelink data

Centrelink agreed to provide participants' data for the twelve months prior to entering the trial based on the month of entry of each participant. This included:

- Accommodation data: the amount of rent paid; the number of changes of address disclosed to Centrelink; the duration of stay at each accommodation as disclosed to Centrelink; the type of rent and sharer status of each stay, whether participants ever qualified as 'unreasonable to live at home' (bearing in mind that participants need to be under 21 years of age when assessed).
- Employment data: declared earnings from employment; the number of employers they had; income from each employer.
- Income and benefit data: history of all benefit types in the reporting period; reasons for being off benefits; income from Centrelink for the reporting period; activities undertaken in the reporting period.
- The number of breaches and suspensions (if any) in the reporting period.

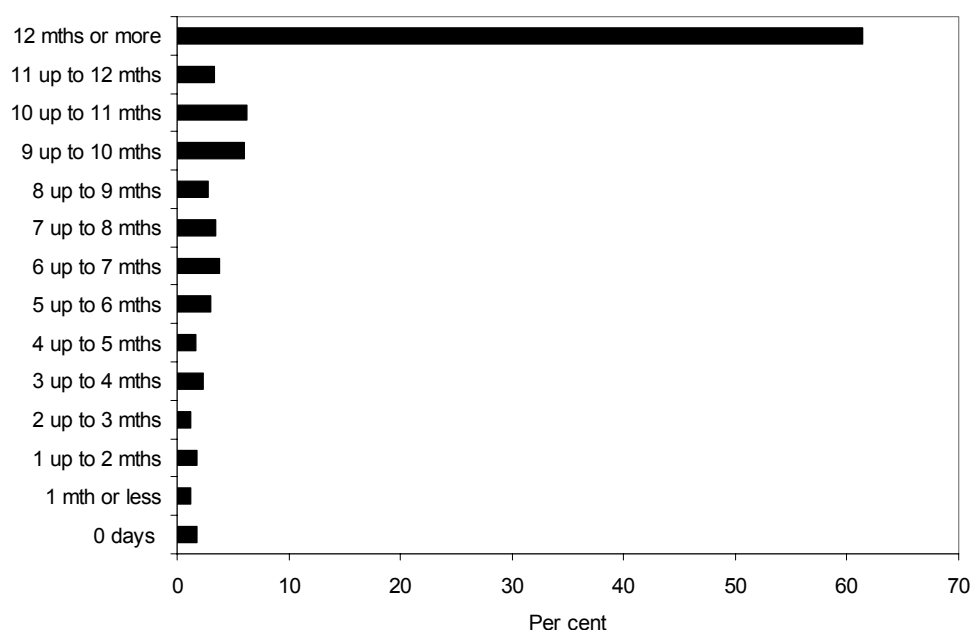
With consent from participants, a YP⁴ Evaluation and Research Officer provided a Centrelink computer programmer (from Area North Central, Victoria) with the names, date of birth, month of entry, and the Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) of all YP⁴ participants. The Centrelink programmer provided the Research Officer with an individualised data set for the data requested. The programmer also provided copies of all relevant codes for the data given. Centrelink data were provided in notepad format, imported into Excel and then into SPSS. Random checks were undertaken to ensure this process was reliable. In the SPSS dataset, some participant data such as group assignment, gender and trial site was added. Close communication between the Research Officer and the Centrelink computer programmer who extracted the data occurred during the process of data extraction, transporting and early analyses. Key staff at Centrelink were then consulted to ensure that appropriate sense had been made of this information.

The Centrelink data set included 399 YP⁴ participants, 137 women and 262 men, 217 J group participants and 182 S group participants. The fifteen participants whose data was not included had been interstate in the year prior to entry and their data was unavailable.

Analysis of the Centrelink administrative dataset was complicated for a number of reasons. First, some participants did not have a full twelve months of data because they had not been in

receipt of a Centrelink benefit for the full year before entering the trial. On average, participants had 316 days of data ($n=399$; range: 0-395 days)⁵. Seventy-seven per cent of participants had nine months or more of data, leaving 23 per cent with less than nine months. No differences between men and women and J and S group were found. The distribution of days of benefit data is shown in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3: The amount of Centrelink benefit data from YP^d participants



Source: YP^d Centrelink administrative data ($n = 399$)

The second reason for difficulties with this dataset was that some participants were on and off benefits during the twelve months prior to entry. The data did not always represent a single continuous period of time. Our calculations for average Centrelink income, average income from employment, average amount of rent paid, and the proportion of income spent on rent are based on participants' periods in receipt of Centrelink payments⁶.

In general, averages were calculated by summing the raw data and dividing by the corresponding number of days of data for each participant. These averages are reported as both annual and fortnightly averages. The fortnightly average was chosen because participants

⁵ Data were extracted from the Centrelink system using the first day of the month of entry of participants as a proxy for month of entry. This was done in order to make the volume of work on our request more manageable. It is thus logically possible that we received 31 days more data than a year as participants may have entered on the last day of the month and yet we collected information from the start of that month.

⁶ This is a limitation of the data and its analysis. However, we believe that our analysis has produced credible estimates. Some participants' income and rent would have increased when they were off benefits, and for some these amounts would have decreased. As Figure 1.3 shows, we have more than 9 months of data for more than 75 per cent of participants. When calculating averages, we excluded participants with less than three months of data.

commonly receive benefits on a fortnightly basis. The calculation of these averages involved two rounds of averaging: first for each participant and then across participants. A risk in taking an average of an average is artificially truncating the variation shown in raw data, producing more uniform results. Examination of the ranges reported shows that this procedure has had minimal impact. The method for calculating all reported income-related statistics is described in footnotes where these figures are reported.

SAAP NDCA data

Initially we requested individualised data from the National Data Collection Agency (NDCA). However, the NDCA was unable to assist us because of the strict confidentiality provisions of the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987*. As an alternative, the NDCA (based at the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) agreed to provide us with aggregate data that would not identify individuals. The SAAP data collection is based on a financial year cycle, meaning that NDCA could not individualise the data by participants' month of entry to YP⁴. While the collection contains support period start dates they were not available for use in this analysis. With participants' consent, we provided information to the NDCA that enabled the provision of client data for YP⁴ participants for the financial year 2005/06. These data were provided in aggregate tables showing all YP⁴ participants and J and S group participants. We also requested data split by site and by gender where numbers were sufficient to guarantee anonymity, however numbers were not sufficient to do this.

The SAAP NDCA Client Collection (see Appendix 6) contains information about:

- level of support;
- client age, gender and linguistic diversity;
- client groups and reasons for seeking assistance;
- length of support and accommodation;
- type of support needed, provided and referrals for support;
- whether client needs for services were met; and
- circumstances before and after support.

Data from the NDCA were received as three sets of tables, the first showing all YP⁴ participants who had used SAAP services, and the second and third as J and S group data. Tables included 148 YP⁴ participants who received 419 support periods. The overall YP⁴ data were compared with national data from the most recent SAAP annual report (AIHW 2006) to examine differences specific to the YP⁴ population. Differences between J and S group were also examined. Consultations with the NDCA were held to ensure that appropriate sense had been made of this information.

Annual interviews

We plan to carry out annual interviews with YP⁴ participants at entry to the trial, and at one, two, and three years after entry. The interview schedule relates directly to trial objectives, with questions about accommodation, employment, education and training, experiences with community services, health and wellbeing, and community connectedness.

The interview schedule was designed by the Principal Investigator and an Evaluation and Research Officer with input from EEAG members. The schedule (Appendix 5) and all consent forms (Appendices 3 and 4) were approved by Victoria University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HRETH.007/05; HREC05/034).

As part of their in-kind contribution to YP⁴, Centrelink agreed to conduct all the annual interviews with participants. This arrangement has advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that Centrelink is likely to have up-to-date contact details for participants. Given that we expect the participants to be difficult to contact, this is an important consideration. The main disadvantage is the possibility that participants' attitudes towards Centrelink may cloud their willingness to participate in YP⁴ interviews, and what they are prepared to disclose in their interviews. Despite this limitation, Centrelink social workers undertook the interviews, as it was not possible to secure funding for the cost of paying independent interviewers.

The YP⁴ outcome evaluation team provided training for these Centrelink social workers (and some social work students) and the script for the interviews included reassurance about the above matters (see Appendix 5).

As Centrelink staff have a non-negotiable duty to report any matters affecting eligibility for benefits, questions concerning current employment and income from employment were not included in the annual interviews. This information was collected through the Centrelink administrative data. The inability to ask about employment in the interviews was an important limitation of having Centrelink staff conduct the interviews.

The interviews took approximately thirty to sixty minutes and were conducted either face to face at a Centrelink office or by telephone. Participants were compensated for their time with vouchers to the value of thirty dollars, redeemable at a range of Coles-Myer stores. Vouchers were used to avoid compromising participants' eligibility for income support.

The completion of the first round of annual interviews, known as the 'zero-month interviews' were managed by the Evaluation and Research Officers in conjunction with four Centrelink interview coordinators (one for each trial site). About 54 per cent of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and the remainder were telephone interviews. Once completed, interview schedules were sent to the Evaluation and Research Officers through the post, and were entered into an SPSS dataset. After entry the data were randomly checked for errors against the hard copies.

One hundred and thirty-five participants (of the 414 recruited) completed zero-month interviews within three months of entering YP⁴, giving a response rate of 33 per cent. More S than J group participants completed these interviews (45 per cent, n=84 to 22 per cent, n=51)⁷. The average number of days between entry and these interviews was 28 days (range: 0-91 days). Another 94 interviews were conducted but were completed more than three months after entry to the trial. These interviews were conducted an average of 168 days (five and a half months) after entry to the trial (range: 96-287 days). These interviews have been excluded from analyses in this report. Following changes to some procedures, and appointment of a dedicated staff member within Centrelink, we have achieved a much higher response rate for the twelve months interviews.

⁷ This difference in response rates is most likely an artefact of idiosyncrasies of recruitment as detailed earlier. By the final months of recruitment, procedures had been improved, facilitating completion of the zero-month interview close to the time of entry to the trial. Since S group recruitment was concentrated later in the year, more S than J group participants were interviewed close to their recruitment date and their interviews were therefore more likely to be included as zero-months interviews.

Despite the low response rate, we have reported the interview findings with some confidence as participants completing a zero-month interview had similar characteristics to the YP^d participants in general as shown in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Comparison of the characteristics of all YP^d participants with respondents to the YP^d zero-month interview

Characteristic	All participants⁸	Zero-month interviewees⁹
18-19 years old	29%	33%
20-24 years old	44%	38%
25-29 years old	15%	19%
30-35 years old	11%	11%
Male	64%	55%
Female	36%	45%
Highest level of education as year 11 or below	76%	67%
Identified ex offender	25%	22%
Identified Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI)	5%	3%
ISCA eligible	66%	65%
PSP eligible	21%	21%
JPET eligible	15%	14%

Source: YP^d research database

⁸ The number of valid responses ranges from 394 to 413.

⁹ The number of valid responses ranges from 131 to 135.

Part 2: The YP⁴ participants

The second part of this report presents a profile and circumstances of YP⁴ participants for the twelve months prior to entry to the trial. We place the YP⁴ participants in the context of Victorians and Australians aged 18 to 35 years experiencing homelessness and unemployment, and the broader population.

The information presented here draws on data from three sources:

- Centrelink administrative data which includes data for 399 participants;
- Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) with data for the 148 participants who used a SAAP service; and
- YP⁴ zero-month interviews which includes data for the 135 participants who completed interviews.

Reflecting the objectives of the trial, we report on participants':

- accommodation;
- employment, income, education and training;
- use of community services;
- health and wellbeing; and
- community connectedness.

The Centrelink administrative data is our most complete data set. Findings from NDCA data reflect only those participants (36%) who used SAAP services in the period and are relevant only for participants' accommodation. Findings from the zero-month interviews are presented in each of the following sections, and are our only data sources regarding the health and wellbeing of participants and their community connectedness. While the response rate for the zero-month interviews was 33 per cent, the comparability of this sample with all YP⁴ participants allows us to have reasonable confidence in these findings.

The outcome evaluation will pay attention to changes over time, and to any differences in outcomes between the group receiving joined up services (J group) and the group receiving standard services (S group). To check for differences at the time of entry to the trial, we analysed data by group assignment, and also by gender and site (Central Melbourne, Bendigo, Frankston and Cheltenham). Only those differences which were testable and statistically significant at a confidence level of 95% are reported.

Profile of YP⁴ participants

Once recruitment into the trial was finalised, we compared the YP⁴ participants with the broader population of young people experiencing homelessness and unemployment. To do this, we used the socio-demographic profile of this population at both an Australian and Victorian level published in our *Benchmark Report* (Grace et al. 2005). The YP⁴ participants, drawn from Central Melbourne, Bendigo, Cheltenham and Frankston, cannot be seen as representative of the broader Australian or Victorian population of homeless jobseekers. However, this profile shows that they are reasonably similar to that broader population, meaning that our findings may be cautiously generalised.

We compared the J and S group participants with each other using their socio-demographic characteristics. This comparison is important, as any significant differences between the two groups must be considered as a possible explanation for differences in outcomes. The next outcome evaluation report of the YP⁴ trial will discuss the extent to which any differences in outcomes between the two groups are the result of joining up services. Random allocation to the groups should mean that the combination of known and unknown characteristics of the people in the two groups balance each other out in terms of likelihood of better or worse outcomes. However, systematic differences between the two groups must be considered in explaining any differences in outcomes. Table 2.1 presents these comparisons.

Table 2.1: Comparison of key characteristics of YP^d participants with Australian and Victorian estimates for young people experiencing homelessness and unemployment

Characteristic	Australian estimates ¹⁰	Victorian estimates	All participants (n = 414)	J group (n = 228)	S group (n = 186)
Gender					
Male	59% - 69%	57% - 66%	65%	71%	57%
Female	31% - 41%	34% - 44%	35%	29%	43%
ATSI status¹¹					
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	12%	4%	5%	7%	2%
Not stated/missing			6%	5%	8%
Ex offender status					
Ex offender	20%	19%	26%	32%	19%
Not stated/missing			15%	14%	15%
Education level achieved					
Year 11 or below	60%	58% - 60%	77%	80%	73%
Above Year 11			15%	14%	16%
Not stated/ missing			8%	6%	11%
Age					
Mean age at entry (with range)			23 years (18-36)¹²	23 years (18-36)	23 years (18-35)
Program eligibility at entry¹³					
Intensive Support Customised Assistance (ISCA)			65%	65%	66%
Personal Support Program (PSP)			21%	22%	20%
Job Placement Employment Training (JPET)			15%	14%	16%

Source: YP^d research database and Grace et al. 2005

¹⁰ Australian and Victorian estimates of young homeless job seekers were calculated for the *Benchmark Report* (Grace et al. 2005). For more information please see this report.

¹¹ Disclosure of ex-offender and ATSI status to Centrelink is voluntary, and both may be under reported.

¹² Please note one participant was aged 36 at the time of entry but was allowed to remain in the study as they had received an SMS from DEWR inviting their participation.

¹³ Participants can be eligible for more than one program at a time.

Compared with national and state population estimates for young people experiencing homelessness and unemployment, YP⁴ participants are similar in terms of gender and Indigenous status. However, YP⁴ participants are more likely to be ex-offenders and have lower levels of educational attainment than this population generally. These characteristics identify the YP⁴ participants as particularly disadvantaged, even among people who are both homeless and unemployed.

The average age of YP⁴ participants at entry to the trial was 23 years (range: 18-36 years, n=413). Although the upper age limit of 35 is high for a 'young' homeless jobseeker, 51 per cent of participants were 21 or under at entry, and 74 per cent were 24 or under at entry, making the participants quite overall.

Sixty-five per cent of participants were eligible for ISCA from the Job Network, while 21 per cent of participants were eligible for PSP, and 15 per cent of participants were eligible for JPET. Generally, it is the most disadvantaged of jobseekers that are eligible for ISCA. People participating in PSP and JPET are understood to face significant personal barriers to employment, and time is allocated to addressing and overcoming these before they are expected to look for work. Confirming eligibility for ISCA, JPET and/or PSP is important for YP⁴ participants, as these are among the programs being joined up in the service delivery component of the trial.

There are some differences between S and J groups. J group participants are more likely to be male, ex-offenders, and identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. J group participants had lower levels of educational achievement than S group participants. Participants' program eligibility at entry to the trial did not differ between groups. While randomisation will produce apparent differences between groups, and these differences are expected to be balanced by unknown characteristics, our analysis indicates that the differences reported above are greater than could be expected by chance. This raises the question of the extent to which the groups are comparable for future analysis of differences in outcomes, and to what extent future differences are attributable to differences in the way the two groups received their services. In general, J group could be seen as more disadvantaged than S group. In this situation, if J group has better outcomes than S group this would be a particularly convincing result. When we analyse future results, we will use appropriate statistical methods to explore apparent differences, taking account of the differences between the groups, and we will report these analyses in detail in order that findings can be interpreted with confidence.

Circumstances of YP⁴ participants

We examined a great deal of data in relation to participants' circumstances in the twelve months prior to entering the trial. In the following sections, we present details about their accommodation, employment, income, education and training, use of community services, health and wellbeing, and community connectedness.

Accommodation

This section presents and discusses information about the security/stability, affordability, appropriateness, and accessibility of participants' housing in the twelve months prior to entering the trial. The information presented draws on three data sources: the Centrelink administrative data, SAAP NDCA data and the annual interviews. As discussed in the data analysis section, all data were examined for differences by site, group and gender. Only differences that were statistically significant at a confidence level of 95% have been reported.

Stability of housing

Housing instability is a defining feature of homelessness, with people experiencing homelessness often moving frequently from one form of unstable, unsuitable or unaffordable housing to another. In the following pages we report on Centrelink's 'unreasonable to live at home' category; participants' number of moves in the past year; their use of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program services; rent types and sharer status; reasons for leaving past accommodation; current accommodation at the time of interview; duration of stay; and expected stay at current accommodation.

Unreasonable to live at home

A young person's Youth Allowance payments are based on both the young person's and their parental income. However, if a young person qualifies as independent, they receive the full rate of Youth Allowance regardless of parental income. A young person may be considered independent if they earn over a certain amount in a twelve-month period or are married.

A young person may also be considered independent if it is unreasonable for them to live at home. To qualify the young person (and a third party) must provide information that demonstrates:

extreme family breakdown (other than normal parent/adolescent conflict); or that there is a serious risk to their physical or mental well being due to violence, sexual abuse or other similar circumstance if they continue to live in the parental home; or their parent(s) can't provide a suitable home as they don't have stable accommodation (Centrelink, n.d.)¹⁴.

Data from the Centrelink administrative system showed that 34 per cent (n=399) of YP⁴ participants were assessed as 'unreasonable to live at home' at some time prior to entering YP⁴. This is much higher than the level of this assessment for Victorian Youth Allowance recipients in general which stands at 10 per cent¹⁵. Women were more likely to have been assessed as 'unreasonable to live at home' compared with men (50%, n=137 and 26%, n=262 respectively), as were S group participants compared with J group participants (42%, n=182 and 28%, n=217 respectively).

Number of moves in the past twelve months

We had two data sources for assessing how often participants had moved in the past twelve months - Centrelink data and our own interviews. As discussed in Part 1 (see Figure 1.3, page 24), 77 per cent of participants had nine months or more of Centrelink data. As well as average number of moves for these participants, we include details for those for who had less data.

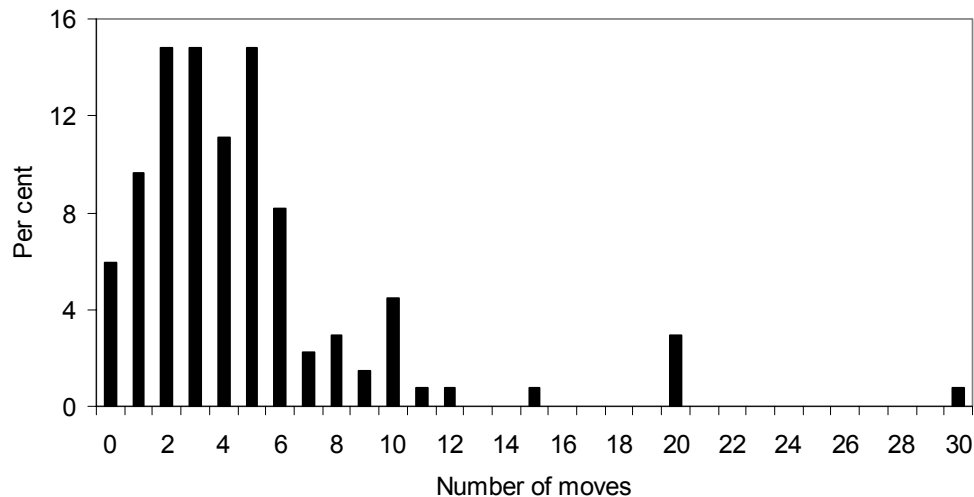
Participants with nine months or more of data informed Centrelink of an average of 2.6 moves (n=306, range: 0-9 moves). While we believe that the mean presented for those with 9 months or more data is the most accurate indicator of the number of moves made using Centrelink data, we also calculated the number of moves made by participants with less than 9 months of data. Participants with up to three months of Centrelink data reported moving an average of once during this time period (n=25, range: 0-4 moves); those with between three and six months of data reported moving an average of 2.4 times in this period (n=28, range: 0-5 moves); and those with between six and nine months of data reported moving an average of 2.9 times in this period (n=40, range: 0-9 moves).

¹⁴ This requirement, when met, means that young people are homeless, as defined in the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994*.

¹⁵ This rate was cited by the relevant Centrelink Officer to YP⁴ staff

We expected that moves disclosed to Centrelink would be an underestimate of this important indicator of housing instability, and in our interviews we asked about the number of moves in the past twelve months. These findings can be seen in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: The number of moves made by YP⁴ participants in the past twelve months



Source: YP⁴ zero-month interviews (n = 131)

While a few participants had no moves or one move in the past twelve months, most (64%) had moved between two and six times¹⁶. The median number of moves made in the past twelve months was 4 with a range of 0 to 30. The range of responses, and in particular the outliers, suggest that this question was understood differently by respondents, with some counting all moves during periods of sleeping rough and others not doing so.

Use of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

SAAP services provide support to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness including women and children escaping domestic violence. Of YP⁴'s 414 participants, 148 (36%) used a SAAP service in the twelve months prior to entry to the trial. These YP⁴ participants received a slightly higher number of support periods than expected¹⁷, at an average of 2.8 support periods per person compared with the national and state average of 1.7 support periods per person (AIHW 2006). However, most support periods (44%) for YP⁴ participants were for less than one day.

¹⁶ A number of participants gave a lower number of moves than suggested by the types of accommodation they had stayed in the past 12 months, and responses to this question were recoded to incorporate the higher number of moves where incongruent information was reported. Eighteen per cent of participants' responses were recoded.

¹⁷ A support period is the period of time a client receives ongoing support from the service. The support period commences when the client begins to receive support from the SAAP service. The support period is considered to finish when the relationship between the client and the service ends.

Usually there are more women than men in the SAAP data collection (59.5% of all SAAP clients were women and 40.5% were men¹⁸), in part because domestic violence services are included in the collection. In the case of YP⁴ participants there were more support periods for men (67%) than women (33%). This finding reflects the gender distribution of YP⁴ participants (see Table 2.1), which in turn reflects the eligibility criteria and its focus on people who were assessed by Centrelink as available for employment. Those who were receiving Parenting Payments were not eligible to participate. It is reasonable to assume that the SAAP data collection would include women receiving Parenting Payments, who were not eligible for YP⁴ participation.

Reflecting the age bracket of YP⁴ participants, a majority of support periods (76%) were for participants under 25 years of age. This is higher than the number of all SAAP clients under 25 years of age (33%), but is consistent with the age profile of YP⁴ participants.

According to figures from Centrelink, five percent of YP⁴ participants identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI). However in only two per cent of support periods YP⁴ participants identified as ATSI.

Eligibility for Newstart or Youth Allowance was one of the entry criteria for YP⁴. Almost all YP⁴ participants who used SAAP services in the twelve months prior to their entry into the trial were receiving a government benefit (89% of support periods after support¹⁹). Most support periods were for participants on either Newstart or Youth Allowance (81% after support) however five per cent of support periods involved participants receiving Disability Support Pension (after support) and three per cent for Parenting Payment (after support).

¹⁸ See Table 4.1 of the *Homeless people in SAAP: SAAP national data collection annual report 2004-2005*.

¹⁹ After support refers to the circumstances of the person at the end of a support period.

Like the SAAP clients in general, advice and information was the main form of support that the YP⁴ participants used. Apart from SAAP/CAP accommodation and emotional support, YP⁴ participants were similar to the general SAAP clients in the forms of support they accessed. YP⁴ participants' main reasons for seeking assistance from SAAP services are shown in Table 2.2, with Australian SAAP users also shown for comparison.

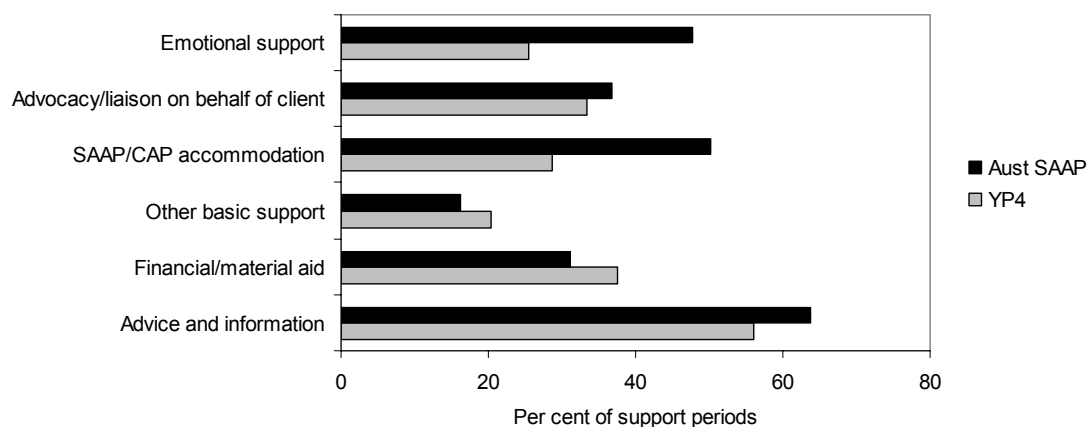
Table 2.2: YP⁴ participants' main reasons for seeking assistance from SAAP services

Main reason for seeking assistance	YP ⁴ participants	SAAP Australia population
Financial difficulty	17%	12%
Eviction/asked to leave	14%	10%
Relationship/family breakdown	9%	9%
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	7%	6%
Timeout from family/other situation	6%	6%
Emergency accommodation ended	5%	2%
Domestic violence	4%	21%
Recent arrival with no other means of support	3%	5%
Interpersonal conflicts	3%	3%
Other	7%	6%

Source: YP⁴ SAAP NDCA data (n = 148) and AIHW 2006

The 36 per cent of YP⁴ participants who accessed SAAP services in the 2005/06 financial year received a range of supports from those services. The most common forms of support are summarised in Figure 2.2, with the general profile of SAAP supports for the whole of Australia included for comparison purposes.

Figure 2.2: SAAP support provided to YP⁴ participants compared with all SAAP clients 2004-05



Source: YP⁴ SAAP NDCA data (n = 148) and AIHW 2006

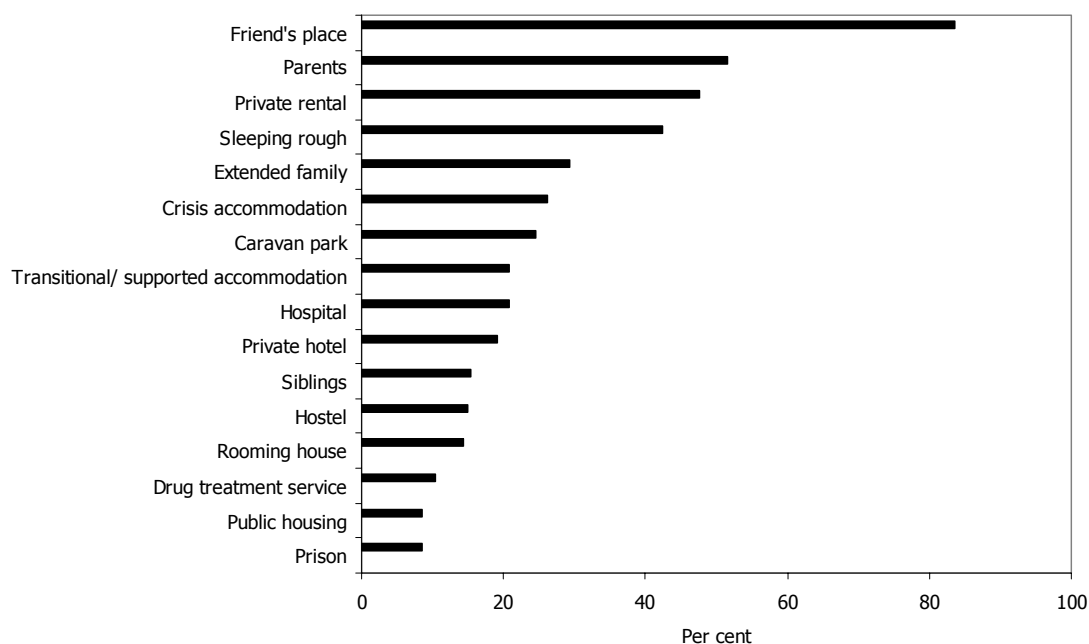
YP⁴ participants were less likely than SAAP users in general to be seeking support from SAAP because of domestic or family violence (4% of support periods for YP⁴ participants compared with 21% of all SAAP support periods²⁰). Financial difficulty was more common among YP⁴ participants than SAAP service users in general. Being evicted or asked to leave was also a more common reason for seeking assistance among YP⁴ participants. No significant differences between J and S groups were evident.

Reflecting the eligibility requirements for YP⁴, only ten support periods with YP⁴ participants (2%) involved a child, compared with approximately 45 per cent²¹ among SAAP users across Australia.

Accommodation types in the past twelve months

As expected, interviews revealed that participants had stayed in a wide range of accommodation types in the past twelve months. This can be seen in Figure 2.3²².

Figure 2.3: YP⁴ participants' accommodation types in the twelve months prior to interview



Source: YP⁴ zero-month interviews

²⁰ See Table 5.4 from the *Homeless people in SAAP: SAAP national data collection annual report 2004-2005*.

²¹ See pages xvii and page 40 in the *Homeless people in SAAP: SAAP national data collection annual report 2004-2005*.

²² Some participants did not respond to all questions concerning stays in each accommodation type. Valid cases varied from 116 to 128.

Eighty-four per cent of participants who were interviewed had stayed with friends, 52 per cent had stayed with parents, 48 per cent had stayed in private rental, and 42 per cent had slept rough²³. Participants were more likely to have slept rough in the past twelve months than to have stayed in crisis accommodation. Nine per cent of participants interviewed had been in prison in the past twelve months, while 10 per cent had been in a drug treatment service²⁴.

S group participants (38% of 76) were more likely to have stayed with extended family than J group participants (16% of 50). Some gender differences emerged in participants' accommodation patterns. Men (91% of 69) were more likely than women (75% of 59) to have stayed with friends, and to have slept rough (52% to 30%²⁵).

Rent types and sharer status

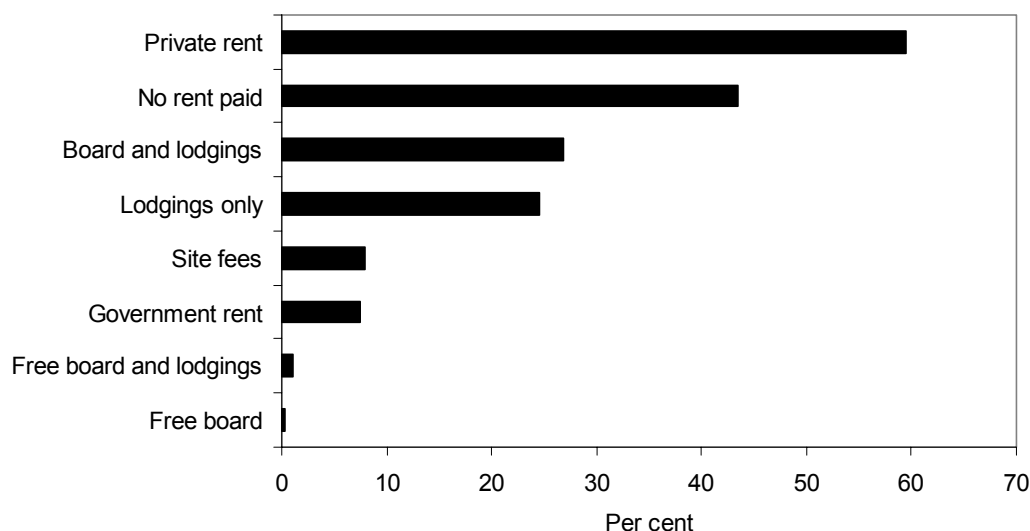
While the Centrelink system does not record type of accommodation in the same way as our annual interviews, the system does record the type of rent paid and the share status of participants. Figure 2.4 shows the percentage of participants with periods of paying each type of rent in the twelve months prior to entering the trial²⁶.

²³ The number of respondents varied from 125 to 128.

²⁴ The numbers of respondents were 117 and 116 respectively.

²⁵ The number of women responding to the question was 56.

²⁶ Please note that we did not always have a full year of data about all participants, and these data should be taken as indicative of participants' accommodation types.

Figure 2.4: YP^d participants' type of rent paid in the twelve months prior to trial

Source: YP^d Centrelink administrative data (n = 397)

As can be seen, 60 per cent of participants had paid private rent (for private rental housing); 44 per cent had periods of not paying rent; and more than 50 per cent had periods of paying either board and lodgings or lodgings only. Less than ten per cent had paid government rent for public housing.

Data from the Centrelink system shows that 72 per cent of participants (n=399) had stayed in shared accommodation in the twelve months prior to entry, while 48 per cent had stayed in accommodation by themselves. Twenty-two per cent of participants had been living with parents in the twelve months prior to entry. The only difference that emerged was that women were more likely than men to have paid private rent in the twelve months prior to entry (68%, n=137 to 55%, n=262 respectively).

Reasons for leaving past accommodation

Participants were asked in the annual interviews why they had left the last two places they had stayed. Responses were extremely varied, and the top ten reasons are given in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: YP^d participants' reasons for leaving accommodation

Reasons for leaving accommodation	Per cent of participants ²⁷
Conflict	23%
Found other accommodation	16%
Family conflict/family issues	13%
Asked to leave/evicted/kicked out/had to leave	12%
Short term/temporary/guest	11%
Affordability	10%
No room/not enough space/over crowded	9%
Lease ended/house sold/house condemned	8%
Relationship break up (romantic)	8%
Moved elsewhere	8%
Abuse/domestic violence/safety	7%
Better work/better study opportunities	7%
Other ²⁸	28.1%

Source: YP^d zero-month interviews ($n = 135$)

Reasons such as 'no room', 'short term' and 'found other accommodation' are indicative of homelessness, as people move from one short term option to another. Conflict and relationship issues were frequent themes among participant responses, with 42 per cent of participants reporting one or more of: conflict, family conflict, family issues, relationship break-up, abuse, domestic violence, and safety issues.

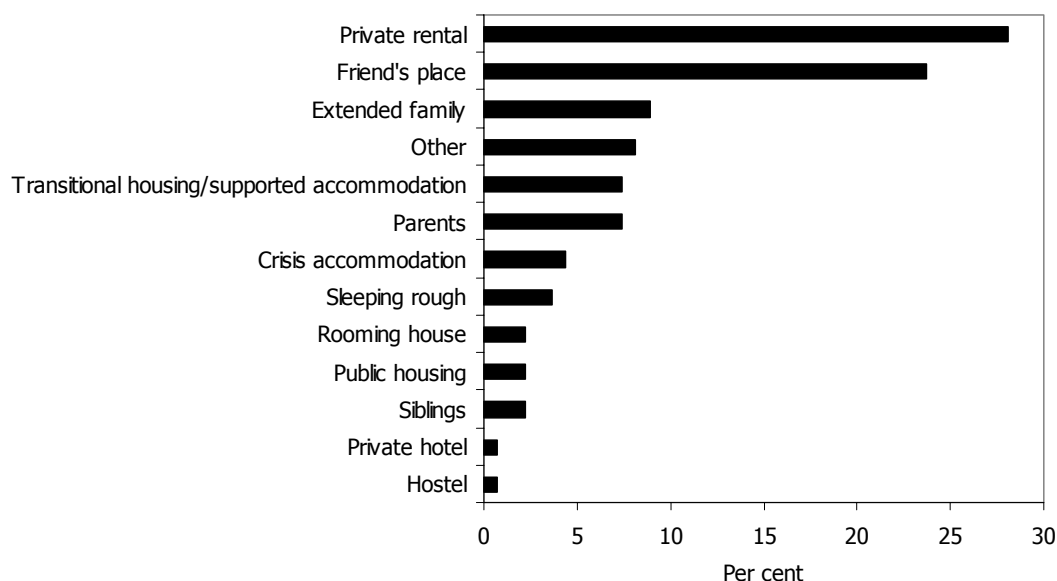
²⁷ Percentages do not total 100 as participants gave multiple reasons.

²⁸ Other reasons for leaving previous accommodation included (in participants' own words): to move regions or interstate; to be close to children; turned 18/turned 16 and DHS moved on (probably exiting State care, possibly without adequate transition arrangements); friends needed emotional/physical space; not enough work; no support from family; mother died; reminded us of our grief in losing our son; father doesn't accept that I am gay; wanted to live alone; felt depressed; didn't like it; young family – too much babysitting; don't remember.

Current accommodation at time of interview

In our interviews, we asked participants about their current accommodation. 'Current accommodation' is a point-in-time indication whereas 'Previous twelve months' accommodation, shown earlier in Figure 2.3, includes all accommodation types used in a twelve-month period. Participants' accommodation at the time of interview is shown below in Figure 2.5²⁹.

Figure 2.5: YP^d participants' accommodation type at the time of interview



Source: YP^d zero-month interviews (n = 135)

Twenty-eight per cent of participants who were interviewed were in private rental, 23 per cent were staying with friends, and eight per cent were with extended family. There were differences between participants' accommodation types in the past twelve months and accommodation at the time of interview. The lower proportion of participants staying with parents and sleeping rough at the time of interview perhaps indicates that many participants used these options as short term stop gaps, increasing their proportion when a full year is included. None of the participants interviewed were staying in prison, caravan parks, drug treatment services or in hospitals at the time of interview.

²⁹ Other included couch surfing, boyfriend's place, boyfriend's parents' place, share accommodation not further specified, tent in backyard of friend's place, between my mum's and friends and my brothers (going on for four months); at mum's now 4 days, living between houses – mothers and friends.

Duration of stay

On the whole, participants had not stayed long in their current accommodation. Sixty per cent of all participants who were interviewed had been in their current accommodation for three months or less at the time of interview, while only 24 per cent had been in their current accommodation for more than six months. The mean number of days participants had been in their current accommodation was 178 days (median: 84, range: 1-2190 days) with a standard deviation of 335 days. Given the variability of these data, responses were grouped and the frequencies examined. No differences were found between J and S group, across sites or between genders.

Along with tracking participants' current address, the Centrelink system records (by default) the duration of stay at each address. Data from the Centrelink system was remarkably consistent with the data collected in the annual interviews. The average duration of stay at any given accommodation in the twelve months prior to entry was 181 days (median: 84 days, n=1399 stays, range: 1-5215 days). Consistent with the interview data, 54 per cent of stays were for three months or less.

Expected stay at current accommodation

Participants' lack of stable housing is further reflected in how long participants expected to stay in their current accommodation. At the time of interview:

- Thirty-one per cent of participants expected to stay for three months or less.
- A further four per cent of participants expected to stay in their current accommodation for less than six months.
- Only 25 per cent of participants anticipated that their current accommodation would be ongoing.
- Fifteen per cent indicated either they did not know how long they could stay at their current accommodation or that they could not stay long.

Affordability

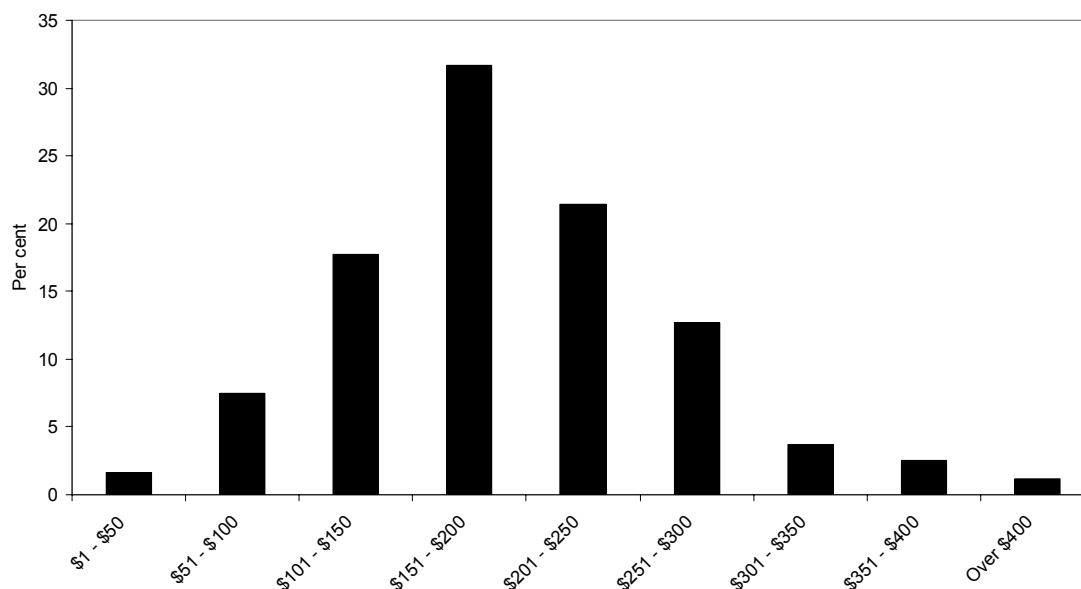
Thirteen per cent (n = 133) of participants rated their accommodation at interview as unaffordable, while 74 per cent rated their current accommodation as affordable. This level of unaffordability contributes to the instability of housing.

Amount spent on accommodation per fortnight

Our data includes two indicators of the amounts that participants spent on accommodation. First, we present findings from the Centrelink rent data (see Figure 2.6), then we present findings from the question about amount spent on accommodation in the zero-month interviews (see Figure 2.7).

The amount of rent paid by participants varied greatly over time and among participants. Many participants who paid rent had periods of time when they paid no rent (44%, see Figure 2.4). When participants were paying rent, their rents ranged from \$20 to \$1214 per fortnight³⁰. Of the 324 participants who paid rent according to Centrelink records, their median fortnightly rent was \$192.27 (mean: \$201.28). This is much less than the average fortnightly rent paid by rental assistance recipients for the 2004-05 financial year: \$278 according to the ABS (2006a). No differences in the average amount of rent paid were found by gender or between S and J groups. The variability in average fortnightly rents is illustrated in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.6: The distribution of average amounts of rent paid per fortnight by YP^d participants

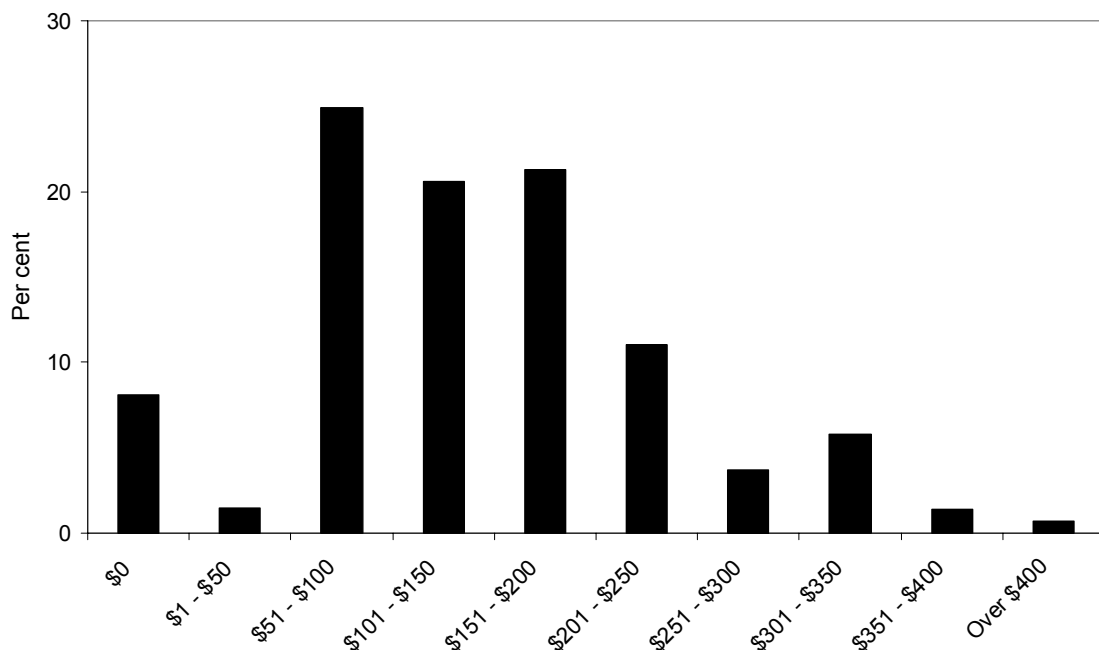


Source: YP^d Centrelink administrative data (n = 324)

³⁰ Average fortnightly rent was calculated by summing the total amount of rent paid (excluding periods of non rent payment) and dividing by the number of days' worth of rent data available for each participant. This gave a daily average of rent paid which was then multiplied by 14 to give a fortnightly average. An overall average was then calculated across all participants using these participant averages.

At interview, participants were asked how much they were spending on accommodation each fortnight. Not all of the respondents to this question reported paying for accommodation. Eleven reported that they spent \$0 on accommodation. The remaining 124 reported spending a mean of \$168.32 per fortnight or \$84.16 per week on accommodation, ranging from \$40 to \$450 per fortnight. This average at the time of trial entry is lower than that given by Centrelink records for the twelve months prior to trial entry. The distribution is shown in Figure 2.7.

Figure 2.7: The distribution of amount spent on accommodation per fortnight by YP^d participants



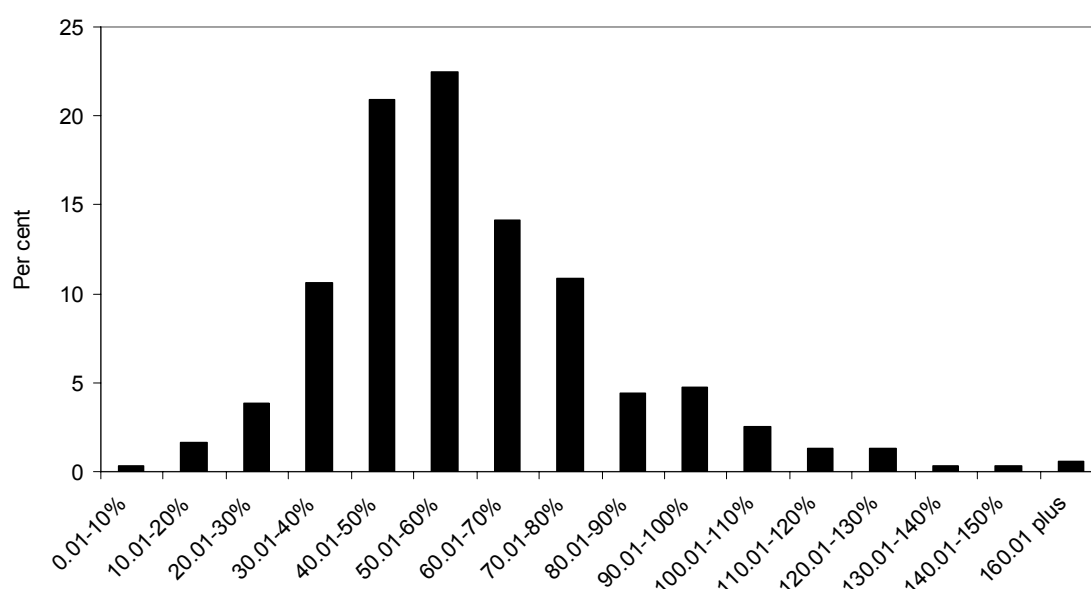
Source: YP^d zero-month interviews (n = 135)

Figure 2.7 shows the eleven participants paying no rent at time of entry to the trial. Consistent with this, Centrelink data reported earlier (see Figure 2.6) showed that 44 per cent of participants had periods of paying no rent during the twelve months prior to trial entry. It seems that participants' housing may be suitable, but sustaining it is unaffordable, or it is affordable but unsuitable for some reason.

Proportion of income spent on rent

The proportion of participants' income spent on rent was alarming. Using Centrelink data for average fortnightly incomes³¹ (benefit payment, Commonwealth Rent Assistance and income from employment) and average fortnightly rent, we were able to examine the proportion of income spent on rent. In the twelve months prior to entry, when participants were paying rent, they were spending a median of 55 per cent of their income (range: 7% to 289%). Only six per cent were spending less than 30 per cent of their income on rent, while six per cent were spending more than their total income. These findings are shown in Figure 2.8. No differences between groups or genders were found.

Figure 2.8: The proportion of income spent on rent by YP^d participants in the twelve months prior to trial entry



Source: YP^d Centrelink administrative data (n = 320)

³¹ Average fortnightly income was calculated by summing participants' total income from benefits (benefit plus Commonwealth Rent Assistance) and dividing by the number of days of benefit data we received for each participant to give a daily average. This was then multiplied by 14 to give a fortnightly average. The same process was followed to generate average fortnightly income from employment. However, when the days of benefit data was smaller than the days of employment income data (which happened in four instances) the total income from employment was divided instead by the days of employment income data. This was then multiplied by 14 to give a fortnightly average. These averages were then added. The average amount of fortnightly rent for those periods when rent was paid was then divided by this average fortnightly income measure to give the average proportion of income spent on rent per fortnight. Because this proportion includes only periods when rent was paid, and because it assumes that participants' incomes were distributed evenly over time, it may overestimate the proportion of income spent on rent.

Financial support to maintain housing

A further indicator of the affordability of housing is whether participants needed financial support to maintain their housing. Of the 133 participants who answered this interview question, 43 per cent had received financial support to maintain their housing in the twelve months prior to interview, with 33 per cent of those receiving assistance indicating this needed to be repaid³². Much of the financial support received was for bond or rent (42% and 37% respectively). Other forms of support included: Centrelink crisis payments and advances (9%), loans not further specified (7%), assistance with crisis accommodation payments (5%), and food, bills, money and gifts (4%). Other responses included not being charged rent, money for petrol to move, food vouchers, white goods, and payment for a week's stay in a caravan park.

Appropriateness and accessibility

Suitability of present living arrangements

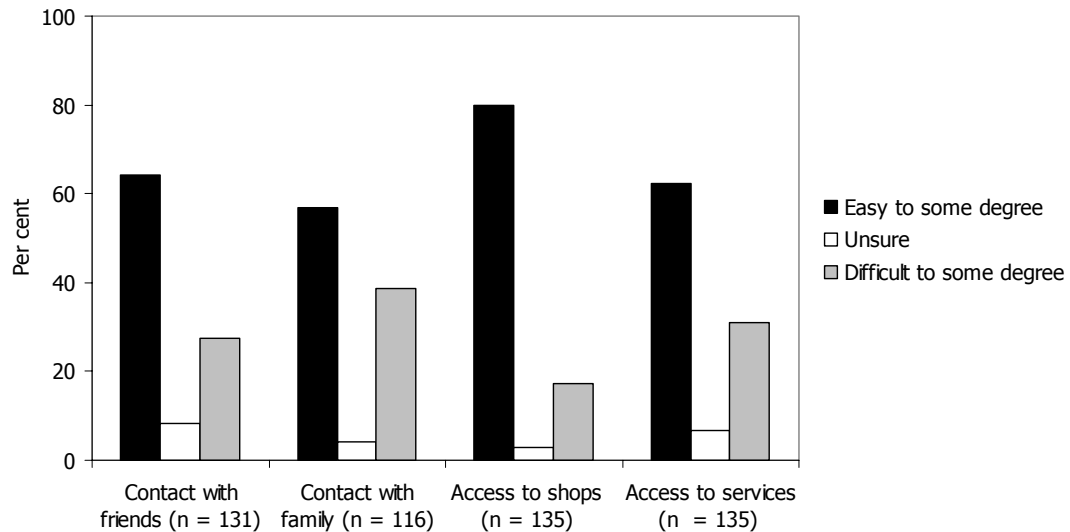
Participants were asked in the interview to rate the suitability of their present living arrangements. More than half of the 133 participants who were interviewed (58%) rated their present situation as suitable to some degree. However, just over one quarter of participants who were interviewed (26%) were in accommodation that they rated as unsuitable to some degree.

Ease of contact with friends and family, ease of access to shops and services

Participants were asked how easy it was to see friends and family and to access shops and services from their current accommodation. These findings can be seen in Figure 2.9.

³² The number of participants who reported receiving financial assistance was 67.

Figure 2.9: YP^d participants' ratings of ease of contact with friends and family and ease of access to shops and services



Source: YP^d zero-month interviews

A majority of participants who were interviewed reported it was either very easy or easy to see friends (64%) and family (57%). Most participants also reported it was either very easy or easy to access the shops (80%) and services (62%) they needed. However, for many it was either not easy or really difficult to see friends (28%), see family (39%), access shops (17%), or access services (31%).

Accommodation aspirations

When asked about their ideal accommodation, participants generally responded by describing elements of their desired accommodation. The 134 participants who responded to this question mentioned a total of 334 elements of their ideal accommodation, and all of these are included in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: YP^d participants' accommodation aspirations

Elements of participants' ideal accommodation	Per cent of participants
Specified number of bedrooms (1 to 3)	31%
Flat/unit/apartment	29%
Close to shops/services/public transport/amenities/school/jobs	18%
Own home/own accommodation/permanent accommodation	22%
House	18%
Live alone	16%
Private rental	13%
In specific area (including: good area, interstate, not a certain place)	12%
Affordability	10%
Share with friends/siblings	10%
Close to town/city	10%
Backyard/garden	7%
Happy with current situation	7%
Share accommodation	7%
Close to family/relatives/friends/children	4%
Room for children/with children	4%
Away from drugs/drug culture/drug addicts	3%
Room for pet	2%
Other ³³	17%

Source: YP^d zero-month interviews

Participants' ideal accommodation was modest. Typically, they wanted a specific number of bedrooms; a unit, flat or house; for their accommodation to be close to services, transport and jobs; and for it to be their own. Only seven per cent of participants³⁴ indicated they were happy with their current arrangements.

³³ Other included (in participants' own words): with someone else; free accommodation; housing commission; I would like to be with family but they don't want me; living at home; place with partner; stable accommodation; where bills are inclusive; villa in Spain; with garage; safe; near beach; not a rooming house; self contained living space; transitional housing; living with people I trust; more conveniences; stability; ½ acre; inside bathroom and toilet; quiet; ground level flat due to injuries.

³⁴ One participant did not answer this question.

Summary of accommodation findings

Just over one third of participants left their family or guardian's home under extremely difficult circumstances such as extreme family disruption, violence and sexual abuse, or parents or guardian experiencing unstable accommodation.

Participants' housing during the twelve months prior to entering YP⁴ was particularly unstable. Participants moved frequently (an average of five times according to interview data and three times according to Centrelink data), with substantial variation in the number of moves made. Participants commonly stayed with friends, in private rental, slept rough, or stayed with immediate and extended family. More than a few had been in prison and/or in a drug treatment service in the past twelve months. Many participants had short stays at previous accommodation and did not expect to stay long in the accommodation they were in at the time of interview.

The annual interviews showed that conflict is a significant reason for leaving accommodation, as are finding other accommodation, being evicted or asked to leave, that the accommodation had been short term, and affordability. These findings are consistent with a pattern of participants moving frequently between short-term options.

Participants were paying a median of 55 per cent of their income on rent. Over half had received some financial assistance to maintain their housing in the past twelve months. Thirteen per cent of participants rated their current accommodation as unaffordable, and 26 per cent rated it as unsuitable. For many it was either not easy or really difficult to see friends (28%), see family (39%), access shops (17%), or access services (31%).

Despite the demonstrated homelessness of this group there was quite low utilisation of SAAP services.

When asked about their accommodation aspirations, participants' responses were modest. Typically they specified a certain number of bedrooms, either a flat or house, for their accommodation to be close to services, transport and employment, and for it to be their own.

Employment, income, education and training

Homelessness makes it difficult to obtain and sustain employment, and unemployment makes already vulnerable people more susceptible to homelessness. As discussed in the *Benchmark Report* (Grace et al. 2005), low levels of education and training among people experiencing homelessness act as a barrier to generating adequate and sustainable income from employment.

This section presents information about participants' past employment, the type of work currently sought, and future employment aspirations. Data from Centrelink about employment and income from employment, breaches and suspensions of benefits, benefit types in the period and activities undertaken are presented. We also present findings about income, education, training (completed to date and planned for the future) and activities undertaken to increase employability.

Information about employment is presented first, followed by Centrelink benefits. The next section looks at education and training. As detailed previously, analyses were conducted by group (J and S), by gender and by site (Central Melbourne, Bendigo, Frankston and Cheltenham). Differences are reported only where they were testable and statistically significant at a confidence level of 95%.

Employment

Previous employment

Data from Centrelink indicates that 50 per cent of the 399 participants had been in paid employment in the twelve months prior to entering the trial. Some people will have ceased benefits because of gaining employment and these people are not captured in these data. The 200 participants for whom the number of employers had been recorded had an average of 1.8 employers in that period (range: 1-7).

Although only 50 per cent of the participants had been employed at some time in the twelve months prior to entering the trial, the vast majority of participants who were interviewed (93%) had been employed at some point in the past. Most participants listed multiple types of employment, and all of these responses are summarised in Table 2.5. Proportions do not total 100 per cent because participants have had numerous employment experiences in the past.

Table 2.5: YP^d participants' past employment

Previous employment	Per cent of participants
Hospitality (including chef, food services, bar work)	44%
Retail/sales/cashier/customer service	42%
Labouring	32%
Factory work	23%
Trades and skilled manual work	19%
Farming/agriculture/meat and fishing industry/fruit picking	19%
Nursing/aged care/personal care/disability	11%
Cleaning/lawn mowing/gardening/home maintenance	11%
Secretarial/administration/office work/reception	8%
Apprenticeship or traineeship	7%
Call centre/telesales/telemarketing	5%
Driver (including forklift)	5%
Security	4%
Volunteering/charity work	4%
Entertainment (D.J., band, media, photography)	3%
Other ³⁵	21%

Source: YP^d zero-month interviews ($n = 126$)

Type of employment sought at present

Participants were typically looking for work similar to what they had done in the past.

Participants' responses are summarised in Table 2.6.

³⁵ Other responses included (in participants' own words): massage parlour, Work for the Dole, aromatherapy, paper delivery boy, casual work, subcontractor for council, youth ambassador, Community Jobs Program, lots of things, interpreter, assistant, home renovations.

Table 2.6: Types of employment currently sought by YP⁴ participants at the time of interview

Employment type currently sought	Per cent of participants
Anything	21%
Not looking for work	19%
Retail/ sales/customer service	18%
Hospitality	16%
Manual work	10%
Apprenticeship/traineeship	7%
Trade	7%
Disability services	5%
Casual	4%
Factory work	4%
Gardening/maintenance/cleaning	4%
Secretarial/administration/office work/reception	4%
Have a job	3%
Call centre/telemarketing	2%
Driver (including forklift)	2%
Beauty	2%
Security	2%
Own business	2%
Outdoor	2%
Information technology	2%
Auto industry	2%
Defence forces	2%
Unsure	2%
Other ³⁶	11%

Source: YP⁴ zero-month interviews (*n* = 135)

The most common response from participants was 'any kind of work'. This was followed by not looking for work. Nine participants gave specific reasons for not looking for work including illness, being unwell with pregnancy, his or her circumstances, having troubles, being a full time student, being a year 12 student or being covered by Workcover. Retail, customer service and hospitality were mentioned by many participants. Clearly, YP⁴ participants regard themselves as workers or potential workers.

³⁶ Other responses included (in participants' own words): massage or natural therapies, delivery work, part time work, full time work with job security, any job I have experience with, work with animals, away from trade, study aged care, further education, business, further study in fashion design/photography, music, travel agent, theatre production, anything that pays enough.

Barriers to employment

When asked about whether anything prevented or made it difficult to gain employment at present, 79 per cent of participants who were interviewed indicated that they experienced barriers to employment. Table 2.7 reports on 151 barriers cited by these 110 participants.

Table 2.7: Barriers identified by YP^d participants to gaining employment

Type of barrier	Per cent of participants
Transport (including: car, transport costs, car broke down, car registration, no drivers license)	30%
Accommodation (including: accommodation, homelessness, living in car, moving around, unstable living circumstances)	18%
Physical health (including: medical condition, illness, injury, stabbed, bad back, pregnancy, diabetes, health issues, effects of medication, pain, insomnia)	17%
Education/training/qualifications (including: lack of education, literacy skills, lack of qualifications, out of date)	14%
Mental health (including: agoraphobia, anxiety, anxiety attacks, depression, post traumatic stress disorder, bipolar, anger management)	11%
Experience and work history (including: experience, lack of work history, unstable work history ³⁷)	9%
Drug use (including: past/present drug use, drug abuse, treatment for drug addiction)	8%
Criminal history (including: criminal record, completing intensive correction order)	6%
Finances (including: training costs, wages due to age, financial hardship, Centrelink, money for courses, costs of transport)	6%
Confidence/shyness/stress	2%
Other ³⁸	14%

Source: YP^d zero-month interviews

³⁷ One participant explained that she had no work history for the past six years due to domestic violence (her previous partner did not allow her to work).

³⁸ Other responses included (in participants' own words): on call for casual work – need to be available, don't know many people in new area, everyday life, Christmas coming up, JNM – too long a process to gain material support for employment (for example, work shoes), no work around, not sure, location, access to internet, lack of tools, clean clothes, discrimination because of health condition, not much factory hand work, personal issues.

The most common barriers identified by participants were transport, accommodation (specifically homelessness), physical health, education and training and mental health issues. In answer to a separate question, just over a quarter (28%) of the 132 participants indicated that the location of their current accommodation was a barrier to gaining employment.

Increased employability

YP⁴ participants had engaged in a range of activities to increase their employability in the twelve months prior to interview. The proportion of participants engaging in these activities is shown in Figure 2.10^{39 40}.

Figure 2.10: YP⁴ participants' activities to increase their employability



Source: YP⁴ zero-month interviews

The activities most commonly undertaken included preparing a resume (89%), using services that provide links to employment opportunities (81%), and changing personal presentation (49%). On average, participants engaged in three activities, with four participants engaging in none of these and one engaging in eight.

³⁹ The number of respondents varies from 133 to 134.

⁴⁰ Other responses included: drug and alcohol counselling or treatment, counselling, moving, purchasing work specific clothing, for example boots, attempting to finish year 12, work safety certificates, reducing or stopping drug use, walked around and spoke to factories, health treatment, a new phone, OH&S course, anger management.

Employment aspirations

Upon entry to the trial, participants were asked to describe their ideal job. Participants' responses were extremely varied, yet generally modest as shown in Table 2.8.

Table 2.8: YP^d participants' employment aspirations

Employment aspirations	Per cent of participants
Hospitality	11%
Art (including sculpting/music/painting/teaching/media/writer/film)	11%
Childcare/work with children	11%
Beauty (including hair)	9%
Gardening/landscaping/nursery	8%
Own business/self employed	7%
Retail	6%
Defence forces/emergency services	6%
Trade of any sort	5%
Auto industry	5%
Unsure/anything	5%
IT (including web design/computers)	5%
Sports (including management, sales, commentator)	4%
Concreting/bricklaying/welding	3%
Own shop	3%
Finish VCE/further study	2%
Real estate	2%
Apprenticeship/traineeship	2%
Office reception/administration/clerical work	4%
Painting/decorating/interior design	2%
Engineering	2%
Forklift driver	2%
Subcontracting	1%
Tourism (under water diving tours)	1%
Factory work	1%
Archivist	1%
Driving trucks	1%
Long term prospects	1%
Flexible around childcare	1%
Tattooing	1%
Mr. Whippy van	1%
Air hostess	1%
Prime Minister	1%
Meat industry	1%
Business management	1%
Airport	1%
Accountant	1%
Teacher	1%
Window cleaning	1%
Storeman	1%
Woodwork	1%
Youth spokesperson	1%

Source: YP^d zero-month interviews (n = 132)

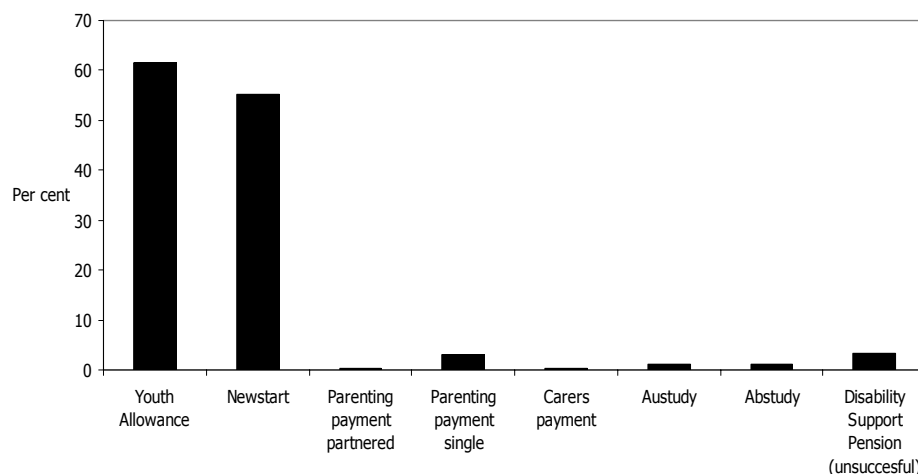
Income

Centrelink benefits

History of benefit types in the twelve months prior to entering trial

While being on either Newstart or Youth Allowance at time of entry to the trial was a requirement of entry, we were interested in examining the benefit histories of participants in the twelve months prior to entering the trial. Figure 2.11 shows the percentage of participants who had received each benefit type in the twelve months prior to entering YP^d.

Figure 2.11: The proportion of YP^d participants in receipt of different benefit types in the twelve months prior to trial entry



Source: YP^d Centrelink administrative data (n = 396)

As can be seen in Figure 2.11 participants were most commonly on Youth Allowance or Newstart, and clearly some had received both of these payments. However some participants had either been studying full time (those on Austudy or Abstudy) or had parenting or caring responsibilities, and been in receipt of the corresponding benefit types. Three per cent of participants had made unsuccessful applications for the Disability Support Pension. Women were more likely than men to have been on Youth Allowance (77%, n=136 to 53%, n=260). This is most likely attributable to the younger average age of women at entry to the trial (women: 22 years, range: 18-35; men: 24 years, range 18-35)⁴¹.

⁴¹ One participant was aged 36 years, but it is inappropriate for confidentiality reasons to identify the gender of this person.

Reasons for change in benefit status

We examined the reasons for changes in participants' benefit status. A total of 37 different reasons for change in benefit status were evident and the top 12 are shown in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9: Reasons for change in benefit status by YP^d participants in the twelve month prior to trial

Reasons for change in benefit status	Per cent of participants
Did not lodge form (automatic)	23%
Does not meet age requirements (automatic)	20%
Withdrawal/voluntary surrender	5%
Customer in prison	4%
Full-time employment, earned income not advised	3%
No dependent children (automatic)	2%
Other	2%
Departure/absence overseas temporary	1%
Full time employment – Working Credit balance is zero	1%
Under 18 – no exemption to studies	1%
Parental income and assets not provided	1%
Cancelled on benefit transfer	1%

Source: YP^d Centrelink administrative data (n = 399)

Table 2.9 shows that the reasons for a change in benefit status are largely administrative and linked to compliance with Centrelink's requirements. Working Credit is worthy of some further explanation. It aims to provide financial incentives for income support recipients to undertake paid work on a casual, part time or full time basis, which may provide opportunities for gaining permanent work in the future. Working Credit is a system that allows income support recipients to accrue points to minimise loss of a Centrelink payment upon commencing employment. Income support recipients can accrue up to 1000 points or credits so that up to the first \$1,000 earned does not affect their payments. Working Credit accrues at around 25 credits per week.

Men were more likely than women to change benefit status because of failure to lodge their forms (28%, n=262 and 13%, n=137 respectively).

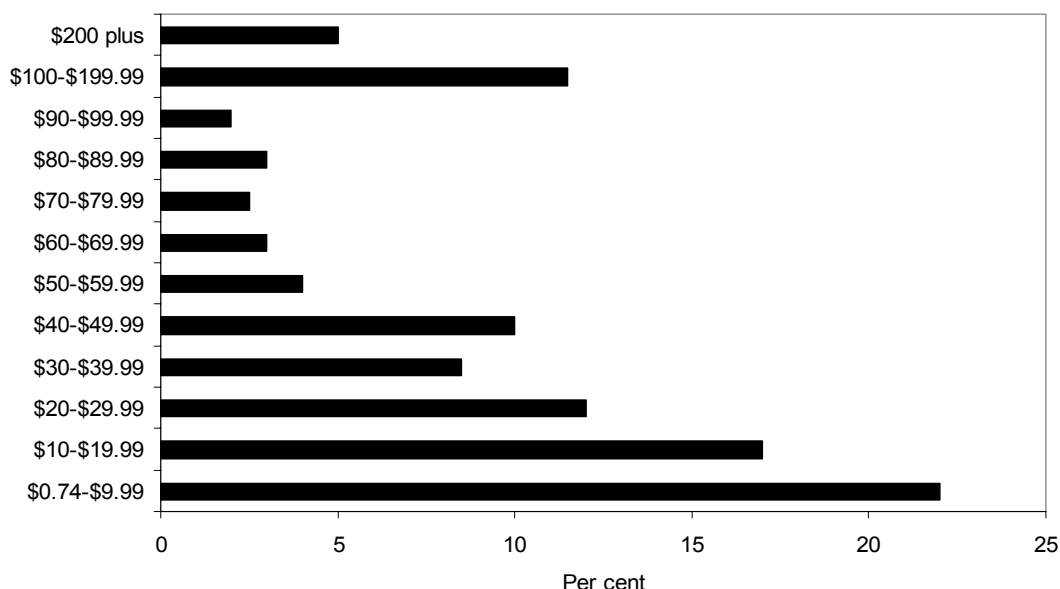
Income from Centrelink benefits

Centrelink provided us with the total benefits paid to participants in the twelve months prior to entry. This included both income from the eligible benefit type and Commonwealth Rent Assistance⁴². We calculated the average fortnightly income from Centrelink benefits for each participant over the course of the twelve months prior to entry⁴³. The median fortnightly income from Centrelink (including Commonwealth Rent Assistance) was \$304.18 per fortnight (mean: \$308.59, range \$128.86-\$768.42, n=375). This equates to a median annual income from Centrelink benefits of just \$7930.33 (mean: \$8045.36, range \$3359.58-\$20033.72, n=375).

Income from employment during the twelve months prior to entering the trial

Participants' average fortnightly income from employment varied dramatically. Some participants had regular earnings. Others had more sporadic periods of earnings, and earnings from different employers also varied greatly. The spread of participants' average fortnightly earnings is shown in Figure 2.12⁴⁴.

Figure 2.12: Average fortnightly earnings of YP^d participants



Source: YP^d Centrelink administrative data (n = 201)

⁴² This includes data only for the times when participants were receiving income support. It does not include earnings from employment.

⁴³ Average fortnightly income from Centrelink benefits was calculated by dividing the annual total given to us by Centrelink by the number of days of data we had for each participant to give a daily average income. This was then multiplied by 14 to give an average fortnightly income for each participant. An average (both mean and median were reported) across all participants was then calculated. Please note that participants with less than 90 days of benefit data were excluded from these estimates as receipt of crisis payments or an advance – both of which must be repaid, and about which we have no details – would have distorted estimates.

⁴⁴ Excludes participants without any earnings.

For those 201 participants who reported paid employment to Centrelink in the twelve months prior to entry, their median average earnings were \$29.17 per fortnight (mean \$56.78)⁴⁵. These average earnings ranged from \$0.74 to \$630.89.

Please note that Centrelink benefits decrease according to the amount of declared earnings from employment. For example, for recipients of Newstart Allowance, the first \$62 earned does not affect income support payments. However, if more than \$62 fortnightly is earned, income support payments then taper by 60 cents in the dollar. In 2005, the 'taper rate' was 70 cents in the dollar. Pension recipients and students have a higher threshold of allowable income from earnings of around \$120 per week before the fortnightly benefit payment is affected.

Income from employment as a proportion of total annual income

For those 201 participants in paid employment, earnings from employment accounted for, on average, 13 per cent of their total income (range: 0%-84%)⁴⁶.

Participants' total income (income from Centrelink benefits and paid employment)

Using the fortnightly averages already calculated for income from benefits and paid employment, we calculated participants' average total fortnightly income⁴⁷. Participants' median average income was \$328.62 (mean: \$334.43, range: \$133.93-\$795.94, n=375) per fortnight. This equates to a median total annual income of just \$8567.53 (mean: \$8719.09, range: \$3491.86-\$20751.41).

⁴⁵ Average fortnightly earnings were calculated by summing participants' income from employment to give a total. This was then divided by the number of days of benefit data we received for each participant to give a daily average. This was then multiplied by 14 to give a fortnightly average. However, in some instances the days of benefit data was smaller than the days of income from employment data. This occurred as participants had declared earnings in either eight weekly or annual blocks, but had come off benefits before the period of declared earnings had ended. In these four instances the total income from employment was divided instead by the days of employment income data. This was then multiplied by 14 to give a fortnightly average.

⁴⁶ The proportion of income from employment was calculated by using the raw data for each participant and dividing participants' actual annual income from employment (regardless of days of data) by their actual total income (again regardless of days of data) and multiplying by 100. This method was chosen over using average estimates because, as a proportion, it was much less susceptible to complications resulting from days of data received.

⁴⁷ Average fortnightly income was calculated by summing participants' total income from benefits (benefit plus Commonwealth Rent Assistance) and dividing by the number of days of benefit data we received for each participant to give a daily average. This was then multiplied by 14 to give a fortnightly average. The same process was undertaken in generating average fortnightly income from employment. However, when the days of benefit data was smaller than the days of income from employment data (which happened in four instances) the total income from employment was divided instead by the days of employment income data. This was then multiplied by 14 to give a fortnightly average. These averages were then added for each participant and an overall average across participants calculated. Please note that participants with less than 90 days of benefit data were excluded from these estimates as receipt of crisis payments or an advance – both of which must be repaid, and about which we do not have data – would have distorted estimates.

Breaches and suspensions

People in receipt of unemployment benefits, either Newstart or Youth Allowance, are required by Centrelink to demonstrate that they are actively looking for work or undertaking other approved activities. When these requirements are not met, the person may be breached, that is, have their payments reduced by a set percentage for a set period of time. The stated rationale for breaching is:

to ensure that unemployed payment recipients do all they can to find work or improve their employment prospects; and to ensure that social security payments only go to those who are genuinely unemployed. This is necessary to maintain the integrity of the welfare system and ultimately help job seekers to help themselves (Centrelink 2006).

There are two types of breaches that may be imposed: administrative and activity based. An administrative breach may be issued when the person fails, 'without good reason', to respond to requests from Centrelink or from a third party such as a Job Network Member. These requests may be to provide information or to attend a prearranged interview. An activity breach is imposed when a person fails to comply with the activity test. This may include failing to take part in a Work for the Dole activity or failing to attend a suitable job interview.

Administrative breaches result in a reduction of benefits by 16 per cent for a period of 13 weeks. The first activity breach results in a reduction of 18 per cent for 26 weeks, the second in a 24 per cent reduction for a 26 week period, while the third activity breach results in an eight week non-payment period.

Data received from Centrelink showed that 11 per cent of the 399 YP⁴ participants were breached in the twelve months prior to entering YP⁴. These 52 participants were breached an average of 1.2 times (range: 1-3). Forty-eight per cent of breaches were administrative while 52 per cent of breaches were activity based.

The most common reason for participants being breached was failure to attend an interview with their Job Network Member (44%, administrative breach). This was followed by failing to comply with the Job Search Plan (unsatisfactory attendance, 12%, activity breach), failing to comply with terms of a Job Search Plan (8%, activity breach) and delaying entering into a Job Search Plan with a Job Network Member (8%, activity breach). Participants were also breached for failing to return their Job Seeker Diary (6%, activity breach), failing to attend a Work for the Dole project (6%, activity breach) and for becoming 'voluntarily unemployed' (that is, leaving employment without a 'good reason', 6%, activity breach).

Unlike breaches, a suspension occurs when a person's benefits are completely withheld. Suspensions generally occur when a recipient of income support is temporarily not qualified for payment for a specific period as a result of changes in their circumstances, or when an investigation by Centrelink into the person's eligibility for payment is pending. This may be for a short period of time or a longer period of time depending on the circumstances.

Three per cent of participants (n=399) had their benefits suspended in the twelve months prior to entering the trial.

Activities undertaken

Under the active participation model people in receipt of Centrelink benefits are required to undertake a variety of different activities, which change over time, to meet their mutual obligation requirements. The data provided by Centrelink shows the range of activities undertaken by participants in the twelve months prior to entering YP⁴. These activities are shown in Table 2.10.

Table 2.10: Activities undertaken by YP⁴ participants in the twelve months prior to trial entry

Activity type	Per cent of participants
Job search activities	97%
Job search	96%
Intensive support - customised assistance	49%
Job search training	8%
Employment programs	23%
Community Work Program ⁴⁸	0.3%
Work for the Dole	11%
Jobs Pathway Program	0.5%
Community Development Employment Project (CDEP)	2%
New Enterprise Incentive Scheme	0.3%
Disability Open Employment	1%
Employment activities	2%
Mutual obligation - part time work	2%
Education and training activities	16%
Adult literacy course	0.3%
Adult migrant education	0.3%
Short course	3%
Mutual obligation - placement education and training	1%
Language literacy and numeracy	0.3%
Full time student	12%
New Apprenticeship Access Program	0.5%
Personal crises and incapacity	38%
Major personal crisis (14 weeks)	15%
Major personal disruption (14 weeks)	1%
Incapacitated	20%
Pending further assessment (needing further information about incapacity)	1%
Not job ready	7%
Caring responsibilities	0.3%
Claiming Disability Support Pension	0.3%
Personal Support Program	5%
Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service	1%
Other activities	3%
Community Service Order	0.3%
Youth activities	1%
Customer overseas	2%

Source: YP⁴ Centrelink administrative data (n = 399)

As can be seen from Table 2.10, while 97 per cent of participants undertook job search activities in the twelve months prior to entering YP⁴, 38 per cent had periods of personal crisis or incapacity. More participants had periods of personal crises and incapacity than undertook approved employment programs or education and training activities.

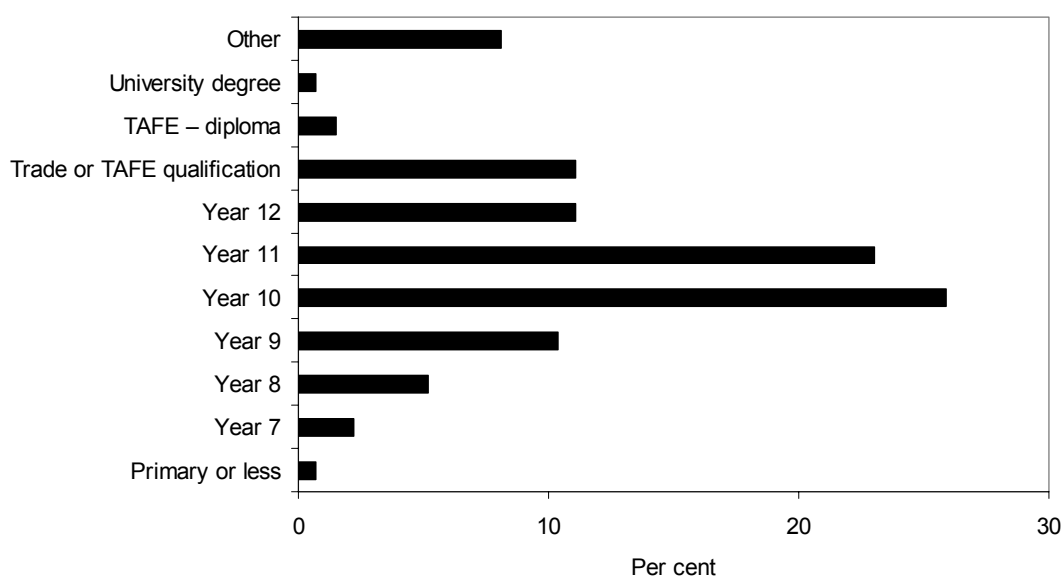
⁴⁸ The Community Work Program was a Victorian Government employment program operating at the time.

Education and training

Highest level of education completed

Of the 135 participants who were interviewed, many had low levels of educational attainment as can be seen in Figure 2.13⁴⁹.

Figure 2.13: Highest level of education attained by YP^d participants



Source: YP^d zero-month interviews

In summary, for their highest level of education:

- Forty-four per cent had completed year 10 or below
- Twenty-three per cent had completed year 11
- Eleven per cent had completed year 12
- Twenty-two per cent had completed post-secondary education or training, usually TAFE⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Other responses included (in participants' own words): 1st year apprentice baker, 2 years apprenticeship, 2 years plumbing, 3rd year apprenticeship music/community care/intro to cooking, apprentice chef (uncompleted), basic computer course, business administration (through JNM), Certificate 3 in emergency first aid, security course, currently studying nursing at RMIT, hair and beauty short course, hospitality responsible service of alcohol, first aid level 2, introduction to computers; nail course and waxing course (both privately delivered), pre-apprenticeship course, short courses at TAFE, started university, childcare work experience.

⁵⁰ Trade or TAFE qualification included: 3 TAFE or trade qualifications; certificate 2 and 3; financial services certificate 2 and 4 at TAFE; certificate 2 in community cookery; farmhand course at Warragul TAFE; certificate 3 in aged care; certificate hospitality; certificate in applied design; certificate in juvenile justice; childcare certificate.

According to estimates calculated for the *Benchmark Report* (Grace et al. 2005), we expected 58 to 60 per cent of participants to have completed year 11 or below. The YP⁴ participants who completed interviews were more educationally disadvantaged than expected, with 67 per cent having only year 11 or below education. Benchmark estimates suggested and interview data confirmed that this population have much lower levels of education than the general Australian population. While 44 per cent of YP⁴ participants had completed year 10 or below as their highest level of education, only 31 per cent of Australians aged 15 years and over have this low level of education (ABS 2005).

Education and training

Sixty-three per cent of participants who were interviewed were considering education or training at the time of interview. There were no statistically significant differences between J group and S group, or men's and women's responses.

Of the 26 participants in Frankston, 38 per cent were considering education. This response was significantly lower than for the overall interview population (63%). Differences between the other sites were not significant.

A majority (70%) of the 90 participants considering further education or training cited a specific course at secondary college, TAFE, or university. The most common training option mentioned was going back to finish secondary college, followed by studying youth work, training in hospitality, bar course, childcare, and training in beauty therapy. A further eight per cent of participants were unsure about exactly what they wanted to pursue. Seven per cent specifically mentioned financial difficulty as a barrier to participating in education and training.

Twenty-two per cent of the 133 participants who were interviewed indicated that the location of their current accommodation posed a barrier to participating in education and training. While no differences were found between J and S groups, women were more likely than men to report their accommodation as a barrier to further education and training (31% of 61 women compared with 14% of 72 men).

Summary of employment, income, education and training findings

Almost all participants had been employed at some time in the past, most commonly in hospitality, retail and customer service, labouring, factory work, trades, farming and agriculture, and personal/health care roles. Centrelink data revealed that half of all YP⁴ participants had declared earnings from employment in the year before entry. Those who had earnings had an average of two employers in the past 12 months, with some having up to seven employers.

Participants were currently looking for 'any kind of work', work in retail, customer service, and hospitality, or were not looking for work. More than three quarters of participants indicated that they experienced barriers to gaining employment at present, the most common being transport, homelessness, physical health, education and training and mental health issues. Just over a quarter indicated that the location of their current accommodation was a barrier to gaining employment.

Participants had engaged in a variety of activities to increase their employability during the twelve months prior to interview, the most popular being preparing a resume, using services that provide links with employment opportunities, and changing their personal presentation. The diversity of participants' employment aspirations for the future was striking, and aspirations were generally modest.

Most participants had received Newstart or Youth Allowance during the twelve months prior to entry; however some participants had also been in receipt of Parenting Payments, Carers Allowance, Abstudy or Austudy. Non-lodgement of forms and automatic age triggers were the most common reasons for change in participants' benefit type.

Participants' median income from Centrelink, including Commonwealth Rent Assistance was \$304.18 per fortnight, giving a median annual income from benefits of \$7930.33. Around eleven per cent of participants were breached in the twelve months prior to entry and received reduced payments as a result. Participants earned a median of \$29.17 from paid employment per fortnight, with earnings from employment accounting for 13 per cent of their total income. Including earnings from employment, participants' median fortnightly income was \$328.62 per fortnight or a median annual income of \$8567.53 in a year.

Consistent with their mutual obligation requirements, participants undertook a range of activities in the year prior to entry. Almost all participants had undertaken job search activities. Over one third had been exempt from looking for work at some stage because of personal crises or incapacity. About one quarter of participants had participated in specific employment programs and fewer participants still had undertaken education and training approved by Centrelink.

Participants had extremely low levels of educational attainment, with over two-thirds completing year 11 or below as their highest level of education. Nearly two thirds of participants were considering further education or training at the time of interview, with most listing a specific course at TAFE or secondary college. Just under one quarter of participants indicated that the location of their current accommodation was a barrier to participating in further education or training.

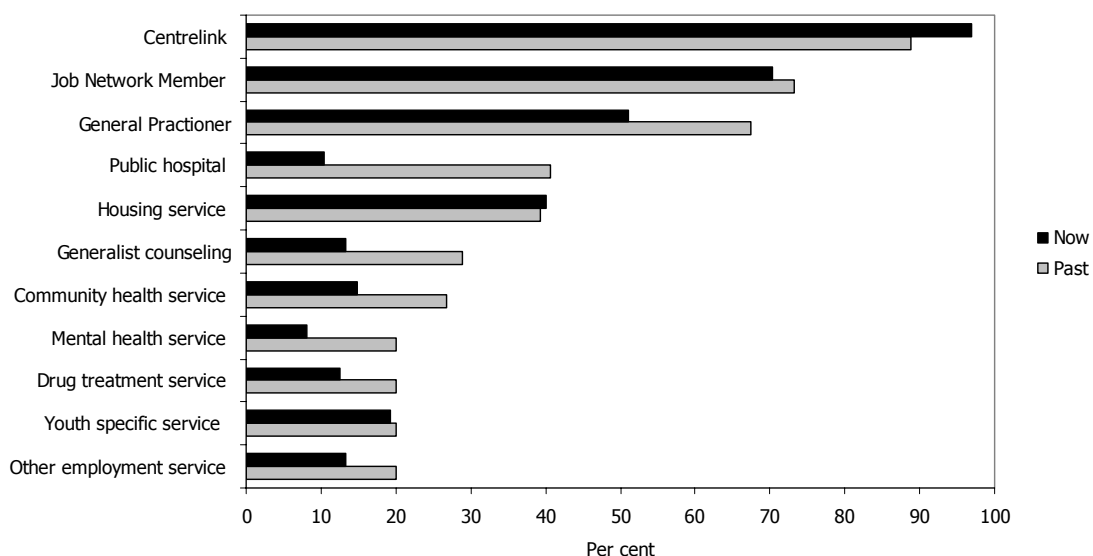
Use of community services

This section presents and discusses community services used by participants, the extent to which services met participants' needs, whether participants thought services appeared to be working together, any difficulties they encountered when accessing services, if they had to wait for services, and the number of case workers working with them. We have one source of data about participants' use of community services: the annual interview. Results presented below come from the zero-month interviews. As with the previous sections, analyses were conducted by group (J and S), gender, and site (Central Melbourne, Bendigo, Frankston and Cheltenham). Differences are reported only where they were testable and statistically significant at a confidence level of 95%.

Community services

Participants were presented with a list of community services, and were asked to nominate which ones they were using at the time of the interview (now), and which ones they had used in the year prior to the interview (past). The top eleven services selected by participants are presented in Figure 2.14.

Figure 2.14: Services used by YP^d participants at the time of interview and in the year prior to interview



Source: YP^d zero-month interviews (n = 135)

As expected in a trial specifically for people experiencing homelessness and unemployment, the most commonly used services were Centrelink and the Job Network. Many of the participants used housing services (40% of those interviewed) and health services. About two-thirds saw a general practitioner in the year prior to entering the trial, and 41 per cent used a public hospital. Significant gender differences were found among service users. When comparing the 61 women participants who were interviewed with the 74 men, women were more likely than men to have seen a general practitioner in the year prior to the interview and around the time of interview (82% compared with 55% for the year prior; 62% compared with 42% around the time of interview). Women were also more likely than men to use a public hospital in the year prior to the interview (53% compared with 31%). Findings from the *2004-2005 National Health Survey* found that 23 per cent of Australians living in private dwellings saw a general practitioner, with another 14 per cent consulting other health professionals such as chemists, physiotherapists and chiropractors in the previous two weeks (ABS 2006b). YP⁴ participants were twice as likely as the general community (individuals in private dwellings) to have used health services.

Over one quarter used a generalist counselling service in the year prior to interview, and one quarter used a community health service. Many participants used mental health services, drug treatment services, other employment services, and youth specific services (20% each) in the year prior to trial entry. Other services which were used by a small proportion of participants are detailed in Appendix 7.

In terms of differences across sites, Central Melbourne participants who were interviewed (of which there were 35) used a general practitioner significantly less than the average in the year prior to interview (46% compared with 67%) and at the time of interview (31% compared with 51%). Only one significant group difference was found. When comparing the 84 S group participants who were interviewed with the 51 J group participants who were interviewed, more S than J group participants saw a general practitioner in the year prior to interview (75% compared with 55%).

Extent of services meeting needs

Participants were asked to rate the extent to which services met their needs, choosing from really well, OK, unsure, not well, and really badly. Feedback from interviewers indicated that many participants had difficulty answering this question. If participants felt very sure about services meeting their needs (or not), they would reply with 'really well' or 'really badly'.

However, interviewers were not sure whether 'OK' meant that participants were satisfied with services. Of the 134 people who responded, the largest group (43%) rated services as being OK, with only 27 per cent indicating that their needs were met really well. Only five per cent gave a rating of really badly. Only men chose this option (8% of 73). No women and no participants from Central Melbourne rated services as meeting their needs really badly. There were no significant differences across genders, groups, or sites.

Services working together

Participants were asked whether services appeared to be working together to assist them. About 40 per cent of the 134 respondents to this question stated that they did work together. Thirty-three per cent stated that services did *not* work together. About 22 per cent reported that services appeared to be working together to some extent. There were no significant group, gender or site differences.

Difficulties accessing services

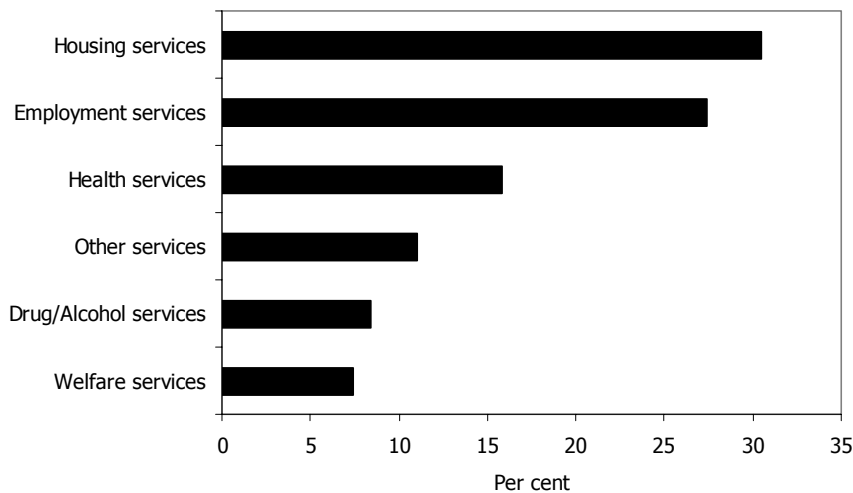
Of the 132 participants who were interviewed, 28 per cent encountered difficulties accessing services in the three months prior to interview. No differences were found between groups or genders. There were, however, significant differences across some sites. More Bendigo participants (43%) had difficulties accessing services than those from Cheltenham (21%), and those from Central Melbourne (14%). Key issues mentioned by the 37 participants included long waiting times, low responsiveness of services, unavailability of meaningful assistance, and geographical access difficulties. Services that were noted included those to do with housing (such as public housing, crisis accommodation), employment (such as Centrelink, Job Network) and health (such as community health services, general practitioners, drug rehabilitation services, psychological services). Other services mentioned included the Personal Support Program, welfare services, transport, and computer access. Some participants noted that services 'in general' were difficult to access.

There are at least two possible explanations for participants not reporting difficulties in accessing services. It could be that services on the whole are relatively easy to access by participants. An alternative explanation which was suggested by case managers is that people may not be accessing services because they judge the available services (for example crisis accommodation) to be unsuitable for them.

Waiting for services

Half of the 134 participants who were interviewed waited for services in the year prior to interview. This was not dependent on group membership, gender or site. Sixty-six participants gave 95 examples of services for which they had to wait as shown in Figure 2.15⁵¹.

Figure 2.15: Services waited for by YP^d participants in the year prior to interview

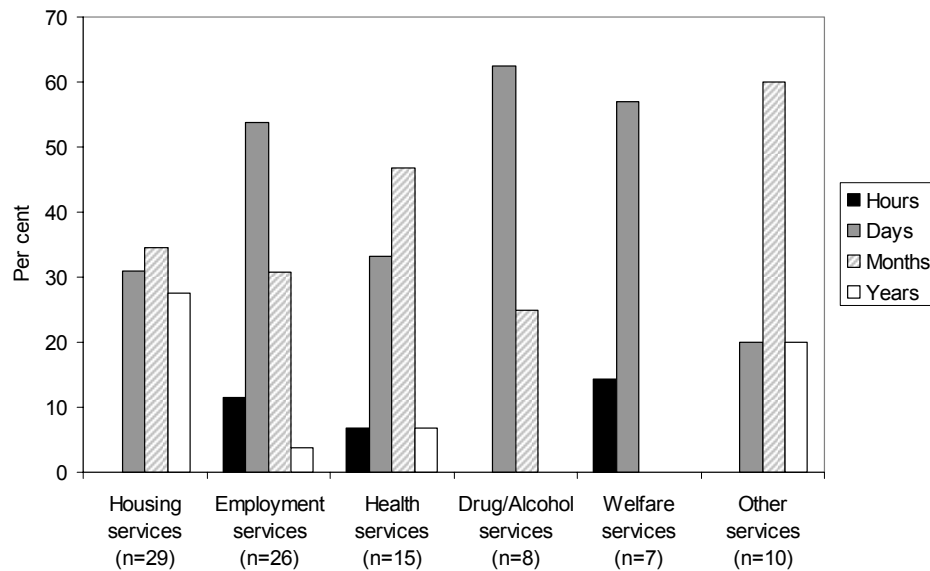


Source: YP^d zero-month interviews

Housing and employment services featured prominently, followed by health, drug and alcohol, and welfare services. As the following figure shows, waiting time for these services ranged from hours, days, and months to years (some people noted that they were still waiting)⁵².

⁵¹ Other services included PSP, legal, WorkCover, financial counselling, TAFE, food vouchers, relief grant.

⁵² Some respondents did not include the wait time when specifying the service and are therefore not included in this figure. See Appendix 8 for more details.

Figure 2.16: Waiting time for services by YP^d participants

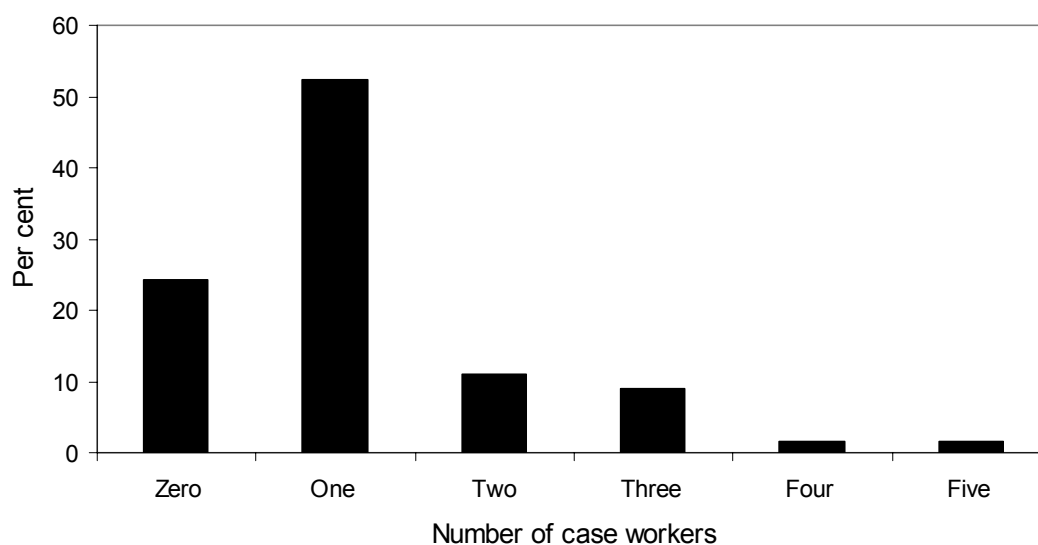
Source: YP^d zero-month interviews

As can be seen the prominent waiting times for services was days and months. A striking finding is the 28 per cent of participants who mentioned that they had to wait for a year or more for housing services. For employment services, waiting times were prominently days and months. Welfare services fared the best with waiting times reported as being only hours and days. For specific details about waiting times for each of these services refer to Appendix 8.

Case workers

Participants were asked how many case workers they had at the time of the interview. Responses from these 132 participants ranged from no workers to five⁵³. This distribution is shown in Figure 2.17.

Figure 2.17: Number of case workers of YP^d participants at time of interview



Source: YP^d zero-month interviews

The majority of participants had one case worker with many reporting having none. Some participants had two or three workers with a small number having up to five. No significant differences were found across groups, genders, or sites.

⁵³ A very small percentage (1%) answered 'don't know'.

Summary of community services findings

The most commonly used services by participants who were interviewed were Centrelink and the Job Network. Housing services were also used by many in the year prior to interview. Health services figured very prominently, with general practitioners mentioned most frequently.

Most interviewees rated community services as being OK, but only 27 per cent indicated that their needs were met really well. About 40 per cent stated that services worked together to help them. About one third stated that services did not work together. Over one quarter of participants who were interviewed encountered difficulties accessing services in the three months prior to interview. Key issues mentioned included long waiting times, low responsiveness of services, unavailability of meaningful assistance, and geographical access difficulties. Services that were noted as difficult to access included housing services (such as public housing and crisis accommodation), employment services (such as Centrelink and Job Network) and health services (such as community health services, general practitioners, drug rehabilitation services and psychological services). Half of all the participants had waited for services in the year prior to interview. Housing and employment services featured prominently, followed by health, drug and alcohol, and welfare services. Waiting times for these services ranged from days, and months to years and some participants noted that they were still waiting. Almost one quarter reported that they had no case workers. About half of the participants who were interviewed had one case worker, eleven per cent had two case workers, nine per cent had three, two per cent had four and two per cent had five case workers.

Health and wellbeing

This section presents and discusses participants' health and wellbeing, including changes over time, health-related activities undertaken, and circumstances impacting on health and wellbeing. Our primary source of data is the annual interview, and results presented here come from the zero-month interviews. As with previous sections, group, gender and site analyses were conducted and results are reported only where differences were testable and statistically significant at a confidence level of 95%.

Rating of overall health

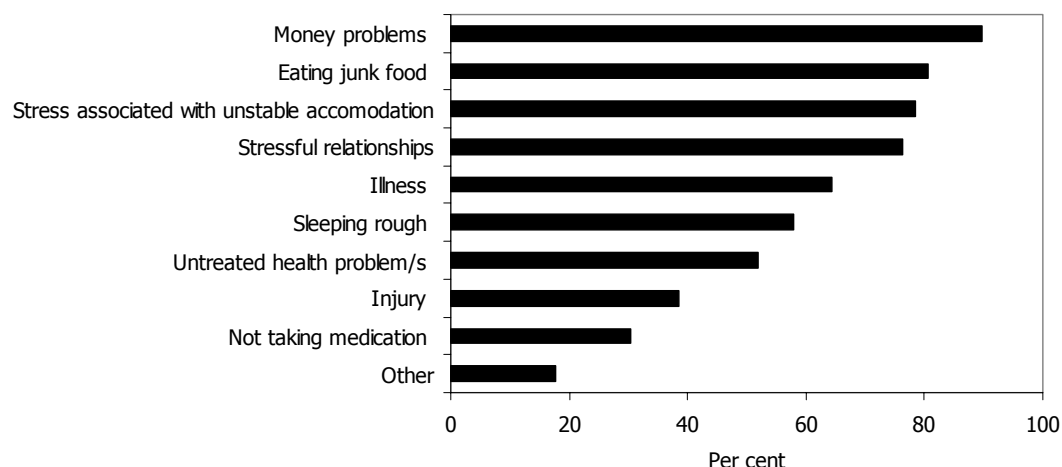
Forty per cent of all the 135 participants who were interviewed rated their overall health as good or very good. This is a much lower reporting of good health than in the wider community. Findings from the *2004-2005 National Health Survey* found that 56 per cent of Australians aged 15 years and over considered their overall health to be very good or excellent (ABS 2006b). Thirteen per cent of YP⁴ participants who were interviewed rated their health as not good or poor and almost half (47%) rated their health as average.

Changes in health

When asked about changes in their health status over the past twelve months, 39 per cent of 135 participants who were interviewed reported no change in their health, while 33 per cent said that it had become worse. Only 28 per cent reported an improvement in their health.

Health-related events

Participants were asked whether the following events had happened during the year prior to interview: illness, injury, sleeping rough, untreated health problem/s, eating junk food, not taking medication, stressful relationships, stress associated with unstable accommodation, money problems, and other (an open response). They could select as many of these options as applicable. The findings are presented in Figure 2.18.

Figure 2.18: Events relating to YP^d participants' health in the year prior to interview

Source: YP^d zero-month interviews ($n = 135$)

Almost 90 per cent of participants who were interviewed cited money problems. Around 80 per cent reported stress associated with unstable accommodation, being involved in stressful relationships, and eating junk food. About two-thirds of participants who were interviewed reported illness, and over half reported that they had slept rough, with significantly more men (66% of 74) than women (48% of 61) doing so.

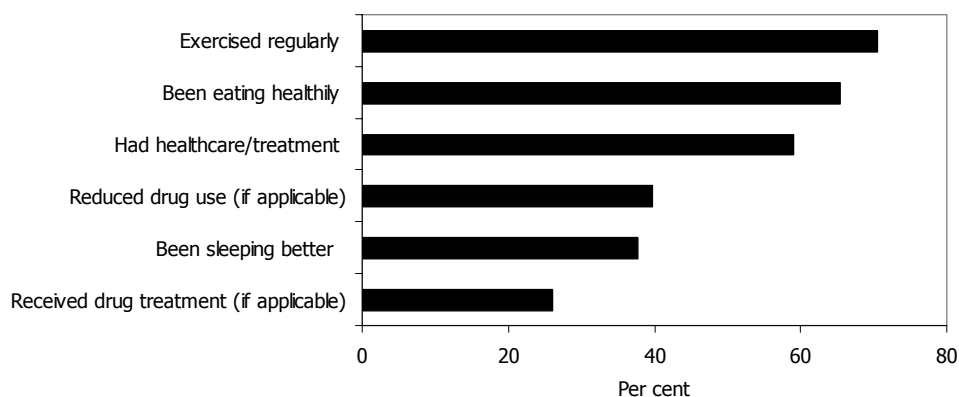
Untreated health problems were noted by half of the participants who were interviewed and over one-third reported having an injury. This injury rate is twice that of the Victorian population (ABS 2006a). One-third reported not taking medication. Participants also reported other issues including alcohol and/or drug use, sleeping problems, mental health and legal issues, child and pregnancy related issues, weight loss, being in prison, and problems with transport.

Significant differences between groups were found relating to money problems, stressful relationships and untreated health problems. When comparing the 84 S group participants with the 51 J group participants, more S than J group participants experienced these events (money problems, 94% compared with 82%; stressful relationships, 82% compared with 67%; and untreated health problems, 60% compared with 39%).

Health-related activities undertaken

Participants were asked whether they had undertaken a number of activities in the year prior to interview and could select as many of these options as applicable. The findings are presented in Figure 2.19.

Figure 2.19: Health-related activities undertaken by YP⁴ participants in the year prior to interview



Source: YP⁴ zero-month interviews⁵⁴

The most frequently cited activity undertaken by participants who were interviewed was regular exercise, followed closely by healthy eating, and receiving healthcare and/or treatment. The prevalence of exercise among these YP⁴ participants is similar to that of Australians adults in general (66%, ABS 2006b). Some significant gender differences were found when comparing the 72 men with the 60 women who answered this question. More men (78%) than women (62%) undertook regular exercise (which is comparable to the Australian population where men were more likely to do moderate or vigorous exercise than women according to the *National Health Survey*). A further gender difference was found where more women (70%) than men (50%) received healthcare or treatment. When looking at sites, significantly fewer Central Melbourne participants reported eating healthily compared with the average (46% out of 35 participants compared with 65% out of 130 participants). No other gender or site differences were found. As can be seen in the figure, reducing drug use and sleeping better also featured prominently.

Rating of wellbeing

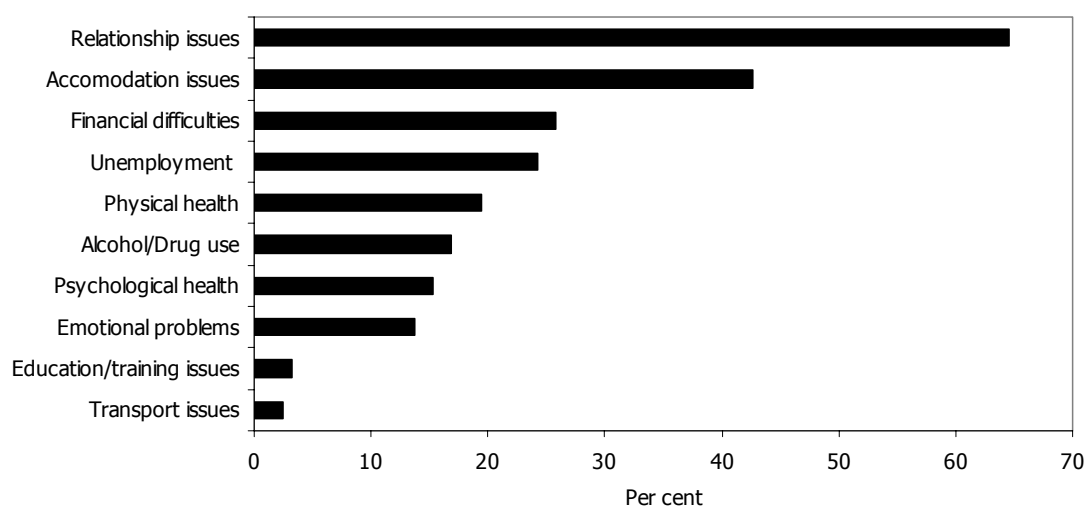
Thirty-four per cent of participants who were interviewed rated their wellbeing (defined as mental and emotional health) as good or very good, and 36 per cent said that their wellbeing was average. YP⁴ participants had a high rate of reporting not good or poor wellbeing at 30 per cent.

⁵⁴ Number of respondents varies from 130 to 132.

Circumstances affecting wellbeing

When asked in an open response question about things affecting wellbeing in the year prior to the interview, responses were given by 124 participants, with most responses referring to negative impacts. They were grouped into categories, and the findings for each of these categories are shown in Figure 2.20⁵⁵.

Figure 2.20: Circumstances affecting YP^d participants' wellbeing



Source: YP^d zero-month interviews

Over two-thirds of participants who were interviewed indicated that relationship issues⁵⁶ affected their wellbeing in the year prior to the interview. About 43 per cent of participants who were interviewed cited accommodation (for example having unstable or no accommodation, or having to find accommodation). Financial difficulties and unemployment were also factors mentioned by many participants (26% and 24% respectively), followed by physical health. Alcohol and drug use, psychological health, and emotional problems also had an effect on wellbeing. A small percentage of participants cited having problems with education and/or training, and with transport.

⁵⁵ Percentages do not total 100 as respondents gave multiple responses. Items which did not fit into one of these categories were classified under 'other issues' which accounted for 18 per cent of responses.

⁵⁶ Multiple sub-themes emerged for this category. Percentages do not total 100 as the 80 participants who answered this question gave multiple responses. Sub-themes were as follows (with the percentage of participants in brackets): family issues (43%), relationship problems (26%), child related issues (20%), problems with partners (13%), death of a close one (8%), sibling issues (5%), problems with friends (6%), domestic violence (5%), and flat mate issues (4%). Another 4 per cent had other issues which did not fit in to these sub-themes.

Summary of health and wellbeing findings

Forty per cent of the 135 participants who were interviewed rated their overall health as good or very good while 13 per cent rated their health as not good or poor. Thirty-nine per cent of participants who were interviewed reported no change in their health in the previous year, while 33 per cent said that it had become worse. Only 28 per cent reported an improvement in their health. Thirty-four per cent of participants who were interviewed rated their wellbeing (defined as mental and emotional health) as good or very good, 36 per cent rated their wellbeing as average and 30 per cent rated it as not good or poor.

Most commonly, participants who were interviewed reported that their healthy activities included regular exercise, healthy eating, and, to a lesser degree, receiving healthcare and/or treatment. A quarter of participants who were interviewed reported receiving drug treatment, with about 40 per cent reporting that they had reduced their drug use. More than a third reported they had been sleeping better than in the past.

In regard to circumstances affecting health, most participants who were interviewed cited money problems. Stress associated with unstable accommodation, being involved in stressful relationships, and eating junk food were other common events. About two-thirds of participants reported illness, and over half reported that they had slept rough. Untreated health problems were reported by half of the participants who were interviewed and over one-third reported having an injury. Another third reported not taking medication.

Nearly two-thirds of participants who were interviewed indicated that relationship issues affected their wellbeing. About 43 per cent cited accommodation issues (for example having unstable or no accommodation, or having to find accommodation). Financial difficulties and unemployment were also mentioned by many. Physical health, alcohol and drug use, psychological health, and emotional problems had an effect on wellbeing. A small percentage cited problems with education and/or training, and with transport as affecting their wellbeing.

Community connectedness

Exploring community connectedness among the YP⁴ participants is vital in understanding their experiences. This section presents and discusses participants' level of community connectedness and how they are involved in their communities. Our primary source of data is the annual interview. Results presented here come from the zero-month interviews. As with previous sections, group, gender and site analyses were conducted and differences are reported only where they were testable and statistically significant at a confidence level of 95%. There were no significant differences across genders, groups, or sites.

Feelings of connectedness

Over half of participants who were interviewed did not feel connected to a community. Only 39 per cent did feel connected to a community, either a local community or a network of people with similar interests.

Participation in community activities

At the time of the interview only 14 per cent of participants who were interviewed participated in community activities such as sports, clubs, or organised groups. These community activities included a range of sports⁵⁷, music related activities such as being in a band, and other miscellaneous activities⁵⁸. According to the *Australian Social Trends* report 17 per cent of young Australian people reported undertaking recreational and cultural activities and 10 per cent undertook community or special group activities (sic.) in the three months prior to interview (ABS 2006a). These findings do not differ much from the level of participation of our participants; however the young people referenced in the ABS report did participate in their community in other ways such as going to cafés, bars or restaurants, attending movies, theatres or concerts and watching, attending or participating in sporting events. Such activities, while popular among young people, may be more difficult for the YP⁴ participants given their circumstances that have been reported here.

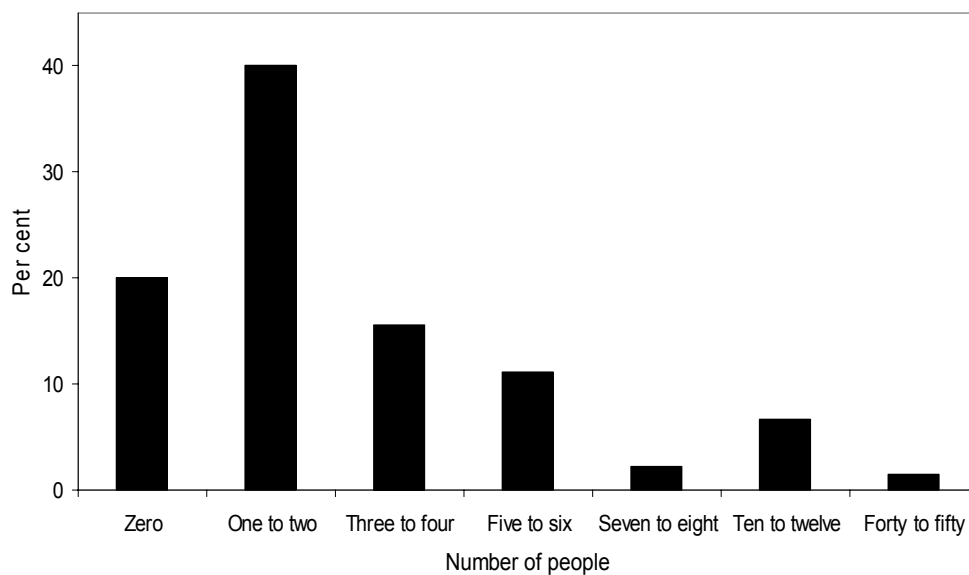
⁵⁷ Sports noted included soccer, diving, lawn bowls, pool, fishing and angling, basketball, boxing, netball, athletics, jujitsu, rugby, gym, dancing, football, kickboxing.

⁵⁸ Activities included being involved with clubs, St. John's ambulance, a food kitchen, narcotics anonymous, being a volunteer, and YP⁴.

Having someone to talk to

The YP^d participants were more likely than other young Australians to be socially isolated. Twenty per cent of the 135 respondents reported that they did not have anyone outside their family they could talk to if they were worried about something (not a worker in an agency). Only eighty per cent did have someone. This is much lower than findings included in the *Australian Social Trends* report (ABS 2006a). In 2002, 98 per cent of young people aged 18 to 24 years of age reported that they had someone outside of their home that they could call on for support (ABS 2006a). The number of people that these participants could talk to ranged from zero to fifty people⁵⁹, as shown in Figure 2.21.

Figure 2.21: Number of people that YP^d participants have to talk to if worried about something



Source: YP^d zero-month interviews

Twenty per cent had no people to whom they could talk, 40 per cent had one to two people they could talk to, 16 per cent had three to four people; 11 per cent had five or six people, and 10 per cent had seven or more people.

⁵⁹ An 'other' category was created for qualitative answers given (a few people; a handful; heaps) which accounted for three per cent of respondents.

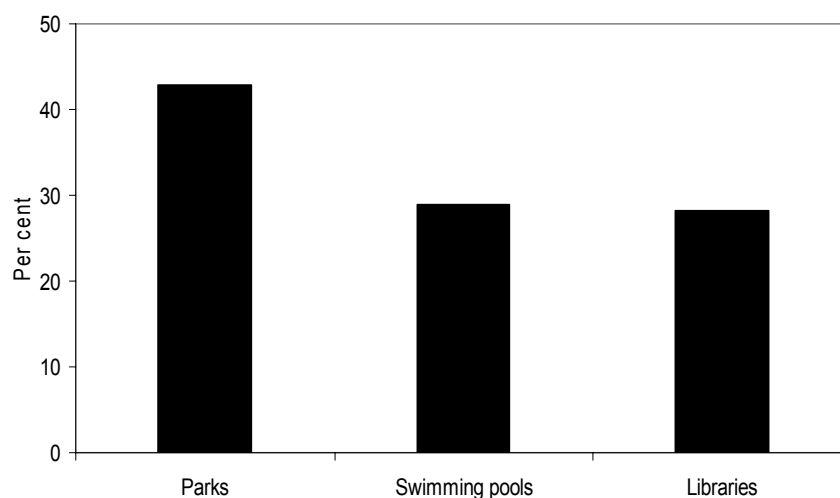
Practical assistance

Three-quarters of participants who were interviewed had someone they could ask for help if practical assistance was needed, for example, assistance with lifting something heavy if moving house. However this is again a much lower percentage than reported in the *Australian Social Trends* report (ABS 2006a). Ninety-three per cent of young Australian people reported that they could ask small favours from people outside their household (ABS 2006a).

Use of community facilities

Over 70 per cent of 135 participants who were interviewed said that they use community facilities such as parks, libraries and swimming pools. These 96 participants mentioned one or more of these facilities which are shown in Figure 2.22⁶⁰.

Figure 2.22: Types of community facilities used by YP^d participants



Source: YP^d zero-month interviews ($n = 96$)

The facility most commonly accessed by participants was parks, followed by swimming pools, and libraries. Some participants reported using only one of these facilities while others reported using two or three. While parks were used as a place to sit or play sport, they may also have been used as a place to sleep. Similarly, while pools were used for swimming, some may have used them specifically for their shower facilities.

⁶⁰ These 96 participants gave 151 responses. Some responses could not be coded according to the three categories and are therefore not included in this figure; in participant's own words they included: gym (3 responses), sport centre (2 responses) and other (1 response).

Summary of community connectedness findings

More than half of the participants who were interviewed reported not feeling connected to a community. Only 39 per cent did report feeling connected to either to a local community or a network of people with similar interests. Fourteen per cent participated in community activities such as sports, clubs, or organised groups. Eighty per cent of the participants who were interviewed had someone they could talk to if they were worried about something (someone who was outside their family and not a worker in an agency). Three-quarters of the participants who were interviewed also had someone they could ask for help if practical assistance was needed (for example, assistance with lifting something heavy if moving house). More than 70 per cent reported using community facilities such as parks, libraries and swimming pools. The facility most commonly accessed was parks, followed by swimming pools and libraries. Some participants reported using only one of these facilities while others reported using two or three.

Conclusion

This second report from the outcome evaluation team has presented a profile of YP⁴ participants and detailed their circumstances in the twelve months prior to entry. These circumstances include participants' accommodation, employment, Centrelink payments, income, education and training, experience of community services, their health and wellbeing, and community connectedness.

Our findings revealed that YP⁴ participants have experienced multiple disruptions and intersecting forms of disadvantage. In addition to experiencing homelessness and unemployment, over a quarter of our participants are disclosed ex-offenders, and over three quarters have completed year eleven or below as their highest level of education. Over a third left their family or guardian's home because of extreme family breakdown, violence, sexual abuse or family/guardian homelessness. Over one third had periods of incapacity or major personal crises in the twelve months prior to entry according to Centrelink records. Our participants had much lower ratings of self-reported health and wellbeing than the general population and most did not feel connected to a community. Income estimates showed participants' incomes to be particularly meagre, with average income being below standard entitlements. Eleven per cent had their payments reduced because of breaches. In the twelve months prior to entry, when participants were paying rent, they were spending a median of 55 per cent of their income on rent. Only six per cent were spending less than 30 per cent of their income on rent.

Not surprisingly, participants reported that homelessness, transport, education and training, and physical and mental health issues were the main barriers they experienced in finding employment. They reported that their accommodation arrangements acted as a barrier to participating in education and training. Just over one quarter of participants who were interviewed rated their current accommodation as unsuitable to some degree, and 13 per cent rated it as unaffordable.

YP⁴ participants are battling on many fronts simultaneously. Yet despite the stigma, hardships, ongoing crises, and resultant trauma, YP⁴ participants have persisted. Almost all participants had been employed at some time in the past, with at least half in paid employment in the twelve months prior to entry. A majority of participants were considering education and training, most commonly finishing secondary schooling or completing a course at TAFE. Almost all had participated in job search activities.

The picture that emerges from our research is of people persevering in the face of multiple barriers, in contrast to myths about young unemployed people as 'job-snobs' or 'job-shy'. Participants had been employed in the past and aspired to similar employment in the future. They had typically worked in hospitality, retail and customer service, labouring and factory work and when asked, participants were most commonly looking for any kind of work.

The complexity of disadvantage our participants live with suggests that models of service delivery that have a single focus are unlikely to be successful in providing these people with the opportunities they are seeking. This underscores the rationale for YP⁴. Joined up services may be what makes a difference for our participants. Our next report will present and examine evidence about any differences between J and S group participants following the delivery of joined up services to the J group.

To our knowledge this is the first attempt at a detailed profile of young Australians experiencing both homelessness and unemployment. Our findings reinforce the need for joined up services for people experiencing both homelessness and unemployment. This report marks the beginning of unprecedented and significant research into how best to assist young people experiencing the double disadvantage of homelessness and unemployment.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Past and present membership of YP⁴ Ethics and Evaluation Advisory Group

Chairperson:

Professor Paul Smyth
Centre for Public Policy, University of Melbourne, and
General Manager, Social Action and Research, Brotherhood of St Laurence

Financial evaluation:

Professor Jeff Borland, Department of Economics, University of Melbourne

Outcome evaluation:

Dr. Marty Grace, Social Work Unit, Victoria University

Hanover Welfare Services:

Professor Andrew Hollows, Manager Research and Development

Loddon Mallee Housing Services:

Peter McLean, Program Manager

Melbourne Citymission:

Michael Horn, Manager Research and Social Policy Unit

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations:

Damien Harlow, JPET Contract Manager, Victorian State Office

Paul Mattsson, Victorian Labour Economics Office

Rohan Nandan, Director JPET, National Office

Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs:

John Assemani, Housing and Homelessness Section, Victoria State Office

Centrelink:

Mira Grin, Project Officer- Centrelink Response to Homelessness

Heather Malerbi, Project Officer- Centrelink Response to Homelessness

Department of Human Services – Office of Housing:

Jac Nancarrow, Manager Homeless Support Services

Peter Lake, Manager Housing Support Services

Department of Victorian Communities:

Timothy Ore, Employment Programs

National Employment Services Association:

Annette Gill, Policy Advisor

Appendix 2: Information and general consent form



Information for Participants

What do we want?

We are looking for 120 people in to participate in a trial to help us test what sorts of services work best for people who don't have a job or a stable home. Basically, we are looking for people who will agree to answer some questions about once each year for four years and will agree that we can match together about five years' worth of information about them held by different services.

Yeah, and...?

The people who agree to participate in the trial will receive services in one of two different ways. We want to compare the experiences of the two groups of people over time, so we can understand if one way works better than the other. The trial is known as YP⁴.

What is in it for you?

- You will get paid to participate in surveys about once each year (with vouchers, so it won't affect your money from Centrelink)
- It does not involve a big commitment – about five hours over four years
- You can help make a difference for other people

What is YP⁴?

YP⁴ is not run by the government. It is the idea of four community organisations: Hanover Welfare Services, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Melbourne Citymission and Loddon Mallee Housing Services. YP⁴ has the support of federal and state government.

What if I want choose my group?

Centrelink will pick a group at random for each of the people who are involved (with a couple of exceptions). There will be no difference between the people in the two groups. But you won't be able to choose the group for yourself. It is important that groups are chosen at random, because it will help us to be sure about what we learn from the trial.

Do I have to be involved?

No. Centrelink will work out if you are eligible to be involved. After that, it's up to you.

What exactly will happen to me if I get involved?

Two things will happen...

1. We will match up five years' worth of information that is held about you by the range of services that work with you, like Job Network, Centrelink and housing services. We need your permission to match information about you. There is a consent form that you can sign if you are happy to be involved.

2. Every year or so for four years, we will ask you some questions to find out what you think about the services you are getting and how they help. Probably, we will ask you to go to a Centrelink office for about an hour to answer the questions. The questions will probably be asked by a Centrelink employee but the answers aren't being used by Centrelink; they are being given to us – the YP⁴ evaluation team. We won't talk to anyone you might work for... We are only interested in declared income. Also, because we understand that it can be a hassle to give up your time and travel to a Centrelink office, we will pay you (with a voucher) for your time.

Will anyone else know that I am participating?

Anyone who is sharing information about you with us (like Centrelink and Job Network) will know who you are and that you are involved, but they are still bound by privacy laws so they can't tell anyone about your involvement other than us (the YP⁴ evaluation team).

We won't use your name or any combination of information about you that will identify you when we talk or write about YP⁴ and what we have learnt, unless you make a point of saying we can.

What are my rights and responsibilities?

Once you agree to be involved, we ask that you participate fully and tell us about what is happening for you.

You have the right to withdraw from YP⁴ whenever you like. If you withdraw, you will not have to answer our questions any more and we will stop matching up information about you.

You have the right to make a complaint if you feel unhappy about anything to do with YP⁴. Complaints should be made to your YP⁴ case manager if you have one or if that is not OK for you or you don't have one, then to the YP⁴ manager. (See below.)

So who is this YP⁴ evaluation team?

- A group of people make up the Ethics and Evaluation Advisory Group for YP⁴. They are the ones who work out how to make sure that people's rights are protected. We can give you their names, if you want.
- YP⁴ staff includes a manager and an evaluation officer. The manager, Louise Coventry, has overall responsibility for YP⁴ and she can answer questions that you may have about YP⁴ and hear complaints about YP⁴ that you may want to make.
- We plan to use consultants and researchers to help us collect and analyse information, and do research. We have not decided who will do this work for us yet, but we can tell you later if you want.

Thank you very much for considering being part of YP⁴. We believe that your involvement will help to make a real difference for all people in the future who don't have a job or a stable home.

Louise Coventry, YP⁴ Manager
PO Box 1016, South Melbourne 3205
Ph: 9695 8366 or Email: lcoventry@hanover.org.au

Any queries about your participation in the evaluation of this project may be directed to Dr Marty Grace on ph. 9365 2920. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne, 8001 (telephone no: 03-9688 4710).



YP⁴ - consent to disclosure of personal and health information

I have been given the YP⁴ Information Sheet and verbal information about YP⁴ and I understand that:

- I can freely participate in YP⁴ and can withdraw at any time.
 - YP⁴ is going to be evaluated and researched.
 - For the purposes of the YP⁴ evaluation, information held about me by various Australian Government and State Government departments and the service providers they fund, including
 - the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)
 - Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) providers
 - Transitional Housing Management (THM) service providers
 - the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS)
 - Centrelink
 - the (State) Office of Housing
 - the Department of Victorian Communities
 - Brotherhood of St Laurence
 - Hanover Welfare Services
 - Loddon Mallee Housing Services and
 - Melbourne Citymission
- will be accessed and used over a four year period.
- The health information that will be accessed is limited to the number of times and the duration of any medical incapacity that I have experienced and whether or not I have been referred to a drug/alcohol service, mental health service or other health service.
 - Withdrawing means that collection and use of my personal and health information by the YP⁴ Evaluation Team will stop immediately.
 - The only people who will be able to see personal and health information provided to YP⁴ about me are the YP⁴ Evaluation Team members. The YP⁴ Evaluation Team will not give to anyone else any personal or health information that might identify me, or my circumstances, or my personal history.
 - Other people, apart from the YP⁴ Evaluation Team and those who have supplied information about me, will not know that I have participated in YP⁴ because my identity and personal and health details will not be revealed when information about YP⁴ is published or presented in public.
 - The YP⁴ Evaluation Team must keep secure all information about me and make sure that no one else can see it and the Team have to comply with the Information Privacy Principles set out in the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Health Privacy Principles set out in the *Health Records Act 2001*.
 - The YP⁴ Evaluation Team will keep a copy of my information for the duration of YP⁴ and will safely dispose of that information after YP⁴ (and its evaluation) is completed

- The YP⁴ Evaluation Team will forward to me an original copy of all my personal and health information if I agree to have the information sent to an address that I nominate.

Would you like to have a copy of your information sent to you? YES NO
(If you circle yes, we will ask you later about the best way to send this information to you).

The information to which this consent applies dates back to twelve months prior to YP⁴ starting in January 2005, includes the two year period of YP⁴ and will last for two years after YP⁴ has finished. The information is:

- Employment assistance activities, including name of Job Network service provider, if any
- Accommodation movements
- The responses contained in the preparing for work agreement including score, as well as any updates to that information during the course of YP⁴
- Number and duration of periods of medical incapacity
- Participation in education and training
- Employment history and any employment undertaken which is reported to Centrelink
- Benefits received from Centrelink including reductions, suspensions and breaches
- Referrals made to health services, including drug and alcohol services or mental health services
- Approved activities undertaken like volunteer work, short courses, Community Jobs Program, Work for the Dole, etc.

I, born on have read and understood the above information and I consent to the disclosure of my personal information (as identified on this page and the other side of this page) to the YP⁴ Evaluation Team at Hanover Welfare Services by DEWR, SAAP providers, THM service providers, FACS, Centrelink, the (State) Office of Housing, Department of Victorian Communities, Hanover Welfare Services, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Loddon Mallee Housing Services and Melbourne Citymission, for the purposes of the evaluation of YP⁴.

Participant name:

Signature:

Date:

Witness:

Signature:

Date:

Researcher's name:

Signature:

Date:

Please note that no more than four copies of the signed consent form will be made. One copy will be kept by Centrelink, one by the YP⁴ Evaluation Team, one by the YP⁴ service provider and one by you, the YP⁴ participant.

Joining up services for young homeless jobseekers



Appendix 3: Consent to be interviewed



CONSENT TO BE INTERVIEWED

I,

of

.....
confirm that I am at least 18 years old and that I am choosing to participate in YP⁴ trial interviews.

I understand that the interviews will happen in a Centrelink office (or maybe by telephone) and that it will be a Centrelink employee who will interview me.

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to have my questions answered and I understand that I can withdraw from the interviews at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

I understand that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed:

Witness other than the researcher:

Date:

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to Dr Marty Grace on ph. 9365 2920. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne, 8001 (telephone no: 03-9688 4710).

Appendix 4: Annual interview schedule



YP⁴ Participant interviews

CRN:

Name:

Date:

Interviewer:

Time interview started:

Joining up services for young homeless jobseekers



Interviewer to read the following script for introduction over the phone

Hello [....], my name is and I'm phoning about the YP⁴ project that you signed up for a little while ago.

As part of signing up for YP⁴, you agreed to be interviewed 5 times over the next 5 years. I'm calling about the [first] of these interviews. We will be giving you \$30 in Coles Myer vouchers for your participation – which won't affect your Centrelink Payment.

Is now a good time for me to talk to you about this?

You can do the interview either over the phone or in person. Doing it in person means coming into a Centrelink office. Which would you prefer?

[If they wish to do it in person – make a time for them.]

[If they wish to do the interview over the phone, ask if now is a good time or if there is a better time when you should call back.]

Before we get started, I will remind you of some things about the interview. The questions are about your housing, employment and training opportunities, personal supports and your use of services. You can skip any questions that you don't want to answer. At any time you can change your mind about doing the interview and this will not go against you in any way.

Centrelink has agreed to support YP⁴ by providing workers to conduct these interviews. I am a Centrelink Officer, but this information is for the YP⁴ evaluation team and not for your Centrelink file. However, if you tell me about undeclared income or some other change in your circumstances that affects your Centrelink payment, I will be obliged to inform Centrelink of this information. The questions have been chosen carefully to try to prevent this from happening.

All responses will remain confidential, accessed only by members of the YP⁴ evaluation team for research purposes. However, intentions or threats to harm others or yourself may be subject to reporting to the relevant authorities or to your primary treatment provider such as your case manager, counsellor, or doctor. Any information regarding safety risks to children will be reported to child protection.

Do you have any thing you want to ask me before we start on the interview questions?

THE FIRST FEW QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT YOUR ACCOMMODATION**1. Where are you living at the moment?**

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--|---|--|
| Crisis accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | Caravan park | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₁ |
| Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ | Sleeping rough (street/squat/carpark) | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₂ |
| Siblings | <input type="checkbox"/> ₃ | Transitional housing/ Supported Accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₃ |
| Extended family | <input type="checkbox"/> ₄ | Drug treatment service | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₅ |
| Private rental | <input type="checkbox"/> ₅ | Hospital | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₆ |
| Hostel | <input type="checkbox"/> ₆ | Friend's place | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₇ |
| Private hotel | <input type="checkbox"/> ₇ | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₈ |
| Public housing | <input type="checkbox"/> ₈ | Specify:..... | 18.1 |
| Prison | <input type="checkbox"/> ₉ | | |
| Rooming house | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₀ | | |

2. How long (in days) have you been living there?

.....

3. How long (in days) do you expect to be able to stay there?

.....

4. Can you afford to stay in this accommodation?☐₁ Yes☐₃ Maybe☐₂ No**5. Where were you living immediately before this?**

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--|---|--|
| Crisis accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | Caravan park | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₁ |
| Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ | Sleeping rough (street/squat/carpark) | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₂ |
| Siblings | <input type="checkbox"/> ₃ | Transitional housing/ Supported accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₃ |
| Extended family | <input type="checkbox"/> ₄ | Drug treatment service | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₅ |
| Private rental | <input type="checkbox"/> ₅ | Hospital | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₆ |
| Hostel | <input type="checkbox"/> ₆ | Friend's place | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₇ |
| Private hotel | <input type="checkbox"/> ₇ | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₈ |
| Public housing | <input type="checkbox"/> ₈ | Specify:..... | 18.1 |
| Prison | <input type="checkbox"/> ₉ | | |
| Rooming house | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₀ | | |

6. How long (in days) had you been living there?

.....

7. What was the reason you left there?

8. Where did you live before this?

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----|---|--------------------------|------|
| Crisis accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | Caravan park | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 |
| Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | Sleeping rough (street/squat/carpark) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12 |
| Siblings | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | Transitional housing/ Supported accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13 |
| Extended family | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 | Drug treatment service | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15 |
| Private rental | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 | Hospital | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16 |
| Hostel | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 | Friend's place | <input type="checkbox"/> | 17 |
| Private hotel | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18 |
| Public housing | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8 | Specify:..... | | 18.1 |
| Prison | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9 | | | |
| Rooming house | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 | | | |

9. How long were you there?

.....

10. What was the reason you left there?

11. How many moves have you made in the past 12 months?

12. Have you stayed in any of the following types of accommodation in the past 12 months? (select as many options as appropriate)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1. Crisis accommodation | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Rooming house | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Parents | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Caravan park | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Siblings | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. Sleeping rough (street/squat/carpark) | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Extended family | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. Transitional housing/ Supported accommodation | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Private rental | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. Drug treatment service | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Hostel | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | 16. Hospital | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Private hotel | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | 17. Friend's place | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Public housing | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| 9. Prison | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT WHERE YOU ARE LIVING NOW.....

13. How would you rate the suitability of your present living arrangements?

- ☐₁ Highly suitable ☐₂ Suitable ☐₃ Unsure ☐₄ Unsuitable ☐₅ Extremely unsuitable

14. How easy is it for you to see friends you want to keep in contact with?

- ☐₁ Very easy ☐₂ Easy ☐₃ Unsure ☐₄ Not easy ☐₅ Really difficult ☐₄₃ N/A

15. How easy is it for you to see family members you want to keep in contact with?

- ☐₁ Very easy ☐₂ Easy ☐₃ Unsure ☐₄ Not easy ☐₅ Really difficult
☐₄₃ N/A

16. How easy is it to get to the shops you need to go to?

- ☐₁ Very easy ☐₂ Easy ☐₃ Unsure ☐₄ Not easy ☐₅ Really difficult

17. How easy is it for you to get to the services you need?

- ☐₁ Very easy ☐₂ Easy ☐₃ Unsure ☐₄ Not easy ☐₅ Really difficult

18. In the past year, have you received any financial support to maintain your housing (such as one-off payments for your rent, bond assistance, gifts from family or friends)?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

18.1. If yes, please describe the kind of financial support

18.2 Have you had to repay any of this ? (for example, did someone loan you money that you have to pay back).

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

19. How much do you spend on your accommodation each fortnight?

Amount spent: \$.....

19.1. Does this cover :

☐₁ food

☐₂ bills

20. Thinking about what you would really like, what would be the ideal accommodation for you?

THE NEXT QUESTIONS I'M GOING TO ASK YOU ARE ABOUT EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

21. What type of employment, if any, have you had in the past?

(for example, shop assistant, fruit picking)

22. What type of employment, if any, are you seeking at the moment?

23 Is anything preventing or making it difficult for you to get employment?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

23.1 If yes, what?

24. Is the location of your current accommodation a barrier to your finding employment?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

25. What's the highest level of education you have completed?

Primary school or less

☐₁

Trade or TAFE qualification

☐₈

Year 7

☐₂

TAFE – Diploma

☐₉

Year 8

☐₃

University degree

☐₁₀

Year 9

☐₄

Other

☐₁₁

Year 10

☐₅

Specify:..... 11.1

Year 11

☐₆

Specify:..... 11.2

Year 12

☐₇

26. Are you considering any education or training at the moment?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

26.1. If yes, please describe:

27. Is the location of your accommodation a barrier to your participating in education or training?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

27.1. If yes, please expand:

28. In the past 12 months have you done any of the following to increase your employability?

(select as many options as appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Prepared a resume | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | Literacy and numeracy training | <input type="checkbox"/> ₇ |
| Gone back to school | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ | Used services that provide or link with employment opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> ₈ |
| Volunteer work | <input type="checkbox"/> ₃ | Vocational skills training | <input type="checkbox"/> ₉ |
| Work experience | <input type="checkbox"/> ₄ | Changed your personal presentation (e.g. got different clothes or a different haircut) | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₀ |
| Apprenticeship | <input type="checkbox"/> ₅ | Other: specify:..... | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₂ |
| Traineeship | <input type="checkbox"/> ₆ | | |
| | | | |

29. If you could have any job or self employment you wanted, what would that be?

THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

30. What services are you using either now or in the past year?

Both options 'now' and 'past year' options may be selected

Centrelink	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Personal development supports	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year
Housing service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	G.P.	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year
Job Network member	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Community health service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year
Other employment service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Drug treatment services	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year
Generalist counselling	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Mental health services	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year
Financial counselling	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Public hospital	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year
Parenting support service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Gender specific service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year
Childcare	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Ethno-specific service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year
Lifeline or other telephone service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Disability service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year
Neighbourhood house/community centre	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Other:.....	
Youth specific service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year	Other.....	
Gambling support service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year		
Consumer or tenancy service	<input type="checkbox"/> now <input type="checkbox"/> past year		

31. How many case workers do you have at the moment?

.....

32. In the past year, have you had to wait for any services you needed?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

32.1. If yes, how long did you have to wait?

Service:	How long waited (in days)
Service:	How long waited (in days)
Service :	How long waited (in days)

33. Have you had difficulty accessing services in the past 3 months?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

33.1 If yes, please let us know which services you had difficulty accessing and what made it difficult to access them.

34. To what extent have the services met your needs?

☐₁ Really well

☐₂ O.K.

☐₃ Unsure

☐₄ Not well

☐₅ Really badly

35. Do the services appear to be working together to assist you?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ To some extent

☐₃ No

☐₄ Don't know

THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

36. How would you rate your overall health at the moment?

☐₁ Very good

☐₂ Good

☐₃ Average

☐₄ Not good

☐₅ Poor health

37. Over the past year, has your health improved or gotten worse?

☐₁ Improved

☐₂ No change

☐₃ Gotten worse

38. Have any of the following happened to you in the past 12 months?*(select as many options as appropriate)*

Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	Not taking medication	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
Injury	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	Stressful relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> ₇
Sleeping rough	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	Stress associated with unstable accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/> ₈
Eating junk food	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	Money problems	<input type="checkbox"/> ₉
Untreated health problem/s	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	Other, specify:	10
		Other, specify:	111

39. Have you done any of the following in the past 12 months?*(select as many options as appropriate)*

Exercised regularly	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	Received drug treatment	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄
Been eating healthily	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	Reduced your drug use	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
Had healthcare/treatment	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	Been sleeping better	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆

40. How would you rate your wellbeing at the moment? By wellbeing we mean your mental and emotional health,
☐₁ Very good
 ☐₂ Good
 ☐₃ Average
 ☐₄ Not good
 ☐₅ Poor wellbeing
41. Can you tell us about the things that have affected your wellbeing over the past year?

THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT FEELING PART OF A COMMUNITY

42. Do you feel connected to a community (either a local community or a network of people with similar interests?)

☐₁ Yes ☐₃ Unsure ☐₂ No

43. If you were worried about something do you have someone outside your family that you could talk to (not a worker in an agency)?

☐₁ Yes ☐₃ Maybe ☐₂ No

44. How many of these people do you have?

.....

45. If you needed some practical assistance, for example lifting something heavy if you were moving house, do you have someone you could ask for help?

☐₁ Yes ☐₃ Maybe ☐₂ No

46. Do you participate in community activities such as sports, clubs, or organised groups?

☐₁ Yes ☐₃ Unsure ☐₂ No

46.1. If yes, please specify:

47. Do you use community facilities such as parks, public libraries and swimming pools?

☐₁ Yes ☐₃ Unsure ☐₂ No

47.1. If yes, please specify:

OTHER QUESTIONS

48. Is there anything else that could be relevant to our study that we haven't asked you about?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME. WE APPRECIATE IT!

**REMEMBER TO GIVE/ARRANGE TO SEND THE PARTICIPANT THEIR
VOUCHERS**

TIME INTERVIEW FINISHED:.....

Question for the interviewer:

48. Did the participant mention anything that you think is relevant for this study? If so please detail below.

Appendix 5: Summary of group and gender differences

Accommodation

S group participants were more likely than J group participants to have qualified for the 'unreasonable to live at home' status by Centrelink (42%, n=182; 28%, n=217). Women were also more likely than men to have this status (50%, n=137; 26%, n=262; see page 34) of this report). S group participants were more likely to have stayed with extended family than J group participants (38%, n=76 compared with 16%, n=50). Men were more likely to have stayed with friends and to have slept rough compared with women (91%, n=69 to 75%, n=59 for friends; 52% to 30%, n=56; see page 39). Women were more likely than men to have paid private rent in the twelve months prior to entry (68%, n=137; 55%, n=262; see page 40).

Employment, income, education and training

Women were more likely than men to have been on Youth Allowance (77%, n=136; 53%, n=260; see page 57). Men were more likely than women to change benefit status because of failure to lodge their forms (28%, n=262; 13%, n=137; see page 58). Women were more likely than men to report their accommodation as a barrier to further education and training (31%, n=61; 14%, n=72; see page 65).

Use of community services

More S than J group participants saw a general practitioner in the year prior to interview (75%, n=84; 55%, n=51; see page 69). Women were more likely than men to have seen a general practitioner in the year prior to the interview and around the time of interview (82%, n=61 compared with 55%, n=74 for the year prior; 62% compared with 42% around the time of interview). Women were more likely than men to use a public hospital in the year prior to the interview (53% compared with 31%; see page 69).


Health and wellbeing

More S than J group participants cited money problems, stressful relationships and untreated health problems as impacting their health and wellbeing (money problems, 94%, n=84 compared with 82%, n=51; stressful relationships, 82% compared with 67%; and untreated health problems, 60% compared with 39%; see page 76). More men (78%, n=72) than women (62%, n=60) undertook regular exercise, while more women (70%) than men (50%) received healthcare or treatment (see page 77).

Community connectedness

No group or gender differences were found regarding community connectedness.

Appendix 6: Copy of SAAP NDCA client collection form



SAAP
NDCA

CLIENT FORM

JULY 2005 – JUNE 2006

* indicates questions that require the informed consent of the client.

AGENCY ID

--	--	--	--	--

SUPPORT PERIOD

Date commenced

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y

Date finished

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y

SUPPORT PERIOD ONGOING AT 30 JUNE 2006 Yes ☐ 1

CONSENT OBTAINED Yes ☐ 1 No ☐ 2

*** ALPHA CODE**

Letters of first name

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th

Letters of last name

M/F for male or female

• Where a name is not long enough please fill in any remaining squares with a 2.
For example, a male client called Ng Tien will have the alpha code G2 IE2 M.

• Where a part of the name is missing or unknown please substitute a 9.
For example, a female client known to you only as Jane will have the code AN 999 F.

• Do not count hyphens, apostrophes, blank spaces or any other such character as a letter of the alphabet.

*** DATE OF BIRTH OF CLIENT**

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y
day unknown		month unknown		estimated year			

1 Sex of client

female ☐ 1

male ☐ 2

2 Person(s) receiving assistance

please tick one box only

WITH child(ren)

person with child(ren) ☐ 3

couple with child(ren) ☐ 4

WITHOUT child(ren)

person alone or with unrelated person(s) ☐ 1

couple without child(ren) ☐ 2

OTHER

please specify _____ ☐ 999

3 Source of referral/information

please tick one box only

self ☐ 13

family/friends ☐ 16

school/other education institution ☐ 2

community services department ☐ 3

police/legal unit/correction institution ☐ 17

health services ☐ 18

psychiatric unit ☐ 7

telephone/crisis referral agency ☐ 8

SAAP agency/worker ☐ 9

other government department ☐ 10

other non-government organisation ☐ 11

other (please specify) _____ ☐ 999

don't know/no information ☐ 0

IF CONSENT IS NOT OBTAINED PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 15

COMPLETED FORMS WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

If you have any problems completing this form please telephone the SAAP NDCA hotline on 1800 627 191 or email ndca@aihw.gov.au

★ 4 Country of birth of client

Australia ☐ 1other (please specify) _____ ☐

★ 5 Does the client identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

no ☐ 1yes, Aboriginal ☐ 2yes, Torres Strait Islander ☐ 3yes, both ☐ 4

★ 6 Presenting reasons for seeking assistance

please tick as many circles as apply

Interpersonal relationships

time out from family/other situation ☐ 2relationship/family breakdown ☐ 3interpersonal conflict ☐ 4sexual abuse ☐ 7domestic/family violence ☐ 6physical/emotional abuse ☐ 5

Financial

gambling ☐ 20budgeting problems ☐ 23rent too high ☐ 24other financial difficulty ☐ 21

Accommodation

overcrowding issues ☐ 27eviction/asked to leave ☐ 25emergency accommodation ended ☐ 11previous accommodation ended ☐ 26

Health

mental health issues ☐ 28problematic drug/alcohol/substance use ☐ 10psychiatric illness ☐ 13other health issues ☐ 29

Other reasons

gay/lesbian/transgender issues ☐ 30recently left institution ☐ 12recent arrival to area with no means of support ☐ 14itinerant ☐ 15other (please specify) _____ ☐ 999don't know/no information ☐ 0

★ 7 Main presenting reason for seeking assistance

please write only ONE code number from Question 6

eg 0 2 7

★ 8 Main income source before and after support

please tick one box only in each column

Before After

No income

no income ☐ 1 ☐registered/awaiting benefit ☐ 2 ☐

Government payments

newstart ☐ 4 ☐youth allowance ☐ 33 ☐community development employment project (CDEP) ☐ 8 ☐ABSTUDY ☐ 31 ☐Austudy payment for students ☐ 28 ☐aged 25 years and over ☐ 12 ☐disability support pension ☐ 13 ☐age pension ☐ 12 ☐parenting payment ☐ 34 ☐DVA payment (pension or support) ☐ 35 ☐other type of allowance or benefit ☐ 36 ☐

Other income

workcover/compensation ☐ 19 ☐maintenance/child support ☐ 20 ☐wages/salary/own business ☐ 21 ☐spouse/partner's income ☐ 22 ☐other (please specify) _____ ☐ 999 ☐client left without providing any information 98 ☐don't know ☐ 99 ☐

★ 9 Labour force status before and after support

please tick one box only in each column

Before After

employed full time ☐ 1 ☐

(35 hours per week or more)

employed part time ☐ 2 ☐

(less than 35 hours per week)

unemployed (looking for work) ☐ 4 ☐not in labour force (see manual) ☐ 5 ☐client left without providing any information 98 ☐don't know ☐ 99 ☐

★ 10 Student status before and after support

please tick one box only in each column

Before After

not a student ☐ 1 ☐primary/secondary school student ☐ 2 ☐post-secondary student/employment training ☐ 3 ☐client left without providing any information 98 ☐don't know ☐ 99 ☐

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*** 11 Type of house/dwelling immediately before and after this support period**

please tick one box only in each column

Before After

Improvised dwelling/sleeping rough

- improvised dwelling/car/tent/squat ☐ 1 ☐
- street/park/in the open ☐ 2 ☐

House/dwelling

- house/flat ☐ 3 ☐
- caravan ☐ 4 ☐
- boarding/rooming house ☐ 5 ☐
- hostel/hotel/motel ☐ 6 ☐

Institutional setting

- hospital ☐ 7 ☐
- psychiatric institution ☐ 8 ☐
- prison/youth training centre ☐ 9 ☐
- other institutional setting ☐ 10 ☐

client left without providing any information 98 ☐

don't know ☐ 99 ☐

*** 12 Type of tenure (legal right to occupy a dwelling) immediately before and after this support period**

please tick one box only in each column

Before After

SAAP/CAP funded accommodation

- SAAP/CAP crisis/short term accommodation (including THM crisis) ☐ 1 ☐
- SAAP/CAP medium/long term accommodation ☐ 2 ☐
- other SAAP/CAP funded accommodation (eg hostel, motel etc) ☐ 3 ☐

Other no tenure

- institutional setting ☐ 4 ☐
- improvised dwelling/sleeping rough ☐ 5 ☐
- other (no tenure) (please specify) ☐ 6 ☐

Tenure

- purchasing/purchased own home ☐ 7 ☐
- private rental ☐ 8 ☐
- public housing rental ☐ 9 ☐
- community housing rental (including THM transitional) ☐ 10 ☐
- rent-free accommodation ☐ 11 ☐
- boarding ☐ 12 ☐

client left without providing any information 98 ☐

don't know ☐ 99 ☐

*** 13 Who was the client living with immediately before and after this support period?**

please tick one box only in each column

Before After

- alone ☐ 10 ☐
- with both parents ☐ 1 ☐
- with one parent and parent's spouse/partner ☐ 2 ☐
- with one parent ☐ 3 ☐
- with foster family ☐ 4 ☐
- with relatives/friends temporary ☐ 16 ☐
- with relatives/friends long-term ☐ 17 ☐
- with spouse/partner ☐ 7 ☐
- with spouse/partner and child(ren) ☐ 8 ☐
- alone with child(ren) ☐ 9 ☐
- living with other unrelated persons ☐ 13 ☐
- other (please specify) ☐ 999 ☐
- client left without providing any information 98 ☐
- don't know ☐ 99 ☐

*** 14 Location of client's last home**

suburb/town

state

postcode

overseas ☐ 9998

don't know/no information ☐ 0

15 Was a case management plan agreed to by the end of the support period?

please tick one box only

- yes ☐ 1 ☐ [Go to question 16](#)
- no, client did not agree to one ☐ 4 ☐ [Go to question 17](#)
- no, support period too short ☐ 5 ☐ [Go to question 17](#)
- no, other (please specify) ☐ 6 ☐ [Go to question 17](#)

16 To what extent were the client's case management goals achieved by the end of the support period?

please tick one box only

- not at all ☐ 1
- some ☐ 2
- most ☐ 3
- all ☐ 4

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17 Support to client

please tick as many circles as apply

	Needs identified by worker	Provided	Referral arranged	
Housing/accommodation				
SAAP/CAP accommodation (including THMs and other SAAP managed properties)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	43
assistance to obtain/maintain short-term accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	39
assistance to obtain/maintain medium-term accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	49
assistance to obtain/maintain independent housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	42
Financial/employment				
assistance to obtain/maintain government allowance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	37
employment and training assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	5
financial assistance/material aid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	6
financial counselling and support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	7
Personal support				
incest/sexual assault support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	45
domestic/family violence support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	46
family/relationship support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	47
emotional support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	48
assistance with problem gambling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	36
General support/advocacy				
living skills/personal development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	14
assistance with legal issues/court support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	25
advice/information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	27
retrieval/storage/removal of personal belongings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	29
advocacy/liaison on behalf of client	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	30
Specialist services				
psychological services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	12
specialist counselling services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	44
psychiatric services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	13
pregnancy support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	33
family planning support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	34
drug/alcohol support or intervention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	16
physical disability services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	17
intellectual disability services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	18
culturally specific services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	19
interpreter services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	20
assistance with immigration services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	38
health/medical services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	26
Basic support				
meals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	21
laundry/shower facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	22
recreation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	23
transport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	24
other (please specify) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	999
other (please specify) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	998

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If you have any problems completing this form please telephone the SAAP NDCA hotline on 1800 627 191 or email ndca@aihw.gov.au

18 If SAAP/CAP accommodation was provided (including THMs and other SAAP managed properties) please provide details

Note: If the client had more than 12 accommodation periods in this support period, you should photocopy a blank copy of this page, complete details, and staple it to this page.

<p>1 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p>7 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>
<p>2 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p>8 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>
<p>3 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p>9 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>
<p>4 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p>10 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>
<p>5 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p>11 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>
<p>6 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>	<p>12 Type of accommodation <i>please tick one box only</i></p> <p>crisis/short term <input type="checkbox"/> 7</p> <p>medium/long term <input type="checkbox"/> 8</p> <p>other SAAP <input type="checkbox"/> 9</p>	<p>Date of accommodation <i>please complete all boxes</i></p> <p>Start <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p> <p>Finish <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></p>

COMPLETED FORMS WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

If you have any problems completing this form please telephone the SAAP NDCA hotline on 1800 627 191 or email ndca@aihw.gov.au

- Accompanying children should be recorded on only one of the parent/guardian forms
- Complete a separate client form for each child aged 18 years and over

*** 19 ALPHA CODE FOR ACCOMPANYING CHILD(REN)**

- For short names fill in with 2's.
- For missing names fill in with 9's.

*** DATE OF BIRTH OF CHILD(REN)**

- Complete date as best you can.
- If day unknown, tick box "day unknown".
- If month unknown, tick box "month unknown".
- If year unknown, provide best estimate and tick box "estimated year".

Letters of first name: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

Letters of last name: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

M/F for male or female: ☐ male ☐ female

D D M M Y Y Y Y

☐ day unknown ☐ month unknown ☐ estimated year

Letters of first name: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

Letters of last name: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

M/F for male or female: ☐ male ☐ female

D D M M Y Y Y Y

☐ day unknown ☐ month unknown ☐ estimated year

20 Sex of child(ren)

female ☐ 1
male ☐ 2

female ☐ 1
male ☐ 2

*** 21 Country of birth of the child(ren)**

Australia ☐ 1
other (please specify) ☐

Australia ☐ 1
other (please specify) ☐

*** 22 Is the child of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?**

no ☐ 1
yes, Aboriginal ☐ 2
yes, Torres Strait Islander ☐ 3
yes, both ☐ 4

no ☐ 1
yes, Aboriginal ☐ 2
yes, Torres Strait Islander ☐ 3
yes, both ☐ 4

23 Support to child(ren)

no assistance ☐ 1

☐ 1

Indicate above if no assistance was given or tick as many circles below as apply

Accommodation

SAAP/CAP accommodation (including THMs and other SAAP managed properties)

School liaison/child care

school liaison

child care

Personal support

help with behavioural problems

sexual/physical abuse support

skills education

structured play/skill development

General support/advocacy

access arrangements

advice/information

advocacy

Specialist services

specialist counselling

culturally specific services

health/medical services

Basic support

meals

showers/hygiene

recreation

transport

other (please specify) _____

other (please specify) _____

Needs identified by worker

Provided

Referral arranged

Needs identified by worker

Provided

Referral arranged

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If you have any problems completing this form please telephone the SAAP NDCA hotline on 1800 627 191 or email ndca@aihw.gov.au

Note: If the client had more than 5 accompanying children in a support period, you should photocopy a blank copy of this page, complete details, and staple it to this page.

Letters of first name	Letters of last name	M/F for male or female	day unknown	month unknown	estimated year
1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th	1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th	<input type="checkbox"/> male <input type="checkbox"/> female	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Letters of first name	Letters of last name	M/F for male or female	day unknown	month unknown	estimated year
1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th	1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th	<input type="checkbox"/> male <input type="checkbox"/> female	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Letters of first name	Letters of last name	M/F for male or female	day unknown	month unknown	estimated year
1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th	1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th	<input type="checkbox"/> male <input type="checkbox"/> female	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
female <input type="checkbox"/> 1	female <input type="checkbox"/> 1	female <input type="checkbox"/> 1	no <input type="checkbox"/> 1	yes, Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> 2	yes, Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/> 3
male <input type="checkbox"/> 2	male <input type="checkbox"/> 2	male <input type="checkbox"/> 2	yes, both <input type="checkbox"/> 4		
Australia <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Australia <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Australia <input type="checkbox"/> 1			
other (please specify) <input type="text"/>	other (please specify) <input type="text"/>	other (please specify) <input type="text"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1			
Needs identified by worker	Provided	Referral arranged	Needs identified by worker	Provided	Referral arranged
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 21	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 21
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 4
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 3
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 24	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 24
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 17	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 17
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 22	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 22
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 15	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 15
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 18	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 18
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 23	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 23
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 10	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 10
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 19	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 19
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 11	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 11
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 12	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 12
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 13	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 13
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 14	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 14
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 999	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 999
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 998	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> 998

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RETURNING FORMS TO THE NDCA

- In the first week of each month, send the forms of *clients who have left the agency in the last month* to the NDCA in the prepaid envelope provided.
- **Forms should reach the NDCA by the 15th of each month.**
- Include a completed Form Return Sheet with your forms. If no clients left your agency in the last month record **zero** forms to return on the Form Return Sheet. This ensures that your agency is counted as participating in the National Data Collection. The NDCA is required to notify State/Territory funding departments of agencies that do not return forms (or Form Return Sheets) each month.

30 JUNE 2005 AND 31 DECEMBER 2005

- In the first week of July 2005 and in the first week of January 2006, you should notify the NDCA of clients who are still being supported as at 30 June 2005 and 31 December 2005.
- For clients who are ongoing at 30 June 2005, refer to the *July 2005 Transfer Guide* and transfer the information from the old 2004–2005 form to the new 2005–2006 form. Return the old form to the NDCA along with the forms of *clients who have left your agency in the last month*. Retain the new form in your agency until the client has finished his/her support period.
- For ongoing clients at 31 December – use the December Form Return Sheet and note in the box provided the number of clients being supported on 31 December 2005. It is important to send in a December Form Return Sheet even if you did not have any client forms to remit or you had no ongoing clients.

If you do not need the materials sent to you, please return them in the NDCA Reply Paid envelope.

Appendix 7: Percentage of YP⁴ participants using other services at the time of interview (Now) and in the year prior to interview (Past)

Service	Now	Past
Financial counselling	4%	5%
Parenting support service	2%	2%
Childcare	1%	1%
Lifeline or other telephone service	2%	9%
Neighbourhood house/community centre	3%	9%
Gambling support service	0%	1%
Consumer or tenancy service	3%	7%
Personal development supports	7%	10%
Gender specific service	2%	6%
Ethno-specific service	0%	2%
Disability service	0%	2%
Other ⁶¹	5%	6%

Source: YP⁴ zero-month interviews (*n* = 135)

⁶¹ Responses included emergency relief, education, corrections, crisis services, WorkCover, and welfare services.

Appendix 8: Services waited for by YP^d participants in the year prior to interview

Services listed by participants	Per cent of responses	Waiting time for services			
		Hours	Days	Months	Years
HOUSING SERVICES (29 responses)⁶²					
Housing	65%		7–42 days	2–6 months	'years'; still waiting; 1 year, 1 month (still waiting)
Public housing	21%			3–18 months	1 – 4 years
Accommodation	7%		7–14 days		
Transitional housing	3%			2 months	
Youth housing	3%		14 days		
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (26 responses)					
Centrelink	54%	0.75–1.75 hours	2–14 days	1–2 months	Ongoing for a year
Job Network	39%	Hours	1–21 days	1 month	
Employment	8%		21 days		
HEALTH SERVICES (15 responses)⁶³					
Dental services	27%			1–4 months	
Mental health services	20%		10–14 days	8 months	
Health services	13%		2 days		Still waiting
Doctor	13%		7 days		
Health (Specialist services)	7%			2 months	
Hospital	7%		2 days for emergency		
Counselling	7%			1 month	
CATT Team	7%	Hours (did not follow up)			
DRUG/ALCOHOL SERVICES (8 responses)⁶⁴	100%		7–21 days	1–4 months	
WELFARE SERVICES (7 responses)⁶⁵	100%	Hours	2–4 days; weeks		
OTHER SERVICES (10 responses)					
PSP	40%			1–3 months	
Legal	10%				Still waiting
WorkCover	10%			2 months	
Financial counselling	10%		35 days		
TAFE	10%				Nearly a year
Food vouchers	10%			3 months	
Relief grant	10%		42 days		

Source: YP^d zero-month interviews (*n* = 66)

⁶² No waiting time was given for two of the responses.

⁶³ No waiting time was given for one of the responses.

⁶⁴ No waiting time was given for one of the responses.

⁶⁵ Two responses included "nothing available".

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Legislation

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987

Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994