

# Improving outcomes for homeless jobseekers: YP<sup>4</sup> participant outcomes by amount of case management service received

Marty Grace  
Peter Gill  
2008

Joining up services for young homeless jobseekers



## YP<sup>4</sup> outcome evaluation series

### Improving outcomes for homeless jobseekers: YP<sup>4</sup> participant outcomes by amount of case management service received

Marty Grace  
Senior Lecturer  
School of Social Sciences  
Institute for Community Engagement and Policy Alternatives  
Victoria University

Peter Gill  
YP<sup>4</sup> Research and Evaluation Officer  
University of Melbourne

2008  
Victoria University, Melbourne  
ISBN: 978-1-86272-682-6

## Executive summary

This report focuses on outcomes for YP<sup>4</sup> participants who were offered joined up services delivered by YP<sup>4</sup> case managers. The YP<sup>4</sup> executive requested this report to explore whether the amount of case management service received by participants made any difference to participants' employment and accommodation outcomes. During the service delivery phase of the YP<sup>4</sup> trial, participants' case managers reported quarterly on the level of service (the number of contacts) that participants received. For this report, the number of contacts with case managers was examined in relation to the key outcomes of the YP<sup>4</sup> project, as assessed by analysis of YP<sup>4</sup> interviews and Centrelink administrative data.

This study found that the amount of service received significantly affected key participant outcomes. In particular, participants who had greater contact with their YP<sup>4</sup> case managers had better access to Centrelink services and education and training, and were more likely to find and maintain employment. With higher levels of employment, these participants were also more likely to find suitable accommodation, particularly in the private rental market. Participants with greater contact with their case managers were less reliant on financial assistance from Centrelink, and less likely to require no-rent accommodation. In terms of participant health and well-being, greater contact with a case manager resulted in a significant reduction in the proportion of people in poor health, although it did not improve people's health and wellbeing beyond an average status. Overall the effects of greater amounts of service were most evident in the area of employment. Participation in employment was also directly related to improved participant accommodation status, and financial independence.

In terms of the optimal level or amount of service, the results indicate that more than 20 contacts were associated with improvements in key outcome areas. As the number of contacts moved beyond 20, greater improvements were evident, particularly in employment. More service predicted improved employment outcomes including both finding and maintaining employment, despite the majority of participants reporting having faced barriers to employment.

These findings support the idea that developing an ongoing, supportive relationship with a case manager significantly improves outcomes for homeless jobseekers.

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank:

- YP<sup>4</sup> participants who have generously given us access to the details of their lives
- Louise Coventry, YP<sup>4</sup> trial manager, for her patient and supportive coordination of a highly complex trial
- Deb Batterham, Lucie Micek, and Chelsea Cornell for their contributions to the YP<sup>4</sup> outcome evaluation process
- Centrelink social workers who conducted interviews with YP<sup>4</sup> participants, especially Kath Tointon, Philomena Saw, Sally Weir, Fiona Pieterston, Rosanne Jansz, Margaret Buchanan, Carlee Prider, Jessica Tems, Des Algin, and José Abalo for their leadership roles in coordinating and conducting interviews
- Those who have provided additional data including Chris Talbot and Janie Davey from Centrelink
- Hanover Welfare Services, the auspice for the YP<sup>4</sup> trial
- The other trial partner organisations - the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Melbourne Citymission and Loddon Mallee Housing Services
- The government departments and agencies that support and fund YP<sup>4</sup>: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations; Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; Centrelink; Department of Victorian Communities; Department of Human Services (Victoria)
- The philanthropic trusts which support YP<sup>4</sup> especially the William Angliss Foundation
- Roger Wilkins, Yi-Ping Tseng and David Black from the YP<sup>4</sup> financial evaluation team who each provided support, helpful advice and/or contributed to data analysis
- YP<sup>4</sup> Ethics and Evaluation Advisory Group members for their advice and support
- The Victorian Government's Community Support Fund which provides funding for the YP<sup>4</sup> outcome evaluation
- Whirlwind Print for the donation of graphic design services

# Table of Contents

Executive summary	i
Acknowledgments	ii
Table of Contents	1
List of Figures	2
List of Tables	3
List of Appendices	3
Introduction	4
Service delivery	4
Service delivery principles	6
Service delivery – the reality	7
YP <sup>4</sup> J Group participants	10
Centrelink data	10
Twenty-four months interviews	11
Key outcome indicators	12
YP <sup>4</sup> Outcomes by amount of service received	13
Affordability of current accommodation	13
Suitability of housing	14
Financial support to maintain housing	17
Education completed in past year	18
Extent of services meeting participants' needs	20
Participants' health status	21
Current assessment of wellbeing	22
Employment and barriers to employment	23
Summary	27
Appendices	30
References	54

## List of figures

Figure 1: Reported affordability of current accommodation by number of contacts with YP <sup>4</sup> case manager	14
Figure 2: Reported suitability of housing by number of contacts with YP <sup>4</sup> case manager	15
Figure 3: Mean number of days in private rental accommodation (past 12 months) by number of contacts with case manager	16
Figure 4: Mean number of days in no-rent accommodation (past 12 months) by number of contacts with case manager	17
Figure 5: Financial support to maintain housing by number of contacts with YP <sup>4</sup> case manager	18
Figure 6: Education undertaken (yes/no) in the past year by number of contacts with a YP <sup>4</sup> case manager	19
Figure 7: Mean number of days spent in education or training in the past 12 months	20
Figure 8: Extent of services meeting participants' needs by number of contacts with YP <sup>4</sup> case manager (percentages)	21
Figure 9: Participants' health status by number of contacts with YP <sup>4</sup> case manager	22
Figure 10: Current assessment of wellbeing by number of contacts with YP <sup>4</sup> case manager (percentage)	23
Figure 11: Barriers to employment by number of contacts with YP <sup>4</sup> case manager	24
Figure 12: Types of barriers to employment faced by YP <sup>4</sup> participants in percentages	25
Figure 13: Proportion of total income derived from employment by contact with a case manager	26
Figure 14: Total income from employment over the past 12 months by number of case manager contacts	27
Figure 15: Participants' age at trial entry by number of case manager contacts (in percentages)	31
Figure 16: Gender by case manager contacts	32
Figure 17: Percentage of participants with dependants	33
Figure 18: Participants' education levels by case manager contacts	34
Figure 19: Participants disclosing a criminal history by case manager contacts	35
Figure 20: ATSI status by case manager contacts	36

## List of tables

Table 1:	Number and percentage of participants in each contact level group	11
Table 2:	Final Centrelink data participant numbers by contact with a case manager	12
Table 3:	Final 24 months interviews participant numbers by contact with a case manager	12

## List of appendices

Appendix A:	Profile of participants by number of case manager contacts	31
Appendix B:	Information and general consent form	37
Appendix C:	Consent to be interviewed	41
Appendix D:	Annual interview schedule	42
Appendix E:	YP <sup>4</sup> Supplementary participant interview schedule	52

## Introduction

YP<sup>4</sup> is a trial of joined up services for young people experiencing both homelessness and unemployment. The trial was initiated by Hanover Welfare Services in partnership with Melbourne Citymission, Brotherhood of St Laurence and Loddon Mallee Housing Services in 2005 in response to the fragmentation of programs and services, an increase in the complexity of response required by service users, and the narrow program-driven approach of some program administrators. Recruitment of participants to the trial commenced in January 2005 and concluded in January 2006. Service delivery was offered until June 2007, meaning that participants were each offered between 18 months and 2.5 years of service delivery, depending on when they joined the trial. The trial partners, on the basis of their long experience in service delivery for people experiencing homelessness, believed that two years of service delivery would be necessary to assist people experiencing both homelessness and unemployment to achieve the outcomes they desired. They further believed in the importance of medium-term follow-up in order to gauge the impact of service delivery.

'Young people' is usually understood to include those beyond childhood and up to 25 years of age. However, the agencies that initiated YP<sup>4</sup> decided that the project should focus on the group considered as young by those services: people in the first one-third of their expected working lives. In accordance with this understanding, the eligible age group for YP<sup>4</sup> was 18 to 35 years. In practice, 75 per cent of participants were aged 25 years and under.

## Service delivery

YP<sup>4</sup> compared two different ways of delivering services for young people without a job or a stable home. At their point of entry to the trial, participants were randomly assigned to receive either joined up services (J group) or standard services (S group). Importantly, the services available to YP<sup>4</sup> participants were broadly similar regardless of whether they received joined up services or standard services. The mode of service delivery was the key difference between groups. This report includes only J Group, the participants who were offered joined up services delivered by a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager, because of the desire to focus on the impact of the amount of service received.



YP<sup>4</sup>s joined up service delivery centred on intensive client-centred case management, involving direct provision of a range of services as well as the brokering of additional services, all through a single point of contact. Standard service delivery involves clients in complex circumstances receiving multiple and potentially uncoordinated services from different providers. In order to access each of the required services, clients are expected to comply with the administrative requirements of each service. They would be expected to reframe their needs to fit the eligibility criteria of services. Most likely, they would be required to accommodate program-centric processes such as registering themselves on a waiting list which is constructed in a manner unrelated to client need, providing and re-providing up-to-date contact details (which is particularly difficult during episodes of homelessness), and telling and retelling a long and potentially painful story as part of an assessment procedure. Any or all of these requirements may need to be met before even a single service is delivered. Additional problems may then be experienced in accessing multiple services, each of which may have a different level of compatibility with other services. While barriers to service access as described here may reflect a worst-case scenario, and it is true that standard forms of service delivery may also be coordinated and client-centred, YP<sup>4</sup>s sponsors would argue that the joining up of standard services tends to happen more as a result of luck (in, for example, finding a highly skilled case manager) than by design. It is important to note that participants receiving YP<sup>4</sup> case management were not necessarily exempt from meeting the administrative requirements that drive services. Rather, client need was explicitly privileged and compliance with programmatic and administrative requirements took second place. The following case study illustrates the complexity of accessing services, and how YP<sup>4</sup> case management worked.

### **Sam's story**

Sam is twenty years old, interested in computers and with a passion for music. After his parents separated, he lived with his father but his relationship with his father deteriorated and he left. Sam has a circle of friends and regularly 'couch surfs'. He spends most of his time with one friend and the friend's girlfriend, but he is sensitive enough to give them regular breaks. Sam is not interested in crisis accommodation or transitional housing. He previously accessed transitional housing with a youth drug agency and thinks this is 'not for him'. He cannot afford private rental housing and has no one in mind with whom he could share a place.

Through his Job Network provider, Sam was linked to a Work for the Dole project designing a web page for an environmental organisation. He is also registered with two recruitment agencies that both provide him with casual part time work in factories. Usually, he works as a storeman or in

data entry. Sam has been offered training in computers, administration and forklift driving but always responds that he does not want to work full time in those areas. When asked what areas of employment he wants to explore, he is not sure.

A few weeks ago, Sam had to move from his main place of living. He approached YP<sup>4</sup> for assistance. He had found someone with whom he was prepared to share and, together with the YP<sup>4</sup> case manager, they decided to use transitional housing for three months to create some time to find a suitable place, get together the things they would need to move into private rental and see how they get along and manage as housemates. This was possible because YP<sup>4</sup> has managed, with the assistance of the Victorian Office of Housing, to negotiate flexible access to transitional housing properties for YP<sup>4</sup> participants. Through the negotiations needed to arrange his accommodation, the YP<sup>4</sup> case manager discovered that Sam's dream was to gain employment in audio engineering. Together, they looked into courses and although Sam does not have the prerequisites to get into the course he wants to do, he is soon to start a short course that will give him an opportunity to showcase the skills he already has, gain some connections in the field, and confirm if this is the way he wants to go.

Things could have turned out differently for Sam without YP<sup>4</sup>. In the normal course of events, information about Sam's employment goals that arises in the course of receiving a different and unrelated service would be unlikely to be passed on and used to inform the delivery of other services. Also, because Sam receives services from diverse agencies (Work for the Dole, Job Network and two recruitment agencies), Sam must be careful not to forget to tell each agency everything that may be relevant about himself in case receiving one service disqualifies him from receiving another. He is also reliant on these agencies communicating well with each other. The YP<sup>4</sup> case manager can help to mediate this information sharing and ensure that each of the agencies is aware of the other and their respective roles in Sam's life. Finally, by establishing protocols and agreements to provide extra flexibility in accessing services, YP<sup>4</sup> can also facilitate access to housing – something that would be difficult to do alone.

Sam's story points to the value of inter-agency relationships - cooperation with other local services as well as government departments - not only from a case management perspective, but more systemically as well. The story also shows the value of the primary relationship between case manager and client - maintaining contact with participants is valuable, even if it is only tenuous. There is an ebb and flow in clients' lives, and many clients, like Sam, appreciate the continuity and consistency of a supportive YP<sup>4</sup> presence as this helps provide them with confidence to touch base when help is needed.

## Service delivery principles

Six principles underpinned YP<sup>4</sup> joined up case management. The best way to implement these principles was open to interpretation by each of the four service providers (Campbell, Horn and Nicholson 2003; Horn 2004):

1. Housing, employment and personal support must be interlocked and delivered as an integrated package of assistance.

2. The integration of housing, employment and personal support assistance must happen at every level, not just at the level of casework but also at systemic and structural levels.
3. Sustainable employment is understood as the over-arching goal, which must determine the way that other forms of support are provided.
4. It is relationships, and not transactions, that count.
5. Solutions must be locally specific, and joined up locally too.
6. Coordinated case management is the key and it must be well resourced enough to ensure individualised, timely and flexible responses.

## Service delivery – the reality

The implementation of the YP<sup>4</sup> joined up model has demonstrated what can be achieved with commitment, goodwill and persistence. It has also revealed barriers to service implementation that would need to be addressed in a broader roll out of this model. Comprehensive implementation occurred in regard to case management practices and key successes were in the area of relationships both between clients and case managers and between case managers and various other service providers. On the other hand, difficulties were especially apparent in funding arrangements, accommodating trial objectives within government policy frameworks and the receipt of concessions regarding compliance with program requirements (Coventry 2008).

In practice, YP<sup>4</sup> offered homeless jobseekers aged 18 to 35 years a single point of contact through case management to address employment, housing, educational and personal support goals in an integrated manner over a two-year period. The key elements of YP<sup>4</sup> case management remained explicitly client-centred, eschewing the rigidity of administrative requirements and program-centred logics and privileging the relationship between case manager and client. Case managers were generally well resourced and supported in their work, which meant for example, that case managers could access a flexible pool of resources on behalf of their clients, the provision of timely, individualised assistance to clients was prioritised, participants were supported to negotiate a pathway to employment, which could include various diverse options like mentoring, work experience and/or vocational training and the commitment to secure, affordable housing and a living wage was maintained, even though it could not always be delivered in full.

In 2006 and 2007 Fiona Gardner of La Trobe University facilitated a series of four critical reflection workshops for YP<sup>4</sup> case managers. Following these workshops, the four aspects of YP<sup>4</sup>'s service delivery model most valued by case managers became clear (Milne and Coventry 2008). They were, first, a longer, two-year timeframe for working with clients; second, the breadth of focus that case managers were able to take with their clients, incorporating a focus on employment, housing, health, and family connection as well as a range of other matters; third, having the capacity to work flexibly and creatively, without some of the traditional constraints associated with funded programs such as narrowly defined eligibility criteria, timeframes and outcomes; and fourth, the greater attention given to partnership with other service providers – a feature of the trial.

YP<sup>4</sup> sought to combine funding and other resources from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), Personal Support Program (PSP), Job Network, Job Placement Employment Training (JPET), and other programs and apply them more flexibly for young homeless jobseekers. However, this original vision, based on the idea that funds which were notionally allocated to differing government programs such as SAAP, PSP and JPET could be collapsed, pooled and then redeployed to assist those receiving the joined up service was not achieved. Instead, some additional, one-off funds were provided (in response to grant applications and over and above previously funded programs) to create a small pool of flexible brokerage funds that case managers could access on behalf of participants.

Some programmatic concessions were made for YP<sup>4</sup>. As would be expected for a trial, these concessions were made by exception rather than embedded into the programs. The process evaluation of YP<sup>4</sup>, led by Louise Coventry, provides details about the implementation and usefulness of these arrangements. The trial of these arrangements has important implications for future policy and program design for people experiencing both homelessness and unemployment. The programmatic concessions were:

- exclusive access rights to a small number of transitional housing properties in inner Melbourne;
- permissions to reduce the job search requirements of J group participants for the first twelve months of participation in YP<sup>4</sup> ;
- a reduced target for JPET clients in inner Melbourne to enable the funded worker to pursue extended work with YP<sup>4</sup> clients;

- opportunities to negotiate more flexible SAAP targets in recognition of the potential redeployment of SAAP funded staff to YP<sup>4</sup> (in three sites); and
- exclusive access to places in the Personal Support Program (in three sites) (Coventry 2008).

The permissions to reduce the job search requirements of J group participants for the first twelve months of participation in YP<sup>4</sup> ran into difficulties with the introduction of Welfare to Work, a significant federal government policy. A component of Welfare to Work, introduced during the period of trial recruitment, extended the obligations of jobseekers and increased the penalties applicable to those who did not meet their obligations. The significance, combined with the newness, of this policy initiative meant that government was unwilling to create exceptions to it. Thus, commitments made to participants in good faith following initial advice from government departments about the extent of participant obligations to government were effectively wound back and trial providers were forced to withdraw these commitments.

In summary, the YP<sup>4</sup> joined up model of services was ambitious and unable to be operationalised in full at systems level. In terms of case management practices, implementation was near complete. Priority was consistently given to building relationships with clients, understanding the diversity and complexity of the issues faced by clients and ensuring that a wider range of client needs were met than standard practice alone may have allowed. However, difficulties were also experienced in joining up funds, negotiating for flexibility and concessions from government departments and reducing administrative and procedural workloads (Coventry 2006).

## YP<sup>4</sup> J Group Participants

In total, there were 224 J group participants. This number does not include the nine participants who received services but withdrew their consent to participate in YP<sup>4</sup> research. Information regarding the amount of service received by each participant was collected from quarterly return surveys submitted by the participants' case managers. The number of contacts participants had with their case manager ranged between zero and 156 with a mean of 23.2 contacts (SD=27.5). In preparation for the analysis of outcomes by amount of service received, participants were divided into five groups depending on the amount of service they received. All five groups were roughly equal in size, that is, each group consisted of approximately 20 per cent of participants (see Table 1).

Table 1: Number and percentage of participants in each contact level group

Number of contacts	Participants	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0 contacts	45	20%	20%
1-5 contacts	39	17%	38%
6-20 contacts	43	19%	57%
21 - 40 contacts	48	21%	78%
41-156 contacts	49	22%	100%
Total	224	100%	

Source: YP<sup>4</sup> participant records

These groups could also be characterised by the period of time over which participants received case management. Those with 1 to 5 contacts received a brief intervention, those with 6 to 20 contacts received a medium term intervention (less than one year), and those with 21 or more contacts received long term intervention (more than one year).

This report draws on three data sources: the quarterly returns submitted by YP<sup>4</sup> case managers, Centrelink data, and YP<sup>4</sup> interviews. The two sources of participant outcome information, Centrelink data, and the YP<sup>4</sup> 24 months interviews, are presented together within this report.

## Centrelink data

Centrelink provided administrative data over the course of the YP<sup>4</sup> trial and consisted of the dollar amounts of financial support received, employment income received, and the costs of accommodation. It also

consisted of accommodation types and durations, and education and employment histories. With consent from participants this information was pooled into a data set and analysed with SPSS for Windows statistical software package. The focus of this analysis was to explore the effects of amount of service received on J group participant outcomes in key areas.

Of the 224 J Group participants, the Outcome Evaluation Team had Centrelink data for 196 individuals, of whom 138 were male and 58 were female (See Table 2).

Table 2: Final Centrelink data participant numbers by contact with a case manager

Number of contacts	Participants	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0 contacts	36	18%	18%
1-5 contacts	35	18%	36%
6-20 contacts	34	17%	53%
21 - 40 contacts	46	24%	77%
41-156 contacts	45	23%	100%
Total	196	100%	

Source: YP<sup>4</sup> Centrelink administrative data

## Twenty-four month interviews

The YP<sup>4</sup> outcome evaluation team selected key variables from interviews (see Appendix D for interview schedule) conducted with J Group participants twenty-four months after their commencement in the YP<sup>4</sup> project. As the response rate for the interviews was 72 per cent, rather than 100 per cent, the final number of participants available for analysis was 157 (see Table 3).

Table 3: Final 24 months interviews participant numbers by contact with a case manager

Number of contacts	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0 contacts	26	17%	17%
1-5 contacts	25	16%	32%
6-20 contacts	29	18%	51%
21 - 40 contacts	38	24%	75%
41-156 contacts	39	25%	100%
Total	157	100%	

Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four month interviews

As shown in Table 2, those participants with greater contact with their case managers were more likely to complete an interview and remain within the sample group. The 41-156 contacts had the highest twenty-four months interview response rate, while the zero contacts group had the lowest response rate.

## Key outcome indicators

As mentioned earlier, the variables selected from the Centrelink data set and the twenty-four months interview dataset as indicators of the YP<sup>4</sup> trial outcomes were:

- Affordability of current accommodation
- Suitability of housing
- Financial support to maintain housing
- Education completed in the past year
- Extent of services meeting participants' needs
- Participants' health status
- Current assessment of wellbeing
- Employment and barriers to employment



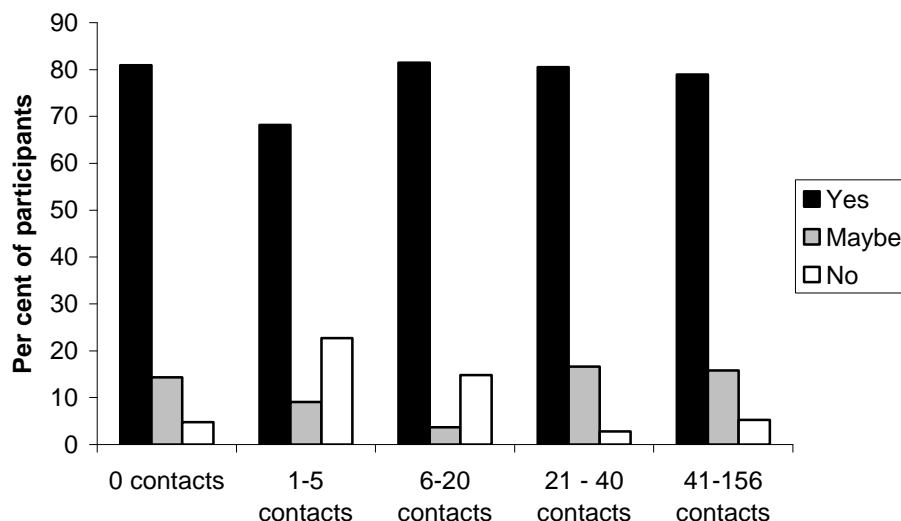
## YP<sup>4</sup> participant outcomes by amount of service received

The following graphs, tables and discussion provide detailed analysis in relation to participants' affordability of current accommodation, suitability of housing, financial support to maintain housing, education or training completed in the past year, the extent of services meeting participants' needs, participants' health status, well-being, employment, and barriers to employment. The number of case manager contacts received by each J group participant was recorded using the quarterly returns report data that was obtained from YP<sup>4</sup> case managers. Data regarding the key outcomes for J group participants was derived from two sources, YP<sup>4</sup> Centrelink administrative data, and YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months participant interviews.

### Affordability of current accommodation

As part of their 24 months interview, participants were asked to indicate whether they could afford their current accommodation. The perceived affordability of accommodation for each of the five contact groups is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Reported affordability of current accommodation by number of contacts with YP<sup>4</sup> case manager



Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four month interviews

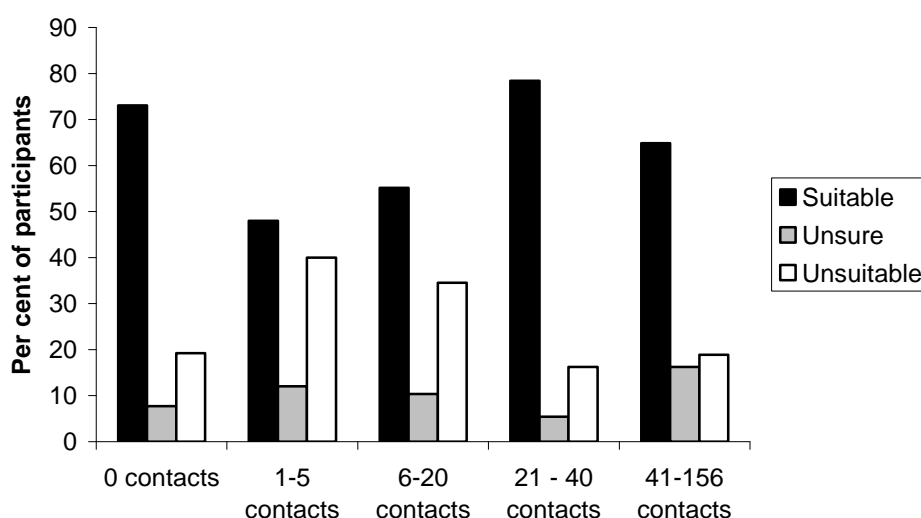
It was reported that 78 per cent of J group participants found their accommodation to be affordable at the time of their twenty-four months interview,

while about nine per cent found it unaffordable. Those participants with more than 20 contacts were less likely to perceive their current accommodation as unaffordable when compared with participants who had 1-19 contacts. The zero contact group's reported high levels of satisfaction may explain why they had not contacted their case manager for assistance. Overall, it was concluded that those participants with greater contact with their case manager (21 to 156 contacts) were more likely to be living in affordable accommodation.

## Suitability of housing

Participants were asked in the twenty-four months interview to rate the suitability of their present living arrangements. Figure 2 shows participants' ratings of housing suitability according to the number of contacts they had with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager.

Figure 2: Reported suitability of housing by number of contacts with YP<sup>4</sup> case manager



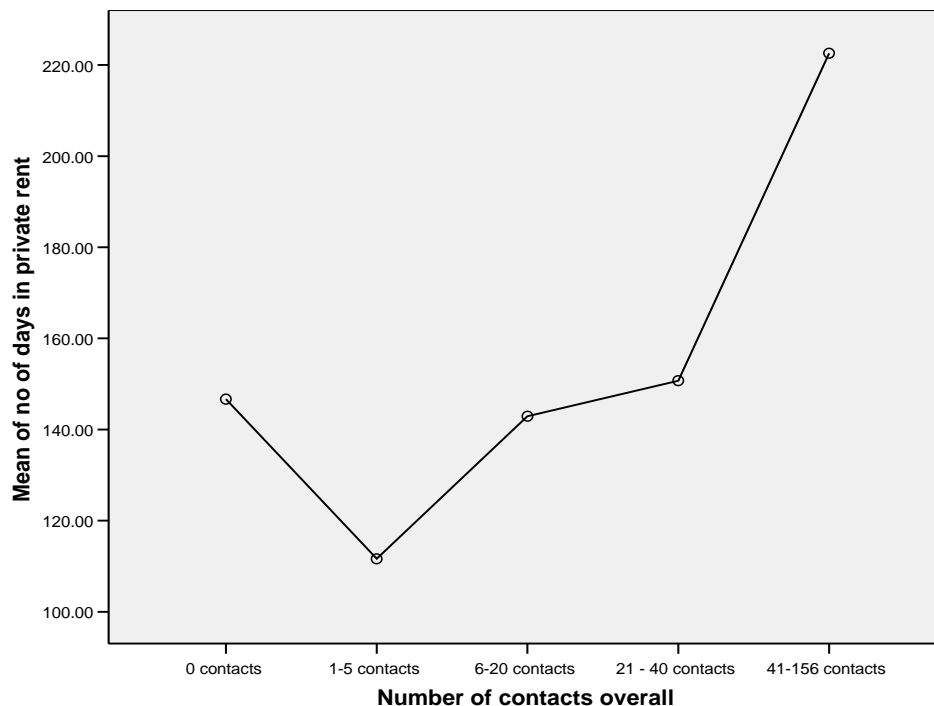
Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four month interviews

It was reported that 65% of J group participants found their accommodation to be suitable at the time of their twenty-four month interview, while 25% reported their accommodation to be unsuitable. As shown in figure 2, reported suitability increased and reported unsuitability decreased as the number of contacts with a case manager increased. The zero contact group's suitability ratings were similar to those receiving more than 20 contacts which may explain why they had not contacted their case manager for assistance. Overall, it could be concluded that

participants with more than 20 contacts with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager were most likely to be in suitable accommodation at the twenty-four month point of the trial.

The following figures present Centrelink data for the number of days over the past year J group participants spent in private rental accommodation (Figure 3) and no-rent accommodation (Figure 4).

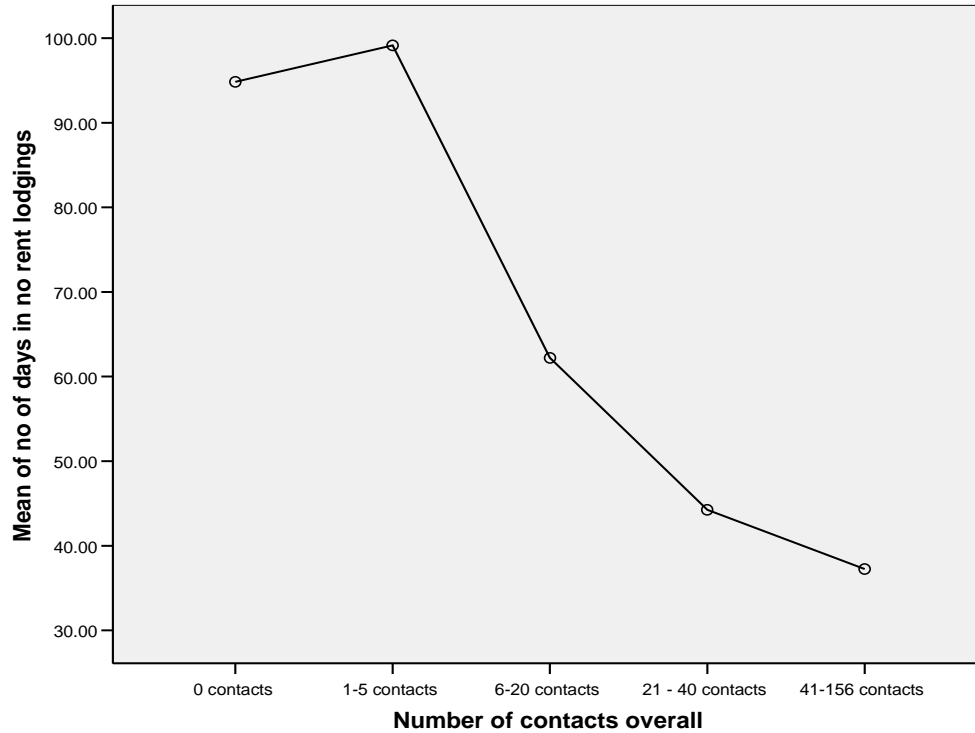
Figure 3: Mean number of days in private rental accommodation (past 12 months) by number of contacts with case manager



Source: YP<sup>4</sup> Centrelink administrative data

The Centrelink data provided further evidence of the link between the number of contacts with a case manager, and the suitability of participant accommodation. First, there was a statistically significant difference (ANOVA) between the five groups in the number of days (in the past 12 months) spent in private rental accommodation ( $p = .019$ ). It was the 41-156 contacts group who had significantly more days in private rental accommodation ( $M = 223$  days) than all of the other four groups ( $M = 147, 112, 143, 151$  days respectively). It was concluded that those participants who had greater contact with their case managers were significantly more likely to find rental accommodation in the private market.

Figure 4: Mean number of days in no-rent accommodation (past 12 months) by number of contacts with case manager



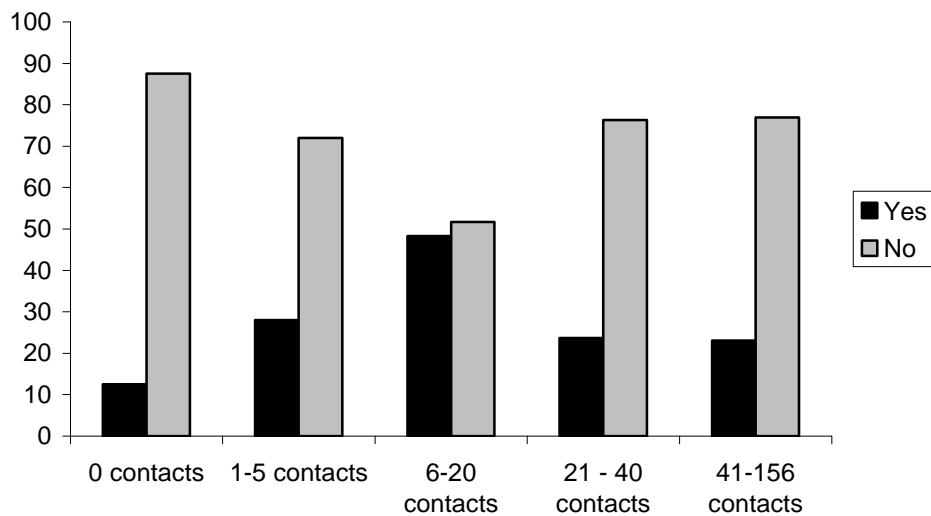
Source: YP<sup>4</sup> Centrelink administrative data

There was a statistically significant difference (ANOVA) between the five groups in the number of days (in the past 12 months) spent in no-rent accommodation (lodgings where no rent or board was paid) ( $p = .05$ ). It was the 21-40 and the 41-156 contacts groups who had significantly fewer days in no-rent accommodation ( $M = 37, 44$  days respectively) than all of the other three groups ( $M = 95, 99, 63$  days respectively). It was concluded that those participants who had more contact with their case managers were significantly less likely to be sleeping rough or dependent on friends and family for rent free accommodation.

## Financial support to maintain housing

Participants were asked whether they received any financial support to maintain their housing in the year prior to their twenty-four months interview. The results by group are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Financial support to maintain housing by number of contacts with YP<sup>4</sup> case manager



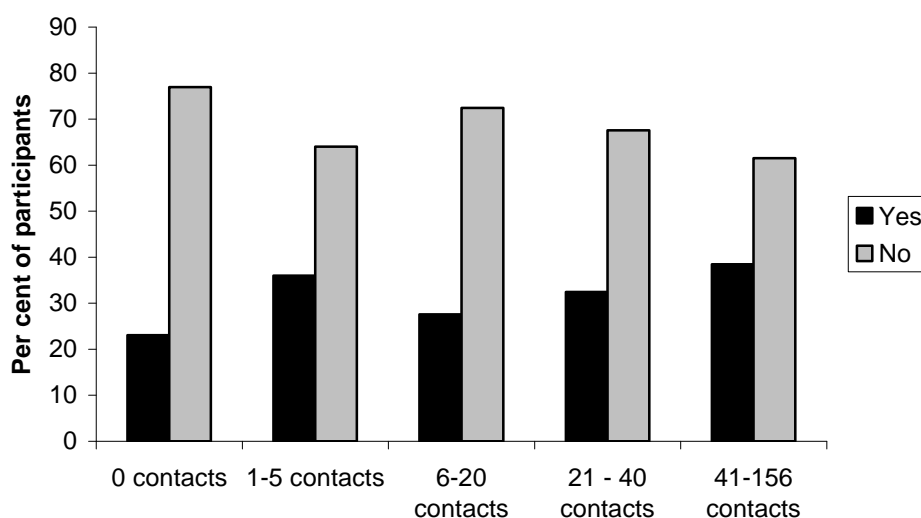
Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

Overall, 27 per cent of J group participants received financial support to maintain their housing in the past year. There was a statistically significant association (Chi Square) between the number of contacts received, and whether participants received financial support to maintain housing ( $p = .045$ ). Specifically, as can be seen in Figure 5, the proportion of participants receiving financial support for housing was very low with zero contact, then rising at 1-5 contacts, rising again to its peak at 6-20 contacts, before dropping significantly with more than 20 contacts. It was concluded that in the short to medium term, contact with a case manager enabled participants to access the financial support needed to establish accommodation. When contact with a case manager moved beyond this level, participants were more able to maintain their accommodation without financial assistance.

## Education completed in the past year

Participants were asked whether they had completed education or training in the year prior to the twenty-four months interview. Figure 6 displays participants' yes/no response to whether they had participated in education or training activities.

Figure 6: Education undertaken (yes/no) in the past year by number of contacts with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager

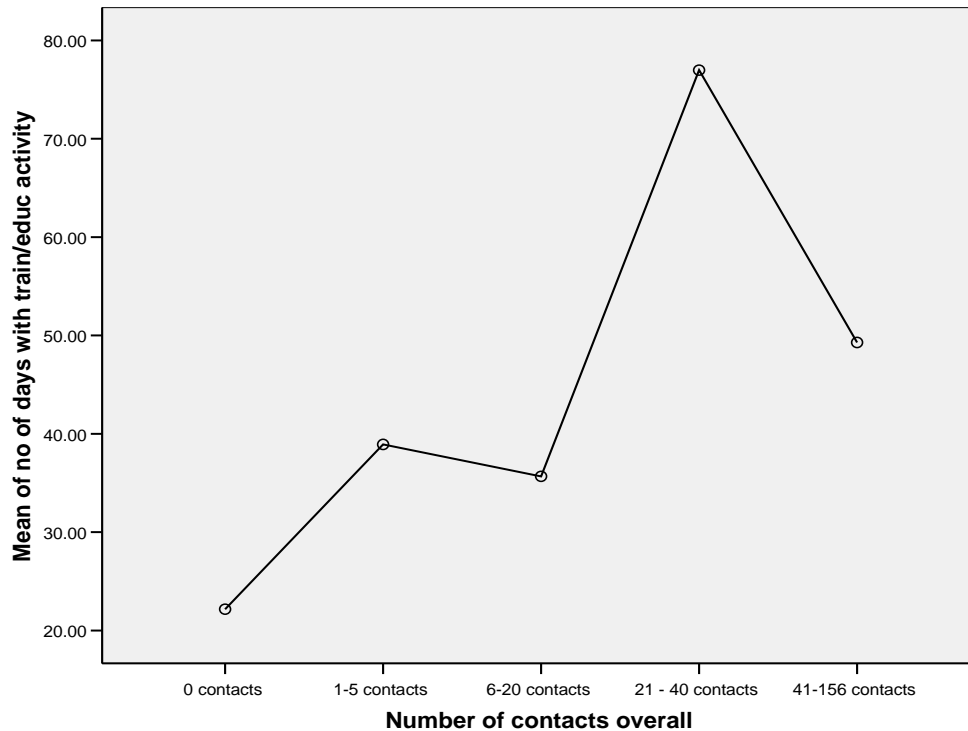


Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

Overall, 32 per cent of J group participants had completed some education or training in the past year. Those participants with no contact with a case manager were least likely to have completed some education (23%) when compared with those who had at least some contact (34%).

Figure 7 displays the mean number of days the participants from each group were involved in education or training (Centrelink data).

Figure 7: Mean number of days spent in education or training in the past 12 months



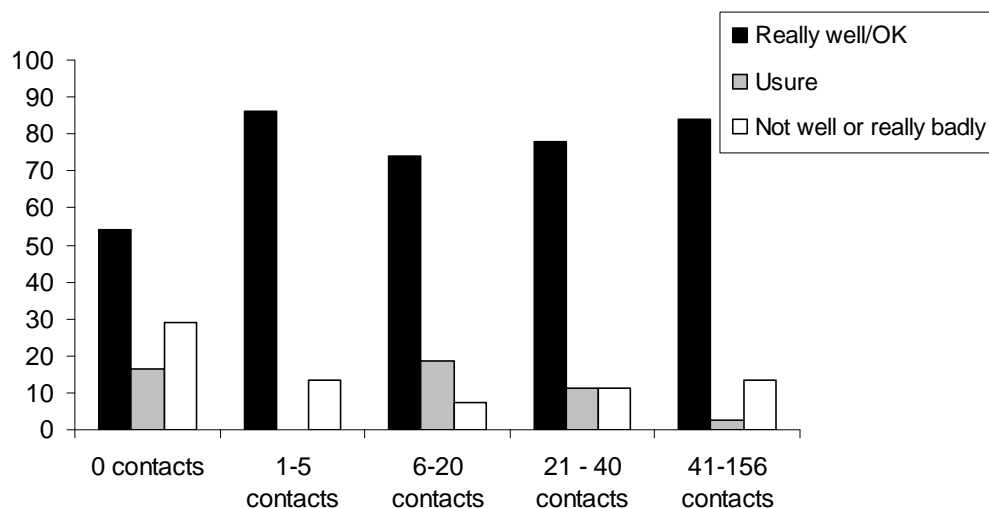
Source: YP<sup>d</sup> Centrelink administrative data

The Centrelink data (see Figure 7) revealed that there was a statistically significant difference (ANOVA) between the 5 groups in the mean number of days (in the past 12 months) spent in education or training ( $p = .019$ ). Specifically, the number of days spent in education or training increased as contact with a case manager increased, reaching its mean peak of 77 days for the 21-40 contacts group. It was concluded that greater contact with a case manager increased the likelihood that participants would persist with education or training after its commencement. In line with the employment data presented later in this report (see pages 28-31), this increased education or training resulted in participants being more likely to find employment and ultimately reducing their education or training needs (see 41-156 contacts group, Figure 7).

## Extent of services meeting participants' needs

In the twenty-four months interview, participants were asked to comment on the extent to which services were meeting their needs. Figure 8 illustrates J group participants' responses to this question by the number of contacts they had with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager.

Figure 8: Extent of services meeting participants' needs by number of contacts with YP<sup>4</sup> case manager (percentages)



Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

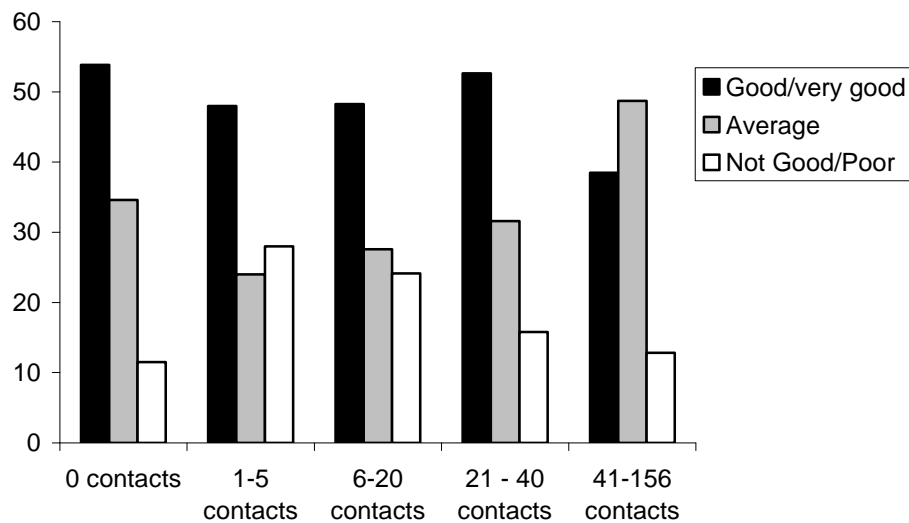
Overall, 76 per cent of J group participants reported having their service needs met really well or OK , while 14 per cent reported their needs were either not being met or being met really badly. Those participants who had no contact with their YP<sup>4</sup> case workers were most likely (29%) to report that the services they used in the past year did not meet their needs. On the other hand, participants who had some contact with a case manager reported much more positive experiences regarding the services they used, with 80 per cent of them reporting that services met their needs. It was concluded that the significant majority of J group participants were satisfied with the services they received, and in particular that having contact with a case manager assisted participants in accessing the services they required.



## Participants' health status

Participants were asked to rate their health at the twenty-four months interview. Figure 9 indicates participants' rating of their health by the number of contacts they had with a case manager.

Figure 9: Participants' health status by number of contacts with YP<sup>4</sup> case manager



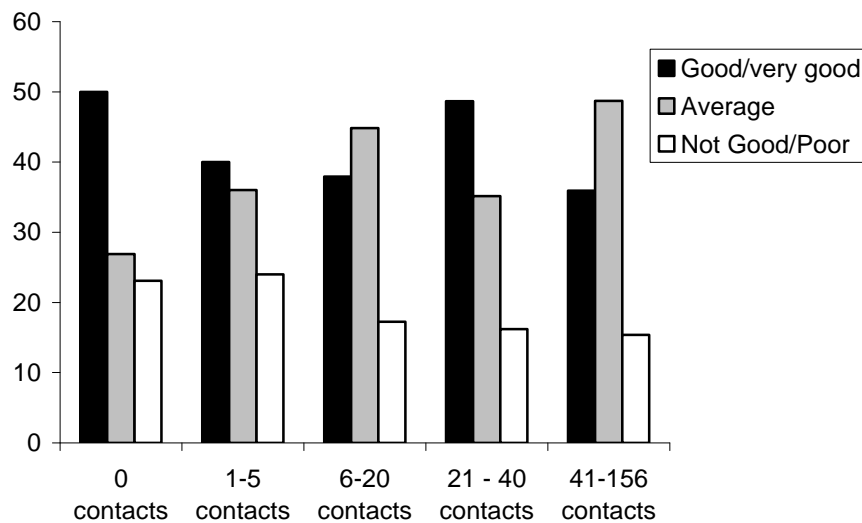
Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

These results showed that the zero contact group had best self-reported health status overall (see Figure 9). In the other four groups there was a decrease in reported poor health as the number of contacts with a case manager increased. In addition there was an increased likelihood that participants would report their health as average as the number of contacts with a case manager increased. It was concluded that increased contact with a case manager was effective in reducing the number of participants in poor health and increasing the number of participants in average health, but had little effect in achieving good or very good health. This trend suggested that case manager support helped improve people's poor health status such that participants were able to engage in employment, education, and training activities. Along with the positive health benefits that arise from engaging in these activities, it is likely that these new factors also created their own health strains (e.g. physical demands of work, hours, work concerns, rental concerns), the result being a high proportion of participants in the average health status category (see Figure 9, 41-156 contacts). It may be that achieving good or very good health is a much longer term project.

## Current assessment of wellbeing

Participants were asked in the twenty-four months interview to rate their own wellbeing. Their assessments of their own wellbeing are displayed in Figure 10 by the number of contacts with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager.

Figure 10: Current assessment of wellbeing by number of contacts with YP<sup>4</sup> case manager (percentage)



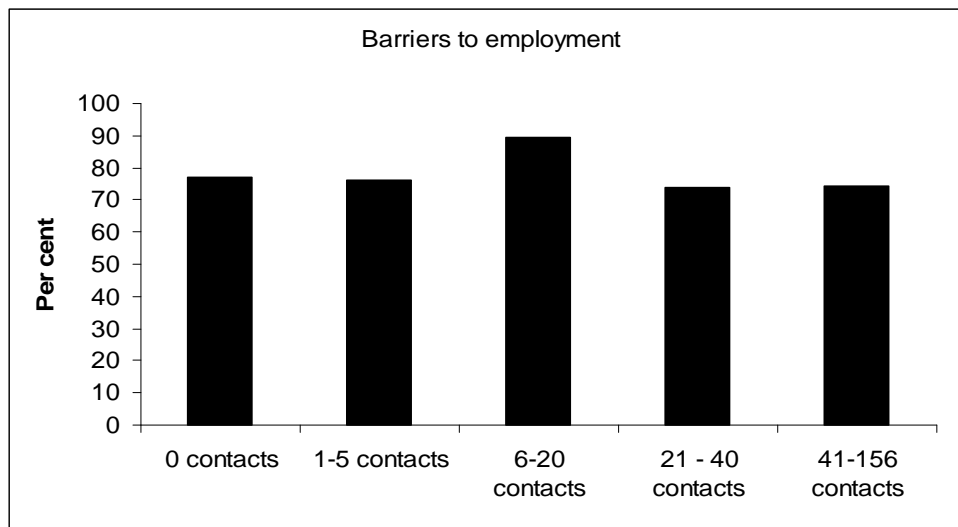
Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

Overall, 42% of participants reported their wellbeing as good or very good. Although group differences were not significant, there was a reduction in the proportion of participants reporting poor wellbeing as the number of contacts with a case manager increased. As with the health status data, results confirmed the high proportion of participants with average well-being with more than 41 contacts.

## Employment and barriers to employment

Participants were asked if they faced any barriers to gaining employment. Their responses were recorded in the first instance as either yes or no. These responses were mapped according to the number of contacts with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager and are presented in Figure 11.

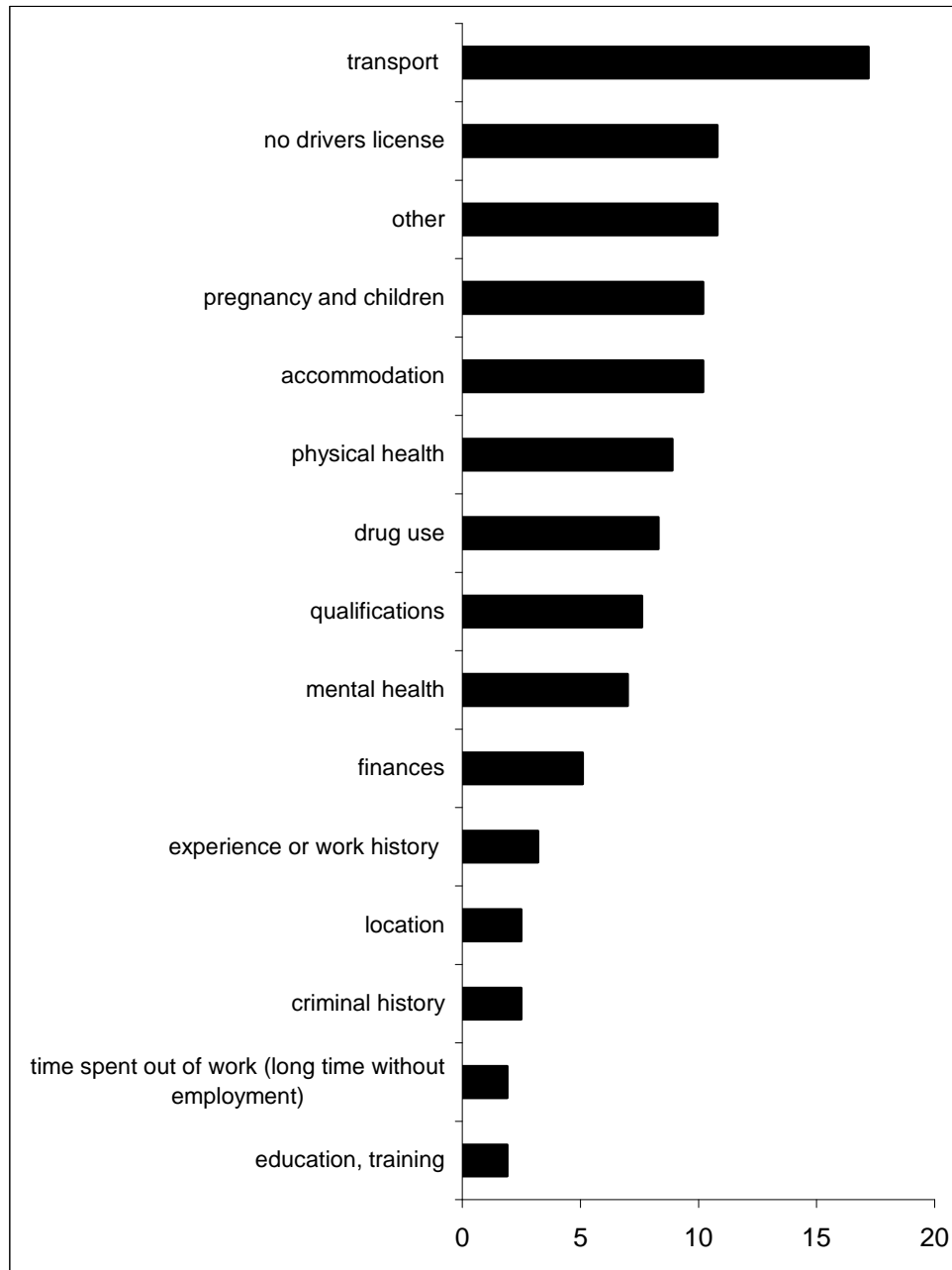
Figure 11: Barriers to employment by number of contacts with YP<sup>4</sup> case manager



Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

The vast majority of J group participants reported barriers to employment. These results suggested that barriers to employment were significant for all J Group members and were difficult to overcome. These barriers as described by participants are listed in Figure 12. In order to determine the degree to which these barriers were overcome, and indeed, to determine if case manager consultation was a successful intervention, Centrelink employment data was analysed and is summarised below.

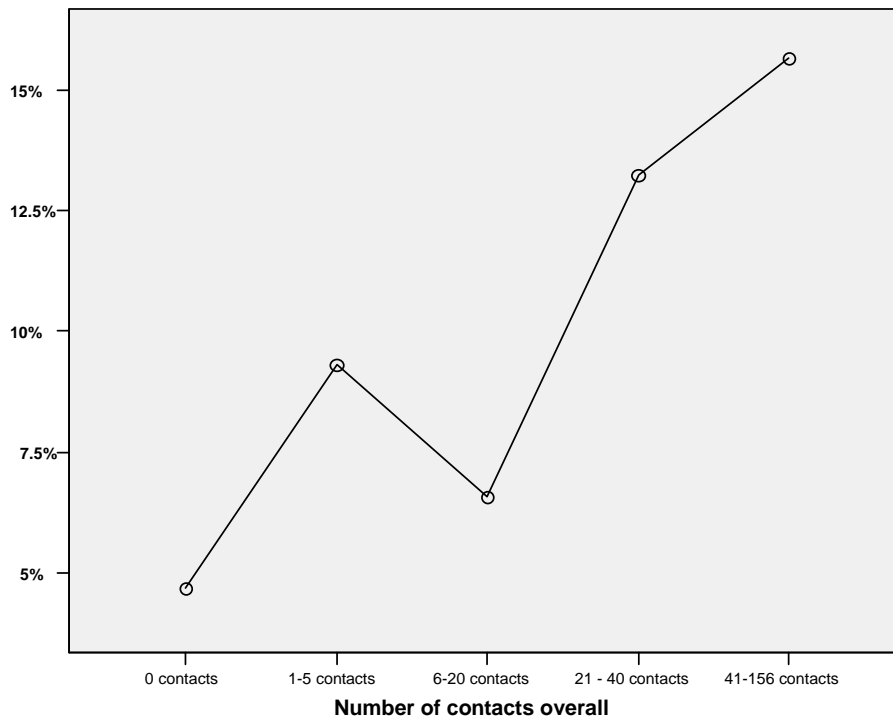
Figure 12: Types of barriers to employment faced by YP<sup>4</sup> participants in percentages



Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

Centrelink data revealed a statistically significant relationship (correlation) between the number of contacts with a case manager, and the proportion of total yearly income derived from employment ( $r = .24$ ,  $p = .001$ ). As the number of contacts increased, so did the proportion of income derived from employment. It was concluded that participants who had greater contact with a case manager had employment incomes proportionally larger than those with less contact. As can be seen in Figure 13, participants with no contact with case managers had a mean employment proportion of total income of 5 percent compared with over 15 percent for the 41-156 contacts group.

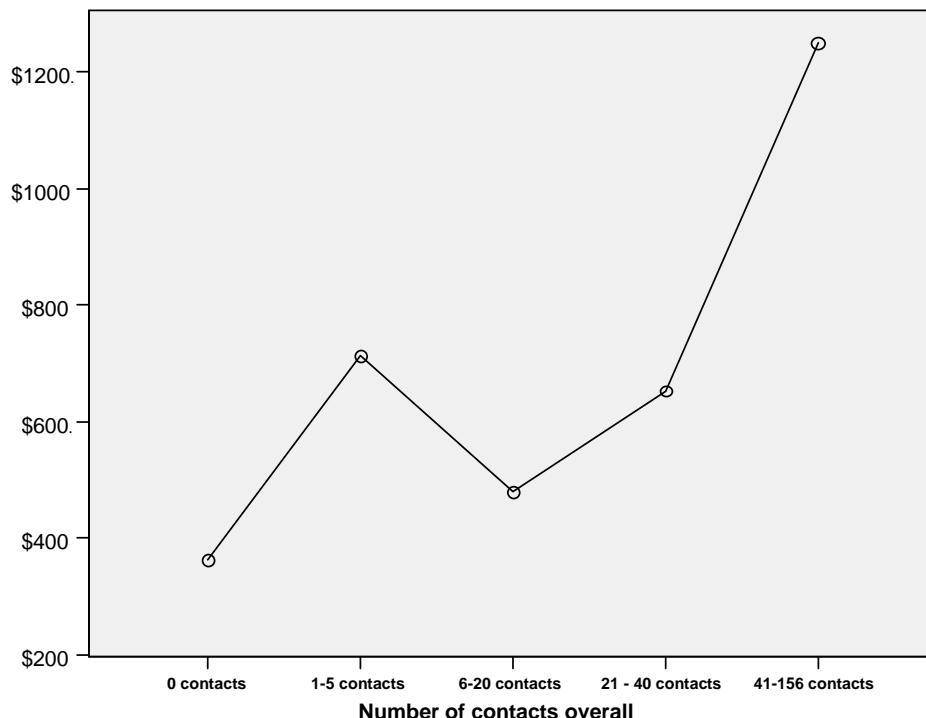
Figure 13: Proportion of total income derived from employment by contact with a case manager



Source: YP<sup>4</sup> Centrelink administrative data

In addition, as shown in Figure 14, there was a statistically significant difference (ANOVA) between the 5 groups in the total amount of income earnings from employment over the past 12 months ( $p = .035$ ). In particular it was the 41-156 (Mean = \$1,250) contacts group that earned significantly more money from employment than any of the other four groups (Mean = \$362, \$713, \$479, \$653 respectively, see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Total income from employment over the past 12 months by number of case manager contacts



Source: YP<sup>4</sup> Centrelink administrative data

Centrelink data showed that in the past 12 months 31 percent of the zero contact group had been employed, along with 26 percent of the 1-5 contacts group, 35 percent of the 6-20 contacts group, 46 percent of the 21-40 contacts group, and 51 percent of participants who had 41- 156 contacts with a case manager.

In addition, there were 15 J group participants who had found full time employment within the past 12 months, and consequently were no longer receiving any Centrelink benefits. Of these 15 people, 12 had received between 21 and 156 contacts, while 3 had received between 0 and 20 contacts.

These findings indicate that J group participants faced significant barriers to finding and sustaining employment. However, case manager support was an effective strategy for dealing with those barriers. Participants with greater contact with a case manager were more likely to find employment, maintain that employment, and earn more money from their employment. They were also less reliant on Centrelink benefits in relation to their total income, and in some instances were able to come off Centrelink benefits completely.

## Summary

The purpose of this report was to evaluate the effects of the amount of YP<sup>4</sup> case management service received (as measured by number of contacts with a case manager) on participant outcomes in the key areas of accommodation, education and training, service needs, health and wellbeing, and employment. This was achieved through statistical analysis of participant interview data, as well as Centrelink administrative data. The results are summarised and discussed below, first as they relate to each key area, and then as an integrated whole.

### Employment

While the majority of J group participants reported facing barriers to employment, it was those participants who had more than 20 contacts with their case managers who were more able to overcome these barriers when compared with those who had fewer than 20 contacts. The participants who received greater amounts of YP<sup>4</sup> case management service were more likely to have been employed in the past 12 months, more likely to maintain their employment, had higher gross employment earnings, earned a greater proportion of their total income from employment, and were less likely to be reliant on Centrelink benefits. It was also evident that having more than 40 contacts with a case manager was most beneficial for participants in terms of employment outcomes.

### Education and Training

While the number of participants who had engaged in some form of education or training increased as the number of contacts increased, the effect of amount of YP<sup>4</sup> case management service was best shown in the number of days in the past year spent completing education or training. The participants with more than 40 contacts with their case managers spent the most days undertaking training. It was concluded that contact with a case manager helped participants not only start, but also continue, their education and training activities.

### Accommodation

Participants with greater contact with their case managers were more likely to find their accommodation both suitable and affordable. In addition, those participants with more than 20 contacts with their case managers were more likely than those

with fewer than 20 to be in the private rental market, and less likely to be reliant on no-rent lodgings (family, friends, sleeping rough). It was also evident that having more than 40 contacts with a case manager was most beneficial for participants in terms of accommodation outcomes.

## Service Needs

Over 80 percent of J group participants were satisfied with the services they received and this was consistent across the five groups. Participants with at least some contact with case managers were more likely to report having their service needs met than those with no contact with case managers.

## Health and Wellbeing

The number of participants reporting poor health and wellbeing decreased as the number of contacts with a case manager increased. In addition, there was an increased likelihood that participants would report their health and wellbeing as average, as the number of contacts with a case manager increased. It was concluded that increased contact with a case manager was effective in reducing the number of participants in poor health and wellbeing as well as increasing the number of participants in average health and wellbeing, but had little effect in raising this level any further. This trend suggested that case manager support helped improve people's poor health status such that participants were able to engage in employment and training activities. Along with the positive health benefits that arise from engaging in these activities, it is likely that these new factors also created their own health strains (e.g. physical demands of work, hours, work concerns, rental concerns), the result being a high proportion of participants within an average health and wellbeing range.

## Overall

Overall the effects of greater amounts of YP<sup>4</sup> case management service were most notable in the area of employment. Participants with more than 20 contacts were most likely to be employed and to be financially self-reliant. These participants also received more education or training in the past 12 months. It is likely that this training facilitated access to the employment market. It was also concluded that participation in employment was related to improved participant accommodation status, including accommodation suitability and affordability. As a result, participants receiving greater service were more often, compared with those



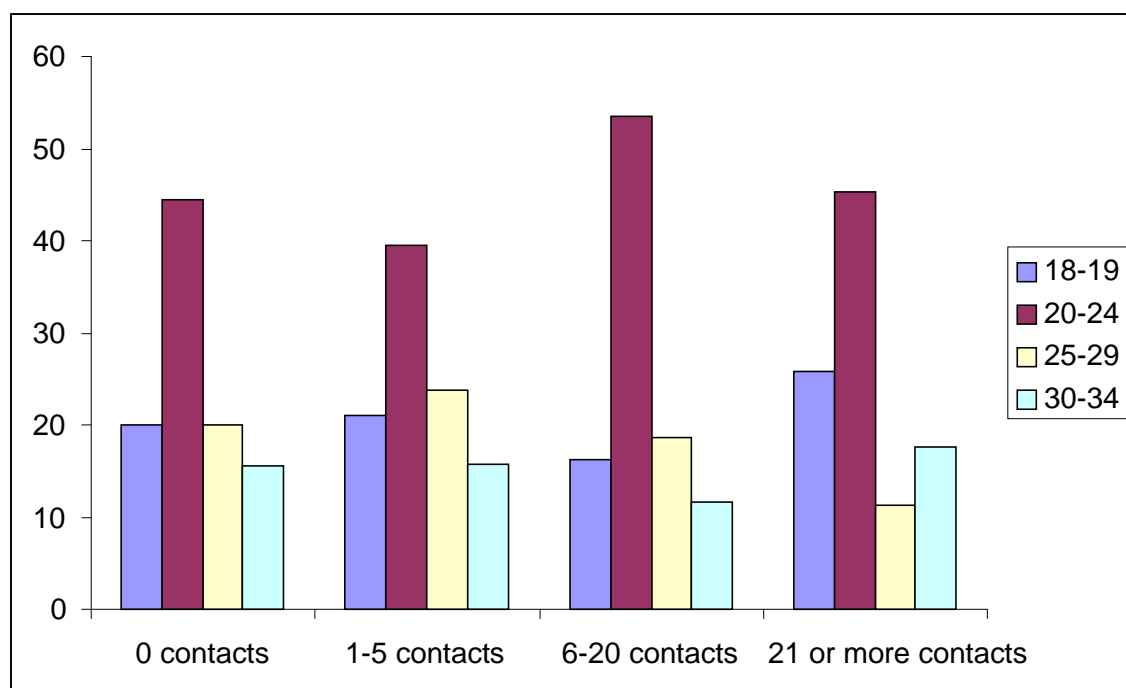
receiving less service, transforming their lives such that their health and wellbeing improved from poor to average. It also appeared that the complex interplay between existing health problems, the health benefits from life transformation (e.g. improved lifestyle, pride), and the new challenges from life transformation (e.g. physical demands of work, hours, work concerns, rental concerns), resulted in the predominance of average to good health and wellbeing ratings.

In terms of the optimal level or amount of YP<sup>4</sup> case management service, the results suggest that those participants with more than 20 contacts were more likely to improve in key outcome areas. It was evident that multiple contacts enabled the development of a client/case manager relationship. This relationship was effective in overcoming barriers to employment, accessing services, finding suitable and affordable accommodation, and adjusting to life transformations. Those participants with most contacts with case managers, and hence more familiarity and rapport, were generally better off in most key outcome areas. This was particularly evident in participant employment outcomes, supporting the partner agencies' expectation that the YP<sup>4</sup> intervention would improve outcomes for homeless jobseekers.

## Appendix A: Profile of participants by number of case manager contacts

Figure 15 shows the age of YP<sup>4</sup> participants at the time they joined YP<sup>4</sup> by the number of contacts with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager.

Figure 15: Participants' age at trial entry by number of case manager contacts (in percentages)

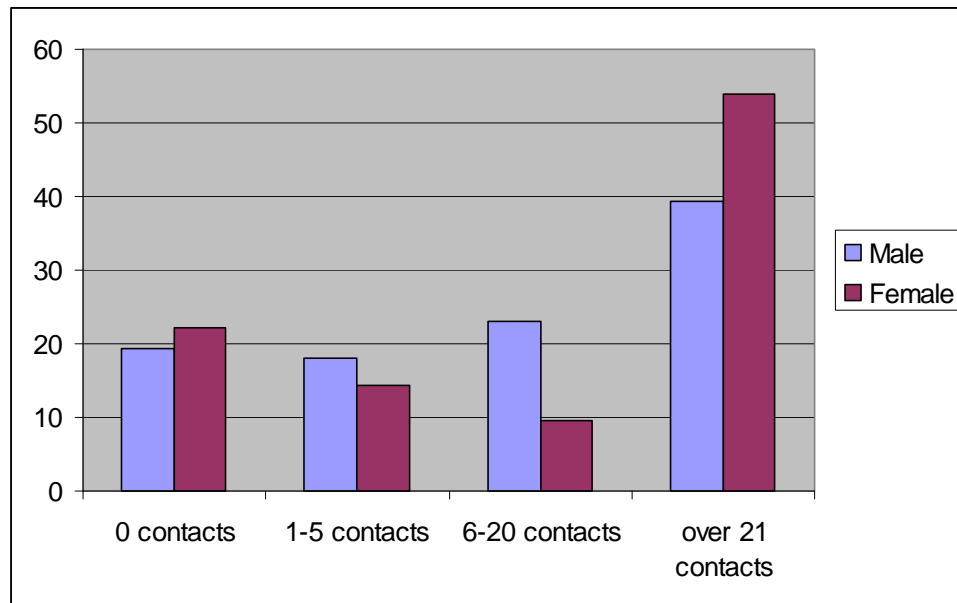


Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

There is no discernible pattern or relationship between participants' age and the likelihood of them being contacted by a case manager. Reinforcing this variation in ages across groups is the observation that the group of participants with the most contacts with a case manager included the highest proportion of those aged 18 and 19 years and the highest proportion of those aged 30 to 34 years.

The gender of participants by the number of case manager contacts is represented in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Gender by case manager contacts

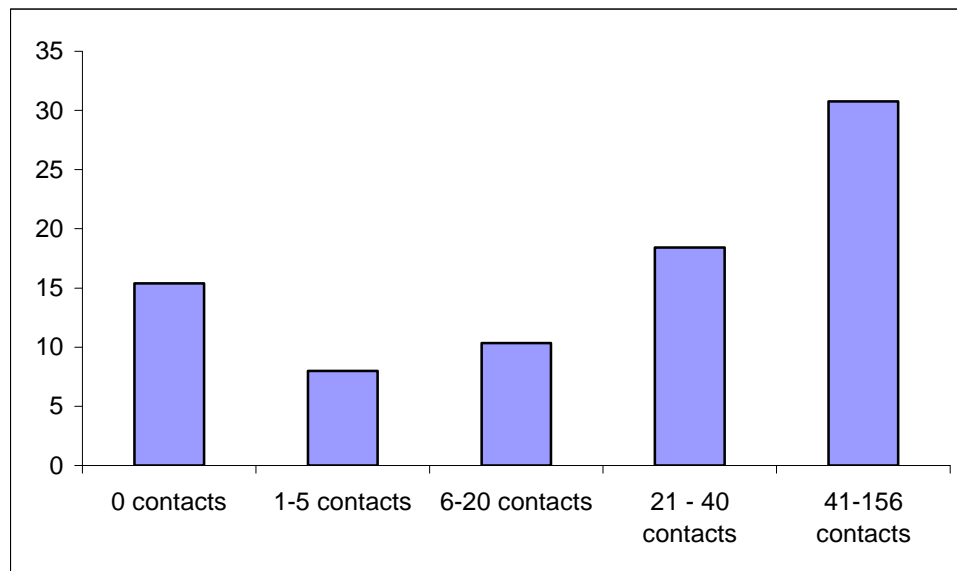


Source: YP<sup>24</sup> twenty-four months interviews

Females outnumbered males in two groups of participants, those with no contact with a case manager and those with more than 21 contacts. Overall, the results showed that females averaged 29.8 contacts with their case managers while men averaged 22.1 contacts. This mean difference was approaching significance at  $p = .08$ .

Figure 17 displays the percentage of participants with dependents by the number of contacts made with a case manager.

Figure 17: Percentage of participants with dependants



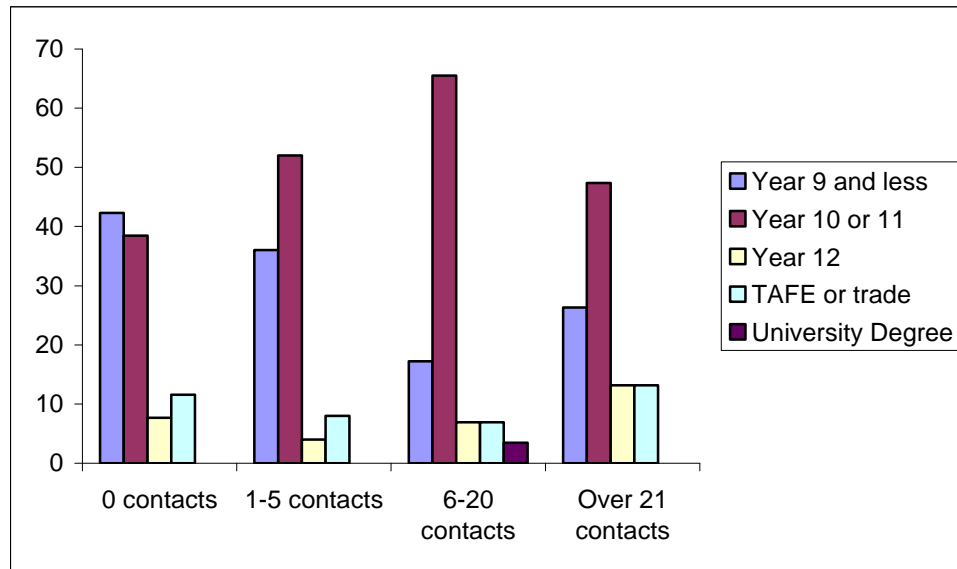
*Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews*

As shown in figure 17, participants with dependants were more likely to have extended contact with a case manager.

It was concluded that participants with dependants were more motivated than others to make the most of the assistance that was offered by YP<sup>4</sup> case managers.

Participants' education levels by the number of contacts with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager are reported below in Figure 18.

Figure 18: Participants' education levels by case manager contacts

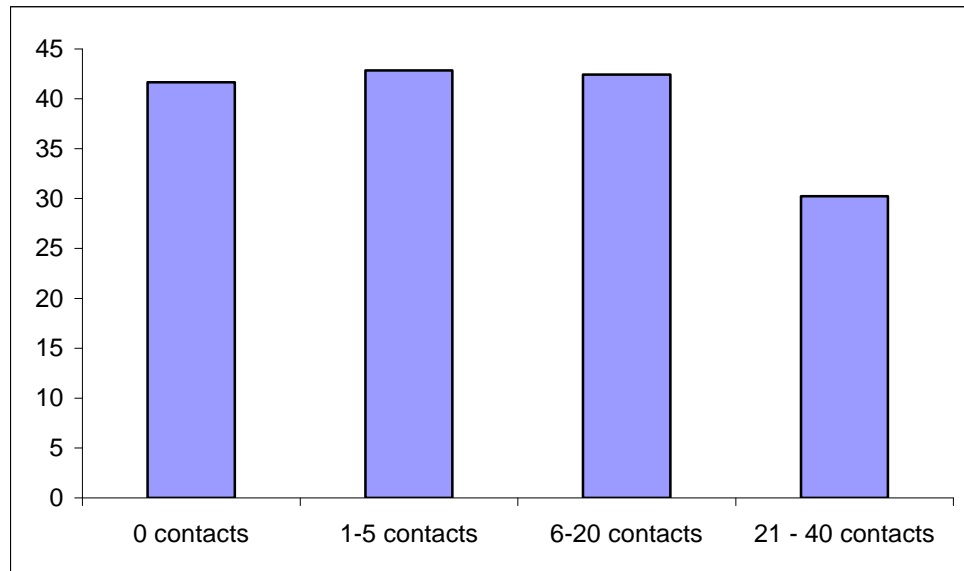


Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

There was no apparent relationship between the education levels of J group participants and the number of contacts with a case manager. Participants with Year 12 education or with a TAFE certificate or trade qualification were over-represented among those with the most contact (21 or more) with a case manager.

Figure 19 presents participants' disclosure of a criminal history by the number of contacts with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager.

Figure 19: Participants disclosing a criminal history by case manager contacts

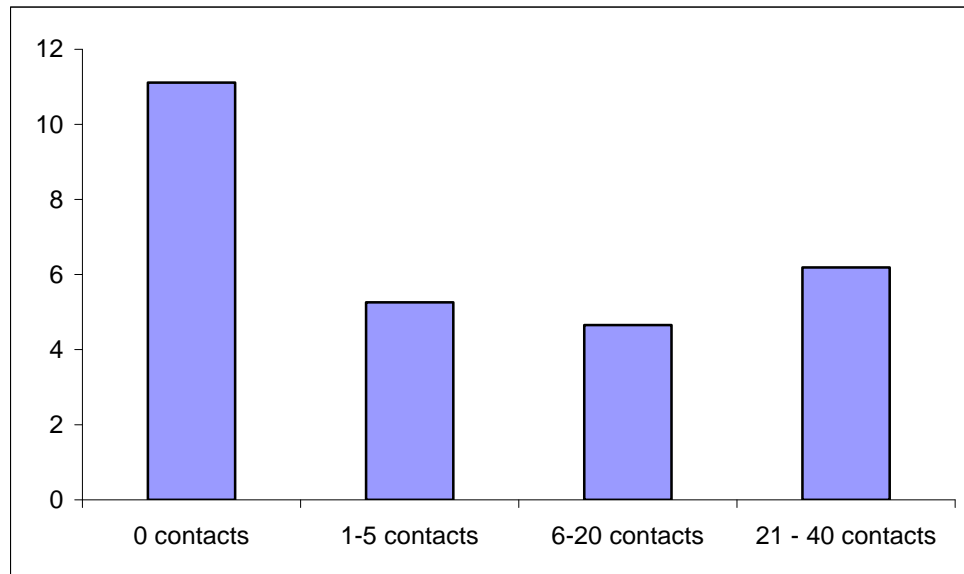


Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

Those participants with the most contact with a case manager (21 or more) were least likely to have disclosed a criminal history.

At the time of entry to YP<sup>4</sup>, information was collected about participants' status as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI). Figure 20 shows participants' ATSI status by the number of contacts with a YP<sup>4</sup> case manager.

Figure 20: ATSI status by case manager contacts



Source: YP<sup>4</sup> twenty-four months interviews

As shown in Figure 20, indigenous participants were most likely to have no contact with a case manager. If and when contact was made, however, indigenous participants were likely to have more contact rather than less contact with a case manager.

## Appendix B: 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 YP<sup>4</sup>.

#### 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 YP<sup>4</sup>?

YP<sup>4</sup> 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. YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup>. Complaints should be made to your YP<sup>4</sup> case manager if you have one or if that is not OK for you or you don't have one, then to the YP<sup>4</sup> manager. (See below.)

### **So who is this YP<sup>4</sup> evaluation team?**

- A group of people make up the Ethics and Evaluation Advisory Group for YP<sup>4</sup>. 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.
- YP<sup>4</sup> staff includes a manager and an evaluation officer. The manager, Louise Coventry, has overall responsibility for YP<sup>4</sup> and she can answer questions that you may have about YP<sup>4</sup> and hear complaints about YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup>. 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, YP<sup>4</sup> Manager  
PO Box 1016, South Melbourne 3205  
Ph: 9695 8366 or Email: [lcoventry@hanover.org.au](mailto: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 YP<sup>4</sup> Information Sheet and verbal information about YP<sup>4</sup> and I understand that:

- I can freely participate in YP<sup>4</sup> and can withdraw at any time.
- YP<sup>4</sup> is going to be evaluated and researched.
- For the purposes of the YP<sup>4</sup> 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 Citymissionwill 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 YP<sup>4</sup> Evaluation Team will stop immediately.
- The only people who will be able to see personal and health information provided to YP<sup>4</sup> about me are the YP<sup>4</sup> Evaluation Team members. The YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup> Evaluation Team and those who have supplied information about me, will not know that I have participated in YP<sup>4</sup> because my identity and personal and health details will not be revealed when information about YP<sup>4</sup> is published or presented in public.
- The YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup> Evaluation Team will keep a copy of my information for the duration of YP<sup>4</sup> and will safely dispose of that information after YP<sup>4</sup> (and its evaluation) is completed
- The YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup> starting in January 2005, includes the two year period of YP<sup>4</sup> and will last for two years after YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup>
- 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 YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup>.

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 YP<sup>4</sup> Evaluation Team, one by the YP<sup>4</sup> service provider and one by you, the YP<sup>4</sup> participant.*

Joining up services for young homeless jobseekers



## Appendix C: 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 YP<sup>4</sup> 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 D: Annual interview schedule



### YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup> project that you signed up for a little while ago.

As part of signing up for YP<sup>4</sup>, 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 YP<sup>4</sup> by providing workers to conduct these interviews. I am a Centrelink Officer, but this information is for the YP<sup>4</sup> 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 YP<sup>4</sup> 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<br>(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<br>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?**

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

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

☐<sub>1</sub> Very easy      ☐<sub>2</sub> Easy      ☐<sub>3</sub> Unsure      ☐<sub>4</sub> Not easy      ☐<sub>5</sub> Really difficult

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

☐<sub>1</sub> Very easy      ☐<sub>2</sub> Easy      ☐<sub>3</sub> Unsure      ☐<sub>4</sub> Not easy      ☐<sub>5</sub> 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)?**

☐<sub>1</sub> Yes      ☐<sub>2</sub> 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).**

☐<sub>1</sub> Yes      ☐<sub>2</sub> No

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

Amount spent: \$.....

**19.1. Does this cover :**

☐<sub>1</sub> food

☐<sub>2</sub> 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?**

**23.1 If yes, what?** ☐<sub>1</sub> Yes ☐<sub>2</sub> No

---

---

---

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

☐<sub>1</sub> Yes ☐<sub>2</sub> No

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

Primary school or less	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	Trade or TAFE qualification	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>8</sub>
Year 7	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	TAFE – Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>9</sub>
Year 8	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	University degree	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>10</sub>
Year 9	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>11</sub>
Year 10	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>5</sub>	Specify:.....	11.1
Year 11	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>6</sub>	Specify:.....	11.2
Year 12	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>7</sub>		

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

☐<sub>1</sub> Yes ☐<sub>2</sub> No

**26.1. If yes, please describe:**

---

---

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

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

**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?**☐ <sub>1</sub> Yes☐ <sub>2</sub> 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?**

☐<sub>1</sub> Yes ☐<sub>2</sub> 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?**

☐<sub>1</sub> Really well ☐<sub>2</sub> O.K. ☐<sub>3</sub> Unsure ☐<sub>4</sub> Not well ☐<sub>5</sub> Really badly

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

☐<sub>1</sub> Yes ☐<sub>2</sub> To some extent ☐<sub>3</sub> No ☐<sub>4</sub> Don't know

**THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

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

☐<sub>1</sub> Very good ☐<sub>2</sub> Good ☐<sub>3</sub> Average ☐<sub>4</sub> Not good ☐<sub>5</sub> Poor health

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

☐<sub>1</sub> Improved ☐<sub>2</sub> No change ☐<sub>3</sub> 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"/> <sub>1</sub>	Not taking medication	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>6</sub>
Injury	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	Stressful relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>7</sub>
Sleeping rough	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	Stress associated with unstable accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>8</sub>
Eating junk food	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>	Money problems	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>9</sub>
Untreated health problem/s	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>5</sub>	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"/> <sub>1</sub> | Received drug treatment | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub> |
| Been eating healthily    | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> | Reduced your drug use   | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>5</sub> |
| Had healthcare/treatment | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub> | Been sleeping better    | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>6</sub> |

**40. How would you rate your wellbeing at the moment? By wellbeing we mean your mental and emotional health,**

- ☐
- <sub>1</sub>
- Very good
- ☐
- <sub>2</sub>
- Good
- ☐
- <sub>3</sub>
- Average
- ☐
- <sub>4</sub>
- Not good
- ☐
- <sub>5</sub>
- 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?)**

- ☐
- <sub>1</sub>
- Yes
- ☐
- <sub>3</sub>
- Unsure
- ☐
- <sub>2</sub>
- 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)?**

- ☐
- <sub>1</sub>
- Yes
- ☐
- <sub>3</sub>
- Maybe
- ☐
- <sub>2</sub>
- 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?**

- ☐
- <sub>1</sub>
- Yes
- ☐
- <sub>3</sub>
- Maybe
- ☐
- <sub>2</sub>
- No

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

- ☐
- <sub>1</sub>
- Yes
- ☐
- <sub>3</sub>
- Unsure
- ☐
- <sub>2</sub>
- No

**46.1. If yes, please specify:**


---



---

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

- ☐
- <sub>1</sub>
- Yes
- ☐
- <sub>3</sub>
- Unsure
- ☐
- <sub>2</sub>
- 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?**

[illegible]

**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 E: YP4 supplementary participant interviews



### YP<sup>4</sup> Supplementary Participant Interviews

CRN:

Name:

Date:

Interviewer:

Time interview started:

Time interview ended:

\

Joining up services for young homeless jobseekers



1. We notice that you went off Centrelink benefits in .....  
(interviewer to insert month/year).

Was this because you had paid employment or for some other reason?

**Paid employment**    ☐<sub>1</sub>

**Some other reason** ☐<sub>2</sub>

*(If some other reason interviewer to record details provided)*

---

---

2. Are you currently in paid work?

**Yes** ☐<sub>1</sub>

**No** ☐<sub>2</sub> *(go to question 4)*

3. Would you mind telling me about your job or jobs?

**What kind of work are you doing?**

---

**Is your job(s) full-time, permanent part-time or casual?**

**Full-time** ☐<sub>1</sub>

**Permanent part-time** ☐<sub>2</sub>

**Casual** ☐<sub>3</sub>

*If full time go to question 3.4*

**If part-time or casual, how many hours per week do you work in your job(s)?**

---

**What are some of the benefits of being in your current job(s)?**  
*(If client says money, interviewer to probe for further information i.e. Apart from money, what are some other good things about your job?)*

---

---

**What are some of the things that may make it difficult for you to continue in your current job(s)?**

---

---

---

**How long do you expect to remain in your current job(s)?**

---

**Would you mind telling me your hourly pay rate?**  
*(If unsure, interviewer to note any details given, e.g. weekly or fortnightly pay. Try to find out whether gross or after tax)*

---



4. Apart from your current job (if applicable), have you had any other jobs since going off Centrelink benefits?

**(If yes, interviewer to record the following information for each previous position)**

Yes ☐<sub>1</sub>      No ☐<sub>2</sub>

**How many jobs have you had?**

**If one or more complete the following table.....**

**I'd like to ask you some questions about your previous employment while off Centrelink benefits....**

Type of work (and pay rate if known)	Work load	Hours per wk (Casual or part time only)	Reason for leaving
<b>1.</b> _____ _____	<b>Full time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> <b>Part time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> <b>Casual</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	  	  
<b>2.</b> _____ _____	<b>Full time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> <b>Part time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> <b>Casual</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	  	  
<b>3.</b> _____ _____	<b>Full time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> <b>Part time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> <b>Casual</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	  	  
<b>4.</b> _____ _____	<b>Full time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> <b>Part time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> <b>Casual</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	  	  
<b>5.</b> _____ _____	<b>Full time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> <b>Part time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> <b>Casual</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	  	  
<b>6.</b> _____ _____	<b>Full time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> <b>Part time</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> <b>Casual</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	  	  

Any other comments:

---



---



---



---

Thank you for your participation!

## References

Campbell, S, Horn, M & Nicholson, T. (2003) *A new approach to assisting young homeless job seekers*, Hanover Welfare Services, Melbourne. Available at <http://www.hanover.org.au>.

Coventry, L. (2006) 'Joinability': A story of YP<sup>4r</sup> Paper presented at international conference, Government and communities in partnership: from theory to practice, *University of Melbourne Centre for Public Policy*, 25 – 27 September 2006, Melbourne. Available <http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference06/presentations.html>.

Coventry, L. (2008) *YP<sup>d</sup> – Final report to National Homelessness Strategy*, Hanover Welfare Services, Melbourne.

Horn, M. (2004) *A new approach to assisting young homeless job seekers: Trial proposal*, Hanover Welfare Services, Melbourne. Available at <http://www.hanover.org.au>.

Milne, L & Coventry, L. (2008) *Rediscovering Case Management: The theory and practice of joined up service delivery*, Hanover Welfare Services, Melbourne.