

Department for Work and Pensions

Research Report No 615

50+ back to work evidence review and indicative guide for secondary data analysis

Sandra Vegeris, Deborah Smeaton and Melahat Sahin-Dikmen

A report of research carried out by the Policy Studies Institute on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions

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First Published 2010.

ISBN 978 1 84712 662 7

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Acknowledgements

This research was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The authors would like to thank Alexandra Dawe, Richenda Solon and Julian Williamson in the Extending Working Lives Team of the Ageing Society Directorate at DWP, for guidance with the review design and commenting on the report.

At Policy Studies Institute (PSI), we would like to acknowledge the help of Vivienne Steimens for Library Services; Jenny Yip and Mehrdad Hashemi-Sadrai for administrative support and Debra Hevenstone for assistance with the review of evaluation reports.

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Abbreviations

ADF	Adviser Discretion Fund
BOC	Better Off Calculation
BTW	Back to Work
CMP	Condition Management Programme
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EC	Employment Credit
ERA	Employment Retention and Advancement project
ESF	European Social Fund
EWL	Extending Working Lives
EZ	Employment Zone
IAP	Intensive Activity Period
IB	Incapacity Benefit
IS	Income Support
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance
NDDP	New Deal for Disabled People
NDP	New Deal for Partners
PSI	Policy Studies Institute
SPA	State pension age
WBLA	Work Based Learning for Adults

WFI	Work Focused Interview
WFIP	Work Focused Interview for Partners
WTC	Working Tax Credit

Glossary

Employment Credit

As part of the New Deal 50plus programme, Employment Credit (EC) was a tax free wage supplement providing £60 a week for those working full-time (£40 for part-time) for a year, provided the recipients' annual income was less than £15,000. From April 2003, EC was replaced by Working Tax Credit (WTC).

Employment Support Allowance

Beginning in October 2008, for new claimants, Employment Support Allowance (ESA) replaced Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Income Support (IS) paid on incapacity or disability grounds. ESA marks a shift of focus on capabilities instead of disabilities. This includes a Work Capability Assessment performed by a healthcare professional.

Incapacity Benefit

IB was the main benefit paid to people who cannot work as a result of a health condition or disability. Entitlement is assessed through a Personal Capability Assessment performed by a healthcare professional. IB is being replaced by ESA for new and repeat claimants from October 2008.

Income Support

IS is a state benefit available to people on low income, between ages 16 and 69, and who are not required to sign on for unemployment benefits. IS consists of personal allowances, premiums and payments to cover certain housing costs.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Jobseeker's Allowance is the main benefit for people of working age who are required to look for work. It is available to people between ages 16 and state pension age (SPA) and consists of either contribution based payments or non-contribution based payments, depending on whether the claimant has paid class 1 National Insurance.

PSA 17

Public Service Agreement 17 (PSA 17) sets expectations for Local Authorities and their partners to promote the well being of older people. Indicators relate to healthy life expectancy, satisfaction with home and neighbourhood, and support for independent living.

WTC

WTC is an income supplement for people in low earnings employment or self-employment of 16 or more hours per week.

Summary

This evidence review was commissioned to provide greater insight into how the scope, nature and effectiveness of Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) back to work (BTW) provision supports the over 50s' return to work. It aimed to identify the key factors associated with successful programme outcomes and to assess which strategies are most effective for older age groups. The review addressed three research questions:

- What is known about outcomes on BTW provision for the 50+ population?
- What types of provision are associated with positive work outcomes?
- What evidence data are available for secondary data analysis?

The research consisted of three parallel strands. The first was a review of relevant policy developments and academic literature on the factors that enable or impede employment participation for older people. The second identified and qualified DWP reports (Research Reports, Working Papers and In-House Reports) covering BTW provision for the 50+ age group. Reports published between January 2000 and December 2008 were included in this exercise. A review protocol was used to grade reports on their technical rigour, soundness of conclusions, coverage of the 50+ population, and coverage of the different services offered by the BTW programmes. Finally, prospective datasets were identified for their potential to address knowledge gaps in welfare-to-work interventions at different stages of life.

Overview of the evidence

The sifting exercise identified 27 reports on BTW interventions that included findings on the 50+ group. These reports covered ten separate pilots or programmes of provision:

- European Social Fund.
- New Deal 25 plus (ND 25plus).
- New Deal 50 plus (ND 50plus).
- New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP).

- Permitted Work.
- New Deal for Partners (NDP).
- Over 50s Outreach.
- Pathways to Work.
- Skills Coaching and Skills Passports, and
- Work Based Learning for Adults (WBLA).

For the purposes of this study, the evidence was generally not sufficient for assessing 'what works' because the majority of evaluation designs did not include a comparison group to assess what could have happened in the absence of the BTW services. Furthermore, most studies did not distinguish which of the services in a 'package' of provision contributed to the reported outcomes. A synthesis of the findings was further complicated by the multiple sub-populations served by the programmes. This was largely due to different eligibility rules for programme participation (usually delineated by the type of benefits received) and whether participation was voluntary or mandatory (plus BTW services may have been voluntary within a mandatory programme).

However, it should be borne in mind that the gaps identified in the evidence reflect the focus of this current study – findings on older people's experiences of BTW interventions – and that previous evaluation studies were commissioned and designed to a different purpose.

Results from the evidence review were classified by broad service types: advisory support, training, work experience, wage supplements and other financial support, and health interventions. Most of the evidence was derived from quantitative surveys and qualitative studies of participants. There was relatively little evidence available on work experience, wage supplements and financial supports.

Findings from the review

General programme impacts

- Participation in NDDP increased employment and lessened dependence on disability-related benefits. Larger proportions of older clients stopped claiming benefits, compared to those under age 50. Programme impacts on employment were similar for both age groups.
- NDP had a positive impact on claimant rates among **existing** benefit claimant households and this was most likely to occur in households where the main claimant was aged 25-45 years, as opposed to older (over 45 years) or younger (under 25 years) main claimants.
- An evaluation of the mandatory Intensive Activity Period (IAP) for 50+ participants in ND 25plus found a significant increase in employment levels, sustained for two years. Effects were stronger for those aged 50-55 and for manual workers.

- Subgroup analyses on **new/repeat IB claimants** taking part in Pathways found no employment gains for those aged 50-59, yet participants under age 50 were ten per cent more likely to be employed. For **existing** IB claimants, Pathways participants experienced higher employment and reductions in benefit receipt. But the strength of these impacts was significantly weaker for participants aged 50+.

Advisory support

- Evidence suggests that having an adviser of a similar age was considered an asset to the advisory relationship.
- Older people looking for work in the professional/managerial sector were more likely to find the advisory services unhelpful.
- Working ND 50plus customers would have benefited from in-work advisory support, especially when Employment Credit (EC) payments were due to end.
- Mixed age programmes that include a mandatory interview with an adviser distinguished the 50+ group as more likely to have a health condition or disability (or these conditions were relatively more severe) and this may have restricted engagement with services.

Training support

- Significant employment gains were found for 50+ participants in the WBLA programme, associated with both the shorter and longer-term training options. The effect of short-term training persisted for the 50+ group but receded over time for those under age 50.
- Studies of mixed age provision reported substantially lower rates of training among the 50+ group. In programmes targeted to older jobseekers, training take-up was reported to be lower than expected or the less favoured option.
- Few studies provided reasons for non take up among older adults. These included perceptions of being 'too old' and disappointment with training options.
- In some survey based studies, the longer-term effects on employment were less favourable for older trainees; however, findings should be treated with caution as most studies that tracked employment did not include a control group in the design.

Work experience

- People with shorter-term health conditions (less than three year IB claimants) were most likely to use Permitted Work as a stepping stone into mainstream work. Results were similar for all age groups.
- Work experience (unpaid) was the most popular mandatory option in the ND 25plus IAP programme. But those with higher qualifications and those from managerial/professional backgrounds found the experience of limited value.

Wage supplements and other financial support

- The incentive effects of the ND 50plus EC can be mediated by individual circumstances like wage level, household conditions, living expenses, and personal attitudes.
- EC provided some people with an incentive (others with the means) to prolong their employment. However, the research design did not include a comparison group which makes it difficult to more fully assess the effects of EC on work retention.
- Take up of the Adviser Discretion Fund (ADF) among Pathways participants was not found to be associated with age. Instead, greater numbers who accessed the fund were work oriented and had fewer health issues.

Health interventions

- Overall take up of the Condition Management Programme (CMP) was higher among existing (eight per cent) compared to **new/repeat** (four per cent) IB claimants. However, rates of participation were more similar for older people ranging from four to five per cent among new customers and five to six per cent among existing customers aged 50-59.
- Employment outcomes for CMP customers were not analysed separately for older people. Multivariate analyses indicate that new or existing customers who entered paid work were relatively unlikely to have participated in CMP.

Recommendations from the evidence review

Planning for measures that will enable extended working lives necessitates a greater awareness of the diversity of the older population. Given the anticipated welfare to work reforms, systems that will ultimately blend the different Jobcentre Plus customer groups into a flexible, work oriented programme of services need to be mindful of the specific work, benefits and retirement preparation requirements of an older population:

- Upper age limits on BTW programme eligibility are exclusionary and counteract attempts to extend working lives in principle.
- Appropriate training, re-skilling and education opportunities are required to address disadvantages faced by older people with low formal qualifications and to help motivate individuals whose existing skills are no longer in demand.
- Specialist provision may be more suitable for older people from managerial/professional backgrounds, who, the evidence suggests, are less satisfactorily catered for through traditional Jobcentre Plus provision.
- Coaching, role models and awareness raising to address ageism and general low confidence in work ability would help improve engagement in work preparation activities.

- Health is recognised as a significant work barrier for the older population. Health management training and advice should be made more widely available.
- Greater awareness of part-time work opportunities, and guidance on negotiating work flexibilities with employers could improve employment participation. Additionally, social security measures need to ensure that part-time earnings (including Permitted Work) will result in financial gain.
- For those with caring responsibilities, strengthening the supply of affordable, quality adult care services would help free up time for employment.
- Greater awareness is needed of the various options available for combining work with pension income. This would include information on budgeting for retirement, work downshifting and self employment.
- Existing work with employers needs to continue to set a convincing business case as well as guidance and support for hiring and retaining older workers.

A number of evaluation research conventions presented challenges to the evidence review. Some of the recommendations that follow are specific to research on the older population but others are targeted more generally to enhance the usefulness of programme evaluations:

- Further research should be carried out to address the gaps identified. In particular, little is known about older people's experiences of the various financial supports or work experience options.
- Given the volume of older people in receipt of health and disability related benefits, little is known about these people's experiences of BTW interventions.
- Greater understanding about the responsiveness of different subgroups to BTW interventions is required. This should include the different preferences and experiences by gender and ethnicity. Furthermore, a more detailed breakdown by age would help to target services more appropriately.
- More evidence on reasons for non take up of services would provide valuable feedback for service design and targeting.
- Research on programme impacts would be enhanced by more sophisticated monitoring systems that record take up of optional services (and combinations over time). This would be useful for explaining different programme outcomes.
- Comparative research on the relative effectiveness of different forms of BTW intervention would be useful.
- Programme monitoring should be expanded to include softer outcomes like 'distance travelled' and movement towards the labour market. These would take into account the longer term changes associated with a journey into work.

1 Introduction

The Policy Studies Institute (PSI) was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to conduct an evidence review of back to work (BTW)¹ provision for older people.

The review was designed to identify the key factors associated with successful programme outcomes and assess which strategies are most effective for older age groups. The jobless may have been claiming unemployment or other benefits such as Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Incapacity Benefits (IB) or Income Support (IS), while others may have been economically inactive or not part of the benefits system. The main focus of the review was on provision those between ages 50 and state pension age (SPA) and corresponds to the Public Service Agreement (PSA 17) that promotes independence and well being in later life. However, comparisons of outcomes and experiences were drawn with younger age cohorts.

In addition, to develop the evidence base, the study included a review of data sources for possible secondary analysis. This review identified gaps in the focus of previous studies in relation to older customers and highlighted where secondary analysis would be beneficial to promote understanding of how labour market programmes impact upon the 50+ compared with younger customers.

1.1 Study background

The needs of older workers and the older unemployed or inactive have moved up the policy agenda in recent years and extending working lives has become a key policy objective in response to a number of demographic and labour market trends. The population is getting older, fertility rates have declined and support ratios² are falling. In addition, years in education have been extended and an early retirement culture has taken hold. Years in paid employment are therefore being

¹ For the purpose of this research 'back to work provision' is defined as any DWP related policy, programme, initiative or practice aimed at moving the individual closer to the labour market. This is to include 'work based support', as well as provision for skills and training relevant to employment.

² Support or dependency ratios are the number of people aged above SPA as a proportion of people of working age (16 to start SPA).

squeezed at both ends of the life course. As a result of these trends, the UK is faced with the prospect of a shrinking workforce with implications for individuals, employers, government and other service providers. The need to retain older people in work and help them re-secure jobs if unemployed or on IB, IS or ESA benefits has therefore become a policy priority.

Arising from this policy agenda is a recognition that previous approaches to older people who are unemployed or inactive is no longer sustainable. Active labour market programmes with mandatory packages of intervention have until recently been voluntary for the 50+³ and large numbers of older people were long-term IB claimants who had little help or encouragement to re-secure employment until recent years. Widespread changes have overhauled these systems and their underlying orientation toward, and expectations of, older clients.

Previous evidence reviews on DWP back to work provision (Hasluck and Green, 2007; Moss and Arrowsmith, 2003; NAO, 2004; Phillipson and Smith, 2005) possess certain limitations. Most do not include findings from recent welfare to work interventions like Pathways to Work or the Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) demonstration, or the focus is on work barriers as opposed to interventions. None have assessed the weight of the evidence in terms of research rigour or population generalisability. The current study aims to address these gaps in the evidence base.

1.2 Study purpose

The central purpose of the proposed study is to provide greater insight into how the scope, nature and effectiveness of DWP BTW provision supports the over 50s' return to work, with a view to highlighting barriers and drivers to effective BTW provision, so that such provision can be improved. The study will review the experience and impact of BTW provision among older clients and draw comparisons with younger cohorts. The review will provide greater insight into how current policies and programmes support over 50s return to work so that such support can be improved. It will highlight the barriers and drivers associated with effective provision. The findings will help guide the development of subsequent stages of the research programme and will be used to inform the future direction, content and emphasis of DWP Extending Working Life (EWL) strategies.

1.2.1 Research questions

The review addressed the following questions:

- What is known about outcomes on BTW provision for the 50+ population?
- What types of provision are associated with positive work outcomes?
- What evidence data are available for secondary data analysis?

³ New Deal 25plus became mandatory for those aged 50-59 from April 2006.

The review was confined to the context of Great Britain and provision supplied by Jobcentre Plus and partner organisations.

1.3 Methodology

The evidence review was conducted in three parallel strands. The first was a review of relevant policy developments and academic literature on the factors that enable or impede employment participation. This served as valuable context for interpreting findings and identifying gaps between need and provision.

In the second strand, a review strategy and protocol were designed, in agreement with DWP project management. The population of reports for review was DWP (and its predecessor departments) published reports in the Research Reports, Working Papers and In-House Reports series, dating between January 2000 and December 2008. The review considered quantitative, qualitative and mixed method approaches. The review protocol was used to identify evaluations of back to work programmes that included a focus on the experiences of the 50+ population. Reports satisfying this condition were then subjected to a qualification exercise. Reports were graded strong, moderate or weak according to four criteria:

- technical rigour.
- soundness of conclusions.
- coverage of the 50+ population, and
- coverage on the different services offered by the BTW programme.

An evidence synthesis was presented thematically by findings on programme impacts and by different types of BTW intervention: advisory support, training support, work experience, wage supplements, other financial supports and health interventions.

Finally, in conjunction with the review of DWP evaluation reports, a third strand of the research considers prospective datasets that offer potential for secondary analysis. These analyses would help to refine variations by age on programme impacts and the different service experiences.

Details on the full methodology are available in Appendix A.

1.4 Report outline

The remainder of the report is set out as follows:

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the rationale for extending working lives. It provides a framework for conceptualising key work barriers and issues associated with the older population, and summarises evidence gleaned from previous reviews of services designed to help older people engage with the labour market.

Chapter 3 classifies the reports included in the evidence review by BTW programme and service types. It supplies a synthesis of the evidence on BTW provision for the 50+ group, separately for programme impacts and six types of service provision: advisory support, training support, work experience, wage supplements, other financial supports and health interventions.

Chapter 4 addresses the current evaluation datasets that hold potential to supply richer detail on BTW interventions for different age groups.

Chapter 5 discusses the review results on 'what works' in relation to the different BTW services. Based on the findings and the knowledge gaps identified, the report concludes with recommendations for policy and future evaluation research.

2 Policy and research context

This chapter relays the findings from the first strand of the review. It overviews the trends and circumstances which have led to the need for policy reform to promote extended working lives, whether by prolonging the retention of older workers or optimising opportunities to re-secure employment later in life. Initially, demographic and employment trends are described, followed by a discussion of their implications for skills in the economy, pension provision and poverty. Government initiatives in response to an ageing workforce have been multi-stranded and these are briefly reviewed in Section 2.2. Section 2.3 examines the key barriers facing older people when either looking for work, or seeking job change, and emphasises the need for tailored policies and services, responsive to the specific difficulties encountered later in life. Finally, this section summarises key findings from previous literature and evaluation reviews which have attempted to pinpoint which policies and provision have been most effective in helping the 50+ get back to work.

2.1 Background issues

2.1.1 Demographic change

The population of the UK, as elsewhere throughout the developed world, is ageing. Europe and Japan are the most affected by these trends, with Spain and Italy predicted to have the oldest populations by 2050 (Taylor, 2008). Between 1971 and 2006, the UK population aged 65+ grew by 31 percentage points while the proportion aged 16 and under declined by 19 points. It is anticipated that one third of the nation will be over age 50 by 2020 (Dean, 2004). Average life expectancy has increased for women from age 77 in 1981 to age 84 in 2008 and from age 71 to age 81 for men. This trend is expected to continue. In addition, fertility rates have fallen below replacement levels. As a result, demographic support ratios are falling; in 2006 there were 3.3 people of working age (16 to state pension age (SPA) – currently 59 for women and 64 for men) for every person of state pensionable age and this ratio is projected to fall to 2.9 by 2031 (ONS, www.statistics.gov.uk).

2.1.2 Employment

Most developed countries have experienced a long-term decline in the labour market participation rates of older people from around the age of 50. In the UK downward trends became evident from the 1970s (OECD, 2006) – largely associated, for men, with economic restructuring and a shift away from manufacturing. In 1971, 83 per cent of men aged 60-64 were in employment but by 2000, fewer than half the men in this age range were employed (Loretto *et al.*, 2007). Employment rates among those aged 50+ have increased somewhat since the turn of the century, but it is not clear whether improvements merely reflect a buoyant economy or a sustainable structural and cultural change. With the current (2008-09) economic recession it will become increasingly clear whether the gains among older workers relative to their younger counterparts are sustainable.

Premature labour market exit, or an 'early retirement culture' is associated with a range of push and pull factors. Push factors include ill health, redundancy, discrimination and complications associated with combining employment with caring roles. Pull factors are largely associated with advantaged circumstances and individuals choosing to leave work before retirement age to pursue other interests. As a result of these different sets of drivers 'two nations' in early retirement can be identified (Lissenburgh and Smeaton 2003; Arthur, 2003; Sutherland, 1995). The first group is better off, typically with an occupational pension, and has chosen to leave employment in relative financial comfort to pursue other interests while they remain in good health. The second group, often from lower social classes, has been forced out of work due to redundancy, long-term unemployment associated with low skill sets or, more often, poor health (Banks and Tetlow, 2008). In terms of extending working lives, the social policy implications for these two groups are quite distinct.

Losing a job after the age of 50 is more likely to lead to long-term unemployment or inactivity compared with job loss at younger ages. Older workers are over-represented among the long-term unemployed in most industrial democracies, but this underestimates the problem as many unemployed older workers move directly to retirement and are part of the 'hidden unemployed', often in the face of shrinking opportunities. Detachment from the labour market by means of early retirement can be interpreted as a route for preserving dignity and well being (McNair, 2005).

2.1.3 Skills shortages

Associated with an ageing workforce, many employers encounter problems due to skills shortages. The loss of older workers, regardless of skill level, shrinks the labour market and narrows the recruitment pool from which employers can select their ideal candidates. In terms of better qualified older workers, many choose to retire early, resulting in a loss of skills, experience and corporate memory. This has implications for economic competitiveness. Prolonging working lives offers a partial solution to this problem. A 2004 survey of 2,092 UK businesses found that

81 per cent had an under-skilled workforce and had problems recruiting skilled staff (Work Foundation, 2005). A more recent, but smaller survey of 355 organisations employing 100 or more staff indicates that despite recessionary conditions more than half were experiencing difficulties maintaining skills sets (Ranstad, 2009).⁴ Skills shortages therefore present a business case to retain staff, regardless of age, for as long as mutually possible. Managers recognize the importance of older workers 'whom they see as possessing more experience, technical and firm-specific knowledge and to be critical in training functions within the firm' (Daniel and Heywood, 2007: 36). A range of policy levers can be effective to this end, offering financial incentives to remain in work and closing early exit routes such as early access to occupational pensions at age 50.

2.1.4 Pensions

Demographic and labour market trends raise the prospect of a pensions shortfall, and concerns that, in the future, taxable income from those of working age will be unable to meet the pension and other benefit costs of those above SPA. To address concerns over a 'pensions crisis', a Pensions Commission was set up in December 2002 to review the pension system and recommend reforms.⁵ This led to the 2007 Pensions Act, which restored the earnings link for the basic state pension, reduced the number of qualifying years required for a full basic state pension and increased the SPA to render these changes affordable. Legislation introduced in 2009 will encourage greater saving throughout the lifetime in preparation for the retirement years. From 2012 it will be compulsory for employers to provide pensions for their employees or workers will be automatically enrolled in a personal accounts scheme.

The various reforms serve to place responsibility for the cost of an ageing population on current rather than future working age generations. The pension system is now designed to balance responsibility for an adequate income during the retirement years between the individual, state and employer.

Employers have also taken steps to mitigate the impact of pension commitments on their balance sheets. Occupational pension schemes have been widely reformed; many employers have replaced more generous defined benefit schemes with defined contribution pensions, the value of which depend upon stock market performance.

⁴ Available at <http://www.randstad.co.uk/skillsshortages>.

⁵ The Commission, chaired by Lord Turner, published two reports; *Pensions: Challenges and Choices (2005)* and *A New Pensions Settlement for the 21st Century (2006)*. Building on these reviews and a nationwide consultation process, the government set out proposals for reform in two White Papers: *Security in Retirement: Towards a New Pensions System (2006)* and *Personal Accounts: A New Way to Save (2006)*.

2.1.5 Poverty

Extended working life objectives are also informed by a need to reduce the incidence and degree of poverty in old age. Pensioner poverty is fairly widespread. Recent Government figures show 2.0 million pensioners (18 per cent) living in poverty in 2007/08 (DWP, 2009).⁶ Difficulties associated with low incomes are compounded by outstanding debt. Around one-fifth of the retired population have some form of unsecured borrowing (Age Concern England, 2008).

Income inequalities among older workers often continue into the retirement years. In order to tackle poverty in older ages, it is necessary therefore to take a life-course perspective to ensure that individuals have the opportunities, support, skills and training necessary to remain in employment, with prospects to save, throughout their lives. Life-long learning policies, pension provision, welfare to work programmes and a commitment to full employment are all therefore implicated in the anti-poverty agenda. In the years after SPA, opportunities to work could also help offset any shortfall arising from inadequate pension and savings income.

2.2 Government initiatives

The Pensions Green paper (Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), 2002), *Simplicity, security and choice: Working and saving for retirement*, sets out the need to extend opportunities for older people in the labour market which includes strengthening back to work (BTW) provision for the 50+ age group. Local governments now have a statutory duty to engage the public in service monitoring and development. The 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review for the period 2008-2011 includes a Later Life Public Service Agreement (PSA 17) that prioritises the older population. One of the five key indicators is to assess progress on the employment rate of those aged 50-69 in relation to the overall employment rate.

Responding to the various factors which can lead to premature labour market exit, Government initiatives have targeted both the demand and supply side of the equation and developed a multi-stranded approach to reverse trends and improve overall employment levels. An 80 per cent overall employment rate has been set as a long-term aspiration, with people aged 50 to 69 among those prioritised to achieve this goal.

⁶ These figures refer to relative pensioner poverty after housing costs, based on Households Below Average Income (HBAI) figures.

2.2.1 Legislation

Key legislative developments and ongoing campaigns include:

- SPA equalization. Women's SPA will change gradually from 60 to 65 over a ten year period from 2010 to 2020. Women born after 5th April 1955 will not be eligible for the State Pension until age 65 (Pensions Act, 1995). Among men, age eligibility criteria for back to work benefits and Pension Credit will also rise after 2010;
- The Welfare Reform Act (2007): this placed an emphasis on worker capacity and introduced, extended or reformed Incapacity Benefit (IB), the Pathways to Work programme, in-work financial incentives and information or advisory services (see below);
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (October 2006): this enshrines the right to equal treatment regardless of age and gives employees the right to request to work beyond the default retirement age;
- The Flexible Working Regulations extension (2007): the right to request flexible or reduced hours was extended to some individuals with eldercare responsibilities. The extension was restricted however to carers of dependent adults only and did not apply if the older parents were not living with the carer. The care of grandchildren is currently not included;
- The Age Positive Campaign: this promotes good practice to include provision of flexible working arrangements as people age;
- The Finance Act (2004): regulations associated with pension drawdown and continued employment have been amended;
- State pension deferrals, introduced in April 2006, act as an incentive to extend working lives. Deferral increases the State Pension by around 10.4 per cent for every year that retirement is delayed. Alternatively, a one off tax free lump sum is available, equal in value to the unclaimed pension, plus two per cent above bank base rate.⁷ State pension receipt can be deferred indefinitely;
- adult education initiatives following the Leitch review, including more adult apprenticeships, with an age cap of 25 removed, and the introduction of age discrimination legislation that applies to training in the workplace. Leitch observed a decreasing need for unskilled labour and a consequent requirement to improve the skills of older age groups to meet the needs of the economy. A Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) was created in 2007. The remit of the DIUS includes raising and widening participation in Further and Higher Education and tackling the skills gap amongst adults;
- new Adult Careers Guidance Service for adults in or out of work, providing information and guidance on careers, skills needs and appropriate training;

⁷ See www.thepensionservice.gov.uk.

- The Black Review (Black, 2008): this emphasises the importance of occupational health services to prevent job loss and facilitate the re-engagement of the workless in poor health;
- Following the Black review, health related changes have been proposed in order to prevent employment exit among those with illness, avoid long-term inertia on incapacity benefits and help people get back into work by means of targeted assistance, rehabilitation and advice:
 - ‘Fit Notes’ to replace ‘Sick Notes’ – to date, when an employed individual becomes ill their (General Practitioner (GP) will specify their ailments and estimate the time off work required. This approach is to be replaced by the requirement that GPs will provide an electronic ‘fit to work’ note which will set out what work could be performed and how duties could be temporarily altered to take account of the health condition;
 - a national centre for working age health and well being;
 - health, work and well being co-ordinators;
 - an occupational health helpline for smaller businesses pilot;
 - a challenge fund to encourage local workplace health initiatives.

2.2.2 Welfare reform

Central to New Labour’s Welfare to Work strategy has been the establishment of nationwide Jobcentre Plus offices. These function as a gateway for all benefit claimants, whether for unemployment benefits, such as Job Seeker’s Allowance (JSA), or for IB or Income Support (IS) or, more recently, Employment Support Allowance (ESA). Jobcentre Plus, with its partner agencies, deliver the various New Deals for the unemployed and help IB claimants by means of the Pathways to Work programme. Further details on the various programmes available to older job seekers and those on inactive benefits are supplied in Appendix B.

It has been recognised for some time that there is a need to re-evaluate the employment possibilities facing the long-term sick or disabled, among whom the 50+ age group predominate. The scale of incapacity benefits remains a challenge – of the 8.8 million people aged between 50 and SPA, 1.3 million were claiming IB (Beatty and Fothergill, 2007). A further 400,000 were either claiming unemployment benefits or were dependent partners of IB claimants. Around 40 per cent of claimants have mental health and stress related conditions – a figure that has been increasing over recent years (Beatty and Fothergill, 2007). Key policy objective is to get one million older men and women back into work (DWP, 2006a) and significantly reducing the numbers of IB claimants, many of whom are 50+. To this end, the Welfare Reform Act (2007) introduced a number of measures, including a new ESA to replace IB and IS based on incapacity or disability. In addition, a new Personal Capability Assessment, alongside ESA, was introduced in October 2008, to assess an individual’s entitlement and the possible support needed to get back into the workplace. The development of a national strategy

for mental health and work will lead to the requirement for medical certificates to emphasise 'capacity' rather than 'incapacity' in the hope of reducing the number of IB claimants.

Back to work support is now increasingly shifting from voluntary to mandatory provision, thus integrating the responsibility for finding work for older people on active and inactive benefits. The 2006 welfare reform Green Paper, *A new deal for welfare: empowering people to work* (DWP, 2006b) announced the intention to replace the various New Deals with a 'Flexible New Deal', which will not differentiate customers according to age groupings. New Deal 50plus does not provide help until six months after an initial claim, which increases the risk of the older unemployed becoming discouraged. The Flexible New Deal will offer some help after three months, followed by specific, tailored support after six months and full mandatory support after one year.⁸ Further developments proposed under the Gregg Review (DWP, 2008) anticipate that the vast majority of benefit claimants will take on responsibility for work preparation and job search with increased conditionality in exchange for the support received. This heralds co-ownership between individuals and BTW support agencies in the progress to work. Increasing numbers of older JSA and ESA claimants will be expected to engage in work-focused activities.

2.3 Key barriers to work among the older jobless

In order to reduce the incidence of unemployment, inactivity and early retirement, there is a need to clarify what works for the 50+ in terms of effective BTW provision and to understand the key challenges for these measures.

Evaluating BTW provision is complicated by a range of demand and supply side factors which can influence or mediate employment outcomes for the 50+ group. Figure 1 provides a conceptual framework, categorising the range of opportunities and barriers that have the potential to interact with return to work support. The impact of BTW provision is inevitably constrained or facilitated by context, whether at the micro (individual characteristics/job centre staff), meso (employer attitudes and behaviour) or macro (wider economy/policy) levels – each represented by separate 'bubbles' within the figure.

2.3.1 Age as a barrier

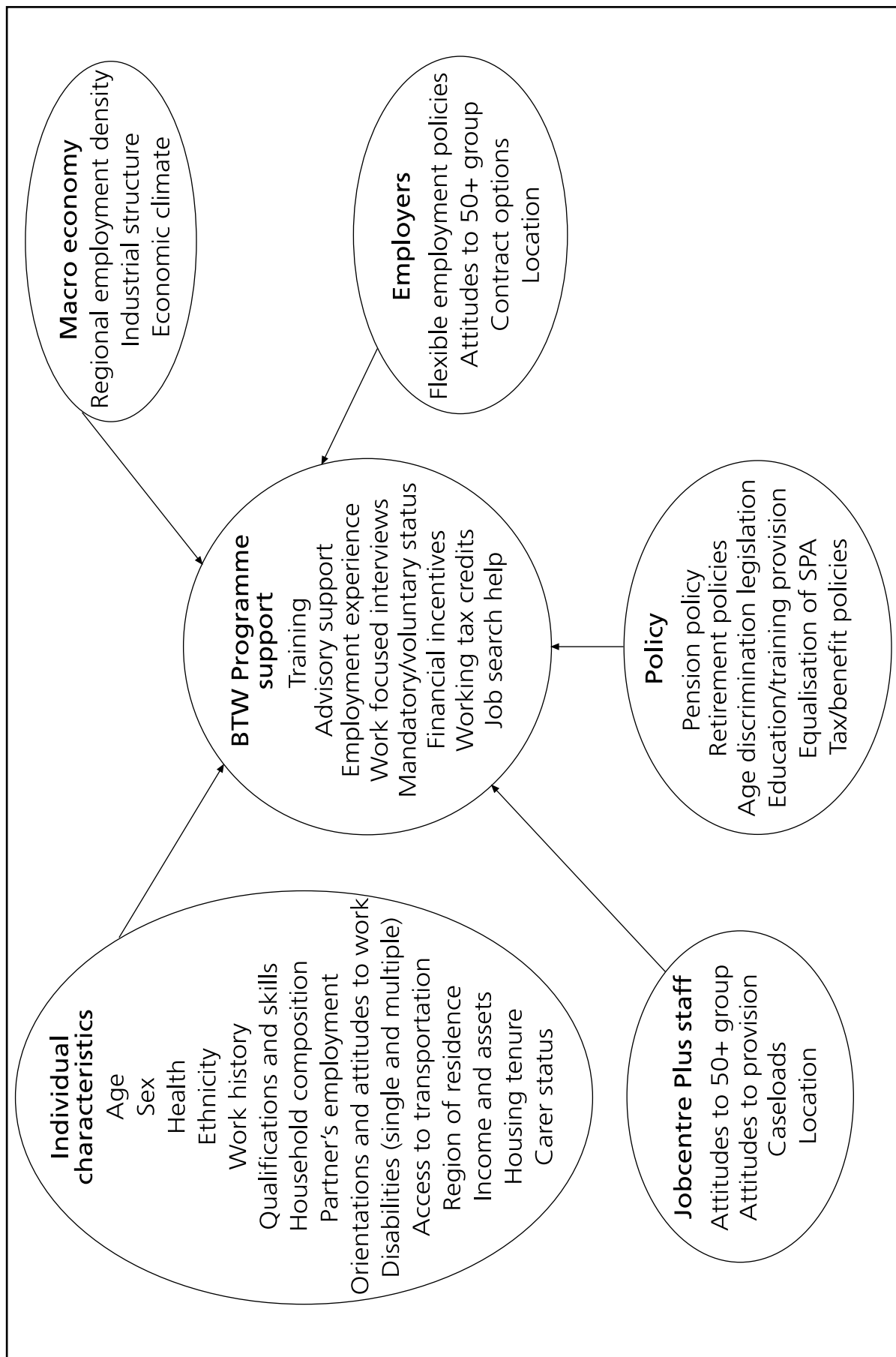
In many respects it is not appropriate to conflate all individuals over the age of 50, as this age group is highly heterogeneous in terms of their needs, skills, preferences and aspirations. These differences lead, in turn, to highly disparate requirements in relation to BTW assistance. Distinct needs, based on class, gender, proximity to SPA, skills, caring responsibilities and work history, are likely to differentiate people **within** older age groups to a greater extent than the differences between the younger and older unemployed.

⁸ In response to rising unemployment, from April 2009, extra help for the newly unemployed has been made available nationally.

Having acknowledged the heterogeneity of older people, and warned against over-simplistic age dichotomies, it remains the case that for a number of reasons, set out below, many older unemployed people require assistance which differs in type, approach and intensity compared with their younger counterparts.

The following subsections briefly outline the various factors, associated with age, which give rise to the possible need to differentiate aspects of BTW provision for different age groups. While the older jobless are a highly diverse group, at an aggregate level several factors suggest the need for a more tailored and 'age proofed' approach to BTW provision for the 50+.

Figure 1 Factors which can influence the effectiveness of BTW provision



2.3.2 Age typing and discrimination

Widespread ageism is an every day experience (Ray *et al.*, 2006) which acts as an additional barrier to accessing the labour market. Compared with other areas of societal discrimination, like sexism and racism, ageism has been less widely investigated (Nelson, 2005). Research indicates widespread ageist attitudes towards older people in Britain – 73 per cent of older people claim to have experienced age discrimination in their day-to-day lives and this is most common from age 55 onward (Ray *et al.*, 2006, Bytheway *et al.*, 2007). Older people are also regularly stereotyped by their same-age peers (IDeA, 2007).

A number studies have emphasised the significance of discrimination in the labour market leading to recruitment problems among the 50+ (Taylor and Walker, 1998; Arrowsmith and McGoldrick, 1996, 2001; McNair and Flynn, 2005). The type and prevalence of discrimination varies according to the characteristics of employees, their jobs and the industry in which they work (Duncan and Loretto, 2003; Weller, 2008).

In terms of discrimination in the workplace, a recent survey of jobless people aged 50+ found that 38 per cent had experienced age discrimination at work and 50 per cent had experienced discrimination when seeking employment (TAEN, 2008). Age discrimination was also raised as a key barrier to re-securing work by nearly three-quarters (71 per cent) of unemployed older men and women in a recent EHRC commissioned survey (Smeaton *et al.*, 2009).

Schemes and initiatives designed to get older people back to work must therefore complement supply side interventions with demand side measures. It remains unclear whether attitudes toward older workers are changing in response to the Age Employment Equality (Age) Regulations⁹ enacted in 2006. Evidence suggests that while employers are now more willing to **retain** older workers and will take steps to maintain their employment, the impetus to **recruit** older workers has not increased to the same extent (McNair, 2007).

2.3.3 Health problems

Health problems are more likely to arise as a barrier to work as people age. Long-term sickness accounts for half of early retirement decisions (Hirsch, 2005) and around one third of the workforce is managing a chronic illness by age 50 (Munir *et al.*, 2005). Among older workers in particular, work related musculoskeletal disorders (WRMSDs) are the most common cause of absence and long-term incapacity. Despite a wide range of EU directives and guidelines, it has been reported that WRMSDs are increasing (European Foundation, 2006). Mental health illnesses (such as stress, depression and anxiety) are also widespread. Health

⁹ The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations Act 2006, covering England, Scotland and Wales and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) Act 2006, make it illegal to issue age-specific job adverts or to use age as a basis for employment decisions.

and rehabilitation interventions are therefore likely to be needed to a greater extent among older claimants.

2.3.4 Caring responsibilities

The need to care for older adults becomes more prevalent from the age of 50 (Carers UK, 2005). Employment participation decisions are influenced by caring responsibilities. Workers in their fifties or sixties may still have elderly parents or a partner with health problems, and they may also have grandchildren to care for, hence their identification as the 'pivot generation' (Mooney *et al.*, 2002). Around six million people in the UK provided unpaid care in 2001; 45 per cent of these were aged between 45 and 64 (Office for National Statistics, 2006). By 2037, it is estimated by Carers UK that the number of carers could have increased to nine million¹⁰ with implications for their availability to work. Indeed, it is suggested that eldercare may become the work and family issue of the 21st century (Smith, 2004; Ghosheh *et al.*, 2006). As women now, typically, delay childbirth, parents often also have responsibilities for older dependent children while in their fifties and sixties (Smeaton *et al.*, 2009). The availability and desire to work among carers is determined by a range of factors including; financial need, availability of jobs, access to flexible working arrangements, carers' and other means tested income maintenance benefits, social services provision, personal identity, distance to work and travel times (Arksey and Glendinning, 2008).

2.3.5 Formal qualifications

One of the factors associated with reduced employment and recruitment prospects among older people is their lower qualification levels, reflecting the poorer educational opportunities of older cohorts. Older women are particularly disadvantaged in terms of educational attainment; they are more likely to have left school at 15 or earlier and are less likely to hold educational qualifications. Among the 50+ 21 per cent have no formal qualifications compared with 13 per cent of those aged 16-SPA (Taylor, 2008).

Skills obsolescence can also arise for older workers who may have skills and experience in declining industries. Opportunities to up-date skills or retrain would help these groups. To this end the Government has expressed a commitment to reverse the decline in apprentice numbers. The DCSF plans for numbers embarking on an apprenticeship to increase to 400,000 and recognises the need to include provision for apprenticeships later in life – for adults wishing to change careers, for example. Consequently, the 25-year-old age cap for apprenticeship funding has been removed (DCSF, 2008). An adequate skills and qualifications base can protect workers as they age. Those most at risk of involuntary, premature labour market exit have low skills and few qualifications (Lissenburgh and Smeaton, 2003) whereas take-up of training improves promotion opportunities, continued employment and movement toward flexible work arrangements or 'bridge jobs' as an alternative to early retirement (Lissenburgh and Smeaton, 2003; NIACE, 2006).

¹⁰ See <http://www.carersuk.org/Aboutus/Whoarecarers/Tenfactsaboutcaring>

The incidence of formal learning declines with age (Smeaton and Vegeris, 2009). Barriers to adult learning include transport problems, information shortfalls and, partly due to the lower skill levels of older workers – the well educated in their 60s are three times more likely to undertake training as employees in their 20s with no qualifications (NIACE, 2006).

Leitch (2006) observed that not only will older people comprise an increasing proportion of the total workforce, but changes in the job structure, with less demand for unskilled work, entail a significant increase in demand for higher level skills. There has been, and will continue to be, a decreasing need for unskilled labour. As a consequence, it is necessary to improve the skills of older age groups to meet the needs of the economy.

Results from the quantitative evaluation of the New Deal 25+ Intensive Activity Period (IAP) programme indicated that customers previously employed in manual jobs were most likely to have returned to work following mandatory participation in IAP (Dorsett and Smeaton, 2008). It is likely that the range of options was particularly suitable for their needs. The types of low cost training available as part of IAP was reported, in the qualitative phase of the evaluation, as largely unsuitable for the more specialist needs of managers, professionals and other more skilled customers (Atkinson *et al.*, 2006). Maltby (2007) reported that focus group participants in a study of older unemployed inhabitants of Birmingham and Solihull similarly objected that their skills gaps were not being met. Training offered to them by Jobcentre Plus was too generic, low level and took no account of their educational and employment history.

Attendance on accredited courses are likely to help those with no qualifications. For groups with work experience but no formal qualifications, help advising on how best to present oneself in a CV is also likely to be beneficial.

2.3.6 Self perceptions

Older workers often express discriminatory views about their own age group, suggesting they personally are 'too old' to work. As a consequence, the older unemployed can quickly become demoralised when job applications are rejected (Atkinson, 2001 ND50+ evaluation). Other studies have also highlighted that older workers in particular can lose morale, motivation and self-confidence with a risk that they will give up and join the 'hidden unemployed' (i.e. those neither working nor claiming benefits). Frontline Jobcentre Plus workers emphasise the numbers of older people who write themselves off and regard themselves as 'too old' to work and learn (DFES, 2003: 8).

These self-perceptions are also an important obstacle to the pursuit of training. If older workers believe that employers are unlikely to recruit them then any investment of time and money in training will be perceived as a risk (Phillipson and Smith, 2005: 59; Mitton and Hull, 2006). In order to be effective for older workers, training opportunities may need to be combined with advice, encouragement and clarification of the opportunities that may ensue regardless of age.

2.3.7 Career change and modification of expectations

The jobs we hold and the status they carry have significant implications for personal identity and self-esteem. In some cases individuals with a work history of good, well paid employment may retain greater self respect by 'retiring' rather than taking an alternative, low paid, poor quality job (Taylor, 2008) Some individuals – especially if from senior, professional backgrounds – may retain unrealistic reservation wages (i.e., minimum income expectations), and occupation/status expectations (Atkinson *et al.*, 2001). A mismatch between job availability and job expectations has been explored by Lindsay and McQuaid (2004). They observe the importance of the service sector for the British economy but find that many so called McJobs – low paid, low skilled, poor conditions, entry level jobs – are rejected by substantial minorities of unemployed older jobseekers. Those particularly likely to refuse such positions tend to be older men from traditional industries such as coal extraction and the manufacturing sector. Lindsay and McQuaid conclude that the jobless need to remain open to a broader range of employment opportunities while employers need to offer jobs with decent pay and conditions with scope for progress and personal development.

While work placements are not widely offered to the older unemployed (Dorsett and Smeaton, 2008) they may nevertheless be useful for older workers, not to provide them with a general experience of work so much as to expose them to alternative careers and occupations with which they may be unfamiliar.

2.3.8 Geography of unemployment

Beatty and Fothergill (2007) have assessed the extent to which welfare reform measures are likely to be effective in getting the 50+ inactive and unemployed back into work. Despite identifying a large reserve of older men and women able and willing to re-engage with the world of work, they suggest that the geography of unemployment is likely to undermine efforts to improve employment rates among the over 50s. Analyses show that the economically marginalised over 50s are concentrated in Northern England, Wales and Scotland – the areas which were hit hardest by industrial restructuring in the 1980s and 1990s and in which employment opportunities are at their lowest. In these old industrial heartlands, there is a dearth of jobs for older people to enter and competition for the jobs that arise is strong. Under these circumstances, where older people do secure work, this may have a displacement effect on younger workers. Targeted regional economic policy is therefore more likely to improve the prospects of older workers throughout the UK than the more general welfare reforms currently on offer.

2.4 Previous reviews of 'what works' in helping the 50+ back to work

Previous reviews of back to work services for the age 50+ group (Moss and Arrowsmith, 2003, NAO, 2004; Hasluck and Green, 2007, Philipson and Smith, 2005) concluded that older clients benefited particularly from:

- financial incentives (New Deal 50 plus Employment Credit (EC)) – these were described as not only encouraging returns to work but also broadening the range of occupations that were considered. The financial support was an effective means to overcome the 'benefit trap' thereby smoothing transitions into work. Evidence suggests that the EC was most effective in areas of low wages and low living costs and it made lower wages more acceptable;
- EC was welcomed as 'invisible' to employers who might otherwise make adjustments to salaries. The switch from EC to Working Tax Credit (WTC) in 2003 raised concerns among Jobcentre Plus staff that fewer older clients would participate in the ND50 plus programme;
- provision of advisory support, especially where Personal Advisers (PA) were of a similar age are perceived as effective for older clients. Ongoing support, with repeated contact and development of rapport was most helpful – acknowledged by PAs and older clients. Despite the value placed on personal advice and guidance or 'caseloading', both by staff and programme participants, Green and Hasluck (2007: 60) observe that subsequent surveys identified no statistical correlation between caseloading and the likelihood of securing employment, mainly because the most job-ready did not enter caseloading (Atkinson *et al.*, 2003);
- apposite timing of interventions and assistance are critical. Timing of provision is particularly important for older people as their multiple barriers to work, combined with the option of psychologically reorienting toward retirement, can quickly undermine confidence and motivation;
- flexible training opportunities help older clients. An evaluation of Work-Based Learning for Adults (WBLA) indicated that both short, job focused training (SJFT) and longer occupational training (LOT) had a significant positive impact on employment participation outcomes for the 50 plus. SJFT accelerated entry into work for those over 50 whereas for other customers the impact was short-lived. LOT had a significant impact on all customers, including the 50+. The numbers of older clients participating on basic employment training (BET) were too small to evaluate;
- exposure to a job through Work Trials was found to be effective for encouraging employers to hire older workers, particularly among the long-term unemployed and those with little direct experience of the job sector.

Similar rates of employment success have been identified for those above and below 50 on Action teams, NDDP and Work Based Learning for Adults. By contrast, those over 50 did not fare as well on ND25 plus or in Employment Zones (NAO, 2004).

The reviewers (Moss and Arrowsmith, 2003; NAO, 2004; Hasluck and Green, 2007) identified the need to promote and adjust services in order to attract more non-JSA clients, long-term unemployed and those at the older end of the age spectrum. It was also noted that Personal Advisers were very helpful but not in a position to provide the range and depth of careers guidance and advice needed by older clients. Training provision on ND50 plus was widely regarded as too basic for many of the older unemployed who already had at least basic numeracy and literacy skills. More advanced skills training opportunities may therefore be more appropriate for older customers. On most programmes with a training component, take-up was low among older age groups.

Based on this synthesis of previous evidence reviews, it is difficult to estimate the effectiveness of various back to work provisions as most programmes included in the reviews have been voluntary for the 50+ population. Therefore, observable effects have largely reflected impacts upon individuals belonging to the younger side of the 50+ age spectrum, the more work motivated who choose to participate in service interventions and who typically have the fewest barriers to work. These individuals are the easier to help. Attitudes of older customers are noted to be of critical importance as many of those approaching SPA have already 'psychologically' retired. Encouraging motivation can be a challenge. Equally important in relation to employment outcomes are employer attitudes about hiring older job applicants.

In summary, the evidence from evaluations to date suggests that for older people who **volunteer** for a programme of BTW support, personal advice and guidance, combined with tailored services, are most valued. In-work financial incentives can promote work entry for some older individuals, but take-up may be influenced by the methods used to make such payments.

The following chapter broadens and updates the evidence on BTW provision for older people and includes programmes where participation was mandatory.

3 Synthesis of the evidence on back to work provision

This chapter presents strand two of the study, a classification and synthesis of the evidence. It maps out the reports included in the review and itemises this evidence according to back to work (BTW) programmes and services. Further detail on this process as well as a qualification of research rigour, soundness of evidence, scope of age and services covered is supplied in Appendix C.

The chapter then presents a synthesis of the evidence. This begins with the wider programme impacts reported for older participants. It then turns to the evidence on separate types of BTW provision and summarises the findings for each.

It should be borne in mind throughout this chapter that the extent to which the evidence supports findings on the 50+ population is largely determined by the objectives of the reviewed study, which, for the most part, included all customer groups. Gaps identified in the evidence therefore reflect the purpose of this current study – findings on older people’s experiences of BTW interventions. It is acknowledged that previous evaluation studies were commissioned and designed with a different purpose in mind.

For reference, BTW programmes are described in Appendix B. Report reviews are supplied in Appendix D. In the discussions, reports are referred to by their unique Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) report number.

3.1 Classification of reports included in the review

The sifting exercise identified 27 reports on empirical studies of BTW interventions that included findings on the 50+ group. These reports covered ten separate pilots or programmes of provision:

- European Social Fund (ESF) – training focus;
- New Deal (ND) 25 plus – various;
- ND 50 plus – various;

- ND for Disabled People – various;
- Permitted Work – work experience;
- ND for Partners – various;
- Over 50s Outreach – engagement;
- Pathways to Work – various;
- Skills Coaching and Skills Passports – training;
- Work Based Learning for Adults – training.

These programmes can be further classified by the eligibility criteria based on type of benefit claim and voluntary or mandatory participation rules. Details on the programmes/pilots are available in Appendix B.

Various types of BTW intervention are represented in the review. These are often offered as a package of services within a programme. These can be classified into six broad service types:

- advisory support;
- training;
- work experience;
- wage supplements;
- other financial support;
- health interventions.

Featured in all of the programmes is advisory support. This is to be expected as BTW services tend to be accessed through an adviser based in Jobcentre Plus or in a partner organisation. Training support is also a common type of service, offered in eight of the programmes in the review. Other forms of financial support (e.g., better off calculations, transportation, interview clothing costs) were provided by five of the programmes. The remaining services – work experience, wage supplements and health interventions – were less common, and more specific to particular programmes of intervention. For example, health interventions were only offered as part of Pathways to Work. Similarly, the New Deal 50 plus and Pathways to Work offered a wage supplement to help ease the transition to work.

The chapter now synthesises the evidence on BTW services for the 50+ group – advisory support, training support, work experience, wage supplements, other financial assistance and health interventions – starting with general programme impacts.

3.2 Impact analyses

3.2.1 Summary

Evidence on general programme impacts for age 50+ participants was available from eight reports. All impact analyses included a control group in the design. Outcomes focused on measures of work entry, benefit receipt and changes in health. In cases where age contrasts were detected, no reasons for the differences were discussed by the authors:

- Positive Impacts were reported for two voluntary programmes: New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP) which is restricted to people on disability related benefits and New Deal for Partners (NDP) with findings on non-working, non-claiming partners of claimants on benefit. Comparisons were made with like people from the eligible populations who did not participate in the programme.
- Participation in NDDP increased employment and lessened dependence on disability-related benefits. Impacts on benefit claims were greater for participants age 50 and over, compared to those under 50, i.e., larger proportions of older clients stopped claiming benefits. Programme impacts on employment were similar for both age groups.
- NDP had a positive impact on claimant rates among **existing** benefit claimant households and this was most likely to occur in households where the main claimant was aged 25-45 years, as opposed to older (over 45 years) or younger (under 25 years) main claimants. No impacts on benefits were detected for **new** claimant households.
- Impact findings from mandatory programmes are mixed. Evidence is available from two programmes: Mandatory ND 25plus Intensive Activity Period (IAP) for age 50+ which applies to Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants and Pathways to Work which is confined to Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants.
- An evaluation of the mandatory IAP for 50+ found a significant increase in participant employment levels which were sustained for at least two years. Effects were stronger for those aged 50-55 and for manual, as opposed to managerial/professional, workers.
- Early implementation impacts showed positive results on employment and benefits for older (age 45+) **new/repeat IB claimants** taking part in Pathways. However, these findings were contradicted by later assessments of the programme. Eighteen months after programme registration, Pathways was found to increase the probability of employment by seven percentage points, overall. Subgroup analyses revealed that participants under age 50 were ten per cent more likely to be employed but there were no employment gains attributed for those aged 50-59. Likewise, any positive impacts on benefit claims for the 50+ group were found to dissipate after six months. Positive impacts on health were only associated with participants under age 50.

- Regarding Pathways impacts on **existing** IB claimants, age was found to be a significant factor. For all groups, participants showed a significant gain on employment and reductions in benefit receipt. But the strength of these impacts were significantly greater for participants under age 50.

Eight reports include findings on the overall impacts of programmes of BTW provision, separately for older individuals.¹¹ In all studies, methodologies designed to detect programme impacts did not focus on the separate elements of programme provision nor did they assess the relative contribution of these services to programme outcomes. In some cases, this was due to the limited data capture of the administrative data and management information systems that were used. Programme impacts pertain to changes in employment, benefits and health status.

3.2.2 Evidence from voluntary programmes

Among the voluntary BTW programmes included in the review, evidence on impacts is available on the NDDP and NDP customer groups. Research evidence from the ND 50plus is largely descriptive in nature and does not include an assessment of impacts.

ND for Disabled People

The NDDP was subjected to a large scale multi-method evaluation using data between 2001 and 2006. Analyses, based on a quasi-experimental, matched comparison design, show robust positive programme impacts for work entry and for reduction in benefits receipt among 50+ participants. Results at 12 and 24 months after programme registration reveal that employment gains endure (RR432). Comparisons between older NDDP registrants and like non-registrants in the eligible population showed that NDDP increased employment by ten percentage points for existing claimants and nine percentage points for new claimants.¹² Employment impacts were found to be similar for both the over 50 and under 50 groups. But there were age differences regarding change in benefit receipt; showing a greater reduction in the numbers collecting disability related benefits among the older cohort. This applied to both new and existing claimants. Descriptive results from early participant cohort surveys (RR260) showed that 49 per cent of those aged 50-59 were in work (employee, self employment or Permitted Work) one year after joining NDDP and the proportion in work was statistically

¹¹ All impact assessments incorporated a comparison group, primarily through quasi-experimental data analysis techniques, constructed from either sample survey or administrative data. Counterfactuals were constructed as an estimate of the outcomes in the absence of the studied intervention. One study (RR500) used an experimental random controlled trial (RCT) design.

¹² Existing claimants were defined as those who had been receiving disability related benefits for more than one year before registering for NDDP. New claimants would have been claiming these benefits for less than one year before registering.

greater than for the youngest age group (16-29 years). Descriptive analyses on the types of employment revealed that the incidence of Permitted Work increased with age, rising to 16 per cent of workers who were age 60+ (RR369).

A synthesis report on key NDDP evaluation findings concluded that there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that participation in the programme led to any health benefits, on the other hand, nor did it suggest any adverse effects on participants' health (RR430).

ND for Partners

There is limited impact evidence from studies of ND for Partners and Work Focused Interviews for Partners (RR417). Based on administrative data monitoring flows of workless households that were eligible for the WFIP, age was found to be an important factor regarding change in benefit status. Among existing claimant households (those on benefits for more than 26 weeks), there was a small but significant reduction in benefit claims and this reduction was most likely to occur in households where the main claimant was aged 25-45 years, as opposed to older (over 45 years) or younger (under 25 years) main claimants. No impacts on benefits were detected for new claimant households. In addition, partners aged 25-45 years were more likely to join NDP following participation in a WFIP. No reasons for these age differences were discussed by the authors.

3.2.3 Evidence from mandatory programmes

ND 25plus Intensive Activity Period for the 50+

Mandating the IAP for older jobseekers participating in ND 25plus has been found to have positive effects on labour market outcomes, based on a random controlled trial (RCT) experimental design (RR500). IAP caused a significant increase in job outcomes and employment levels were sustained over the two year evaluation period. By the end of this period, the employment rate was five percentage points higher for the IAP group – 27 compared to 22 per cent. Some differences on impacts were detected. The mandatory IAP period was more likely to lead to employment outcomes for manual workers, compared to higher skilled and qualified claimants. The main difference by age was with regard to unemployment. The reduction in unemployment was sustained for the participants aged 50-55 years, but disappeared after the first year for older individuals (56-59 years). The impact analysis did not report separately on the different IAP activities. Therefore it is not possible to report the independent effects of the different training and work experience opportunities.

Pathways to Work

Overall, effects of the Pathways to Work pilots differed for the two customer populations – recent (new/repeat) and longer term (existing) IB claimants. In general, older programme participants fared less well. The profile of new/repeat claimants tends to be slightly younger; 31 per cent were aged 50-59, compared to

36 per cent of existing IB claimants. This reflects the longer duration, on average, existing claimants have been on IB (Hales *et al.*, 2008).

Early research on new/repeat IB claimant experiences of Pathways presented encouraging results for older participants (RR354). Based on survey responses comparing participants with like benefit claimants in non-Pathways areas, the research attributed the programme with increasing overall employment by over nine percentage points. The research detected an impact interaction with age and gender and suggested greater employment impacts for men age 45+ and for women under age 45. Benefit claims were also found to be reduced by the programme, overall by just over eight percentage points. Again, this impact was found to be greater for men and women over age 45, compared to the younger cohort. The authors warn that findings are based on early implementation results and assess the impacts of a more stable programme delivery would require more time.

However, later research that tracked the effects of Pathways on the same claimant population identified no effects or negligible effects on participants aged 50-59 years. Impact analyses performed 18 months after Pathways registration revealed no effects for the 50+ group (RR435). Overall, Pathways was found to increase the probability of employment by seven percentage points. Analyses by age subgroups revealed that participants under age 50 were ten per cent more likely to be employed but there were no employment gains attributed to those age 50-59. In terms of benefit exits, the effect of the programme did not persist for older participants: for both age groups, there were significant reductions in the probability of claiming incapacity benefits during the first six months of the programme, but this effect dissipated for those over age 50 after the sixth month.

With regard to health, Pathways reduced the proportion of new/existing claimants aged under 50 who reported a health condition or disability that limited their ability to carry out their day-to-day activities 'a great deal'. For those aged 50 or over, this effect was not statistically significant (RR435). Poor health was the most consistent reason reported by participants who did not find work or who did not retain work (RR456).

Analyses on existing claimants suggest a much stronger effect for younger participants (RR488). Pathways participation was found to have a significant impact on work entry for all groups. Subgroup analyses were not statistically significant; however, the strength of the effect was found to be significantly weaker for older participants: without Pathways, the likelihood of entering employment did not vary by age, but with the Pathways intervention older people were significantly less likely to enter employment, compared to participants under age 50. This finding is corroborated by evidence on changes to benefit status; without Pathways, older and younger customers were equally likely to stay on IB, but with the intervention, older participants were relatively more likely to stay on the benefit.

From a survey profile of existing claimant participants conducted 12 months after programme entry, those age 50+ were found to be the least likely (12 per cent) to either be in paid work or be actively seeking work, compared to 26 per cent of 18-24 year olds and 24 per cent of 25-49 year olds (RR527). Older respondents were also characterised as having concerns that employer ageism (40 per cent) and limitations to the number of hours they could work (60 per cent) would reduce their chances of finding a job.

3.3 Advisory support

3.3.1 Summary

The evidence on advisory support is compiled from qualitative research or descriptive survey data:

- Evidence from customers and advisers suggests that having an adviser of a similar age was considered an asset for building rapport with 50+ customers and for providing a role model.
- Those who attended multiple meetings appreciated the continuity of seeing the same adviser over time.
- Regular meetings were considered most helpful by individuals who expressed a desire to return to work, or those who recognised that they required guidance with their job search or more generally wanted an escape from unemployment.
- 50+ customers most appreciated help with: job searches; CVs and letter writing, application forms; IT skills; and free stationary, newspapers, telephone and stamps.
- People looking for work in the professional/managerial sector were most negative about their advisory experiences and were more likely to find them unhelpful.
- Working ND 50plus customers would have benefited from in-work advisory support, especially when Employment Credit (EC) payments were due to end. Proactive guidance on how to offset the drop in income would help to address any retention issues.
- Mixed age programmes that include a mandatory interview with an adviser distinguished the 50+ group as more likely to have a health condition or disability (or these conditions were relatively more severe). These factors may have restricted engagement with advisory services.
- Research on outreach activities suggest that negative perceptions of Jobcentre Plus may discourage some older people from taking up the opportunities on offer.

Advisory support is common to all BTW programmes studied in the review. In Jobcentre Plus a personal adviser (PA) can serve as the main point of personal contact, assesses the needs of people looking for work and guides them towards

appropriate kinds of assistance needed to find a job (House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, 2007). Although the primary role is to help customers secure work (reinforced through set work-entry targets), PAs also proffer advice on financial support (in-work and out of work assistance) and employment rights; training and education; and they will make referrals to outside service agencies who provide specialist support. The level of engagement with an adviser varies according to a customer's needs and wishes and/or the programme regime. In many instances, a series of regular contact meetings will take place, although ad hoc meetings may be arranged. In voluntary programmes (e.g., ND 50plus, ND for Disabled People), clients may elect to be 'caseloaded', meaning they attend regular meetings with a PA according to a mutually agreed schedule (in the case of NDDP, an external provider or job broker takes on the advisory role). In mandatory programmes (e.g., Pathways to Work), a Work Focused Interview (WFI) is the first one-to-one meeting between a customer and a PA.

The evidence on advisory support is compiled from qualitative research or descriptive findings from surveys. Results are presented separately for voluntary and mandatory programmes.

3.3.2 Voluntary programmes

ND 50plus

Qualitative evidence found that customers usually chose not to see a ND 50plus personal adviser because they were concerned they might be 'pushed' into work, or they felt confident in their own job seeking abilities, or they did not think the advisory help would be useful (ESR70). Those who attended advisory meetings were generally very positive. People particularly appreciated the continuity of seeing the same adviser over time. More positive views of the advisory experience were found to be associated with people who had gone on to find work. Experience with job search support from advisers received mixed reviews. While some customers believed their adviser was providing a broad range of choices, others felt they were being steered towards unsuitable jobs. In terms of in-work support, evidence from the third wave customer follow up (ESR99) suggests that, participants who entered work would have liked to have had more after-care support from advisers, especially towards the end of the Employment Credit payments. This support could be key to work retention and customers would have benefited from more proactive guidance to offset the drop in income, like help finding a more highly paid job, or increasing work hours and general advice on in-work benefits.

ND for Disabled People

Survey evidence from the ND for Disabled People Personal Adviser Service Pilots reported contrasts in customer experience by age (RR144). The voluntary pilots tended to attract younger people from the eligible population and older participants were distinguished as having a relatively low engagement in the pilot. Although finding a job was the primary reason for joining, proportionately fewer

people aged 50+ than those under 50 indicated work as a reason for joining and more older participants cited their poor health or disability, or their age, as barriers to getting a job. Similarly, fewer of the 50+ group were attracted to the pilots by training opportunities. In terms of the content of advisory meetings, older participants were less likely to have kept in regular contact, less likely to have discussed training or in-work support, less likely to have engaged in job-search or other work related activities. Finally, marginally more people aged 50+ stated they received the help they needed (36 per cent compared to 29 per cent). This research, based on data collected in 1998-2000 is somewhat dated.

Other reported research on NDDP either did not differentiate customer experiences of job brokers and preferences for services by age (RR260) or did not analyse the separate programme provisions for impacts (RR430).

Over 50 Outreach Pilot

Although not entirely focused on back to work provision, the Over 50s Outreach Pilot can provide insights into how to enhance older people engagement with Jobcentre Plus. Outreach was delivered through organisations with previous experience of engaging with economically inactive people. They offered information, awareness raising and referral services. In the end, numbers responding to the pilot and ultimately engaging with Jobcentre Plus were lower than anticipated. The findings from a qualitative evaluation (RR401) identified negative perceptions and attitudes about Jobcentre Plus as contributing factors. Stigma, personal pride and fear of the unknown were perceptions that discouraged engagement. There were also concerns that enquiring about work would result in the loss of benefits. Among those interested in employment, their age and benefit status largely determined how Jobcentre Plus dealt with them. Notably, in many cases when people were above SPA or not in receipt of benefits, Jobcentre Plus could not help them. Those from professional/managerial background with interest in work found the job opportunities lacking.

The study recommended that marketing of services to engage the 50+ group works best when it is personalised (face-to-face contact) and tailored to the specific needs of individuals. Outreach events offering a range of information and advice were found to be most effective for attracting interest, while leaflets and poster campaigns were least effective. Outreach workers who belonged to the same age group were generally perceived as better able to empathise with the older participants. The study concluded that the use of intermediaries did not substantially improve the engagement of older people on inactive benefits with Jobcentre Plus services.

3.3.3 Mandatory programmes

ND 25plus

Qualitative evidence from advisers who delivered the IAP pilots to the 50+ group (RR388) indicates they did not feel they required any additional skills or training

to help the older job seekers aside from knowledge of Working Tax Credit (WTC) and the financial incentives available to 50+ customers who enter work. However, advisers belonging to the same age group were considered an asset for building rapport with the customers and as a role model, demonstrating that Jobcentre Plus '*practice what they preach*' (p 42). A preference for an adviser of a similar age was echoed by some participants. In general, customers were found to be positive about their relationships with advisers. The assistance was most often appreciated by individuals who expressed a desire to return to work, or those who recognised that they required guidance with their job search or more generally wanted an escape from unemployment. Overall, the 50+ customers particularly acknowledged help with: conducting a job search; writing CVs, letters, application forms; IT skills; and free stationary, newspapers, telephone and stamps.

People looking for work in the professional/managerial sector were most negative about their experiences. These customers felt that the advisers lacked knowledge about how job search in their specific area should be undertaken. In response, in some cases advisers felt this specialist knowledge was irrelevant as the job market restricted customers from re-entering their professions. Another general criticism about advisory support was the lack of privacy at Jobcentre Plus offices.

ND for Partners

Reports on Work Focused Interviews for Partners (WFIP) and the enhanced ND for Partners (RR417, RR335) provide further evidence on the lower work expectations among the 50+ group, compounded by the fact that older partners were much more likely to have a health condition or disability. Results from a longitudinal survey describe older partners as being less work oriented and less interested in training options than those under age 50. Unsurprisingly then, older partners were less likely than average to report they felt hopeful or motivated, as a result of the WFIP. Some advisers who were interviewed felt that older partners were less inclined to see the positives of changing their situation and considering work. The report concluded that some opportunities relating to partners in the older age ranges (e.g., ND 50plus) were not being identified and offered by advisers.

Pathways to Work

Three reports from the Pathways series of evaluations provide limited evidence on 50+ experiences of advisory support. Findings from a cross-sectional survey of existing IB claimants reports contrasts between age groups (RR527). Customers aged 50+ were distinguished as having attended fewer WFIs, however, assessments of how much WFIs helped them think about paid work were similar to other age groups, although slightly lower for those aged 55-59. An earlier study relating new and repeat customers' experiences of the programme did not report these findings by age (RR456).

Qualitative findings from a study of Pathways in-work support (RR478) identified success factors with matching services to support needs. For all age groups it was felt that a comprehensive range of services needed to be available and that the timing of services was key. However, personal advisers perceived older men (age 45+) to be reluctant to use supports that were made available to them through the programme, particularly emotional support.

3.4 Training support

3.4.1 Summary

Findings on work-related training for the 50+ group are primarily drawn from descriptive data on participant rates and qualitative observations. Although training was included as part of mandatory provision, participation was voluntary:

- The 50+ group is characterised with low interest and low take-up of training. Studies of mixed age provision reported substantially lower rates of training participation among the 50+ group. In programmes targeted to older jobseekers, training take-up was reported to be lower than expected (ND 50plus in-work training) or the less favoured option (ND 25plus Mandatory IAP).
- Few studies provided reasons for non take up among older people. These included perceptions of being too old and disappointment with training options.
- Only one study, evaluating Work Based Learning for Adults, provided robust impacts on employment. In a one year follow-up, significant employment gains were attributed to the programme for older people who had taken both shorter and longer term training options. The effect of short-term training was more lasting for the 50+ group but receded over time for those under age 50.
- In some survey based studies, the longer term effects on employment were less favourable for older trainees; however, findings should be treated with caution as studies that tracked employment did not include a control group in the design.
- A mixed-age training format, including a wide age range of participants, was identified as less effective.
- Advice and guidance was suggested for those not job-ready after course completion to further develop work preparation plans.

Support for training is a common element in back to work programmes, offered in seven of the nine programmes of intervention included in the review (excepting the Over 50s Outreach and Permitted Work programmes). Programmes usually combine work-related skills and education training with advisory and financial support. Provision varies, for example, differing by time of take-up (work preparation or in-work training), type of provider, value of training grant and duration. This section examines the evidence on work related training provision for the 50+ group, separately for work preparation and in-work training.

3.4.2 Work preparation training

Three of the studies (RR258, RR391, WARR187) dealt exclusively with training provision and reported impacts of the training on employment outcomes. However, only one of the studies (WARR187) included a control group so gains in employment may partially be due to the buoyant job market at the time.

The first (RR258) presents evidence from a longitudinal survey of participants in work preparation training supported by the European Social Fund (ESF). Results were less encouraging for the 50+ population. Outcomes were less positive for individuals who were economically inactive prior to participation (primarily women and people age 50+) while those who were seeking work or on prior training achieved more positive employment results from the training. 50+ participants were the least likely to have gained a qualification while in the programme (27 per cent compared to 35 per cent on average) and older people (men especially) were the least likely to be planning to attend further training after completing ESF (67 per cent compared to 80 per cent in the 25-34 and 35-49 age groups). IT training was the most popular subject for this group but older trainees were the least likely to say it helped with finding a job. Over the two year follow up period, older people showed the smallest gains in employment; 64 per cent were working at the time of the second survey while, on aggregate, 70 per cent of participants were in work. The authors concluded that some people would also benefit from direction/advice following course completion, and this would especially help those not work ready to identify further work preparation plans. A disproportionately higher percentage of this group were age 50+. More positively, among those who entered work, the proportion (72 per cent) who stated that the ESF helped them to get a job was similar for all age groups.

A second report (RR391), synthesising three quantitative and qualitative evaluations during the first year of the Skills Coaching trials (introduced in April 2005), provides further evidence on weaker outcomes for the 50+ group following a training related intervention. The Skills Coaching service was targeted to jobseekers identified with a skills deficit that might negatively affect their employability and to individuals in receipt of an inactive benefit who might improve their job prospects in the long-term through additional training. Participants were referred to the service at the discretion of a Jobcentre Plus Adviser. Those aged 50+ were found to be more likely to exit the programme early and less likely to achieve a work-related outcome. Compared to an overall exit rate of just under 14 per cent, 22 per cent of customers aged 55+ or above, and nearly 20 per cent of customers aged 45-54, had left the programme. On the whole, participation was found to dwindle over time, with those perceiving little return dropping out early. Older participants were not distinguishable from other groups by the types of services accessed. Likewise, there was no separate analysis reported on older participants' views and experiences of the Skills Coaching services.

Regarding employment outcomes, the prospect of full-time job entry decreased with age (18 per cent compared to 24 per cent overall). However, participants

aged 50+ were the most likely to start part-time work (20 per cent compared to nine per cent overall). Multivariate analysis revealed that a part-time work outcome was most highly concentrated in the age 55+ group.

An evaluation (WARR187) tracking participants in Work Based Learning for Adults Results (WBLA) showed positive impacts on employment. Analyses were based on survey data and quasi-experimental matching of JSA claimants who volunteered to the programme in 2002. WBLA increased the probability of work (any hours) by 17-18 per cent among the age 50+ participants. This finding applied to both the short, job focused training (SJFT) which offered work-focused training, soft skills and job placements for up to six weeks, and the longer occupational training (LOT) which offered opportunities to update work-related skills, develop new skills, improve basic skills, gain relevant qualifications, and perform a job search over 14 weeks. Details on the exact nature of the training activities undertaken were not provided. SJFT was also identified to accelerate entry into work for those 50 and over whereas this did not apply to participants under age 50. The authors did not speculate on possible reasons for this more favourable outcome among the older participants. Impacts of LOT were similar for both age groups. It is worth noting that, although demographic breakdowns of respondents were not supplied by age group, the majority of participants in the training schemes were male (76 to 80 per cent).

The remaining studies in this section considered programmes that offered work-related training as a choice among other BTW options.

Various training options were provided within the ND 25plus IAP mandated for the 50-59 age group (RR500, RR388). During IAP, participants receive a training allowance equivalent to their JSA, plus a top up. Data on participation rates showed individuals had a preference for IAP work experience (52 per cent) over any of the IAP training options combined (34 per cent). Among those who chose training, Education and Training Opportunities (ETO), which provided study leading to a recognised qualification, was the least favoured option. Instead, participants tended to enrol in basic numeracy/literacy and employability skills modules, and in IAP Training, used mainly for IT training or vocational training such as HGV/LGV, forklift truck driving, horticulture or plumbing.¹³ Findings from qualitative longitudinal evidence (RR388) suggest that while the training options were less common than work experience, they were generally well received, but more so among those with lower qualifications. Those with higher education and skills were often disappointed at what they viewed as the relatively limited choices on offer. This was particularly evident during the Gateway period of ND 25plus. Mixed age provision was also an issue. Many participants indicated a preference to receive support within same age groups as the younger people were perceived to be disruptive and less engaged in the process. From interviews with staff, participant motivation and expectations were identified as two important factors in determining employment outcomes, underlining the need for a more

¹³ In the study, 74 per cent of participants were male.

holistic approach to work preparation. Staff reported a link between proximity to retirement age and motivation to find work. This was confirmed in customer interviews, during which the older respondents (closer to SPA) reported that they felt they were now 'too old' to find work or retrain and they cited health problems or employer ageism as the reason for their lack of motivation.

In an earlier evaluation (RR366) of the ND 25plus Gateway period, where the addition of work preparation training at an early stage (four weeks after joining the Gateway) was found to have no impact on employment starts (across all ages), mixed age training was also called into question. The pilot offered training in communication skills, team building and problem solving; and help with CV writing, interview techniques and applying for jobs over a two week full-time course. The practice of mixing different age groups (between ND for Young People and ND 25 plus) was considered inappropriate as participants in the two programmes represented different needs and aspirations. Formative feedback from staff indicated that the course content was deemed more appropriate for younger job seekers and was not flexible enough to address the diverse needs of the older age group. The two-week course was also considered too short for tackling work barriers more common amongst the long-term unemployed.

Further evidence from the ND for Disabled People evaluations (RR369, RR144) found training to be a less favoured option among older participants who volunteered for the programme. The programme offered advice on training and education as a step towards work. From a cross-sectional survey of NDDP entrants in 2004 (RR369), younger participants were more inclined to take up training or education options and this declined with age; 48 per cent among participants aged 26-35 years, reducing to 44 per cent for those aged 36-45 years and 30 per cent among those aged 56 and over. The report did not provide reasons for these differences. On a related theme, an earlier survey (RR144) of NDDP participants found evidence that those aged 50+ were less likely to have discussed training with a personal adviser.

Likewise, a synthesis report on findings from the New Deal for Partners evaluations (RR417) found that older participants were generally less work focused and less likely than younger age groups to discuss training possibilities during a mandatory Work Focused Interview.

3.4.3 In-work training

The New Deal 50 Plus is the only BTW programme included in the review that offered support for in-work training.¹⁴ It featured a training grant of up to £750 (increased to £1,500 in June 2002) during the first year of employment following

¹⁴ The Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) demonstration also offered in-work training support, but there was no evidence in the published reports on the take up or experiences of this provision for the 50+ group.

programme participation.¹⁵ In addition to marketable work experience, the in-work training was considered key for future employability and job progression (WAE142). Yet take up of this option was low. By June 2001, only four per cent among those eligible had taken up the grant (WAE142) and by March 2003, the rate had risen to six per cent (Moss and Arrowsmith, 2003).

In a study (WAE142) which followed up 60 participants either six or 12 months after eligibility for EC had ended (i.e., 18 or 24 months into employment for those who remained in work), only five had taken up the Training Grant. Feedback included being too old, not seeing any benefit in training, and extra training being superfluous to the specific job tasks as reasons for non take up. Some felt the Training Grant was not compatible with existing in-house training provision. In general, obtaining a promotion within a workplace was valued more highly than gaining new or upgrading old skills.

Findings from a longitudinal study (ESR99) following 30 participants up to three points in time again found little experience of the Grant among the sample. The Training Grant was viewed as a secondary feature of ND 50plus. Attitudes towards training were found to be job specific, with the self employed and those working in professional and skilled jobs being more open to training compared to those in lower skilled jobs. It was recommended that more marketing and dissemination of information was needed to promote the training element of the programme.

Earlier evidence collected from 70 client interviews during the first year of programme implementation (ESR70) suggested that poor take up of the Training Grant may be due to low awareness or understanding of how the Grant operates. Participants perceived the main barrier to take up was their age, as many felt they were too old to learn new skills. Many also felt their employer would provide them with all the training they needed or wanted. Other barriers to in-work training were a lack of time and poor choice of training opportunities.

3.5 Work experience

3.5.1 Summary

Little research is available detailing work experience for older people. Two studies, one survey based and one qualitative, provide evidence:

- Results on a study of Permitted Work Rules pertain to incapacity claimants. A three wave survey of participants reported a 58 per cent work activity retention rate, with a quarter of respondents in work and off IB. Results were similar for all age groups. People with shorter term health conditions (less than three year IB claimants) were most likely to use Permitted Work as a stepping stone into mainstream work. The study recommended that people who take up Permitted Work also receive advisory support.

¹⁵ The original conditions for the grant apply to the evidence reported in the review.

- The ND25+ IAP work experience (unpaid) option received mixed reviews from 50+ participants. The better qualified and those from managerial/professional backgrounds found the experience particularly of limited value. Work experience was the most popular option in the IAP programme, selected by 52 per cent.

Few evaluation studies provide evidence on work experience provision for the 50+ group.¹⁶ The review on this topic looks separately at paid and unpaid work experience.

3.5.2 Paid work experience

Permitted Work is the topic of one longitudinal study (RR268) following participants over a three wave survey. Permitted Work aims to encourage a gradual return to employment by allowing people claiming disability related benefits to undertake work of low hours (less than 16 hours per week) while still receiving benefits. It replaced Therapeutic Work in 2002.

Results from the study on Permitted Work Rules (PWR) did not find significant differences on outcomes by age; however, the study sample included a high proportion (59 per cent) of respondents belonged to the older age groups: 36 per cent aged 46-55; 23 per cent aged 56+. Findings from a three-wave survey of participants identified that retention of a work activity was high, remaining at about 58 per cent between waves two and three of the survey. In total, 25 per cent were in work and off IB while the remaining third were still receiving IB while in work. A similar trend was report for people age 55+. The likelihood of moving into work and coming off benefits was found to be linked to the length of time that people had been claiming incapacity benefits. Those who had been on benefits for shorter periods (less than three years) were most likely to have moved into paid employment and off benefits. The main reasons given for leaving Permitted Work were that a person's condition had worsened or the job had been a temporary one. A third of those who had left work reported they planned to find another job, suggesting the work experience helped to encourage future work participation. The authors recommend that, in order to keep the momentum, these individuals would benefit from guidance and advice on employment possibilities and supports available.

3.5.3 Unpaid work experience

Evidence from the ND 25plus IAP 50 plus is available on two types of unpaid work related activities:

- work placement: These were of a short duration, typically two weeks and were seen as more suitable for job-ready claimants;
- work experience: Typically four days a week with job search activities one day a week and targeted those needing more supervision and training.

¹⁶ Although Pathways to Work offers work experience as part of the Choices package, details reported on older participants were negligible.

Findings from administrative records (RR500) indicate that, work experience was by far the most common IAP activity, selected by 52 per cent of mandated participants, while six per cent entered a work placement (participation in all training activities combined was 34 per cent and is reported in more detail in Section 4.2.3). Evidence from qualitative longitudinal research suggests that take up of work placements was relatively low because advisors reported difficulties finding suitable placements and instead, directed those interested in work to the work experience option. Most of the work experience took place in third sector agencies or with public sector employers. For example, several respondents worked part-time in a charity shop or with an environmental project. Customer views of the work experience were mixed. Some appreciated the opportunity to be in a work environment. Others resented working for free and they also did not expect it to have any positive effects on future employment, given that the majority of experiences were not relevant to their job search. Many found this kind of exercise irrelevant to the kind of work they would like to do. Many said they would have preferred work placements as these would bring them in direct contact with a recruiter. The better qualified and those from managerial/professional backgrounds found the experience particularly of limited value. It was felt that more quality provision such as relevant work placements was required to bring about job outcomes.

3.6 Wage supplements

3.6.1 Summary

Direct evidence about wage supplements for the 50+ group were only available from research on the ND 50plus. Research findings are based on qualitative data and administrative records:

- EC was considered to be the most attractive feature of the programme by both working and non-working participants.
- Incentive effects of EC could be mediated by individual circumstances like wage level, household conditions, living expenses, and personal attitudes.
- Longitudinal evidence found job retention to be high after EC had ended. EC provided some people with an incentive (others with the means) to prolong their employment. However, the research design did not include a comparison group which makes it difficult to more fully assess the effects of EC on work retention.

Wage supplements were offered as part of two back BTW programmes in the review: Pathways to Work and ND 50plus. These bonus payments, paired with work, are intended to encourage work entry and possibly work retention.

Pathways to Work

Pathways to Work participants who enter and sustain work of at least 16 hours or per week (earning less than £15,000) are entitled to Return to Work Credit (RTWC) payments of £40 per week, for up to a year. Three studies in the review include evidence on RTWC.¹⁷ Findings, based on survey sample data, are available on the take up of RTWC among new and existing customers but do not provide a breakdown by age groups. Take up of the work supplement was found to be higher among existing as opposed to new/repeat IB claimants.

New Deal 50 plus

New Deal 50 plus evaluation reports include evidence on EC which was a weekly payment of £60 to those sustaining work of 30 or more hours or £40 to supplement part-time work of 16-29 hours per week. An annual income threshold was set at £15,000 for eligibility.¹⁸ Research findings are based on qualitative data and administrative records.

Findings from cross-sectional interview data collected during the first year of the programme report EC was regarded highly (ESR 70). The wage supplement was considered to be the most attractive feature of the programme by both working and non-working participants. The attraction of EC varied according to individual financial circumstances. Some viewed EC as a wage top-up to encourage them to accept low paid work; others with higher earning potential or a second household earner saw it as a bonus. Urban dwellers who experienced a higher cost of living were less likely to view EC as a work incentive. Therefore, the incentive effects of EC could be mediated by individual circumstances like wage level, household conditions, living expenses, and personal attitudes.

Research which followed workers over time, did not include a comparison group which makes it difficult to assess the effects of EC on work retention. Longitudinal qualitative evidence found job retention to be high after EC had ended (ESR99, WAE142). However, part-time workers were struggling financially. It was noted by some advisers that participants would have benefited from a gradual reduction in EC payments so as to avoid the sudden drop in income when payments ended.

The rate of job sustainability was considered to be partly due to the incentive value of the payments and the extra support helped to make work financially viable. Yet, the voluntary nature of the programme and work orientation of the customers also had a role. Administrative data on recipients found work exits to be associated with customers who were male, disabled, in the 65-69 age band, single (or divorced or cohabiting), self employed, in a full-time job, having previously claimed SDA (or IS), having previously claimed for under 100 days in

¹⁷ A fourth, qualitative study which focused on 35 customer experiences of RTWC (Corden and Nice, 2006) did not consider differences between older and younger participants.

¹⁸ EC has been replaced by WTC.

total, and multiple repeat claimants (ESR151). These groups were relatively more likely to return to benefit after six months in work.

3.7 Other financial support

3.7.1 Summary

Evidence on the Adviser's Discretionary Fund (ADF) among the 50+ group is negligible and based on descriptive survey findings from IB claimants engaged with Pathways to Work:

- Take up of the ADF was not found to be associated with age. Instead, greater numbers who accessed the fund were work oriented and had fewer health issues.

Some BTW programmes provide financial help to pay for the extra expenses associated with job preparation and job search. This model of provision is offered under the ADF and is made available in the New Deal and Pathways to Work programmes included in this review. Access to the ADF fund is arranged by a personal advisers. Evidence on ADF experiences of the 50+ group is minimal and based on descriptive survey findings from IB claimants engaged with Pathways to Work.

Pathways provided participants with an ADF of up to £300 to help them obtain a job. Most commonly, the money was used for buying new clothes for job interviews or to start work. ADF also paid for travel, work tools, car related expenses, training or education fees and business set up fees. In a survey of new and repeat IB claimants, the take up of the ADF was not found to be related to age – ten per cent access among the 50+ group, compared to 17 per cent of 40-49 year olds, 11 per cent of 30-39 year olds and 18 per cent of 18-29 year olds (RR456). Instead, take-up was more closely associated with an interest in work and work readiness. Access to ADF was found to be higher among customers who had attended multiple WFIs and those classified with 'improving health'. The same trends on ADF take up were found in a survey of new and repeat customers (RR527). Customers who received ADF were more likely to be in paid work by the survey (55 per cent) compared to those who did not receive any money (nine per cent). The authors suggest that this may be indicative of successfully balanced targeting of the assistance by IBPAs. Take up was not reported by age for this customer group.

3.8 Health interventions

3.8.1 Summary

The evidence on health interventions is confined to the population of people in receipt of incapacity benefits and is based on two Pathways to Work studies largely reporting take up rates for the voluntary Condition Management Programme (CMP):

- Predominant health issues among 50+ Pathways participants were musculoskeletal and chronic/systemic health conditions. Mental health conditions were less common.
- Overall take up of CMP was higher among existing (eight per cent) compared to new (four per cent) IB claimants. However, rates of participation were more similar for older people ranging from four to five per cent among new customers and five to six per cent among existing customers age 50-59.
- Quality of self assessed health (changeable and affecting day-to-day activities) was found to be an important factor in the take up of the health intervention and reflects the targeting of the intervention.
- Employment outcomes for CMP customers were not analysed separately for older people. Multivariate analyses indicate that new or existing customers who entered paid work were relatively unlikely to have participated in CMP.

Health interventions aim to support disabled people or those with long-term and debilitating illnesses in managing their condition. Interventions of this sort featured in one national employment programme included in the review. Pathways to Work is a mandatory BTW programme designed to support people claiming incapacity related benefits.¹⁹ Pathways offers a range of health related interventions which clients access through an IBPA referral. The primary provision is the CMP which was jointly developed between Job Centre Plus and local NHS providers. CMP delivers work focused rehabilitation, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, advice and guidance on topics such as pain and lifestyle management, confidence building and motivational support to help clients return to work. Specialist modules are designed to help individuals overcome mental and physical conditions. Delivery may take the form of one-to-one or group sessions. Although Pathways is a mandatory programme, customers may choose the supports available to them, and therefore, participation in CMP options is voluntary.

Evidence on the effectiveness of CMP was found in two studies conducted as part of the Pathways evaluation. The studies did not provide details on the separate components of the health intervention. The first report (RR527), provides evidence on the experiences of a cross-sectional survey sample of **existing IB claimants**. The second study (RR456) investigated the Pathways experiences and outcomes of **new and repeat IB claimants** using a matched comparison sample. Overall, existing IB claimants were far more likely to report a life limiting health condition than new customers; 60 per cent as opposed to 33 per cent. Health conditions among the older age group were predominantly musculoskeletal and chronic or systemic conditions. Mental health issues were less common among older

¹⁹ Although the NDDP does not offer health interventions as part of the programme design, participants can obtain health related help and advice through a referral to a Disability Employment Advisor or a Work Psychologist. However, these services did not feature in any of the NDDP evaluation studies pertaining to the 50+ group.

participants. CMP take up was higher for existing claimants: eight per cent overall compared to four per cent of new claimants. However, the two studies report that take up rates were quite similar among older people in the two IB claimant populations, ranging from four to six per cent. Fewer of the existing claimants aged 50-59 engaged in CMP health services (five per cent of the 55-59 group and six per cent among those 50-54 years took part, compared to ten per cent of 40-49 year olds and nine per cent of 30-39 year olds) while participation for new claimants aged 50-59 was similar to the average rate, increasing slightly to five per cent for those age 55-59. Health was an important factor in CMP take up. Those reporting changeable health that still affected day-to-day activities were more likely to take part. This finding was thought to reflect the targeting of the intervention (RR456). Higher take-up within the 50+ existing customer group occurred among people in the moderate range, classified as 'medium-changeable' (14 per cent).²⁰ Ratings of CMP services were generally high and did not differ by age. Older new claimants who did register for CMP were more likely to attend only one CMP session, (as opposed to attending a series of sessions and completing a treatment). Changes in health status by CMP participants was not reported, due to small numbers.

In terms of employment outcomes, the reports did not breakdown work entry for CMP participants by age. However, multivariate analyses on both customer populations indicated that CMP participation was not likely to lead to work. This is understandable given that CMP is part of a longer-term package of support to help people move back into employment.

²⁰ Medium changeable health was defined as 'good health declining, fair changeable, poor improving'. This group would have constituted a smaller proportion of the 50+ as older participants generally rated their health as 'bad' or 'very bad' (68 per cent, compared to 57 per cent of the 25-49 year group and 48 per cent of the under 25 year group).

4 Datasets for secondary analysis

4.1 Rationale

One of the aims of the evidence review was to identify gaps in knowledge and highlight the implications of evidence to date for policy and practice in relation to older people aged 50 and above. The evidence reviews in Chapter 3 identified which Back to Work (BTW) evaluations since 2000 have adequately addressed the issue of age and the effects of different elements of provision. By and large there is little quantitative evaluation evidence to draw upon for policy purposes when formulating welfare to work measures specifically directed at individuals aged 50-55, 56-59 and 60-64. In principle, however, this information can be extracted from a number of evaluation surveys combined with administrative data which contain information on age of clients. This chapter relays findings from the third strand of the research, identifying datasets most suitable to further understanding of effective welfare-to-work interventions at different stages of life.

Key concerns of interest include:

- the extent to which a programme of BTW assistance helps older clients compared with younger clients;
- the extent to which labour market programmes help different age groups within the 'older' age category of 50+;
- within labour market programmes, which elements of provision are more or less effective for older compared with younger clients (e.g: guidance, work experience, training, or health interventions);
- the extent to which timing of assistance is critical for different age groups.

A number of these issues are addressed in Chapter 4 which discussed the evidence relating to 'what works' for older people and identified where gaps in knowledge remain. Datasets recommended for further secondary analysis are chosen insofar as they are able to contribute knowledge in relation to any of these key concerns.

This chapter outlines the criteria used in rejecting and recommending evaluation data for the purposes of secondary analysis. Recommended datasets are presented in Table 6.1 which indicates sample sizes, customer groups, location of data and topics covered. Further information relating to each dataset is provided in Chapter 4 which indicates the quality of datasets and range of provision associated with each labour market programme.

4.2 Criteria for selection

Datasets selected for re-analysis are recommended in order to:

- compare impacts of those above and below 50;
- further disaggregate findings for the 50+ age group;
- analyse choices and outcomes by age group, differentiating the different components of and options within packages of multiple provision. Measures which may be offered in tandem, but which have not been evaluated separately include PA advice and guidance, work experience, training, self-employment assistance and/or health interventions. Failure to separate the different elements of provision obscures understanding of which approaches are most effective in helping older compared with younger customers back into work.

Datasets were excluded if:

- age has already been adequately assessed within a published evaluation (e.g., New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP) admin data, European Social Fund (ESF), see RR376);
- they are based on qualitative data;
- the evaluation design (e.g., no control or comparison group);
- programme assessments are based on administrative data only which are not designed for evaluation purposes and therefore tend to have a very narrow range of covariates;
- the policy is now outdated (Work Based Learning for Adults (WBLA), now subsumed within Pathways); or
- an evaluation has demonstrated a zero impact over short or longer time periods (eg. JRRP, Employment zones).

Table 4.1 Proposed datasets for re-analysis

Dataset	Sample size	Where data held	Survey year	Data description	Topics covered (types of provision)
Pathways to Work (RR456)	N= 6940 total 2,188 over age 50 New and repeat customers in first seven pilot areas	Nat Cen	2004	Survey data includes two interviews ten months apart. Only interview 1 analysed to date and no modelling for age, etc.	Customer experiences and outcomes. Employment, employment duration, hours per week, wages, whether non-working recipients were seeking work. Health outcomes include whether self assessed health had improved or worsened, and self reported barriers to work. Interventions include contact with Jobcentre Plus, take up of a choices program element, attended case management meetings, clients' perceptions of why they had to attend case management meetings.
Pathways to Work (RR435)	Survey N=5784 Admin N= 38730<50, 1607 50+ New customers	Policy Studies Institute (PSI)	2004	Survey data (two waves, initial enquiry and 18 months later). Admin data (National Benefits database). Look at 50+ using admin data only, find notably lower impact on employment and IB receipt outcomes. No effect for 50+ on health outcomes.	Look at following outcomes; Employment status Incapacity Benefit (IB) receipt Earnings Self reported health status Do not differentiate effect of different components of the Pathways package.
Pathways to Work (RR488)	N=1808 Existing customers	PSI	Survey – 2008 Admin data benefit histories 2006-2008	Survey data merged with two admin. datasets: National Benefits Database and the Pathways Evaluation Database.	Control variables include sex, partner, health problems, dependent children, housing tenure, driving licence, access to a vehicle, literacy problems, and qualifications. Outcomes include 17 employment status characteristics (employed, retired, self employed, etc.) The second outcome was IB receipt.

Continued

Table 4.1 Continued

Dataset	Sample size	Where data held	Survey year	Data description	Topics covered (types of provision)
Employment Retention and Advancement Demonstration (RR520, RR412)	Survey wave2 n= 661 51% age 40+ Admin data n=6782 (P=3424, C=3358) 48% age 40+	PSI	2003-2007 (pilot completed 2007)	Customer survey (12m and 24m post RA) and Admin. data (Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS), HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)) Used admin data only for measuring impacts No separate analysis performed on age.	Employment entry/exits over a five year period, earnings and out-of-work benefits over two years. Measures on Employment Retention and Advancement Demonstration (ERA) participation, in-work training, job quality, efforts to retain and advance in work.
NDDP (RR369)	Survey: 2,531 registrants (708 age 50+), plus 1,062 partner interviews (1/3 age 50+) Cohort 3 (registered Aug-Oct 2004)	CRSP NatCen	2004	Cross sectional survey of NDDP registrants in 2004. Considerable scope for further analysis to assess attitudes according to age group to shed light on 'what works' and why. Age analysis reported was restricted to whether entered work (46-55 and 56+) type of job (50-59/60+).	Choice of job brokers, views on services, work aspirations and barriers, work outcomes, work exit, partners of registrants. Survey modules covered: - Pre-registration and current circumstances - Routes to Job Brokers and registration - Job Broker contact, support and activities - In-work support/opinions of Job Broker - Bridges and barriers - Health and quality of life - Background information - Partner interview A voluntary service
NDDP (RR260)	Cohorts 1 and 2 Cohort 1, wave 1: 2002, N=3014, Cohort 1, wave 2: 2003, N=2400, Cohort 2, wave 1: 2003, N=2192 Cohort 2, wave 2: 2004, N=1682,	CRSP NatCen	2002-2004	Panel surveys of NDDP registrants. Found stronger impact for 50+. But with no control group uncertain how many would have returned to work anyway. Scope for further analysis of perceived bridges and barriers by age.	As above.

Continued

Table 4.1 Continued

Dataset	Sample size	Where data held	Survey year	Data description	Topics covered (types of provision)
ND 25+ - IAP (RR500)	Post RA: N= 3660 Entered options: N=1080	PSI	2004-2006	RA tool. ND evaluation database. National benefits and HMRC data.	<p>This evaluation was specific to the 50+ age group and was designed to assess the impact of changing IAP from a voluntary to a mandatory programme for the 50+.</p> <p>Further analysis is possible to differentiate impact of using different options among both the Action and Control groups.</p> <p>Options:</p> <p>Most common:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work experience - basic employability training - basic skills training - IAP training (eg IT, HGV, vocational) <p>Less common:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - other education and training - self-employment assistance - work placements - assistance with jobsearch - motivation help - jobsearch skills

4.3 Prospective datasets for secondary analysis

Evaluation datasets recommended for further, age focused, analysis are described in greater detail below. The range and type of information gathered within each of the surveys is set out in order to clarify the potential for further analysis.

4.3.1 Pathways to Work survey data

The survey data (refer to report RR 435) were collected from three telephone interviews with a sample of individuals who enquired about claiming incapacity benefits in the seven pilot areas where Pathways was initially implemented, or in their associated comparison areas.

The first telephone interview collected detailed background information on current employment activity, respondents' health condition and the nature of their disability. Data collected from the first interviews therefore provided baseline information. Later interviews collected data on the respondent's benefit, employment and health status as follows:

- whether in paid work (including part-time work and self-employment, and those temporarily away on sick leave, training or holiday);
- whether in paid work during the week of the final interview, or the week before, of at least 16 hours a week or at least 30 hours a week;
- monthly take-home pay at time of final interview. The respondent was asked to state their pay in their main job after all deductions such as tax, national insurance and pension contributions had been taken, but including overtime, bonuses, commission or tips last time they were paid;
- whether in work in each month between the first and final interviews, based on respondents' reports on the month and year in which each spell of employment started and ended;
- whether receiving incapacity benefits at the time of the final interview;
- whether reporting a health condition at the time of the final interview (or a recurring health condition which was not affecting them at present) which limited the ability to carry out everyday activities;
- whether reporting a health condition at the time of the final interview (or a recurring health condition which was not affecting them at present) which limited the ability to carry out everyday activities 'a great deal'.

4.3.2 ERA survey data

A survey was administered to customers 12 months after their date of random assignment (between December 2004 and February 2006) and again at their 24-month anniversary (between November 2005 and March 2007). Refer to reports RR520 and RR412.

Data collected include the following:

- sex;
- age;
- race/ethnicity;
- education/Qualification levels/Basic skills;
- housing status;
- employment history (three years prior to RA and subsequently);
- driving licence;
- transport access;
- childcare requirements;
- health;
- earnings benefit receipt;
- region of residence.

Participation in ERA in-work and out-of-work services:

- training bonus – awareness and use;
- work retention bonus – awareness and use;
- help/advice/guidance (e.g. on negotiating promotion, pay rise).

Not in work: whether received help/advice from Jobcentre Plus staff:

- looking at job vacancies;
- applying for a job;
- working out long-term career goals;
- help to stay in work or advance in future jobs;
- help to find out about or arrange child care;
- looking for education or training courses;
- looking for volunteer work;
- setting up own business;
- other type of help;
- participated in activities to help find a job or prepare for work;
- attended job club/programme centre classes or group meetings;
- put name on books of private recruitment agency;
- used careers office, advice department, or used Connexions service;

- looked for job on own;

Whether the unpaid job arranged through a government programme.

Whether did voluntary work.

Whether attended an education or training course.

Did something to set up own business.

Did something else to help find a job.

In work: whether received help/advice from Jobcentre Plus staff:

- getting job with better pay or conditions;
- increasing hours of work;
- negotiating a pay raise;
- negotiating better job terms, e.g. more convenient hours;
- getting a promotion in present work;
- getting a more permanent job or contract;
- working out long-term career goals;
- finding an education or training course;
- other type of help;
- took steps to help improve work situation or earnings;
- tried to increase hours of work;
- tried to get pay raise;
- tried to negotiate better terms, e.g. more convenient hours;
- tried to change to different sort of work with same employers;
- tried to get better job with different employer;
- took steps to find another job;
- put name on books of private recruitment agency;
- went to careers office, advice department or used Connexions service;
- looked for another job on own;
- did something else to find another job.

4.3.3 NDDP survey data

The NDDP evaluation surveyed three cohorts of programme participants (refer to RR369 and RR260). Data collected included information about NDDP participants,

their experiences and their views of the programme. The first two cohorts were interviewed twice, the third cohort just once.

The first two cohorts registered in spring and autumn of 2002. They were interviewed face-to-face, four to five months after registration and then again 13 to 14 months after registration. The third Cohort was selected from among people who registered in autumn 2004 with survey interviews conducted in 2005.

Gender.

Age.

Educational attainment.

Household type.

Region.

Marital status.

Whether have children.

Module A

Pre-registration circumstances.

Awareness of registration.

Activities one month before registration.

Module B

Routes to Job Brokers and registration.

Information about NDDP.

Experience of jobcentres.

Initial contact with Job Broker.

Module C

Job Broker contact and support, and activities.

Type of contact with Job Broker.

Content of discussions with Job Broker.

Activities since registration and link with Job Broker.

Module D

In-work support and opinions of Job Broker.

Details of first employment.

Adaptations and support.

Opinions of Job Broker and NDDP.

Module E

Bridges and barriers.

Attitudes to employment.

Bridges and barriers to work.

Module F

Quality of health and life.

Health condition or disability.

Self-completion: quality of life.

Physical musculo-skeletal condition.

Physical – chronic, systemic or progressive conditions.

Mental health condition or disability.

Sensory disability.

Learning disability.

Module G

Background information.

Access to transport, skills, ethnicity, age, benefits.

Module H

Partner interview.

Activities one month before registration.

Bridges and barriers to work.

Attitudes to partner's employment.

Module K

Job Broker contact, support and advice, and outcomes.

Check on registration status.

Contact with main Job Broker.

Contact with any other Job Brokers.

Contact with any other organisations.

Activities since Wave one and link with Job Broker.

Job Broker has a generic focus.

Job Broker has specialist focus.

Mostly Job Broker or Job Broker only delivered service.

Job Broker and others delivered service.

Job Broker was not involved in NDDP pilot.

Module L

Activity history.

If had started a job at Wave one, activities since and prior to job (up to two years before registration).

If had not started a job at Wave one, activities back to two years before registration.

Benefit history.

Module M

In-work support.

Details of first employment if since Wave one.

If had started a job at Wave one, check on any changes in job.

Details of current or last job if has had more than one job.

Adaptations and support from Job Broker.

Module N

Bridges and barriers.

Bridges and barriers to work.

Opinions of Job Broker and NDDP.

Module P

Quality of health and life.

Check on current health condition or disability.

Self-completion: quality of life.

Module Q

Current circumstances.

Update on household, access to transport, skills.

Module R

Partner activity history.

If was in a job since registration, activities since and prior to job (up to one year before registration).

If was not in a job since registration, activities back to one year before registration.

Module S

Partner details.

Job details.

Barriers and bridges.

Current circumstances.

5 Discussion and recommendations

5.1 Overview

The review set out to answer two key questions:

- What is known about outcomes on Back to Work (BTW) provision for the 50+ population?
- What types of provision are associated with positive work outcomes?

As most evaluations to date were not designed to focus upon the 50+ population, an additional aim of the review was to identify evaluation datasets offering potential for secondary analysis.

The evidence review focused on Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) reports (Research Reports, Working Papers, In-House Reports and Working Age Research series) published between January 2000 and December 2008. A total of 139 reports were identified with relevance to the older worker population. Of these, 27 reported empirical studies of BTW interventions that included a focus on the 50+ group. In addition to findings on general programme impacts, six types of BTW support were identified for the evidence synthesis:

- advisory support;
- training;
- work experience;
- wage supplement;
- other financial support;
- health intervention.

This chapter considers the evidence with a focus on what types and modes of support hold potential for encouraging labour market participation among older people. The recommendations that follow from the review are grouped separately for policy and research audiences.

5.2 Evidence on what works

5.2.1 General observations on the findings

Overall, the evidence on older people's experiences with the different types of BTW services for the 50+ group is limited in both breadth and depth. In particular, little evidence was available to provide meaningful feedback on what works regarding work experience, wage supplements and financial incentives. Moreover, the nature of the evidence on representative populations (primarily gleaned from sample surveys) is weighted towards descriptive data on service take up. These practices severely limit the review's ability to draw definitive conclusions about **what** BTW measures are contributing to outcomes for older participants or to assess the relative merits of the separate services in a package of provision.

The depth of the evidence was also compromised by a limited focus on age in the reported evaluations. This impinged on the quantity of reports admitted to the review as well as the detail of evidence that was available. Reports on the New Deal (ND) 50plus programme are somewhat dated (reporting data from 2000-02) and do not include impact analyses. In the case of mixed age provision, older people were often a part of the eligible population and therefore received the same degree of analysis as any other demographic group. In these cases it is understandable that an older age cohort was treated as one generic group (usually defined as age 50+) and contrasted to a much broader younger (usually under age 50) age group. Furthermore, there is a dearth of evidence on the experiences of people aged 60 and over, mainly due to restrictive upper age limits on programme eligibility. It would appear, therefore, that the enhanced policy focus on an ageing population has not as yet been adapted to BTW programme provision²¹ nor to evaluation research designs. It must be re-iterated that less of a focus on age is not a criticism of previous evaluations, which were designed with a different set of objectives in mind. Given the criteria of previous evaluations, however, identifying clear impacts of specific BTW provision on the 50+ age group compared with younger clients was a challenge.

For the purposes of this study, the technical quality of the evidence was generally insufficient for assessing 'what works' because the majority of evaluation designs did not include a control or comparison group. This is unsurprising given the practical and ethical difficulties that can be encountered when applying methods such as randomised controlled trials in social research. A critical weakness for the purposes of this review is that those few studies that did include control comparisons did not distinguish which services in a package of provision contributed to the outcomes nor did they provide an indication on the relative merits of the different service options.

²¹ One exception is Pension Credit which has been a qualifying BTW benefit since 2004.

In general, evidence on the individual BTW services is not robust. This reduces the ability of the review to address the second research question, *What types of provision are associated with positive work outcomes?* A second challenge concerns the voluntary nature of provision. A programme consists of a 'package of services' that in practice can be highly individualised. The issue of 'heterogeneity of provision' that results from individual differences in the take-up of voluntary programme options has also been raised previously in a review of BTW services (Hasluck and Green, 2007).²²

In some of the BTW programmes in the review participation was strictly voluntary, but even in programmes which made benefit receipt conditional on mandatory registration, take-up of the options or follow through on referrals to services remained entirely voluntary. For evaluation purposes, data capture on the variation of activities engaged in would require highly sophisticated monitoring systems which, to date, have not been implemented. This necessitates some assumptions when relaying the evidence separately for the different BTW services. Firstly, even though participants can engage in numerous and various combinations of services, the evidence does not incorporate service interactions but treats the service as a singular intervention. Secondly, because the degree of engagement in a service is ultimately by choice, no distinctions are made on whether the service is part of a voluntary or mandatory programme registration. Thirdly, since the findings are largely indicative, where possible, multiple strands of evidence are 'triangulated' across different customer groups and programme contexts.

One final caveat concerns the economic context underpinning the reported findings. All studies report on data collected during a relative economic boom when unemployment was at record low levels. Results should be interpreted within the wider context of prevailing labour market conditions as well as the work welfare policies contemporaneous to the studies. In the context of recessionary conditions, reported volumes of activity and the characteristics of participants may be quite different.

In terms of identifying specifically 'what works', despite the fact that many previous evaluations were designed for a different purpose, it is still possible to distil from these multiple reports, common and reoccurring themes gathered from stakeholder perspectives and the service take-up behaviours of older people. The discussion of the review findings opens with an overview on general programme impacts for the 50+ group. It then considers the findings in relation to the separate types of BTW provision.

²² Recent secondary analysis of data on Pathways participants who engage with the Choices package also considers the role of non-observables and selection effects when assessing the contribution of specific services on employment outcomes (Adam *et al.*, 2009).

5.2.2 Overall programme impacts

A number of studies provided evidence on programme impacts for the 50+ group and some compared these to different age groups. The studies predominantly contrasted outcomes for two age subgroups: those 50 and over and those under 50. Impact analyses provided the most robust findings in terms of technical rigour. All studies included a control group to provide a counterfactual estimate of the circumstances that would have occurred had the BTW programme not been introduced. Individuals in a control group either received no intervention or they received the BTW services of the conventional provision at the time. Outcome measures are largely confined to benefit flows and changes in employment status, as captured in programme administrative records and sample surveys.

The generalisability of these findings are restricted by differences among the programmes of provision, the eligible populations and differences between the work motivations of voluntary and mandatory programme registrants. With these caveats in mind, some useful insights can be gleaned from the empirical findings related to programme impacts for the 50+ group:

- Positive results for older Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants who had participated in mandatory work related options suggest that intensifying these types of activities earlier in a claim period will result in job gains. This lends support to current jobseeker reforms that mandate participation in work search and preparation support within the first months of a JSA claim.
- The review found mixed outcomes for older people on disability related benefits. Participation in New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP) led to higher rates of employment and lessened dependence on benefits. Results from the Pathways to Work intervention differed for older new/repeat and existing Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants. For new/repeat claimants, Pathways made no difference whereas for existing claimants, the programme had positive effects on both employment and benefit rates, although the magnitude of the effects were smaller for the 50+ group. In contrast, among participants under age 50, impacts were consistently positive for both types of claimants. The authors of the reports did not speculate on reasons for the differences among older claimants. Further investigation is warranted.
- Both voluntary programmes (NDDP, New Deal for Partners (NDP)) in the review resulted in positive impacts for older participants, leading to increased work entry and a reduction in benefits.

Positive work-related outcomes support the premise that BTW provision which includes multiple options from which participants can choose, are working for people age 50+. Indeed, a holistic service, incorporating customer choice among flexible and responsive services, was considered critical to the success of NDDP (RR430). The more consistent findings in relation to voluntary programmes also suggest that motivation and perceived work readiness are key to programme success.

The remainder of this section identifies findings that are specific to the different types of BTW service provision. Apart from one report on training provision, the evidence is based on evaluation designs that did not include a comparison group. Therefore, findings should be interpreted with caution. The studies predominantly report statistics on take-up rates for different age groups or are based on qualitative data reporting participant or delivery agent perceptions.

5.2.3 Advisory support

The majority of BTW provision is mediated by a PA and the review found limited evidence pertaining to older people's experiences. Most of this information was gleaned from qualitative evaluations of ND 50plus. Indicative results support the following practices:

- having an adviser of a similar age is perceived to help establish rapport;
- continuity of a PA can help to maintain a positive relationship;
- support for managing health conditions would help to encourage engagement;
- awareness raising activities about the range of supports available through advisers would help to reduce suspicions and allay concerns about loss of benefit;
- for those receiving a finite term of in-work financial support, proactive advice and guidance can help with job retention and income management;
- follow-up advice and guidance would help older customers who go on to complete a service to develop further job-preparation plans;
- older people who take up Permitted Work would benefit from review meetings to address retention issues and options for increasing work hours;
- older jobseekers from professional/managerial backgrounds would benefit from additional services or referral to agencies with experience of the customer group.

5.2.4 Training

Findings pertaining to training provision present a strong argument for services that can stimulate participation. Training participation was reported to be lower than anticipated and this applied to both work preparation and in-work training interventions. Studies of mixed age provision distinguished the 50+ group with relatively low take up of training options. To help stimulate participation, the following findings are informative:

- Positive impacts on employment were identified for older JSA claimants who volunteered to take part in WBLA (see Section 3.4.2). The model of provision was highly varied and entailed multiple locally based providers. Volunteer motivation may also have contributed to the results.
- IT training and help with CVs are popular options among older job seekers.
- A broad base of training/education options, accommodating different levels of skills, qualifications and ability may improve take-up, particularly for those from professional/managerial backgrounds.

- Results from one study suggest that, if practical, group training that is arranged for people of a similar age may help with training recruitment and completion rates among older customers.
- Older people would benefit from confidence building sessions and mechanisms that challenge perceptions of age and beliefs about being 'too old' to learn or re-skill.

5.2.5 Work experience

There was limited evidence relating to work experience, either paid or unpaid. Findings are drawn from two programmes: Permitted Work rules and the ND 25plus IAP 50 plus. These suggest:

- paid work experience may be the more attractive option – some participants in the ND 25plus IAP were negative about the benefits of unpaid time in the workplace;
- outcomes for older people who experienced Permitted Work suggest that the option offers similar benefits for older as for younger IB claimants. Health was the most important factor in determining if Permitted Work served as a stepping stone towards increased hours. Delivery of health management sessions in conjunction with work experience may therefore be of use;
- unpaid work experience may not be appropriate for older individuals with relatively stable work histories and higher skills and qualifications.

5.2.6 Wage supplements

Evidence on wage supplements is confined to the context of ND 50plus and participant experiences of EC. The findings suggest:

- the incentive effects of a wage supplements depend on individual circumstances like wage level, household conditions, living expenses, and personal attitudes. Those with lower wage earning capacity tend to view the support as a wage top up, while those with higher earning capacity are more likely to view it as a bonus;
- longitudinal follow-up of EC recipients suggests a high rate of job retention after the supplement had ended. This provides weak but positive support that a reduction in income due to the removal of a work supplement poses little threat to work sustainability;
- a gradual reduction in the amount of wage supplement would help prepare recipients and reduce the 'shock' of a sudden decline in income.

5.2.7 Other financial support

Very little information was available on older people's experiences with other forms of financial support. Evidence relates to the Adviser Discretion Fund (ADF) in the context of the Pathways to Work programme:

- Use of the ADF did not statistically vary by age, although the percentage of older participants who accessed the fund was relatively lower compared to those under age 50. Rather, take up among Pathways participants was related to work readiness and 'improving health'. This finding largely reflects the appropriate targeting of the service as it was intended.
- No evidence was found on older people's experiences or views of Better Off Calculations (BOC).

5.2.8 Health interventions

Pathways to Work was the only BTW programme included in the review which offered health related interventions. Evidence on the 50+ group is confined to take-up rates:

- Take-up rates of referrals to the Condition Management Programme (CMP) were found to be similar for new/repeat and existing IB claimants aged 50-59. This contrasted with a general observed trend which showed higher CMP take-up among existing IB claimants. This difference may be partly explained by the higher incidence of health conditions among the older participants, however, further data analysis is required to investigate this difference.
- There were no findings reported on softer outcomes such as distance travelled or changes in work readiness in connection with CMP.

5.3 Recommendations relating to BTW services

Planning for measures that will enable extended working lives necessitates a greater awareness of the diversity of the older population. Given the anticipated welfare to work reforms, systems that will ultimately blend the different Jobcentre Plus customer groups into a flexible work oriented programme of services need to be mindful of the specific work, benefits and retirement preparation requirements of an older population. Several recommendations ensue from the research findings, backed by the synthesis, reported in Chapter 2, on factors that enable or impede employment participation among older people:

- Upper age limits on BTW programme eligibility are exclusionary and counteract attempts to extend working lives in principle. Provision is limited for people nearing and beyond SPA and for older people who do not receive benefits.²³
- Appropriate training, re-skilling and education opportunities are required to address disadvantages faced by older people with low formal qualifications and to help motivate individuals whose existing skills are no longer in demand.
- Specialist provision may be more suitable for older people from managerial/professional backgrounds, who, the evidence suggests, are less satisfactorily catered for through traditional Jobcentre Plus provision.

²³ Pathways to Work is now also available to people over age 59.

- Coaching, role models and awareness raising to address ageism and general low confidence in work ability would help improve engagement in work preparation activities.
- Health is recognised as a significant work barrier for the older population. Health management training and advice should be made more widely available.
- Greater awareness of part-time work opportunities, and guidance on negotiating work flexibilities with employers could improve employment participation. Additionally, social security measures need to ensure that part-time earnings (including Permitted Work) will result in financial gain.
- For those with caring responsibilities, strengthening the supply of affordable, quality adult care services would help free up time for employment.
- Greater awareness is needed of the various options available for combining work with pension income. This would include information on budgeting for retirement, work downshifting and self employment.
- Existing work with employers needs to continue to set a convincing business case as well as guidance and support for hiring and retaining older workers.

5.4 Recommendations relating to evaluation research

A number of evaluation research conventions presented challenges to the evidence review. Some of the recommendations that follow are specific to research on the older population but others are targeted more generally to enhance the usefulness of programme evaluations:

- Further research should be carried out to address the gaps identified. In particular, little is known about older people's experiences of the various financial supports or work experience options.
- Given the volume of older people in receipt of health and disability related benefits, little is known about these people's experiences of BTW interventions.
- Greater understanding about the responsiveness of different subgroups to BTW interventions is required. This should include the different preferences and experiences by gender and ethnicity. Furthermore, a more detailed breakdown by age would help to target services more appropriately.
- More evidence on reasons for non take-up of services would provide valuable feedback for service design and targeting.
- Research on programme impacts would be enhanced by more sophisticated monitoring systems that record take up of optional services (and combinations over time). This would be useful for explaining different programme outcomes.
- Comparative research on the relative effectiveness of different forms of BTW intervention would be useful.

- Programme measures should be expanded to include softer outcomes like 'distance travelled' and movement towards the labour market. These would take into account the longer term changes associated with a journey into work.

Appendix A

Review methodology

The focus of this evidence review was on support for the over 50s' return to work. The vast majority of Back to Work (BTW) services are provided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and accessed through Jobcentre Plus and its partner organisations. Reflecting this, the bulk of the review concentrated on reports published by the DWP.

In addition, a synthesis of important policy developments as well as evidence on the factors that enable or impede employment participation from various stakeholder perspectives provided a valuable backdrop for interpreting findings and identifying gaps between need and provision.

The methodology set out below only applies to procedures applied to the review of DWP reports.

Scoping and sifting protocols

The review was designed to achieve a systematic overview of older people's documented experiences of programmes and specific types of BTW provision. The review was undertaken between October 2008 and January 2009 and included both quantitative and qualitative evidence.

The review protocol was applied to DWP (and its predecessor department) reports published in the Research Reports, Working Papers and In-House Reports series between January 2000 up to December 2008, as indexed on the DWP resource centre websites.²⁴ A full systematic review was not possible within the timeframe of the project, yet the strategy and procedure adopted for the review and appraisal of the evidence was informed by the principles of systematic review methodologies as set out in authoritative guidelines (e.g., www.campbellcollaboration.org/guidelines (2008); www.cochrane-handbook.org (2008); Petticrew and Roberts

²⁴ The websites can be accessed on: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rrs-index.asp>; <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/wp-index.asp>; and <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/ih-index.asp>

(2006)). The review followed an iterative process in collaboration with DWP project management. The full process aimed to be as transparent as possible.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Screening was performed using predefined criteria to minimize bias when selecting studies for inclusion. Material published prior to 2000 was generally excluded, as were studies not specific or relevant to UK practices.

At the first sift, reports were rejected if:

- they focused on a population that excluded older people (e.g. New Deal for Young People (NDYP));
- they included specific issues that would provide minimum information on BTW support (e.g., homelessness, child support);
- they reported on BTW provision but did not indicate if people in the age 50+ range were included in the study.

The second sift searched for detailed findings on the BTW (and in-work) experiences of older people. Reports were rejected if:

- the report did not provide evidence on a BTW intervention;
- an evaluation of a BTW intervention did not provide subgroup analyses by age;
- in the case of qualitative studies, reports did not attribute age when reporting programme experiences or perceptions.

Evidence admitted to the review was required to include measures (hard and soft) of outcomes or impacts duly reported in, but not confined to, evaluation studies. These included:

- exit from benefits;
- work entry;
- sustainability of work;
- unpaid and voluntary work;
- movements closer to labour market;
- service take-up;
- measures of satisfaction;
- measures of change in attitude/motivation/confidence.

If a publication included sufficient numbers of older participants but analyses did not differentiate by age, this was noted and flagged for possible secondary analysis of the related dataset.

Review tools

Each document review commenced with a relevance screening to ensure that the coverage of the 50+ age group was sufficiently adequate to carry on with detailing features of the research according to the specification. Most critical was the inclusion of the 50+ group in study samples. A relevance check yielded one of three possible results, as outlined in Table A.1.

Table A.1 Report relevance scoring

Score	Relevance
0	The report does not include the 50+ group in its focus; the 50+ group may be included in the sample but size is not provided or analyses are not broken down by age.
1	The report does not supply new evidence. Rather it provides a synthesis of existing evidence or presents findings from previous research that are relevant to the 50+ group.
2	The report presents empirical evidence on a BTW intervention that includes the 50+ group in analyses and reports findings broadly by age groups or breaks down 50+ subgroups (various definitions may apply).

A template was devised for recording the information contained in each report. This is replicated in Table A.2.

Table A.2 Research evidence review template

Study reference	
Report title	
Authors	
Date	
Sourced from	
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Note if study/discussion specifically relevant. Note if dataset relevant. If not, abandon review of report.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Brief description.
Status of programme	Pilot, mainstream evaluation, ongoing or completed.
Years of data	
Elements of provision	E.g., financial, advisory.
Findings/outcomes	
Impact indicators	Distinguish relative influence of identified factors and inter-relationship, if possible.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	
Specific to older workers	

Continued

Table A.2 Continued

Methodology		
Sample framework	Include country coverage, sampling strategy.	
Data sources		
Quantitative	To include years covered, sample size, response rate, age range of respondents, sample size for age 50+, proportion of sample age 50+.	
Indicate if potential data for secondary analysis	YES	NO
Qualitative	To include years covered, respondent types (e.g., clients, staff), sample sizes.	
Indicate if potential data for secondary analysis	YES	NO
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors		
Reviewer comments		

Completed review templates were treated as data for the review and served as an easy shorthand for report reference. Reports that received a score of '2' in the relevance screening were subjected to the next stage, an evidence appraisal. The evidence was graded a score of one to three (1=weak; 2=moderate; 3=strong) on four criteria: technical rigor, soundness of the evidence, data focus on the 50+ group, focus on separate BTW provisions. The grading system is described in Table A.3.

Appraisals were carried out by two independent appraisers. Discrepancies in the grading were discussed and a joint decision was made on the final grades awarded on each of the criteria for a report.

The review included evaluations using quantitative, qualitative or mixed methodologies. However, the report grading criteria was necessarily harsh for qualitative studies which very rarely include a control group in their design. This was dictated by the nature of the research questions. To ask 'what works' is to require an answer that is reliable and generalisable to the study population – part of the aims of quantitative methods. Instead, qualitative research methods are useful for describing processes and in identifying specific issues experienced by individuals that may not be picked up in quantitative measurement. Qualitative studies are valued for explaining how or why something did or did not work but the results are not intended to be representative.

Table A.3 Appraisal grading and criteria

Criteria	Grading		
	1 Weak	2 Moderate	3 Strong
Technical rigor	No Control group. Cross-sectional design led by a single research method.	No Control group. Longitudinal and repeated measures design to capture changes over time.	Includes a control group achieved through experimental or quasi-experimental techniques.
Soundness of conclusions	Makes claims that do not follow from evidence or may not be solely attributable to the intervention. Or a moderate technical design with challenging evidence.	A moderate technical design with claims firmly based on the evidence. Or a strong technical design with additional challenging evidence (e.g., early implementation results).	A strong technical design with claims firmly based on the evidence.
Data focus	Findings on 50+ group restricted by age ceiling thus limiting generalisability.	There were sufficient numbers to identify separate findings for the 50+ age group, no ceiling implied.	Findings on the 50+ group were distinguished with further subgroup analyses.
Provision focus	Results reported as a 'package' of provision: separate elements not distinguished.	Some but not all elements of a package of provision were identified when reporting results.	Report concentrated on a single type of provision or results on individual services of a programme were reported separately.

Potential datasets for secondary analysis

Information on potential data sets for secondary data analysis was recorded on a separate template (see Table A.4). This included:

Data characteristics:

- type;
- years of data;
- number of cases;
- technical details;
- analysis design;
- outcome/intervention measures;
- significant mediators;
- status of programme;
- limitations of the study as stated by the authors.

Table A.4 Dataset review template

Reference (match study reference with postfix 'a')	
Study/intervention	
Authors	
Date	
Study organisation	
Data held	
Data characteristics	
(if multiple data sources, provide details on each)	
Type	E.g., survey, admin data, qualitative data
Years of data	
Number of cases	Overall, age 50+ (subgroups?), treatment and comparison groups
Technical details	E.g. study population, sample frame, response rate, if weighted, duration of panel (repeat cross sectional or continuous)
Analysis design	E.g. RCT, matching
Outcome/intervention measures	E.g. employment activity rates, earnings, out-of-work benefits, attitudes (indicate if pre and post measures)
Significant mediators	Anything specific to older workers? Reported or potential
Status of programme	Pilot, mainstream evaluation ongoing or completed
Limitations of the study as stated by the authors	

Analytical framework

Altogether, the review of BTW evidence was designed to identify interventions, policy measures and evaluation research evidence. The information from the separate reports were treated as data to be comparatively assessed for:

- repeated patterns;
- inconsistencies (and probable reasons for these);
- effective interventions;
- effective labour market policies;
- gaps in the topic coverage;
- gaps in the methods employed;
- substantive areas for further primary research.

The analysis also established key determinants of outcomes and appraised, where possible, the relative strengths of various determinants.

Literature and policy review

A review of the research evidence and policy literature was assisted by the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) librarian. Major databases were searched for journal articles, books and grey literature. These are:

- Social Sciences Citation Index (Web of Knowledge);
- IBSS (EBSCO);
- ASSIA (CSA);
- Social Policy and Practice (Ovid);
- COPAC.

COPAC is a union database that catalogues all major university and research libraries in the UK. Records retrieved from COPAC cover a wide range of monographs, including grey literature, especially reports.

Zetoc keyword alerts (RSS) were set up using title keywords. The Zetoc database of journal articles and conference papers was also searched.

Other resources searched were institutional repositories (using Intute's IR search facility) and the websites of relevant organisations.

Search terms were combined using Boolean operators, and were utilised according to the search functionality and syntax options available in individual databases, and their indexing practices:

- geographical area: United Kingdom;
- time period: 2000-2008;
- language: English.

Terms were combined within and across the following categories:

- older people, older men, older women, older workers, ageing, over 50s, 50 plus, mature workers;
- unemployed, unemployment, employment, reemployment, non-employment, work, out of work, back to work, return to work, jobless, job seekers;
- support, provision, in-work programmes, work attitudes, job opportunities, skills development, training, learning support, job experiences, age discrimination, ageism, prejudice.

Retrieved references are screened for relevance before being added to an EndNote library. Full-text copies of documents for selected references were obtained through document supply services, online subscription resources, and the PSI Library collection.

Appendix B

Back to work provision for older workers

Below are outlined the range of programmes included in the review that currently or historically have provided back to work support for the 50+ group. Most of these services are delivered through Jobcentre Plus in conjunction with partner agencies.

New Deal 50plus

New Deal (ND) 50plus is a voluntary programme aimed at customers aged 50 plus (and their dependent partners), who have been claiming one of the following benefits (Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Incapacity Benefit (IB), Severe Disability Allowance (SDA), Income Support (IS), National Insurance (NI) credits or the Pension Credit) for at least six months. ND50plus was introduced in April 2000 and offers support, advice and training for people over 50 to find work.

A Working Tax Credit is available for those who find work, this can be claimed for up to one year if employed for at least 16 hours a week. A training grant is available once back in work. This is to help update skills or learn new ones whether the training is at work or at a local college.

Grants can be up to £1,200 for job related training, or up to £300 for general training or courses. Grants can also be used to set up a business.

New Deal 25plus and the Intensive Activity Period

ND25+ is designed to help unemployed individuals aged 25 and over to find and keep a job. Participation in ND25+ is compulsory for people who have been claiming JSA for at least 18 of the previous 21 months.

When individuals first join ND25+, they enter a period known as Gateway. This can last up to four months and consists of informal meetings between the customer and a Personal Adviser to help with job-search activity, including addressing any issues that the individual feels are preventing them from moving into work (for example, childcare). If the individual has not found a job by the end of the Gateway period, they enter an Intensive Activity Period (IAP). This requires the individual to commit full-time to either:

- work experience/work placements with an employer or voluntary organisation;
- training for a specific job; or
- courses to develop the skills that employers are looking for.

During the IAP, customers stop claiming JSA but receive a training allowance of equal amount (and, possibly, a top-up payment as well). If they have still not found a job by the end of the IAP (which lasts a minimum of 13 weeks), they make a new claim for JSA and continue receiving support from Jobcentre Plus to help them find a job: this period is known as follow-through and can last up to six weeks.

New Deal for Disabled People

New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP) is a voluntary programme open to individuals in receipt of a disability or health-related benefit (e.g., IB or SDA) or of a disability premium to a non-health-related benefit (for example, IS or Housing Benefit (HB)³⁴). Job 'brokers' from a range of organisations provide advice and practical support to participants, with the aim of helping them move from disability and health-related benefits into paid employment.

Job Brokers can offer a wide range of support, including:

- helping to assess skills and abilities and identify suitable job opportunities;
- help with filling in application forms;
- advice about writing CVs;
- help with preparing for interviews;
- identifying training needs and then working with local training providers to secure the training needed;
- information about local job vacancies;
- helping with the process of applying for jobs;
- ongoing support during the first six months in work.

Job Brokers also work closely with local employers and can arrange extra support in the workplace - like special equipment, for example - if needed. Some Job Brokers also help with travel costs to interviews.

New Deal for Partners

New Deal for Partners (NDP) is a voluntary programme open to partners of claimants of JSA, IS, IB, ICA and SDA, where the claimant has been claiming for six months or more. NDP was launched nationally in April 2000. In April 2004, mandatory Work Focused Interviews (WFIs) were introduced for the non working, non claiming partners of benefit claimants claiming either income-based JSA, IS, IB, SDA or, in some instances, Carer's Allowance. WFIPs are triggered at the 26-week point in a benefit claim and are intended to provide partners of benefit claimants with information on the support that can be given to them via the NDP.

NDP provides caseload interviews, which offer intensive guidance and continuing support to help partners find work. PAs give advice and information on jobs, Jobcentre programmes, training, in-work benefits and incentives, and childcare. They may also provide specific support with general job search.

Employment zones (EZs)

EZs are operated by either public or private sector organisations in 13 areas of Great Britain, and are designed to help long-term unemployed individuals find and keep a job. With a payment regime based on a system of, the EZ system of few restrictions on provider activities encourages innovative interventions. Providers are incentivised to help long-term unemployed individuals secure and sustain employment through a system of payments based on work outcomes.

Participation in EZs is compulsory for customers aged 25 and over who have been in receipt of JSA for at least 18 out of the last 21 months. For individuals in receipt of Pension Credit who are not in work for at least 16 hours a week, EZ participation is voluntarily.

Employment Retention and Advancement project

Between 2003 and 2007, ERA operated in six Jobcentre Plus districts in England, Scotland and Wales. ERA followed a random control trial design whereby volunteers were randomly assigned to a treatment or comparison group. Participation was voluntary and eligibility mirrored that for ND25+ and NDLP. Lone parents working fewer than 30 hours per week and in receipt of Working Tax Credit (WTC) were also eligible to join. ERA treatment customers were offered employment-related assistance from an Advancement Support Adviser for 33 months to help them find suitable work, solve work-related problems and advance in their jobs. Customers working 30 hours a week or more were eligible for a tax-free work retention bonus up to a maximum of £2,400. Financial support was available for training undertaken during employment and to help with personal emergencies that might pose a threat to job retention.

Pathways to Work for Incapacity Benefit claimants

Pathways to Work was introduced in 2003 then rolled out in stages until it was mainstreamed nationally in April 2008. The programme is mandatory for people aged 18-59, in receipt of IB and deemed capable of work (those over age 59 may voluntarily take up the services). It offers a range of back to work services within a 'Choices' package, including guidance, training, health interventions and financial incentives.

The age of participants is disproportionately skewed to the older end of the population. A recent survey of participants (Hales *et al*, 2008) found that among existing customers, 44 per cent were age 50+ (15 per cent were 50-54 and 29 per cent were 55 and older). Among new/repeat customers, 31 per cent were age 50+ (13 per cent were 50-54 and 18 per cent were 55 and older).

New and repeat incapacity benefits claimants are required to attend WFI at Jobcentre Plus eight weeks after the start of their claim. WFIs with an IB Personal Advisor are mandatory. A screening tool is used in the first WFI to screen out those closest to the labour market and all remaining customers screened are then required to attend five further WFIs.

Existing services such as the NDDP, Work-Based Learning for Adults (WBLA), Training for Work (TfW) and Programme Centres have been brought together to provide a 'Choices package' of work-focused support. A new service, the Condition Management Programme (CMP), run in collaboration with health providers, offers assistance to customers to help them manage their health conditions. These are voluntary elements of the programme.

A Return to Work Credit (RTWC) offers customers who find work of at least 16 hours a week, a weekly payment of £40 for a year if their gross annual earnings are below £15,000.

In-Work Support (IWS) is a programme of provision to complement the support provided by IBPAs and NDDP Job Brokers. It is contracted-out to providers and includes one or more of the following: mentoring, a job coach, occupational health support, in-depth support, financial advice/debt counselling and an aftercare service.

An Advisers' Discretionary Fund (ADF) allows IBPAs to make awards of up to £100 per individual to support activities or purchases to increase the chances of finding work.

Working neighbourhoods

Worklessness remains persistent in some local communities, in response a Working Neighbourhoods Fund was established. This replaces Communities and Local Government's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and incorporates the Department for Work and Pension's (DWP) Deprived Areas Fund to create a single fund. WNF

provides support to local authorities that have the highest concentrations of worklessness and lowest levels of skills and enterprise. Allocations are based on the Indices of Deprivation as well as a measure of non-employment.

The Working Neighbourhoods scheme was based on very local approaches to overcoming worklessness with delivery organisations, Jobcentre Plus and Working Neighbourhood/EZ providers working within the framework of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) to determine how best to overcome barriers to work, and move local people into jobs.

Intensive support was provided for residents within local neighbourhoods to help them access available jobs. This involved both help to find work by means of work-focused interviews at the earliest opportunity – and help for customers to remain in work through in-work support and incentives. The main aspects of the Working Neighbourhood provision include:

- weekly signing at weeks seven to 13 and accelerated access on to New Deal/EZ provision after just three months for all residents claiming JSA;
- more frequent WFIs for people claiming IS, including lone parents, and all partners in receipt of designated benefits;
- more help for new IB customers to ensure that employment opportunities and support to overcome barriers were regularly discussed and explored;
- a flexible discretionary fund (FDF) for each neighbourhood to allow personal advisers, in co-operation with local strategic partners, to tackle the barriers that prevent residents in these neighbourhoods from returning to work;
- retention payments at 13 and 26 weeks, in the form of lump sum rewards, for customers who moved into and remained in work after previously receiving benefits.

Work-Based Learning for Adults

WBLA was a voluntary programme available to unemployed individuals aged 25 or over who have been out of work for at least six months. It aimed to help such individuals back to work through a programme of training and work experience, which might have involved training to do a specific job, working towards a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), actual work experience or a combination of these. WBLA could also form a compulsory element of ND25+.

European Social Fund

The European Social Fund (ESF) is the European Union's (EU) main financial instrument for supporting employment in the Member States and promoting economic and social cohesion. ESF spending represents ten per cent of the EU's total budget.

The ESF is one of four structural funds of the European Union, these are redistributive

instruments that promote cohesion within Europe by concentrating spending on the less-developed regions. The particular aim of ESF is to support the creation of more and better jobs in the EU, by co-funding national, regional and local projects that improve the levels of employment, the quality of jobs, and the inclusiveness of the labour market.

The last funding programme ran from 2000-2008 and operated through three programmes:

- Objective 1 – to develop areas which are currently under-developed.
- Objective 2 – to renew industrial, urban, rural and fisheries areas which are in decline.
- Objective 3 – to tackle long-term unemployment, promote equal opportunities, improve lifelong learning, encourage entrepreneurship and improve the role of women in the workplace.

The ESF offers part-funding to projects to enable them to provide training, and employment-related advice for beneficiaries. Projects offer a diverse range of training courses targeted at different groups of individuals encompassing those a long way from the labour market, those actively seeking work, as well as those already in employment. Objective 3 projects can apply for funding under any of five Policy Fields:

- active labour market;
- equal opportunities and social inclusion;
- lifelong learning;
- adaptability and entrepreneurship;
- improving the participation of women in the labour market.

In 2007, the EU launched a new round of ESF programmes for the next seven years to 2013. The new programme will invest £4.6 billion in 2007-2013 of which £2.3 billion will come from the ESF and £2.3 billion will be national funding. In 2009 it was announced that 32 bidders would receive ESF money specifically to deliver innovative regional projects in England. Projects help disadvantaged groups back to work, supporting older workers and making sure unemployed people get all the help they need to find work (http://www.esf.gov.uk/introduction_to_esf/)

Skills Coaching and Skills passports

A Skills Coaching service and the introduction of Skills Passports were announced in 2004 as part of the New Deal for Skills (NDFS). The key objective of the Skills Coaching service was to improve employability. Trials of Skills Coaching and Skills Passports commenced in April 2005 in eight Jobcentre Plus districts.

Individuals eligible to participate in Skills Coaching are adults claiming Jobseeker's

Allowance or inactive benefits for whom a lack of skills is the main barrier to sustained employment. Access to Skills Coaching is through Jobcentre Plus Advisers who refer eligible customers to the service. The Skills Coaching process commences with an Entry Review interview followed by a Skills Diagnostic assessment of the individual's employability leading to agreement of a Skills Development Plan setting out skill-related objectives for the customer. The Skills Coach then seeks to broker appropriate provision through local learning providers to enable the customer to meet their Skill Development Plan objectives. Skills Coaches also provide ongoing support to customers.

The Skills Passport provides a record of learning and achievement.

Appendix C

Classification of reports

A total of 139 reports were identified with relevance to the older worker population. Among these:

- 66 did not supply sufficient detail on the 50+ group or if they did, the topics did not cover employment related issues;
- 44 did not report on interventions but provided policy and context detail on Back to Work (BTW) support or older workers;
- 27 reported empirical studies of BTW interventions that included a focus on the 50+ group;
- two reports did not produce separate findings for the 50+ group although the data capture included substantial numbers of these customers – these data are put forward for secondary data analysis.²⁵

The second sift in the review rejected reports that did not evaluate an intervention or did not provide evidence on BTW services with specific findings for the 50+ population. The most common reason for rejecting evaluation studies was a lack of focus on age. This is understandable given that the analysis of age differences was not a requirement at the time these evaluations were commissioned. Some examples include cost-benefit analyses and process evaluations. Where impact analyses did not consider programme outcomes by age, findings were presented for participants grouped and contrasted according to other criteria such as length of time on benefits or proximity to the labour market at programme entry. In some of these cases age was included only in the description of sample characteristics.

Not providing any information on the age profile of the sample was another reason for rejection. In some qualitative studies which were otherwise thorough with the exploration of issues effecting older programme participants, exact numbers in the over 50s category could not be established. In some cases small samples included too few over 50s to warrant further appraisal of the research.

²⁵ Proposed datasets for secondary analysis are discussed in Chapter 5.

The remainder of this chapter concentrates on the 27 reports that studied a BTW intervention with findings specifically reported for the 50+ age group. The review only addresses reports based on empirical research. This includes outcomes based research and explanatory evidence which considers how interventions support older job seekers and identify contextual factors which influence the achievement of intervention outcomes.

Pilots and research programmes in the review

The reports included in the review covered ten separate pilots or programmes of provision:

- European Social Fund (ESF) – training focus;
- ND 25 plus – various;
- ND 50 plus – various;
- ND for Disabled People (NDDP) – various;
- Permitted Work – work experience;
- ND for Partners – various;
- Over 50s Outreach – engagement;
- Pathways to Work – various;
- Skills Coaching and Skills Passports – training;
- Work Based Learning for Adults (WBLA) – training.

Details on programme/pilot provision are available in Appendix B. Of the ten, four offered a package of various BTW services; three had a training focus; one offered training and work experience; one offered work experience only, and; one focused on older people engagement.

Study populations

Populations for the reviewed studies were determined by eligibility to the programme or pilot.²⁶ The majority of the reports include a wide range of age groups for comparison. Six reports (RR500, RR388, ESR151, ESR99, ESR70, ESR68) focused solely on the age 50+ group.

The BTW interventions can also be characterised according to whether the programme is mandatory or voluntary and by targeted benefit groups. Table C.1 shows the breakdown of programmes by these characteristics. Only one programme (RR401) in the study was 'benefit neutral' where services were available regardless of benefit receipt. Most (eight) of the programmes offered voluntary participation. It should be noted that a substantive number of the reports in the review (13) pertain to provision that is targeted to people on Incapacity Benefits (IB).

²⁶ In the discussions, reports are referred to by their unique Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) report number.

Table C.1 Programme eligibility

	Mandatory	Voluntary
Active benefits	ND 25+	ESF ND 50+ ND for Partners Skills Coaching and Skills Passports WBLA
Inactive benefits	Pathways to Work	NDDP NDP Permitted Work Rules
No benefits restriction		Over 50s Outreach

Age representation of the older population

Table C.2 lists the 27 reports included in the review organised by the programme of intervention and defines, for each, the intervention population and age divisions analysed for older programme participants. Overall, the vast majority of evaluation reports defined the older population as age ‘50+’, often with no upper age limit, except where this was delineated by programme eligibility criteria. For example, both the Pathways to Work and ND25plus Intensive Activity Period (IAP) programmes placed a ceiling of age 59 on access to services²⁷. There were few instances of disaggregation reported within the older age range but these breakdowns were not consistent. For example, one report on Permitted Work Rules (RR268) broke down findings for 46-55 and 56+ age groups. Another (RR391) reported findings for 45-55 and 55+ groups. Two reports included members of the population beyond state pension age (SPA) (ESR151, RR401).

Table C.2 Intervention and study populations

Research reports in the review (Year)	Intervention population	Age subgroup
European Social Fund (2005)		
258 Follow-up survey of European Social Fund leavers (2005)	Diverse range of labour market disadvantage and training needs serviced through multiple providers. Includes active and inactive claimants.	50+
ND 25 plus (2006-08)		
500 Mandating Intensive Activity Period for jobseekers aged 50+: Final report of the quantitative evaluation (2008)	Age 50+ and have been claiming JSA for 18 out of 21 months. Offered in 14 Jobcentre Plus districts.	50-59
388 Evaluation of the Intensive Activity Period 50plus Pilots (2006) (Qualitative)		
Continued		

²⁷ Pathways to Work is now available to people over age 59. Further, the upper age limit for programmes such as Pathways and New Deal/Flexible New Deal programmes will increase as women’s pension age equalises to men’s between 2010 and 2020.

Table C.2 Continued

Research reports in the review (Year)	Intervention population	Age subgroup
366 Gateway to Work New Deal 25 Plus pilots evaluation (2006)	Age 25+ with mandatory participation after four weeks on ND 25+. Delivered in four Jobcentre Plus districts in England, Scotland and Wales.	50+
ND 50 plus (2001-03)		
WARR151 New Deal 50 plus: Quantitative analysis of job retention (2002)		50-69
WARR142 New Deal 50 plus: Sustainability of employment		
ESR99 Evaluation of New Deal 50plus-qualitative evidence from clients: third phase (2001)	Voluntary programme of back to work support for people age 50+ who have been out of work and on benefits or National Insurance Credits for 6 months or more.	50+
ESR70 Evaluation of New Deal 50 Plus. Qualitative Evidence from Clients: Second Phase (2001)		
ESR68 Evaluation of New Deal 50 Plus. Qualitative Evidence from ES and BA Staff: Second Phase (2001)		
ND for Disabled People (2001-07)		
432 Long-term impacts of the New Deal for Disabled People (2007)		
430 New Deal for Disabled People: Third synthesis report – key findings from the evaluation (2007)	National voluntary programme for people on qualifying disability benefits. (IB, Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA), or Income Support with a Disability Premium (IS-DP).	50+
369 New Deal for Disabled People: Survey of Registrants: report of Cohort 3 (2006)		
260 New Deal for Disabled People Evaluation: Registrants Survey Merged Cohorts (2005)		
144 Evaluation of the New Deal for Disabled People Personal Adviser Service Pilots (2001)	Same as NDDP but with a minimum claim of 28 weeks on a disability claim.	50+
ND for Partners (2006-07)		
417 Work Focused Interviews for Partners and enhanced New Deal for Partners evaluation: Synthesis of findings (2007)	Non-working, non-claiming partners of working age who have been claiming a benefit (Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), IS, IB, SDA) for a minimum of 26 weeks.	50+
335 Work Focused Interviews for Partners and Enhanced New Deal for Partners: Quantitative Survey Research (2006)		
Over 50s Outreach (2006)		
401 Over 50s outreach pilot: Qualitative research (2006)	50+ and beyond SPA who are economically inactive, regardless of benefit status, living in one of seven pilot areas in England, Scotland or Wales	50-SPA+

Continued

Table C.2 Continued

Research reports in the review (Year)	Intervention population	Age subgroup
Pathways to Work (2006-08)		
527 Pathways to Work: the experiences of existing customers Findings from a survey of existing customers (2008)		50-59
488 Evidence on the effect of Pathways to Work on existing claimants (2008)		
478 Pathways to Work: Qualitative study of In-work support (2008)		45-59
456 Pathways to Work: customer experience and outcomes. Findings from a survey of new and repeat customers (2007)	New, repeat and existing incapacity benefits claimants aged 18 to 59 years and living in pilot areas. Various roll-out criteria over time.	50-59
435 The Impact of Pathways to Work (2007)		50-59
354 Early quantitative evidence on the impact of the Pathways to Work pilots (2006)		45-59
345 Incapacity Benefit Reforms Pilot: Findings from the second cohort in a longitudinal panel of clients (2006)		50-59
Permitted Work Rules (2005)		
268 Final outcomes from the Permitted Work Rules (2005)	Recipients of IB or SDA who took up Permitted Work.	46-55; 56+
Skills Coaching & Skills Passports (2006)		
391 Evaluation of Skills Coaching trials and Skills Passports A synthesis of qualitative and quantitative evidence (2006)	All working age adults without a first full Level 2 qualification or equivalent who show interest in training and are deemed eligible by a personal adviser. In receipt of JSA for up to 18 months or on IB/IS and have attended a WFI. Living in one of 7 trial areas.	45-55; 55+
Work Based Learning for Adults (2004)		
WARR187 Work-based learning for adults: an evaluation of labour market effects (2004)	Recipients of JSA or inactive benefits (IS, IB, SDA) for at least six months, aged 25 years and over and living in England. Participation is voluntary but subject to Jobcentre Plus adviser discretion.	50+

Service provision

Various types of BTW provision are represented in the review. These are classified into six broad groups of services:

- advisory support;
- training;

- work experience;
- wage supplements;
- other financial support;
- health interventions.

Programmes of intervention are listed next to the different types of provision in Table C.3. Many of these programmes offered more than one type of back to work provision, often as a package of service options.

Featured in all of the programmes is advisory support. This is to be expected as BTW services tend to be accessed through an adviser based in Jobcentre Plus or in a partner organisation. Training support is also a common type of service, offered in eight of the programmes in the review. Other forms of financial support (e.g., better off calculations, transportation, interview clothing costs) were provided by five of the programmes. The remaining services – work experience, wage supplements and health interventions – were less common, and more specific to particular programmes of intervention. For example, health interventions were only offered as part of Pathways to Work. Similarly, the New Deal 50 plus and Pathways to Work offered a wage supplement to help ease the transition to work.

Table C.3 Interventions in the review by types of service provision

Programme/ Intervention	Advisory support	Training support	Health intervention	Work experience	Wage supplement bonus	Other financial
ESF	X	X				X
ND 25 plus	X	X		X		X
ND 50 plus	X	X			X	
ND for Disabled People	X	X				X
ND for Partners	X	X				X
Over 50s Outreach Pilot	X					
Pathways to Work	X	X	X	X	X	X
Permitted Work	X			X		
Skills Coaching/ Skills Passports	X	X				
WBLA	X	X				
Total	10	8	1	3	2	5

The quality of reports

Findings on the quality of the 27 reports included in the evidence review are recorded in Table C.4. A summary of the ratings in relation to each of the four quality criteria follows.

Technical rigour

Quantitative research methodologies are most represented among the reports in the review. Sixteen reports were based strictly on quantitative techniques; eight followed qualitative approaches while three featured mixed methods.²⁸ Among these:

- ten received a strong rating – one study used a random controlled trial (RCT) design; the remaining nine used quasi-experimental techniques to achieve a matched comparison group;
- ten received a moderate rating – all featured longitudinal data collection;
- seven received a weak rating – all used cross-sectional designs at one point in time.

Soundness of conclusions

By and large, scores on the soundness of conclusions matched the technical rigour of the design. Studies were downgraded if there was evidence of a possible confounding factor(s). This occurred in four of the cases. In two instances (RR258 and RR260) it was noted that improved employment effects attributed to the intervention, in the absence of a control group, may have been a function of a healthy labour market. In one case (RR354) there was concern over early implementation effects on programme outcomes, and administrative records were called into question in the final case (RR391). In sum, the findings on soundness of conclusions were:

- nine received a strong rating;
- eight received a moderate rating;
- ten received a weak rating.

Coverage of the age 50+ population

Ratings on the coverage of the research population were also mixed. As noted in Table 3.2, few studies approached analysis with a view to identifying variation within the 50+ group. Therefore, a larger proportion of the reports achieved the minimum requirement of reporting separate results for a grouped older sample and received a moderate score (n=14). Several reports received a weak rating

²⁸ There were relatively fewer reports included in the review that followed a qualitative methodology. This is largely driven by the research questions of the specific studies at the time, which did not include age as a sampling criteria.

because coverage was restricted by the intervention eligibility criteria. This applied to the ND 25plus IAP (n=2) and all Pathways to Work reports (n=7). Reports that achieved a strong grading on age coverage either broke down findings among the older population by subgroups (RR268, RR391) or they included people after SPA (WAE151, RR401).

Coverage of different types of provision

Reports received a strong grading on coverage of different provisions if they reported findings separately for the different BTW services included in the programme or if their primary focus was a single type of provision. The findings are summarised as follows:

- 13 received a strong rating – seven focused on a single provision while four reported on separate services within a programme of multiple provision;
- six received a moderate rating – in these cases some findings were reported for separate elements of a BTW package of provision;
- eight received a weak rating – in these cases it was not possible to identify how the different elements of a programme provision contributed to the results.

Among the ten reports that received a strong technical rating, only four reported findings on the different services offered by the BTW programme.

Outcomes

Table 3.4 also provides details on the general areas in which outcome and explanatory data were reported for each study in the review. Quantitative studies on programme impacts largely focused on changes in employment and benefit status. Qualitative studies provided explanatory findings primarily based on stakeholder perceptions of services and attitudes to work.

Table C.4 Quality of reports

Research report	3=strong			2=moderate			1=weak		
	Technical rigour	Sound conclusions	Age data focus	Provision focus	Technical rigour	Sound conclusions	Age data focus	Provision focus	Data capture and outcomes
ESF									
258 Follow-up survey of European Social Fund leavers	2	1	2	2					No Control group. Longitudinal. Participant (2 waves) surveys: 22 per cent of 1399 age 50+. Increased employment may be due to healthy labour market. Impact of separate provisions not isolated. Outcomes: employment status, skills qualifications.
ND 25 Plus									
500 Mandating Intensive Activity Period for jobseekers aged 50+: final report of the quantitative evaluation	3	3	1	1					Control group. RCT. Survey at programme entry, merged with administrative records and New Deal Evaluation Database. N=3,700. Impact of separate provisions not isolated. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status.
388 Evaluation of the Intensive Activity Period 50plus Pilots	2	2	1	3					Qualitative. Longitudinal. Two wave Interviews with 182 participants (gross) plus interviews with 75 staff and 23 providers in four of the 14 districts. Separate provisions considered. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions. Control group matched comparison. Administrative tracking data: 20 per cent of 22,600 were age 50+. Interviews with staff in three of the districts. Mainly job readiness provision. Outcomes: employment status.
366 Gateway to Work New Deal 25 Plus pilots evaluation	3	3	2	3					

Continued

Table C.4 Continued

Research Report	Technical rigour	Sound conclusions	Age data focus	Provision focus	Data capture and outcomes
ND 50 Plus					
WARR142 New Deal 50 plus: Sustainability of employment	1	1	2	3	Qualitative: 60 cross-sectional interviews with working participants after eligibility period for Employment Credit (EC) had ended. Explanatory data on attitudes/perceptions.
WARR151 New Deal 50 plus: Quantitative analysis of job retention	1	1	3	3	No control group. EC claimants profiled on New Deal 50 plus evaluation database, n=75,000 ages 50-69. Descriptive analyses of Pension Credit claimants. Weak proxy of return to benefit as measure of lack of job retention. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status.
ESR99 Evaluation of New Deal 50plus-qualitative evidence from clients: third phase	2	2	2	3	Qualitative. Longitudinal. Thirty face-to-face and telephone two wave interviews and focus groups with participants. Explanatory data on attitudes/perceptions.
ESR70 Evaluation of New Deal 50 Plus. Qualitative Evidence from Clients: Second Phase	1	1	2	3	Qualitative: 70 cross-sectional interviews plus focus groups with JSA claimants in seven areas of the programme. Explanatory data on attitudes/perceptions.
ESR68 Evaluation of New Deal 50 Plus. Qualitative Evidence from ES and BA Staff: Second Phase	1	1	2	3	Qualitative: 48 cross-sectional interviews with Employment Service and Benefits Agency staff in 4 districts. Explanatory data on attitudes/perceptions.

Continued

Table C.4 Continued

Research report	Technical rigour	Sound conclusions	Age data focus	Provision focus	Data capture and outcomes
ND for Disabled People					
432 Long-term impacts of the New Deal for Disabled People	3	3	2	1	Control group, quasi-experimental. HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) employment data merged with Admin dataset. 50+ subgroup analysis n=1455. Impact of separate provisions not isolated. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status. Synthesis report. Three wave survey of eligible population; three wave survey of registrants; surveys of job brokers and employers; interviews with participants, Jobcentre Plus and job broker staff; DWP NDDP evaluation database; impact analysis; cost-benefit analysis. Impact of separate provisions not isolated. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.
430 New Deal for Disabled People: Third synthesis report – key findings from the evaluation	3	3	2	1	No control group. Survey of registrants, 28 per cent (n=708) age 50+. Descriptive results. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status, self-reported health. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.
369 New Deal for Disabled People: Survey of Registrants: report of Cohort 3	1	1	2	2	No control group. Longitudinal. Two wave survey of NDDP registrants n=4082. One-third over 50. Outcomes may be due to healthy labour market. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.
260 New Deal for Disabled People Evaluation: Registrants Survey Merged Cohorts	2	1	2	1	No control group. Longitudinal. Two wave survey of NDDP registrants n=4082. One-third over 50. Outcomes may be due to healthy labour market. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.

Continued

Table C.4 Continued

Research report	Technical rigour	Sound conclusions	Age data focus	Provision focus	Data capture and outcomes
144 Evaluation of the New Deal for Disabled People Personal Adviser Service Pilots	3	3	2	3	Control group. Surveys of participants and non-participants; national survey of IB recipients. 50+ group constituted 31 per cent of participants, 47 per cent of non-participants and 53 per cent of the national IB survey respondents. Mainly advisory support. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.
ND for Partners					
417 Work Focused Interviews for Partners and enhanced New Deal for Partners evaluation: Synthesis of findings	2	2	2	2	Synthesis report. No control group. Longitudinal. Interviews with Jobcentre Plus staff; two wave interviews with couple participants; survey of eligible partners; impact assessment; cost benefit analysis. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.
335 Work Focused Interviews for Partners and Enhanced New Deal for Partners: Quantitative Survey Research	2	2	2	2	No control group. Longitudinal. Two wave interviews with couple participants (n=3,786, 21 per cent age 50+). Outcomes: employment status, benefit status. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.

Continued

Table C.4 Continued

Research report	Technical rigour	Sound conclusions	Age data focus	Provision focus	Data capture and outcomes
Over 50s Outreach					
401 Over 50s outreach pilot: Qualitative research	1	1	3	3	Qualitative. 20 cross-sectional interviews with pilot delivery and Jobcentre Plus staff; 12 cross-sectional interviews with older people who followed up referrals to Jobcentre Plus. Mainly info/advice service focus. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.
Pathways to Work					
527 Pathways to Work: the experiences of existing customers Findings from a survey of existing incapacity benefits customers in the first seven pilot areas	1	1	1	1	No control group. Cross-sectional survey of new and existing customers living in one of seven pilot areas, 36 per cent age 50+. No consideration of separate provision. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status, self-reported health.
488 Evidence on the effect of Pathways to Work on existing claimants	3	3	1	1	Control group. Survey of eligible population (n=1,808, 43 per cent age 50+), merged with National Benefits Database and the Pathways Evaluation Database No consideration of separate provision. Outcomes: employment status, earnings, benefit status, self-reported health.
478 Pathways to Work: Qualitative study of In-work support	2	2	1	3	Qualitative. Comparison group. 30 qualitative interviews with participants (15 age 45+). 24 interviews with providers in four Pathways districts. Single service focus. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.

Continued

Table C.4 Continued

Research report	Technical rigour	Sound conclusions	Age data focus	Provision focus	Data capture and outcomes
456 Pathways to Work: customer experience and outcomes. Findings from a survey of new and repeat incapacity benefits customers in the first seven pilot areas	3	3	1	3	Control group. Used matched samples. Random sample survey of participants who did and those who did not take up the Pathways Choices programme, n=3,507 31 per cent age 50+. Age groups 50-54 and 55-59. Some separate provisions considered. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status, self-reported health. Explanatory data: service engagement, attitudes/perceptions.
435 The Impact of Pathways to Work	3	3	1	1	Control group. Survey of eligible population (n=1,957, 38 per cent age 50+), merged with National Benefits Database and the Pathways Evaluation Database. Impact of separate provisions not isolated. Outcomes: employment status, earnings, benefit status, self-reported health.
354 Early quantitative evidence on the impact of the Pathways to Work pilots	3	2	1	1	Control group. Surveys with IB recipients in pre- and post-pilot areas (n=4,805). Admin data n=3,813 for age 45+. Concern about early implementation effects. Impact of separate provisions not isolated. Outcomes: employment status, earnings, benefit status, self-reported health.
345 Incapacity Benefit Reforms Pilot: Findings from the second cohort in a longitudinal panel of clients	2	2	1	2	Qualitative. Longitudinal. 53 interviews with IB recipients with up to three interviews achieved, n=25 age 50+. Some separate provisions considered. Explanatory data: attitudes/perceptions.

Continued

Table C.4 Continued

Research report	Technical rigour	Sound conclusions	Age data focus	Provision focus	Data capture and outcomes
Permitted Work					
268 Final outcomes from the Permitted Work Rules	2	2	3	3	No control group. Longitudinal. Three wave survey of participants. N=676 (36 per cent aged 46-55, 23 per cent aged 56+). Descriptive results. Outcomes: employment status, benefit status.
Skills Coaching and Skills Passports					
391 Evaluation of Skills Coaching trials and Skills Passports A synthesis of qualitative and quantitative evidence	2	1	3	3	No control group. Mixed method. Longitudinal. 36 two wave qualitative interviews with participants. 138 interviews with advisers and training providers. Admin participant data: n=4580; 20 per cent 45-55, seven per cent 55+. Measurement error due to poor documentation of outcomes. Primarily a single provision. Outcomes: employment status, skills qualifications.
Work Based Learning for Adults					
WARR187 Work-based learning for adults: an evaluation of labour market effects	3	3	2	3	Control group, quasi-experimental. Survey of JSA claimant participants and non-participants. 50+ subgroup analysis n=366 participants. Impact of two training options. Outcomes: employment status.

Appendix D

Reviews on reports included in the study

Table D.1 European Social Fund (ESF)

Study reference	RR 258
Report title	Follow-up survey of European Social Fund Leavers
Authors	Humphrey, A and Robinson, C.
Date	2005
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep258.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Age is not the primary focus, but some analyses are presented by age. Sample includes about 300 respondents aged over 50. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	ESF is a programme that operates in five policy fields and by providing part funding to projects to enable them to provide training.
Status of programme	Participation in ESF programmes had ended at time of survey.
Years of data	2004
Elements of provision	ESF funded a wide range of training and support programmes and activities.
Findings/outcomes	Proportion in employment increased from the time of the Leavers Survey. Some moves into employment followed participation in training/education. Of those who were unemployed or on training prior to participation seem to have benefited from ESF the most. The least successful in securing employment were those inactive (mostly women and older) prior to ESF participation.

Continued

Table D.1 Continued

Study reference	RR 258
Impact indicators	<p>A follow-up survey of respondents to the 2002 ESF Leavers Survey, aiming to investigate long-term impact of the training and advice provided through ESF programmes.</p> <p>Changes in activity status, movements into work, improvements in situation at work, job mobility, changes in skills, sustainability of positive outcomes, soft outcomes and experience of the course were investigated.</p>
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	<p>For a small group of ESF participants, employment seems unlikely at any point, though there may be less tangible benefits to taking part in training. However, the programme should be targeted better in the future to provide ESF support to those with a chance of attaining positive labour market outcomes.</p> <p>Some participants may not have attended appropriate training that would be most beneficial to them.</p> <p>Need to understand the role of any direction/advice given following course completion and understand why few people reported that the course had helped with skills.</p>
Specific to older workers	<p>Men over 50 were the least likely to be planning to attend further training. Over 50s were the least likely to have gained a qualification since Leavers survey. Over 50s were the most likely to report gaining IT skills and the least likely to say it helped with finding a job. Employment rate increased for all age groups, but those over 50 had the smallest increase. Oldest (and youngest) workers were also less likely to have sustained employment.</p>
Methodology	
Sample framework	<p>Respondents to the original Leavers Survey, who agreed to be re-contacted formed the sampling frame for the Follow-up Survey.</p>
Data sources	
Quantitative	<p>Survey carried out in 2004. 2,088 respondents approached and 50 took part in the pilot and 2038 in the main survey. 1,399 interviews achieved. Response rate is 69 per cent. Twenty-two per cent of respondents (about 300) are 50+.</p>
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	
Reviewer comments	

Table D.2 ND 25 plus

Study reference	RR 500
Report title	Mandating (IAP) for jobseekers aged 50+: Final report of the quantitative evaluation
Authors	Dorsett, R. and Smeaton, D.
Date	2008
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep500.pdf
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	<p>Evaluation to assess the impact of mandating Intensive Activity Period (IAP) participation among the 50+. Prior to this, participation had been voluntary for customers in this age group, in contrast to younger customers for whom IAP participation had always been mandatory. A pilot study mandating participation for the over-50s began in April 2004 in 14 Jobcentre Plus districts. The report presents the quantitative evaluation of the effect of mandating IAP. Note that this was distinct from the effect of IAP – the focus is on how making IAP mandatory rather than voluntary affects labour market outcomes.</p>
Status of programme	<p>These evaluations based on pilots in 14 Jobcentre Plus districts. The programme has been rolled out nationally since.</p>
Elements of provision	<p>New Deal 25 plus (ND25+) provides job search assistance, training opportunities and work placements to people aged between 25 and the state pension age who have been claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for 18 out of 21 months. It comprises three stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway – up to four months of intensive jobsearch assistance. • IAP – a variety of assistance (training, work experience etc.) lasting 13 to 52 weeks. • Follow-through – further jobsearch assistance for up to three months. <p>The focus is on the IAP stage. The types of activity available under the IAP included the following:</p> <p>Employment: A minority of customers went into work which was subsidised for 26 weeks.</p> <p>Basic Employability Training (BET): Lasting up to 26 weeks, problems with language, reading or writing were tackled in classroom settings.</p> <p>Basic Skills Training (BS): Fundamental generic skills necessary for any employment.</p> <p>Self-Employment: Supported by a range of advice and guidance from business start-up consultants.</p> <p>Education and Training Opportunities (ETO): This option provided the opportunity to study, for up to one year, leading to a recognised qualification.</p> <p>Work placement: The placements were of short duration, typically two weeks. Not widely available.</p> <p>Work experience: Typically four days a week with job search activities one day a week. Most opportunities were in the third sector with charities, voluntary agencies or public sector employers.</p>

Continued

Table D.2 Continued

Study reference	RR 500
Elements of provision (continued)	IAP training: Most customers used this option for IT training or vocational training such as Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV)/ Light Goods Vehicle (LGV), forklift truck driving, horticulture or plumbing. Budget limitations prevented the uptake of more advanced study which was favoured by – and more suitable for – some customer groups.
Findings/outcomes	<p>With regard to employment, mandating IAP caused a significant increase that was sustained over the full two-years. By the end of this period, 22.3 per cent of the control group and 27.3 per cent of the action group were employed – an increase of 5.1 percentage points</p> <p>The main difference by age was with regard to unemployment. The reduction in unemployment was sustained for the participants aged 50-55 on entering ND25+ but disappeared after the first year for older individuals.</p> <p>Effects were most notable among customers employed in manual occupations before their current period of unemployment (the largest group of customers). For this group results are significant with the effect of mandating IAP reaching nearly eight percentage points by the end of the second year.</p>
Impact indicators	Employment entry, Exiting from benefits
Recommendations	<p>Do not treat 50+ differently from younger New Deal customers. Offer same provision under same terms and conditions.</p> <p>IAP most effective for customers from manual job backgrounds. May need to think again about the range and type of support offered to the better qualifies and those from managerial/ professional backgrounds.</p>
Methodology	
Sample framework	The evaluation follows a random assignment (or ‘experimental’) design. Individuals participating in the pilots were randomly assigned to either an ‘action’ group for whom IAP participation was mandatory or a ‘control’ group for whom participation remains voluntary. Random assignment took place at the time of ND25+ entry.
Data sources	
Quantitative	The analysis is based on data collected at the time of random assignment, matched to administrative employment and benefits records that allow outcomes to be observed over an extended period of two years. The data are also matched to the New Deal (ND) Evaluation Database in order to assess the extent to which the ND25+ experience was affected by the requirement to participate in IAP. The results are based on about 3,700 individuals.
Limitations of the study as stated by the authors	None stated by authors. IAP provision includes work experience, training, support for self-employment etc. The impact of these different types of provision not assessed so cannot determine which more appropriate overall although the point is that provision should be diverse and flexible to reflect highly disparate needs and work history experiences.

Table D.3 ND 25 plus

Study reference	RR 388
Report title	Evaluation of the Intensive Activity Period 50plus Pilots
Authors	Atkinson, J. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2006
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep388.pdf
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Evaluation to assess the impact of mandating IAP participation among the 50+. Prior to this, participation had been voluntary for customers in this age group, in contrast to younger customers for whom IAP participation had always been mandatory. A pilot study mandating participation for the over-50s began in April 2004 in 14 Jobcentre Plus districts. The report presents the qualitative evaluation of the effect of mandating IAP.
Status of programme	These evaluations based on pilots in 14 Jobcentre Plus districts. The programme has been rolled out nationally since.
Elements of provision	See RR500.
Findings/outcomes	IAP provision was dominated by work experience, which many of the cohort felt they did not really need (in view of their generally extended prior labour market experience). Many would have preferred a work placement, where direct contact with a possible recruiter might have been important in overcoming employer ageism, but these were extremely rare. Skill training was less common than work experience, but was generally well received, particularly among those with least qualifications, for whom the relatively modest skill gains nevertheless marked a significant marginal improvement in their human capital. By contrast, others with more human capital to start with, were often disappointed at what they viewed as the relatively small skill/qualification gains on offer. Basic Employability Training and Self-Employment Preparation were taken up by small numbers. Health and caring responsibilities were key barriers to work as were poor motivation, and unrealistic aspirations. Motivation and expectations, were widely regarded by staff as the two most important factors in determining outcomes on ND for this cohort. Staff faced a difficult challenge in dealing with this because motivation was often low amongst particular groups, and advisers employed a number of tactics to increase motivation amongst customers to try and improve confidence and self-esteem; – expectations were often unrealistic, being informed by previous labour market experiences which were either no longer relevant or no longer attainable. Thus, staff often had to try to bring down customers' aspirations to a more realistic level, while still boosting their self-esteem and motivation.
Impact indicators	Employment entry, Exiting from benefits

Continued

Table D.3 Continued

Study reference	RR 388
Recommendations	<p>IAP training most appreciated by customers from low skilled job backgrounds with few qualifications. May need to think again about the range and type of support offered to the better qualified and those from managerial/professional backgrounds for whom work experience and the training options were of limited value. Staff and customers felt that more quality (IAP) provision was required to bring about job outcomes. In their view, there remains an unmet need for high levels of vocational training, and or quality work placements, to allow more customers to regain something closer to their former employment trajectory. Many older customers indicated that they would prefer to receive support within same age groups rather than mixed age activities. Must focus on job quality and job retention. When customers did get jobs whilst taking part in New Deal, these jobs tended to be low-skilled and low-paid. They were, in addition, often short-term, either because they were temporary or casual, or because customers did not stay in them long.</p>
Specific to older workers	<p>Focus on impact for 50+.</p> <p>Some consideration of different experiences and motivations within the 50-59 age range.</p> <p>Staff interviews frequently reported a definite link between proximity to retirement age and motivation to find work. This was confirmed in a number of customer interviews, during which older clients (those closer to retirement age) reported that they felt they were now 'too old' to find work or retrain and were generally less motivated than the younger age groups. This customer group often cited health problems or employer ageism as the reason for their lack of motivation. However, many staff members thought that some customers were biding their time before they become eligible for their state pension, and as such, do not really want to enter the labour market, and most particularly so if this entailed taking a job which they felt to be demeaning or beneath them.</p>
Methodology	
Sample framework	
Data sources	
Qualitative	<p>The qualitative research focused on four of the 14 pilot sites, and was principally based on face-to-face interviews involving 75 Staff, 23 Providers and 182 Participants, in spring 2005 and winter 2005/06.</p>
Limitations of the study as stated by the authors	<p>None stated by authors.</p>

Table D.4 ND 25 plus

Study reference	RR 366
Report title	Gateway to work New Deal 25 plus pilots evaluation
Authors	Page, J. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2006
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep366.pdf
Relevance screening 50+ group coverage	Report draws together qualitative fieldwork and analysis of large administrative database on the Gateway to Work (GtW) intervention. One fifth of participants tracked (no sample size provided) were age 50+. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	A two week, full-time training programme that is mandatory for people claiming JSA four weeks after joining ND25+ Gateway.
Status of programme	Pilots complete. Elements of support integrated into revised Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) regime.
Years of data	July 2003 to June 2005.
Elements of provision	Provides training in communication, team building and problem solving; and help with CV writing, interview techniques and applying for jobs. Experience intended to intensify job readiness and increase job starts earlier in the JSA Gateway period.
Findings/outcomes	On the aggregate, comparisons between pilot offices and similar offices not offering BtW training indicated no impact on volumes of people moving into jobs in the early stages of Gateway. Delivery staff views on the programme were discouraging.
Impact indicators	Job starts during the 13 week post tracking period.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	Given the findings, report suggested investment in GtW not good value for money. Formative feedback provided.
Specific to older workers	The administrative data indicated that, among those referred to GtW, aged 50+ were more likely to start the training, statistically significant. (report does not elaborate, may or may not be associated with promise of a sanction for fail-to-attends.) Impact on early job starts n.s. for any of the age groups.
Methodology	
Sample framework	Pilot delivered in four areas of England, Scotland, Wales.
Data sources	JCP administrative data. April 2003 to December 2005.
Quantitative	There were 22,600 ND25+ referrals to GtW and 12,900 starts. Numbers not provided for 50+. Descriptive and matched comparison (non-pilot Jobcentre Plus offices) using administrative data.
Qualitative	No qualitative fieldwork with customers, only staff.
Limitations of the study/ dataset as stated by the authors	
Reviewer comments	

Table D.5 ND 50 plus

Study reference	WARR 142
Report title	New Deal 50 plus: Sustainability of employment
Authors	Atkinson, J. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2003
Sourced from	DWP Leeds electronic archive
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Concentrates on ages 50-69. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Aimed to investigate the longer term outcomes of New Deal 50 plus with a qualitative follow up of working participants.
Status of programme	Re-engineered.
Years of data	June-July 2002.
Elements of provision	See ESR 151.
Findings/outcomes	Employment Credit (EC): Just under half said they would have taken the job anyway without the EC. But EC seemed to encourage some participants to take a job at a lower wage. When their EC expired, about three-quarters were still in the same job. Even with the drop in income, it was considered better to be receiving earnings than out of work benefits. The vast majority continued in work. This was attributable to (1) their preference for work over benefit, and (2) the fact that even without the EC, most were better-off in work than they had been when out of it. Various reasons for leaving work: an inability to work more hours, ill-health, failure to establish an income stream in self-employment, dissatisfaction with the job/employer/manager, and involuntary job loss, as well as acceptance of living on benefits. Training: Only five respondents used of the Training Grant; three-quarters said they received no training from employers. Reasons for non take up: being too old, not seeing any benefit in training, extra training not required to do the job. Gaining a promotion within the workplace valued more than gaining skills. People did not view the Training Grant as compatible with existing in-house training provision, so less helpful.
Impact indicators	Key explanatory factors noted were the voluntary nature character of the programme, and attitudes concerning work and benefits. In particular: people tended to have an aversion to being on benefits and a strong commitment to working for a living.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	Authors conclude: The fact that such a high proportion had continued to work suggests that there is no need for further public intervention or assistance to promote stability/retention. However, successfully using ND50plus as a springboard to regain career momentum was very rare, and there may be a more compelling case for intervention to help in this way, through for example, more actively promoting the Training Grant to clients, and/or extending links between ND50plus customers and PAs beyond their entry into work.
Specific to older workers	See above.

Continued

Table D.5 Continued

Study reference	WARR 142
Methodology	
Sample framework	People who had taken work after ND50plus, who had completed their eligibility for EC, and who had been living for up to a year without the additional income. Research conducted in four areas of England.
Data sources	
Quantitative	
Indicate if potential data for secondary analysis*	
Qualitative	Sixty face-to-face interviews with previous ND50+ participants. Average age=56.
Indicate if potential data for secondary analysis*	
NO	
Limitations of the study/ dataset as stated by the authors	
Reviewer comments	

Table D.6 ND 50 plus

Study reference	WARR 151
Report title	New Deal 50 plus: Quantitative analysis of job retention
Authors	Grierson, K.
Date	2002
Sourced from	DWP Leeds electronic archive
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Concentrates on ages 50-69. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Aimed to investigate job retention for New Deal 50 plus EC claimants, in the year following the end of their entitlement. Characteristics of ECs recipients and impact analysis on job retention after EC completed.
Status of programme	Discontinued.
Years of data	June 2002
Elements of provision	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to one-to-one advice and guidance about finding work through a New Deal Personal Adviser • wage top-up (Employment Credit), providing £60 a week for those working full time (£40 for part-timers) for a year, provided that recipients' total income is less than £15,000 a year; and • Training Grant, of up to £750, for those in receipt of the Employment Credit.
Findings/outcomes	If the customer has any one of the following characteristics; male, disabled, in the 65-69 age band, single (or divorced or cohabiting), self-employed, in a full-time job, having previously claimed Severe Disability Allowance (SDA) (or Income Support (IS)), having previously claimed for under 100 days in total, and previously claimed benefits several times, then they tend to be more likely to have returned to benefit after six months.
Unable to robustly analyse for independent effects.	
Impact indicators	
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	Further investigation needed.

Continued

Table D.6 Continued

Study reference	WARR 151
Methodology	
Sample framework	Admin information – ND 50+ evaluation database
Data sources	
Quantitative	Administrative data analysis of Employment Credit claimants (n=75,000), 59 per cent age 50-54.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	Used benefit claim as a proxy for lack of job retention. Noted that job retention can only be measured by analysing a customer's benefit records. If a customer is still off benefits, e.g. six months or a year after expiry of the EC, they are said to have retained their job. There is no evidence that the customer actually is still in that job. Bias likely. Author also suggests the customer group, because they had already spent 12 months in their job, were a fairly settled group. It is likely that the customers who were more likely to return to benefits and not retain their jobs would have already left their jobs before claiming the full 12 months credit, thus not entering into the analysis here. Not possible to test independent influences of the identified customer characteristics as none of the variables had a significantly large enough explanatory role to justify building a model This means there is probably other factors, not captured on the ND50+ evaluation database, that have more impact on the job retention of customers after EC expiry. Or it could be that job retention after EC expiry is largely random.
Reviewer comments	

Table D.7 ND 50 plus

Study reference	ESR 99
Report title	Evaluation of New Deal 50plus: Qualitative evidence from clients: third phase
Authors	Aston J. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2001
Sourced from	DWP Leeds electronic archive
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Qualitative longitudinal follow-up. Concentrates on age 50+. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Voluntary programme of back to work support for people age 50+ who have been out of work and on benefits or National Insurance Credits for six months or more. Research purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact of the expiry of the ND50+ Employment Credit - Views and experiences of the ND50+ Training Grant
Status of programme	Re-engineered.
Years of data	2001
Elements of provision	See ESR 151
Findings/outcomes	EC was viewed as main provision of ND50+ and received positively as a financial boost. It may have acted as an incentive to take a lower paid job. How it performed as a work incentive depended on other conditions like wage level, household conditions, living expenses, personal attitudes. Job retention after EC ends was high in the sample. But part-time workers seemed to be struggling financially. Little contact with PA or Jobcentre Plus once on Pension Credit. Mixed views among participants as some felt fine and others would have liked advice, especially when Pension Credit coming to an end. Due to the low take up, there is little detailed information about experiences of the Training Grant. Grant was viewed as a secondary feature of ND50+. Attitudes towards training were also very job specific, with those who were self employed or working in professional and skilled jobs being more positive towards the idea than those working in more menial jobs, who saw themselves as having less to gain from training.
Impact indicators	
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	More marketing and dissemination on details of ND50+ is needed.
See Chapter 6	
Methodology	
Sample framework	
Data sources	
Qualitative	Phase 3 follow-up interviews with customers participating in Phase 1 or 2 interviews and focus groups. N=30 face-to-face or telephone interviews.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	
Reviewer comments	

Table D.8 ND 50 plus

Study reference	ESR 70
Report title	Evaluation of New Deal 50 Plus. Qualitative Evidence from Clients: Second Phase
Authors	Kodz J., <i>et al.</i>
Date	2001
Sourced from	DWP Leeds electronic archive
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Qualitative Phase 2 research. Concentrates on age 50+. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Voluntary programme of back to work support for people age 50+ who have been out of work and on benefits or National Insurance Credits for six months or more.
Status of programme	Re-engineered.
Years of data	2000
Elements of provision	See ESR 151
Findings/outcomes	<p>Reports participant’s perspectives and attitudes on employment. Main barriers to work seen to be ageism, decline in some job sectors, fear of being financially worse off in work, health issues. Other key obstacles identified were: caring responsibilities, confidence and motivation issues, transport and literacy problems.</p> <p>Advisory support:</p> <p>Research participants were generally very positive about the support and advice they had received from their NDPA. They particularly appreciated seeing the same person regularly, who built up knowledge about their circumstances. However, the longer-term unemployed tended to be less satisfied.</p> <p>EC was viewed as main provision of ND50+ and received positively as a financial boost. Could be viewed as a work incentive. Those ES were especially positive about the extra £ from EC.</p> <p>Training Grant viewed as secondary status. Very low take up in the sample (n=5). Not adequately understood. The main barrier to taking up training was perceived to be age, as many felt they were too old to learn new skills. Also, many EC recipients felt their employer would provide them with all the training they needed or wanted. Other barriers to training identified, included a lack of time and, as far as respondents knew, lack of training opportunities available.</p> <p>Outcomes for ND50+ (soft outcomes reported): Whether or not individuals had so far actually found work, this support had generally made for more effective job search, boosted the confidence and broadened the horizons of individuals.</p>
Impact indicators	
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more publicity about the programme; • more targeted help with job search, in particular to help to overcome employer prejudice; • more specific help for the longer-term unemployed people aged over 50; and • the availability of further support and advice from the Jobcentre, once clients are in employment.

Continued

Table D.8 Continued

Study reference	ESR 70
Methodology	
Sample framework	Fieldwork conducted in seven areas.
Data sources	
Qualitative	Phase 2 research entailed 70 one-to-one interviews with participants of the programme and seven focus groups.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	
Reviewer comments	

Table D.9 ND 50 plus

Study reference	ESR 68
Report title	Evaluation of New Deal 50 Plus. Qualitative Evidence from ES and BA Staff: Second Phase
Authors	Atkinson J., <i>et al.</i>
Date	2001
Sourced from	DWP Leeds electronic archive.
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Qualitative research. Concentrates on age 50+. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Voluntary programme of back to work support for people age 50+ who have been out of work and on benefits or National Insurance Credits for six months or more.
Status of programme	Re-engineered.
Years of data	2000
Elements of provision	See ESR 151
Findings/outcomes	Formative feedback on implementation. EC: The EC was regarded by NDPAs as both the key feature of the programme in objective terms, and the most visible and attractive in the perceptions of clients. Objectively, the EC was felt to have an important effect on clients' reservation wages, and so to have significantly increased the range of jobs which they could now afford to consider. Subjectively, NDPAs report that clients easily understood the 'offer', were often strongly attracted to it, and viewed it as the main part of the programme. NDPAs reported the voluntary client group was highly motivated and reliable, but lacking in self-confidence and self esteem. To these generic problems could also often be added poor or obsolete occupational skills, an unrealistic attachment to their former job status, incomplete core skills (particularly IT), a deep unfamiliarity with the labour market, loss of momentum through an extended period of unemployment, etc. Some NDPAs felt that the oldest potential clients were not entering the programme in great numbers because they were already psychologically retired, while others (a minority) felt that they were (a) much more exposed to employer age discrimination, and (b) less likely to make an easy rapport with a younger ES adviser.

Continued

Table D.9 Continued

Study reference	ESR 68
Impact indicators	
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	
Methodology	
Sample framework	Fieldwork conducted in four areas.
Data sources	
Qualitative	Forty-eight interviews with Employment Service and Benefits Advisory staff.
Indicate if potential data for secondary analysis*	NO
Limitations of the study/ dataset as stated by the authors	Warns results should be viewed as tentative given small area coverage and sample size.
Reviewer comments	

Table D.10 ND for Disabled People

Study reference	RR 432
Report title	Long term impacts of the New Deal for Disabled People
Authors	Orr, L. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2007
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep432.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Findings on the impact of New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP) on employment and receipt/amount of benefits for individuals who registered for the programme between July 2001 and June 2004, includes both new and existing claimants. Evaluation covers voluntary participants, eligibility based on qualifying disability-related benefits (e.g., Incapacity Benefit (IB), SDA, IS-DP, War Pension with unemployment supplement, etc.). Any working age. Average age of participants was 40. Approx 20 per cent of sample age 50-59. (Table 2-2a). Therefore, report applies to age 50+ group in receipt of disability-related benefits. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Jobcentre Plus and partner Back to Work (BTW) provision for jobseekers in receipt of qualifying disability-related benefits.
Status of programme	Introduced 1998, altered & mainstreamed 2001; studied version ended March 2008.
Years of data	Spans Jan 2001 to Dec 2004, but varies for 3 cohorts studied.
Elements of provision	National voluntary programme. Job broker organisations (voluntary, public and private) contracted to provide services (approx 65 brokers nationwide). Brokers receive payments for NDDP registrants, employment entry and retention. Job Brokers provided, in-house and/or through others, a range of services, including help with looking for work and training tailored to individuals. Advisory support and help paying for job search expenses.

Continued

Table D.10 Continued

Study reference	RR 432
Findings/outcomes	<p>During observation period, 100,000 people registered for NDDP, 35 per cent entered work. For all 21 subgroups and both existing recipients and new claimants, NDDP reduced benefit receipt in the first and second years of follow-up, more so in the second year than the first. The magnitude of this reduction is at least five percentage points – and in most cases ten percentage points or more – compared to the non-intervention group at the end of the first year, and larger still a year later.</p> <p>Contrasts among subgroups suggest that NDDP most substantially reduces disability-related benefits for registrants who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are age 50 or older; • suffer from physical disabilities (i.e., disabilities other than mental and behavioural impairments); • have received benefits for at least three years at the point of registration; • are further from the labour market, as measured by the probability of finding work in the next two years in the absence of the programme; • are served by the largest Job Brokers; • rely on brokers in the public and private sectors rather than the voluntary/charitable sector; • live in comparatively rural areas; and • live in communities where a larger share of working age adults receive IB. <p>NDDP also increased employment for all 21 subgroups of existing recipients and new claimants.</p>
Impact indicators	Receipt of IB, IS-DP, SDA, JSA, and amounts. Employment spells by month and proportion over observation period.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	None provided.
Specific to older workers	Includes detailed subgroup analysis by two age groups, 50+ (n=1455) vs under 50 (n=4130). Analyses refer to Cohort1 only. Benefit receipt: effect on those age 50+ greater, where NDDP most substantially reduces disability-related benefits, compared to people under age 50. Employment: Effects on employment are very similar for the two age groups. No analysis by age bands broken down within 50+ group.
Methodology	
Sample framework	Quasi-experimental matching. NDDP registrants and non-registrants matched on personal characteristics like age, sex, and type of disability and on prior benefit history.
Data sources	HMRC employment data merged with Admin dataset. Total N=>35,000 for new and existing claimants combined.
Quantitative	All subgroup analyses conducted on early cohort 1 which had longest observation period.

Continued

Table D.10 Continued

Study reference	RR 432
Limitations of the study/ dataset as stated by the authors	Admin data not available on other characteristics that could impact on employability; these variables therefore omitted: race/ethnicity, qualifications, occupation and industry of previous employment, household composition, and personal health status and functional ability. An analysis of survey data for a subset of the population suggests that the inability to control for individual characteristics and circumstances not included in the administrative data may have caused some bias away from zero in the estimates presented (see Chapter 3). For this reason, estimates should be viewed with some caution.
Reviewer comments	Potentially large data file for exploring 50+ group of clients.

Table D.11 ND for Disabled People

Study reference	RR 430
Report title	New Deal for Disabled People: Third synthesis report – key findings from the evaluation
Authors	Stafford, B. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2007
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep430.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Reports findings for 50+ group. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	This synthesis report highlights key findings from a large-scale, comprehensive and multi-method evaluation of NDDP. It covers the programme over the period July 2001 to November 2006 and is based on all of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) published evaluation reports on NDDP as well as analysis of administrative data using the DWP NDDP database. Further to the second synthesis report, this final report also includes findings on the third cohort of registrants, which has been presented in RR 369.
Status of programme	
Years of data	
Elements of provision	
Findings/outcomes	
Impact indicators	
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	

Continued

Table D.11 Continued

Study reference	RR 430
Specific to older workers	<p>(1) Older participants were more likely to enter employment; in Cohorts 1 and 2, 49 per cent of those participants aged 50 or over entered paid work compared to 46 per cent of younger participants. This might seem slightly surprising, given that those aged 50 or over were more likely to have had no qualifications (and hence be further from the labour market) and, more generally, a high proportion of this sub-group were economically inactive. However, the proportion of working age people aged 50 and over who are economically inactive has declined in recent years (from 31 per cent in the mid-1990s to 27 per cent in September- November 2006) and the employment rate for older working age people is increasing (National Statistics, 2004 and 2007). Older participants might be benefiting from more general labour market trends, despite their lack of qualifications.</p> <p>(2) Younger participants (16 to 29 years) were more likely to be employees and less likely to be self-employed than older participants (Cohorts 1 and 2 and Cohort 3).</p> <p>(3) Younger participants tended to work for longer than older participants (those who found job after registering with NDDP).</p> <p>(4) For those who found a job, both weekly and hourly earnings increased with age. Thus, even though younger participants worked longer on average (see above), their average weekly earnings were lower than older participants whose hourly earnings were significantly higher.</p> <p>(5) The impacts of NDDP on benefit receipt varied across sub-groups, and it reduced receipt more for participants who were aged 50 or older (among other groups).</p> <p>(6) On average older participants experienced larger impacts than younger workers, with 22 per cent of longer-term recipients and 19 per cent of more recent claimants estimated to have left work by month 24 because of NDDP.</p> <p>(7) For example, for longer-term claimants whilst benefit receipt for older participants fell by 22 percentage points compared to 15 percentage points for younger workers, benefit saving were larger for the latter (£84) compared to the former (£71). This is likely to be because amongst those induced to leave benefit by NDDP, older participants had smaller initial benefit payments than younger ones.</p>
Methodology	
Sample framework	Those who had registered with a Job Broker in Aug to Sep 2004 (and additionally in Oct 2004 in Pathways to Work areas) were randomly selected from the DWP and Pensions' NDDP Evaluation Database. Sample stratified by whether or not registrants were within Pathways areas and whether they had registered with new or existing Job Brokers.
Data sources	
Quantitative	See RR 369, RR 260, RR 144.
Limitations of the study/ dataset as stated by the authors	
Reviewer comments	

Table D.12 ND for Disabled People

Study reference	RR 369
Report title	New Deal for Disabled People: Survey of registrants: Report of cohort 3
Authors	Legge, K. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2006
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep369.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Survey of registrants, 28 per cent (n=708) were age 50 plus: 30 per cent of males and 24 per cent of females. Proportions similar to the 2002 survey. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	National voluntary programme provision for jobseekers and partners in receipt of qualifying disability-related benefits.
Status of programme	Ongoing at time of research.
Years of data	Survey conducted Feb-May 2005 of those registering between Aug and Oct 2004.
Elements of provision	Generalist and specialist BTW support delivered through independent Job Brokers, including voluntary and other not-for-profit bodies, commercial companies, and public sector organisations. Brokers receive payments for NDDP registrants, employment entry and retention. Job Brokers provide, in-house and/or through others, a range of services, including help with looking for work and training tailored to individuals. Advisory support and help paying for job search expenses. BTW plans agreed and reviewed jointly with the participant.
Findings/outcomes	At the point of interview (approx. six months after registration with a Job Broker) over a third (37 per cent) of registrants reported being in paid work. A further 24 per cent were actively looking for work. A higher proportion of job entries for Pathways to Work areas was observed, compared to elsewhere. Existing Job Brokers performed better in terms of job entries, compared to new ones. This attributed to an 'implementation lag'. Finding held across age groups. In terms of advisory support services: 54 per cent of participants discussed how their health condition or disability might limit the work they were able to do (no significant difference by age).
Impact indicators	Choice of job brokers, views on services, work aspirations and barriers, work outcomes, work exit, partners of registrants.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	Higher job entries within Pathways to Work areas lends support to the effectiveness the new BTW programme.

Continued

Table D.12 Continued

Study reference	RR 369
Specific to older workers	<p>Age subgroups: 16-25; 26-35; 36-45; 46-55; 56 and over.</p> <p>Survey results not presented systematically by age. Could assume if age not mentioned, then not a significant factor in analyses. (i.e. propensity to enter work not independently associated with age.). However, the proportion of registrants entering work declined steadily with age from 92 per cent for the 16-29 year-olds to 75 per cent for those aged 60 years or older. Conversely, the proportion of registrants entering self-employment or Permitted Work increased with age.</p> <p>Younger respondents (16-25 year olds) were significantly more likely than older respondents (those over 55) to say that their health was very good or good (46 per cent compared with 29 per cent; $p < 0.01$). By the same token, older partners (those aged 50 or over) of participants were more likely to report a health condition for themselves than those aged under 50 (55 per cent compared to 40 per cent; $p < 0.01$).</p> <p>Expectations of work: Registrants nearer to retirement age were more likely to say that they were not expecting to enter the job market again, (29 per cent of those not in work aged 56 to 65 compared to two per cent of those aged 16 to 25). Citing age as a barrier to work increased with age, among the oldest group: 70 per cent of those aged over 56 mentioned age as a barrier compared to two per cent of those aged 26 to 35; $p < 0.01$). In contrast, older participants less likely to mention lack of skill and experience as a barrier – See Table B.26 Perceived barriers by age of registrant.</p> <p>Training: Younger registrants more likely to have undertaken training and education. Registrants aged 26-35 years (48 per cent) ($p < 0.05$) and those aged 36-45 years (44 per cent) ($p < 0.01$) were more likely to have undertaken training or education since registration than those aged 56 and over (30 per cent).</p>
Methodology	
Sample framework	<p>Those who had registered with a Job Broker in Aug to Sep 2004 (and additionally in Oct 2004 in Pathways to Work areas) were randomly selected from the DWP and Pensions' NDDP Evaluation Database. Sample stratified by whether or not registrants were within Pathways areas and whether they had registered with new or existing Job Brokers. Disproportionately large numbers of those within Pathways areas and those with new brokers were sampled to allow robust analysis of these groups.</p>
Data sources	<p>One hour face-to-face (CAPI) survey of 2,531 registrants (response rate 64 per cent; 77 per cent for fielded sample), plus 1,063 partner interviews.</p>
Quantitative	<p>Weighting applied to correct for different selection probabilities and the different periods of selection.</p>
Limitations of the study/ dataset as stated by the authors	
Reviewer comments	<p>Worthwhile pursuing data to further breakdown survey results within the 50+ group.</p>

Table D.13 ND for Disabled People

Study reference	RR 260
Report title	New Deal for Disabled People Evaluation: Registrants Survey Merged Cohorts (Cohorts one and two, Waves one and two)
Authors	Kazimirski, A. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2005
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep260.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	One third of participants were over 50 years old and findings discussed by age, albeit limited to under 50, over 50 differentiation. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Survey of NDDP registrants which collected information about NDDP participants, their experiences and views of the programme. The survey involves three Cohorts of participants, the first two of whom registered in spring (May-June) and autumn (September-October) 2002. This report presents analysis based on surveys of cohorts 1 and 2 combined.
Status of programme	NDDP ongoing.
Years of data	2002 - 2004
Elements of provision	NDDP is delivered by a national network of local Job Brokers comprising public, private and voluntary sector providers of varying types and levels of work-focused support and assistance.
Findings/outcomes	<p>Looking at the activity profile for the whole three years covered by the survey, two years before registration and one year after, the overall impression is one of successful return to work, albeit for around one-third of registrants. The proportion of registrants in work steadily decreased during the two years before registration, while the proportion looking for work increased.</p> <p>The type of work registrants found is not all at the lowest end of the labour market. The average pay is a bit above the National Minimum Wage, a minority of the jobs are part-time (less than 16 hours), and 16 per cent of registrants started a job in the Managerial/Professional/Technical sector.</p> <p>One particular area of success, in comparison to two years before registration, seems to be entry into Permitted Work. One fifth of first job entries were into Permitted Work. One year after registration six per cent of all registrants were in Permitted Work, compared to just one per cent two years before registration.</p>
Impact indicators	Employment outcomes and movements off benefit post registration.

Continued

Table D.13 Continued

Study reference	RR 260
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	<p>Contact time with job brokers is very short and is of some concern. Around one-third of registrants were still in contact with their Job Broker one year after registration (although 71 per cent were still registered). The main reason for deregistering was lack of help from the Job Broker, pointing perhaps to a failure in some cases in meeting the challenge of identifying suitable help for clients.</p> <p>Perhaps some work with Job Brokers could be undertaken to ensure training opportunities are appropriately and equitably sign-posted to and/or arranged for registrants.</p> <p>Entry into work might, therefore, be boosted by greater encouragement of take-up of Permitted Work. The reality for many, however, is fluctuating health, often in unexpected ways. It might be worth considering a more flexible version of the eligibility rules such as a maximum number of hours over one month, rather than over a week.</p>
Specific to older workers	<p>Long-term claimants were older (44 per cent as opposed to 31 per cent of all respondents). Older respondents more likely to hold Level 4 qualifications. A potentially 'hard to help' group, those aged 50 and over, whose national employment rates are lower than the younger age groups (Strategy Unit, 2004), also seem to fare relatively well after registration. Registrants are, in general, younger than the eligible population, but those aged 50 to 59 were more likely to enter work than those aged 16 to 29. Older workers more likely to have entered Permitted Work. They were also, one year after registration, more likely to be in the same first post-registration job.</p>
Methodology	
Sample framework	<p>The sample frame was the NDDP Evaluation Database. The first Cohort is based on registrations made in May and June 2002, and the second Cohort is based on registrations in September and October 2002.</p>
Data sources	
Quantitative	<p>Report covers research with two cohorts of registrants. Each cohort was interviewed twice. Interview dates as follows:</p> <p>Cohort 1, wave 1: Oct – Dec 2002, N=3014, response rate 67 per cent Cohort 1, wave 2: July-Sept 2003, N=2400, response rate 80 per cent Cohort 2, wave 1: Feb-April 2003, N=2192, response rate 69 per cent Cohort 2, wave 2: Nov 2003 – Jan 2004, N=1682, response rate 77 per cent</p> <p>Combined sample size for report: 4082. One third over 50. Weights were applied.</p>
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	<p>In the absence of a planned control group, it is not possible to know from this survey how many of those who have returned to work would have done so anyway without the help of NDDP. A subjective estimate is available: 42 per cent of registrants who entered work themselves identified that NDDP had an impact on their employment (whether by influencing their decision to start work or by helping them obtaining their first job after registration).</p>
Reviewer comments	<p>New data presented on experiences of NDDP and outcomes. Over 50s form one third of all sample. Survey covered issues of programme benefits extensively and there may be potential to exploit the data to further to analyse the experiences of over 50s and for sub groups of the over 50 population.</p>

Table D.14 ND for Disabled People

Study reference	RR 144
Report title	Evaluation of the New Deal for Disabled People Personal Adviser Pilots
Authors	Loumidis, J. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2001
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rrep144.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Profile and activities of pilot participants discussed by age (under or over 50). Neither the programme nor the evaluation specifically targeted the 50+, but they constituted 31 per cent of participants, 47 per cent of non-participants and 53 per cent of the national survey respondents. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Findings from a two year evaluation of the Personal Adviser Pilots.
Status of programme	Run for two years from 1998.
Years of data	Various over 1998-2000.
Elements of provision	Personal Adviser interviews with IB claimants, providing general counselling and support, work guidance, arranging access to other services, financial information and advice, assistance with job search, help or support while in work.
Findings/outcomes	Evaluation was very comprehensive and also reported on the process of implementation. For findings specific to older workers, see below.
Impact indicators	Progression towards work, increase in work related activities, movements off benefits and into paid work.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	None noted.
Specific to older workers	IB claimants over 50 were half as likely to participate in the pilot. In fact, age proved to be significant over and above other characteristics determining participation in the pilot. Participants over 50 were more likely to have ill-health. According to management data, participants over 50 were less likely to give training and wanting to return to work as reasons for contacting a personal adviser. They were also less likely to have kept in regular contact, less likely to have discussed training or in-work support (probably due to low numbers in work), less likely to have engaged in job-search or other work related activities. Older participants were also less likely to have been offered help and advice with other benefits, training or job search activities. Among the survey respondents, those who left benefits for work tended to be aged under 50.

Continued

Table D.14 Continued

Study reference	RR 144
Methodology	
Sample framework	Various - see details below.
Data sources	(1) Surveys of participants and non-participants, (2) A national survey of IB recipients (3) Local labour market analysis (4) Site visits (5) In-depth interviews with Personal Advisers, managers, clients, occupational psychologists, employers and group discussions with some of the stakeholders.
Quantitative	Survey of participants (N=450) and non-participants (N=380) in six pilot areas, conducted in 1999. Survey of participants (N=1914) and non-participants (N=643) in 12 pilot areas, conducted in 2000. National survey of IB recipients between Nov 98 and Aug 99. N=1556. (Findings from the national survey discussed more fully in NDDP 160). Secondary analysis of 1991 Census, LFS, JOVOS claimant count and 1998 Annual Employment Survey to build a profile of the local labour markets in pilot areas.
Qualitative	Site visits to pilot areas during the first two to five months of the pilot. In depth interviews with 16 representatives from partner organisations in four pilot areas. Interviews with personal advisers, work psychologists, managers. In-depth interviews with 91 people who were currently or had been in touch with the Personal Adviser Service. In-depth interviews with 64 employers or their representatives.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	None noted.
Reviewer comments	Client group includes large number of over 50s.

Table D.15 ND for Partners

Study reference	RR 417
Report title	Work Focused Interviews for Partners (WFIPs) and enhanced New Deal for Partners (NDP) Evaluation: Synthesis of findings
Authors	Coleman, N. & Seeds, K.
Date	2007
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep417.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Various evaluations of the WFIPs and NDPs presented some evidence on older partners, but this synthesis brings together the evidence in a more focused way. It is helpful for highlighting the particular needs of older workers and more importantly, for revealing adviser perceptions of and attitudes towards workless older people. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	The report brings together findings from the different strands of the evaluation of WFIP and NDP. It provides a succinct assessment of the programme, with a particular emphasis on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overall impact of WFIP/enhanced NDP on partners and main claimants; • elements of the programme that were more/less successful; • sub-groups that benefited more/less from participation; • potential options for future direction.

Continued

Table D.15 Continued

Study reference	RR 417
Status of programme	Both WFIP and NDP ongoing, from April 2004.
Years of data	2004-2005
Elements of provision	N/A
Findings/outcomes	See below for age related findings.
Impact indicators	N/A
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	<p data-bbox="632 645 1345 1406">Specific to older workers</p> <p data-bbox="632 645 1345 1406">Older partners were disproportionately likely to be partners of IB claimants. As is generally the case, the incidence of health problems or disabilities was higher among those aged 50 or over, and these partners were less likely than average to have qualifications. Those aged 50+ were no less positive to the WFIP than other partners. However, they were less likely than average to have a work focus, and to have discussed training at the WFIP. Qualitative: A few of the NDP participants interviewed were aged 50 or over and they appeared to be faring comparably to others on the programme. All were the partners of IB customers and all were WFIP route entrants. The main reasons they gave for participating in NDP and seeking work were health improvements in their previously cared for spouses, and the persuasive evidence from BOCs. All but one of the NDP participants interviewed aged over 50 perceived their skills and workplace experience to be outdated and had therefore undertaken training while on NDP, and some had successfully entered employment. All of those who had started jobs since participating in NDP were still in work six to twelve months later. Although concerns were widely expressed about perceived age discrimination in the jobs market, their confidence that once in employment they could prove their worth and their reliability were perhaps being borne out in practice.</p> <p data-bbox="632 1417 1345 1765">Older partners were less likely than average to say their skills had been improved, or to feel more hopeful and motivated, as a result of the WFIP. Some advisers perceived that this older group of partners was more difficult to persuade of the benefits of changing their situation and considering work. There appeared to be a poor perception of this age group among some advisers, despite the fact that some older partners can access additional help via New Deal 50 Plus. Some opportunities relating to partners in the older age ranges were not being identified and picked up by current Jobcentre Plus practices.</p>
Methodology	
Sample framework	This study did not involve analysis of any new data. For details of data used in separate components of the evaluation see appraisals: RR 352, RR 335, RR 283.
Data sources	
Quantitative	
Qualitative	
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	
Reviewer comments	Useful for indicating the different profile of 50+ (in terms of needs and behaviour) and thus confirming the need for an in-depth analysis of provision for this age group.

Table D.16 ND for Partners

Study reference	RR 335
Report title	Work Focused Interviews for Partners and Enhanced New Deal for Partners: Quantitative Survey Research
Authors	Coleman, N. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2006
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep335.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Report presents some findings on older partners which may help understanding on the behaviour of 50+ in workless households. Twenty one per cent of respondents were aged 50+, but no further age breakdown provided. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Survey of partners of main benefit claimants who were asked to attend a WFIP between October 2004 and January 2005. In addition, short complementary interviews were conducted with the main benefit claimant in the same household whenever possible.
Status of programme	Both WFIP and NDP ongoing, from April 2004.
Years of data	Survey conducted between April and July 2005.
Elements of provision	WFIPs are intended to provide partners of main benefit claimants with information on the support that can be given to them via the NDP. NDP includes assistance with job search, access to training and information about in work benefits and Tax Credits.
Findings/outcomes	Little evidence that WFIP increased the number of partners in work. Partners reported other benefits, such as increased motivation and awareness of job opportunities and access to training.
Impact indicators	Analysis considered customers experience and views of WFIP and NDP; attitudes to work and changes in employment status.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	The purpose of the WFIP interview must be clearly stated. In particular, not to alienate certain groups such as carers, the invitation letter should stress that current circumstances and barriers to work will be taken into account. This will help overcome previous negative experiences of Jobcentre Plus.
Specific to older workers	Over 50s were less likely to have had a work focus in their interviews, 88 per cent, compared to the average of 93 per cent. Compared to 16 per cent of under 35s, 61 per cent of 50+ said they do not want to work again. Over 50s also more likely to have health problems – 62 per cent, compared to 17 per cent of those aged under 25. Older partners less likely to have a qualification – 36 per cent, compared to 46 per cent of all partners.
Methodology	
Sample framework	All customers in receipt of IB/IS/JSA/SDA/CA invited to a WFIP interview between October 2004 and January 2005. Sample included attendees and non-attendees.
Data sources	
Quantitative	Fieldwork between April and July 2005. 3,786 interviews achieved. Response rate 73 per cent. Twenty-one per cent are over 50 (about 800). Survey provides descriptive data on some characteristics of older workers, but no further breakdown of age.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	None.
Reviewer comments	

Table D.17 Over 50s Outreach

Study reference	RR 401
Report title	Over 50s outreach pilot: Qualitative research
Authors	Jones, G. and Griffiths, R.
Date	2006
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep401.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Qualitative (process) evaluation of pilot provision in five of the seven sites. 32 interviews. Most useful for informing about means for increasing engagement of economically inactive 50+ with Jobcentre Plus services. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Response to poor engagement among 50+ population with Jobcentre Plus. Aimed at economically inactive 50+ to increase use of Jobcentre Plus services, regardless if they were in receipt of benefits or over SPA. The challenge posed to policy makers is how to actively engage with the over 50s to help them to stay in work longer or return to work, particularly from inactive benefits.
Status of programme	Complete.
Years of data	Dec 2005 – Feb 2006.
Elements of provision	Over 50s Outreach Pilot set up as an information, awareness raising and referral mechanism for encouraging the use and take-up of Jobcentre Plus services. Delivered through external organisations with previous experience of engaging with economically inactive people. Pilot delivered by seven areas in England, Scotland and Wales by external providers. Primary aim of evaluation was to identify best practice and lessons learned.
Findings/outcomes	Numbers responding to the pilot and ultimately engaging with Jobcentre Plus lower than anticipated. Concerns that enquiring about work would result in the loss of benefits was cited as a key barrier preventing individuals from engaging with Jobcentre Plus. Those above SPA or not on benefits most likely to engage. But interested more in pensions, benefits or volunteering advice than in work. If over SPA and interested in work, most wanted a 'top-up' job rather than full-time work. Key barriers to Jobcentre Plus engagement: Stigma, personal pride, a fear of the unknown, coupled with out-dated images and perceptions of the types of places jobcentres were. Outreach: Generally, the more targeted the marketing and the more personalised (face-to-face contact) and tailored the outreach service to the specific needs of individual customers, the more effective it was. Least effective methods were deemed to be general leaflet drops and poster campaigns. Themed outreach events and 'one stop' jobs fairs specifically aimed at older people looking for work, training or volunteering opportunities were identified as being particularly effective methods. Outreach that encouraged links with Age Positive employers were deemed to have worked well at engaging the more job ready. Age of adviser: Outreach workers who were more mature adults themselves were generally better able to identify and empathise with older adult customers.

Continued

Table D.17 Continued

Study reference	RR 401
Impact indicators	
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	Low participation rates with Jobcentre Plus after third party referral provides little evidence to support third party intervention in building up engagement among the 50+ economically inactive. Suggest need to address attitudes among inactive first; convince 50+ that work is financially viable. Suggests a targeted market campaign that seeks to get this message across. Alternatively, a means of encouraging target benefit customers to access Jobcentre Plus back-to-work services, may be through a mandatory Work Focused Interview (WFI) which includes a BOC. (Like IB Pathways.)
Methodology	
Sample framework	Purposive sample of five from seven pilot sites.
Data sources	
Qualitative	Thirty-two interviews with pilot delivery staff, Jobcentre Plus staff and older people who followed up referrals to Jobcentre Plus. Two to three interviews with customers were conducted in each of the five evaluation sites, interviews lasted 45 min on average.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	A constraint for the pilot was the timing of its implementation, coinciding with major structural and policy changes within Jobcentre Plus, some of which ran contrary to the main aims and objectives of the pilot. In the period between the announcement of the pilot and its conclusion, many Jobcentre Plus offices had centralised services, staff had reorganised and efforts were refocused around priority groups of benefit customers. In most districts, advisers simply did not have the time to spend with people over state pension age or not in receipt of benefit. Getting the timing of the pilot right and ensuring a good degree of 'fit' with wider policy developments and objectives, therefore appears to have been a key lesson learned.
Reviewer comments	Note that findings on customer behaviour and preferences seem to be based on 12 interviews. Therefore, mainly indicative results.

Table D.18 Pathways to Work

Study reference	RR 527
Report title	Pathways to Work: the experiences of existing customers
Authors	Hales, J. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2008
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep527.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Twenty-nine per cent of existing customers (1,231 clients) and 18 per cent of new customers (1,221) were 55+. Ten pages focus on results by age, primarily presenting cross-tabulations. Dataset potentially useful for secondary analysis. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Pathways to Work Pilot. Mandatory activities included meetings with Jobcentre case managers. Optional services included work subsidies, lump sum payments for work-related costs, as well as training and health services.
Status of programme	Pilot.

Continued

Table D.18 Continued

Study reference	RR 527
Years of data	July-December 2004 and February 2005
Elements of provision	Mandatory meetings with staff plus optional 'Choices' program includes: case management, job search assistance, training, travel costs to interviews, counselling, exercise, nutrition counselling.
Findings/outcomes	Take up of optional services was higher than anticipated (20 per cent took up 'Choices'). Customers thought the program was useful, and controlling for health, participants were slightly more likely to return to work.
Impact indicators	Current activity (paid work, seeking work, training, family care, retired, health disability), job search indicators (whether work applications had been submitted in the past three months), working hours, pay, and self-reported health outcomes
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	None noted.
Specific to older workers	Low uptake among older clients, older people are less likely to be looking for work, less likely to transition to paid work, more likely to feel limited by their health, and less likely to take up optional 'Choices' services. Older people also felt that age discrimination and a preference for part-time hours limited their attractiveness to potential employers.
Methodology	
Sample framework	Sampled clients participating July to December 2004 and long-term existing customers for those beginning claims in October 2001 to April 2004, who also made a claim in February 2005. Ages 18 to 59 years old, who had claimed IB, Disability Living Allowance (DLA), or income support with disability premium and were in one of the seven pilot areas.
Data sources	Face to face surveys with people on IB, DLA, or IS with disability premium.
Quantitative	Sample: 3,507 new customers and 2,207 existing customers. Response rate for new customers: 72 per cent and for existing customers: 75 per cent. Ages 18 to 59 with 2,058 age 50+, representing 36 per cent of the total sample.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	The authors suggest a longer follow-up period.
Reviewer comments	Mainly tabulation and logistic regression analyses, not designed to specifically contrast the 50+ population with the rest of the population. While these analyses were informative, a more sophisticated analysis of the data with a focus on 50+ would be fruitful.

Table D.19 Pathways to Work

Study reference	RR 488
Report title	Evidence on the effect of Pathways to Work on Existing Claimants
Authors	Bewley, H. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2008
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep488.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	There is a separate section analyzing the effects of Pathways on the 50+ population. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	'Pathways' includes six meetings with a case manager (unless the person is severely ill or likely to independently return to work) while 'Choices' offers several optional programs including regular medical consultation to learn to manage a disability, job search programs, government promoted jobs (work trial), counselling, debt advice, lump sum payments for job related costs, and wage supplements.
Status of programme	Pilot
Years of data	October 2001 to February 2005
Elements of provision	Job search, employment support services, health support services.
Findings/outcomes	Entering employment: Those participating earlier had a greater hazard of entering employment. While effects are significant, they are small, at best placing six per cent of recipients in employment. Participants are also slightly more likely to exit incapacity benefit, but effects are only a little over three per cent (for the 18 months later with early intervention case). Oddly they find that new claimants slightly reduce the probability an existing client remains on IB. They also found that the 2004 (2nd) wave of pathways was more effective than the 2003 (1st) wave. Pathways effects are largely the same for men and women, has better employment effects for those with children and for those without mental health problems.
Impact indicators	Employment, benefit receipt, earnings, health.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	

Continued

Table D.19 Continued

Study reference	RR 488
Specific to older workers	Findings suggest that the Pathways program has a much stronger effect for younger participants. Without pathways the likelihood of entering employment does not vary by age, but with pathways older workers are significantly less likely to enter employment. Similarly without pathways older and younger clients are equally likely to stay on IB, but with the intervention, older clients are relatively more likely to stay on.
Methodology	
Sample framework	Survey data used a sampling frame from administrative benefits records.
Data sources	
Quantitative	The survey (n=1808) data was merged with National Benefits Database and the Pathways evaluation database. Random sample of eligible population from admin benefit records including claims of up to two years in duration prior to Pathways' introduction. Data on outcomes was collected through the survey interviews which occurred in August-November 2006. Weights and response rates are not mentioned. Difference in difference and primarily survival curve estimation analysis.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	Only first entry into employment and first exit from IB are considered even though many clients cycle on and off IB. The authors also suggest that as the program's eligibility criteria will vary in expansion areas, it is uncertain whether this analysis will be generalisable to the expanded program.
Reviewer comments	

Table D.20 Pathways to Work

Study reference	RR 478
Report title	Pathways to Work: Qualitative study of In-work support
Authors	Dixon, J and Warrener, M.
Date	2008
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep478.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	15 of 30 clients were 45 or older (uncertain of 50+ population). CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Pathways in Work Support, with optional 'Choices' supports as well as return to work credit, discretionary funds administered by case managers, incentive payments for training.
Status of programme	Pilot
Years of data	Customers: September 2005 and March 2006: providers: April-October 2007.
Elements of provision	Primarily case management, but also support services including incentive payments for education and work, counselling, job training

Continued

Table D.20 Continued

Study reference	RR 478
Findings/outcomes	Those clients facing the greatest barriers to work perceived Pathways to be the most useful. Providers felt that clients needed emotional and social support as well as financial support and help getting physical accommodations in the workplace. They found inexplicable variation across providers in referral practices and knowledge about the programs.
Impact indicators	Clients' perceptions of Jobcentre efficacy, chance of remaining in employment, the perceived utility of referrals and other support. Cooperation between providers, providers' opinions about funding streams, provided services, and perceptions of interaction with customers.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	Policy recommendations included better information to providers about the services, and better training referral. There were no suggestions for further research.
Specific to older workers	Older men are uncomfortable accepting support, primarily the emotional support.
Methodology	
Sample framework	In depth interviews with customers and in-work support providers including NDDP providers.
Data sources	
Qualitative	Clients who returned to work (17) and used Pathways IWS and those who returned to work but did not use Pathways IWS (13) from Sept 2005 to March 2006. Providers were interviewed April – October 2007 in four areas (24).
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	None
Reviewer comments	

Table D.21 Pathways to Work

Study reference	RR 456
Report title	Pathways to Work: customer experience and outcomes
Authors	Bailey, R. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2007
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep456.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	18 per cent (631 of 3,507) of sample was 55+. They present some results, such as take-up of choices, by age group. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Pathways plus Choices options.
Status of programme	Pilot.
Years of data	July-December 2004.
Elements of provision	Advice, income supplements, as well as services to overcome barriers to work.

Continued

Table D.21 Continued

Study reference	RR 456
Findings/outcomes	Those individuals with better health and with recent work experience were most likely to find work. The best predictor of returning to work was health while a lack of job offers, needing flexible work arrangements, and lacking confidence were also important. Case management and ‘Choices’ had no impact on employment. Take-up was not associated with those characteristics that predict finding employment. Weak association between customer ratings and work outcomes. There was also low take-up of income supplements.
Impact indicators	The most important factor in employment was health although failure in applications and needing flexible work arrangements were also important. Those who did not participate in case management were the most likely to find work (likely due to selection). Over one-third of those screened out of the intervention could still not find work within 14 months.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	Follow clients for a longer period to test what factors lead to sustained employment. A small group of workers suggest that working might negatively impact their health-this sub group should be further explored.
Specific to older workers	Older people were less likely to find work, were more likely to attend only one case management session, were less likely to take up optional services, less likely to use job search facilities, less likely to look for work, generally considered themselves effectively retired, and were more likely to see their health deteriorate over the period.
Methodology	
Sample framework	Sample frame is the DWPs pathways evaluation database, taking a random sample of those who had taken up the choices program. First a random sample was used and then a matched sample of non ‘Choices’ customers were added.
Data sources	
Quantitative	Random sample of Pathways customers who had taken up one of the Choices programs. The sample included clients from all seven pilot Pathways programs who had made claims from July to December 2004 and were new or repeat clients claiming IB, DLA, or IS with a disability premium and were 18 to 59. The response rate was 52 per cent or 3,507 interviews. 31 per cent (351) were 50+.
Limitations of the study/ dataset as stated by the authors	Too short of a time period.
Reviewer comments	

Table D.22 Pathways to Work

Study reference	RR 435
Report title	The Impact of Pathways to Work
Authors	Bewley, H. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2007
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep435.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Page 66-71 focuses on the impact of pathways by age. Used both survey and admin data. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Studies the effects of Pathways on IB recipients.
Status of programme	Pilot.
Years of data	Inquiries beginning 2003 to 2004, with interviews extending through June 2006.
Elements of provision	Advisory, financial, counselling.
Findings/outcomes	Pathways increases the probability of being employed 7.4 percentage points 18 months after pathways, there is no statistically significant effect on earnings or on IB receipt. It also did not reduce the incidence of a health condition, but did discourage participants from stating that their disability limited their day to day activities a great deal.
Impact indicators	Outcomes include employment, earnings, IB receipt, and self-reported health status.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	
Specific to older workers	Those under 50 had stronger employment effects as well as stronger positive effects on their self reported health. There were no effects for those over 50.
Methodology	
Sample framework	UK, sampling based on the business information services database which included even those just calling to inquire about IB as well as the Jobcentre Plus Pathfinder Database.
Data sources	
Quantitative	Survey data as well as admin data 2003-2006, with a response rate of 27 per cent, or 5,784. (43 per cent were lost in the first wave, the authors report that 'most' of this was due to incorrect address information.) Results by age were reported using administrative data with 1,607 individuals over 50 and 38,730 under. Presumably the survey data did not have enough 50+ observations to do the subgroup analysis with this richer data.

Table D.23 Pathways to Work

Study reference	RR 354
Report title	Early quantitative evidence on the impact of the Pathways to Work pilots
Authors	Adam, S. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2006
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep354.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	p. 51 has a section on evaluation by age. CONTINUE
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Pathways pilot intervention including basic case management, Choices, and income supplements.
Status of programme	Pilot
Years of data	October 2003 to March 2005
Elements of provision	Case management, support services, cash incentives.
Findings/outcomes	10.5 months after an initial inquiry into IB, the intervention increased employment in a given week by 9.4 percentage points and the percentage who worked at all in the interim by 9.3 percentage points.
Impact indicators	Distinguish relative influence of identified factors and inter-relationship, if possible.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	Future research should clarify which components of the Pathways program is responsible for the impact, should follow clients for a longer period. It was also unclear whether this analysis would be generalizable to the entire country. Many of the listed gaps were highlighting future studies to be done under the same grant.
Specific to older workers	Unlike other studies, this one finds that the programme has better effects on employment and IB benefit receipt for clients over age 45. In particular table 5.1 would suggest that the strongest effects are for men over age 45. The program seemed to positively influence whether the 45+ male clients were in paid work last week, since the last interview, their monthly earnings, whether they were receiving IB, and on their health.
Methodology	
Sample framework	Those who made an enquiry into making a claim.
Data sources	
Quantitative	Telephone interviews with those who had made an enquiry at their local job centre about incapacity benefits, from 4 groups- those pre and post pilot program in the program areas and pre and post program in the non-program areas (allowing sufficient time and space variability to assess impacts). The study is from September 2003 to March 2005. There were a total of 4,805 subjects. The mean age was 43.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	Because this evaluation is of early entrants into the program, future cohorts might have better outcomes/ face less bureaucratic difficulties. This study also only followed individuals for one year, in particular through the period in which they were eligible for the employment subsidy. The study can also not tease apart which elements of the Pathways program were successful. They also suggest some future studies that will be run under the same grant such as a cost benefit analysis and a measure of spill over effects.
Reviewer comments	It is unclear why this early report should have found stronger effects for older clients while subsequent studies found weaker effects. This paper used primarily difference in difference and matching, while most of the papers used regression-so perhaps the positive effect is due to methodology? This study is also focused on very early entrants into the program and perhaps some aspect of program delivery changed over time.

Table D.24 Pathways to Work

Study reference	RR 345
Report title	Incapacity Benefit Reforms Pilot: Findings from the second cohort in a longitudinal panel of clients
Authors	Corden A. and Nice, K.
Date	2006
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep345.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	A small quantitative study, there were 25 subjects that were 50+. CONTINUE
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Pathways Pilot (mandatory case management with accompanying supports under choices, and an income supplement.)
Status of programme	Pilot
Years of data	2003-2006
Elements of provision	Advice, financial support, counselling.
Findings/outcomes	Changes in attitudes about work, directions of job search, clients' opinions about the offered services, expectations of employment, and those services clients believed they need to return to work.
Impact indicators	The indicators were primarily participants' opinions about the Pathways services.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	
Specific to older workers	Older men found it hard to consider switching occupations or trades. Older people were less likely to need to return to work as they had income through spouses, savings, and had less debts and expenses like mortgages. Older clients were also likely to resent the work-related questions at the mandatory case management meeting, as most had worked a lifetime, were ill, and felt that they were truly unable to work and entitled to benefits. Older clients also resented mandatory meetings to discuss work. Older clients were also likely to think it would be hard to retrain and even if they did, that employers would not be interested in hiring them. Older clients were also subject to high attrition rates. Those who did not expect to work ever again were primarily 50+ recipients with chronic health conditions.
Methodology	
Sample framework	Participants in 7 pilot sites for Pathways.
Data sources	
Qualitative	53 individuals (18 per cent response rate) from December 2004 to July 2005 with 25 participants 50+.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	Some participants dropped out during the interview stage. Some of the outcome measures were associated with response and attrition, such as employment.
Reviewer comments	

Table D.25 Permitted Work

Study reference	RR 268
Report title	Final outcomes from the Permitted Work Rules
Authors	Dewson, S. <i>et al.</i>
Date	2005
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep268.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Survey sample is skewed towards older workers; half over 45 (grouped as 46-55 and over 55). No differences found between age groups in outcomes. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Findings from a three year evaluation of the Permitted Work Rules (PWR), introduced to replace Therapeutic Work (TW), examining the characteristics, experiences and behaviour of those who make use of the PWR, focusing on PWHL (PW higher limit) and SPW (Supported Permitted Work) customers. The report presents findings from the third wave of the survey with PWR participants and focuses on long-term outcomes.
Status of programme	PWR ongoing from 2002.
Years of data	Wave 1 – 2003 Wave 2 – 2004 Wave 3 – 2005. This report concentrates on findings from wave 3.
Elements of provision	The following provision was introduced for recipients of IB and SDA. Indefinite periods of work for those doing SPW. Allows work up to 26 weeks for those on PWHL, which can be extended for a further 26 weeks (16 hours or more). A subsequent period of 52 weeks allowed, after a gap of 52 weeks following the first PWHL, which is called PWHL Subsequent. No GP support for therapeutic content is required. PW Lower Limit allows people to work for any number of hours, without any time limit, for earnings of no more than £20 per week. IS recipients are entitled to participate in permitted work, but their benefit would be reduced for pound for pound for earnings above the £20 disregard.
Findings/outcomes	About a quarter of PWR participants managed to make and sustain a move into paid employment. Many more tried to work under PWR, but had to stop for various reasons, some with plans to try again in the future. Customers who had been on benefits for shorter periods were most likely to have moved into independent employment and off benefits. Having a partner who is in employment and not being single also seemed to be positively related to probabilities of being in employment.
Impact indicators	Employment and benefits status at final survey.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	More work is required to understand the barriers facing people who are on incapacity benefits and who are single (or who have dependent partners) to understand more fully the interaction between benefits and earnings.
Specific to older workers	No age related differences were found, but the sample included large numbers of over 50s and may allow analysis for smaller age brackets.

Continued

Table D.25 Continued

Study reference	RR 268
Methodology	
Sample framework	The original sample for Wave 1 drawn from a database of IB, IS, IS with Disability Premium, SDA recipients who were or had been at some point in 2002 doing TW, PWHL or SPW. Sampling frame for wave 3 survey consisted of respondents of the Wave two survey who agreed to be re-contacted.
Data sources	
Quantitative	The first survey (Wave One) was undertaken between January and March 2003, just before the one year transitional arrangements came to an end for TW customers. A total of 1,435 customers were interviewed at this time. The second survey (Wave Two) went back to these respondents in March and April 2004, at which time 929 interviews took place. The third wave of research followed-up 676 of these customers and was carried out between January and February 2005. Response rate 78 per cent. Nearly 60 per cent over 45 years old (36 per cent aged 46-55, 23 per cent aged 56+).
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	What the research has failed to do is determine in any robust way, any positive effect of Jobcentre Plus intervention. Very few customers reported they had been in contact with local offices about working or the PWR, although many more said they would like this sort of help.
Reviewer comments	

Table D.26 Skills Coaching and Skills Passports

Study reference	RR 391
Report title	Evaluation of Skills Coaching trials and Skills Passports – A synthesis of qualitative and quantitative evidence
Authors	Hasluck, C <i>et al.</i>
Date	2006
Sourced from	http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2005-2006/rrep391.pdf
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Overall, 17 per cent of participants were aged 50+. Participation and outcome patterns vary by age. CONTINUE
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	This evaluation is a synthesis of three earlier reports (two qualitative, one quant) into the first year of the Skills Coaching initiative. It seeks to provide a comprehensive assessment of the implementation, delivery and impact of the programme.
Status of programme	Evaluation of the pilot launched in 2005, the first year of the Skills Coaching initiative. It was extended for another year and plans were made to expand coverage to include low skilled women returning to work after a break.

Continued

Table D.26 Continued

Study reference	RR 391
Years of data	2005-2006
Elements of provision	Entry interview, diagnostic assessment of employability, developing a Skills Development Plan, appropriate provision arranged by Skills Coach and support post participation. Record learning and achievements in Skills Passport.
Findings/outcomes	Overall, all participants and advisers satisfied with the programme. Advisers appreciate that they can offer Skills Coaching to customers where all other options have been exhausted. Customers unhappy, sometimes, with lack of local provision to meet the needs identified by the Skills Coach and lack of jobs following programme participation. About 17 per cent recorded an 'outcome' and around a third of these outcomes were employment related.
Impact indicators	Qualitative: Soft outcomes. Increased confidence, improvement to skills and help develop new perspectives on job search and personal development. Individually tailored support. Quantitative: Education, qualifications, employment outcomes measured, but good records were not kept.
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	Participants entering Skills Coaching are facing more than just skills barriers to employment, require more intensive support and hence less likely to achieve positive outcomes. For many, however, the programme boosted confidence and raised aspirations.
Specific to older workers	Those aged 50+ were more likely to exit the programme early and less likely to achieve a work-related outcome, though any entry to employment by this age group was more likely to be part time. Older people were very unlikely to achieve an education related outcome.
Methodology	
Sample framework	Participants of the Skills Coaching trials in seven areas, in the first year of the pilot. Individuals eligible to participate are adults (aged 20 and over) claiming JSA or IAB, principally IS or IB.
Data sources	LMS and LSC system records and qualitative interviews
Quantitative	The Jobcentre Plus Labour Market System (LMS) and the LSC Management Information (MI) system. 4,580 participants entered the programme. Around 600 were reported to have achieved an outcome. 20 per cent were aged 45-55, less than seven per cent of all participants were aged 55 or over. Overall, 17 per cent are over 50. Not indicated for secondary data analysis because of poor recording of participation and outcomes as highlighted by authors.
Qualitative	A total of 138 qualitative interviews were conducted with Skills Coaching customers, Jobcentre Plus Advisers, Skills Coaches, nextstep Advisers and training providers on two occasions (at the six month and ten month points of the trials). 56 interviews with customers at first wave (36 re-interviewed) and 33 new customers interviewed at wave 2. 56 interviews with customers at first wave (36 re-interviewed) and 33 new customers interviewed at wave 2.
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	Recording of data on referrals and outcomes on LMS and MI systems need to be improved. Participation in reality diverged from the original design and recruitment was a lot lower than planned.
Reviewer comments	

Table D.27 Work Based Learning for Adults

Study reference	WARR 187
Report title	Work-based learning for adults: an evaluation of labour market effects
Authors	Anderson, T., <i>et al.</i>
Date	2004
Sourced from	DWP Leeds electronic archive
Relevance screening	
50+ group coverage	Quasi-experimental impact analysis. Separate analysis for participants age 50 and over. CONTINUE.
Study content	
Subject/Intervention	Voluntary programme of work-related training for jobseekers (minimum six month JSA) aged 25 and over and living in England.
Status of programme	Re-engineered
Years of data	2002-03
Elements of provision	Voluntary participation in any of four types of training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short job-focused training (SJFT) - up to six weeks - Longer occupational training (LOT) - about 14 weeks - Basic Employability Training (BET) - about 26 weeks - Self employment provision (SEP) - this was not included in the evaluation due to low numbers
Findings/outcomes	Positive labour market effects were found for SJFT and LOT. SJFT participation raised the chances of employment by between five-seven per cent. However, this gain was short lived and the same rate of employment was found in the comparison group ten months later. LOT increased probability of work entry by about seven percentage points. There were no effects on earnings. BET had no effect on employment or earnings. All training options were associated with improvements in basic skills and IT skills.
Impact indicators	
Recommendations, evidence gaps identified by authors	WBLA increased the probability of work (any hours) by 17-18 per cent among the age 50+ participants. This finding applied to both SJFT and LOT options. Details on the exact nature of the training activities undertaken were not provided. SJFT was also identified to accelerate entry into work for those 50 and over whereas this did not apply to participants under age 50. Gains in employment for the SJFT group persisted for participants age 50 and over, counter to general trend of a dissipated effect.
Methodology	
Sample framework	JSA claimants who took up one of the WBLA training options
Data sources	
Quantitative	Quasi-experimental matching of sample surveys on participants and non-participants (n=2,233). Propensity score matching was used to identify a suitable sample of non-participants from administrative records on non-participant, eligible, JSA claimants. Approximately 14-21 per cent age 50+ (depending on training option).
Indicate if potential data for secondary analysis*	NO
Limitations of the study/dataset as stated by the authors	
Reviewer comments	

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ND 25 Plus

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RR388 Atkinson, J., Casebourne, J., Davis, S., Dewson, S., Gifford, J. and Tuohy, S. (2006). *Evaluation of the Intensive Activity Period 50plus Pilots*, DWP Research Report no. 388, Leeds: CDS.

RR366 Page, J., Breen, E. and Middlemas, J. (2006). *Gateway to Work New Deal 25 Plus pilots evaluation*, DWP Research Report no. 366, Leeds: CDS.

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- RR401 Jones, G. and Griffiths, R. (2006). *Over 50s outreach pilot: Qualitative research*, DWP Research Report no. 401, Leeds: CDS.

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