

CRSP CONFERENCE – FEEDBACK FROM THE TRANSITIONS THROUGH THE LIFE-COURSE SESSION, ELSPETH POUND, CHAIR.

Four papers were presented at this group:

- An evaluation of the effectiveness of Return to Work Credit and Disabled Person's Tax Credit in boosting the earnings of people with health problems.
- An exploration of the intergenerational transmission of inequalities using local area studies.
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of Care to Learn in encouraging and supporting young parents to return to education.
- A systematic literature review of UK poverty dynamics research.

The presentations were diverse. The vulnerable groups discussed included people with health problems, teenage mothers, and young people living in deprived areas. The life-course transitions discussed included moving from unemployment to employment or education, young adulthood to parenthood, and childhood to adulthood. The initiatives examined were both national and local. However, all the presentations looked from different perspectives at policy initiatives to support people moving out of poverty.

The presentations illustrated clearly the diverse and complex nature of poverty. It was agreed that policy needs to respond to both the dynamic nature of poverty whereby individuals' experiences of poverty fluctuate over time, and tackle the static nature of poverty whereby poverty persists over many generations. In this sense, strategies to deal with poverty need to become more sophisticated and responsive to the dynamic nature of poverty itself.

The delivery of programmes was also discussed and it was agreed that delivery mechanisms need to become simpler. A key criticism of recent programmes has been the complex nature of delivery and the potential to make inaccessible a programme that is designed for vulnerable people. In particular, the requirement to establish expensive and complicated systems in order to deliver programmes was criticised. It was acknowledged that a potential trade-off in simpler delivery design might be that more people are helped but to a lesser degree.

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