

## Tackling Multiple Disadvantage – key lessons for delivery

The Tackling Multiple Disadvantage (TMD) project was designed to support people facing homelessness who were also experiencing multiple disadvantage to pursue their employment goals. TMD was a Building Better Opportunities (BBO) project delivered between April 2017 and March 2020. TMD provided personalised coaching support and integrated training, volunteering, housing support, financial assistance and health-based interventions. The project supported 448 people and achieved an employment outcome rate of 27 per cent, which is substantially higher than recent comparable projects. [Learning and Work Institute](#) carried out a full evaluation of the service. This document draws on lessons from TMD to set out considerations for the delivery of employment support for people facing homelessness with multiple and complex needs.

- **Trusted organisations are required to engage homeless people experiencing multiple disadvantage into support:** Both TMD delivery organisations and referral partners effectively engaged participants because they understood their needs and were trusted services. Future projects should map local organisations and engage these prior to project delivery to secure their buy-in. Support services which are not set up to provide employment support could act as a pre-service, with TMD-like support as a ‘next step’ for those who feel ready to look for work.
- **Project messaging should promote a clear ‘point of difference’:** TMD offered employment support which was significantly different to ‘single-issue’ mainstream provision. There was a range of non-employment support offered which was not time limited, including access to a coach, social activities, housing support, and skills provision provided broad appeal. Future projects should build and promote a project identity which clearly communicates differences from other services to participants and referral organisations.
- **Caseloads must be manageable to provide effective support:** Projects supporting individuals with multiple and complex needs should carefully profile the expected caseload. Caseload management could be supported by effective triage processes and a wide service offer, including appropriate group-based support such as social activities.
- **Coaches time should be focussed on support delivery:** Positive relationships and trust between TMD coaches and participants underpinned improvements to confidence, self-belief and motivation. Projects with high administration requirements should employ staff with administrative expertise to free up coaches’ time to focus on supporting participants, particularly at points of transition into employment or new housing.
- **Employer engagement should be a key component of support:** Improved employer engagement would improve the suitability of employment opportunities, and the sustainability of employment for homeless people with multiple, complex needs.
- **There should be a focus on in-work support to ensure participants sustain employment:** Transition into employment can be fraught and potentially destabilising. Future models of delivery should provide continued in-work support. This should focus on work sustainment and progression, as well as securing continued improvements in areas such as housing, skills, and health.