

Building and Trust in Employment Services

A pilot study to unlock person-centred case management

Appendix

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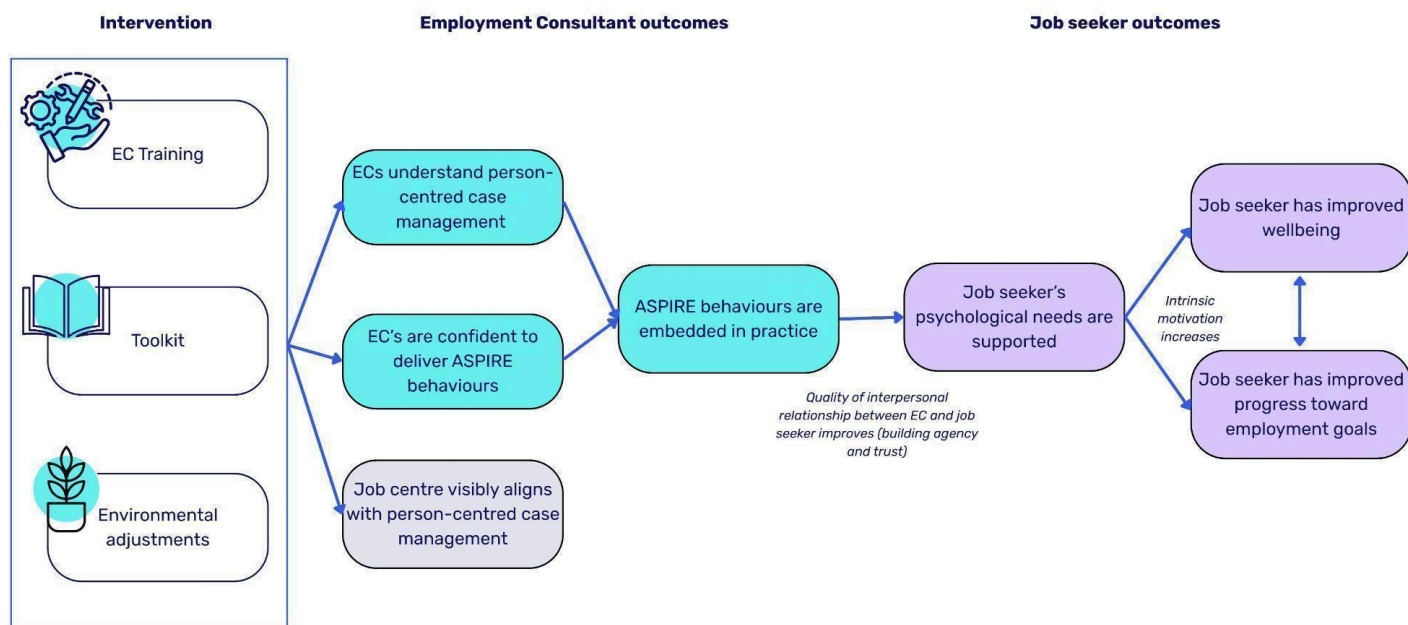
Intervention - Treatment

We delivered training to Provider A and Provider B separately. Because Provider B had only one employment consultant in the treatment group, and the training involves a number of group activities designed to encourage peer learning, we invited 2 employment consultants from a non-participating Provider B job centre to join in the training. These extra employment consultants did not participate in any data collection activities.

The initial training session ran in-person on separate days for 7 hours. The training was co-facilitated by a representative from the BIT project team with expertise in behaviour change and workshop delivery, alongside an external independent employment consultant with support from two members of the research team. Environmental changes were made on the same day to the sites.

Toolkits were handed out in hardcopy to each employment consultant at the beginning of the initial training session. The refresher training session ran two months later for 2 hours and was delivered online through Microsoft Teams for one provider and in-person on-site for the other (due to their limited IT capacity). The refresher training used the same facilitators and participants were asked to bring their toolkits.

Theory of change



Evaluation

Sample detail

Baseline and historical job centre characteristics

	Characteristic of Workforce Australia services caseload		Treatment	Control
Provider A	Baseline	<i>Total caseload size at 17/11/25</i>	946	939
		<i>Number of employment consultants at 17/11/25</i>	8	8
		<i>Total caseload size / Number of employment consultants at 17/11/25</i>	118.25	117.375
		<i>% of caseload who commenced a placement in casual, part time, or full time employment between 17/11/25 and 23/11/25</i>	1.16%	0.64%
		<i>% of caseload who exited employment services between 17/11/25 and 23/11/25 due to finding employment</i>	0.32%	0.53%
	Historical	<i>Total placements in casual, part time, or full time employment in 2025 to date</i>	300-325	250-275
		<i>Total 4-week employment outcomes in 2025 to date</i>	175-200	150-175
Provider B	Baseline	<i>Total caseload size at 17/11/25</i>	102	125
		<i>Number of employment consultants at 17/11/25</i>	1	2
		<i>Total caseload size / Number of employment consultants at 17/11/25</i>	102	62.5
		<i>% of caseload who commenced a placement in casual, part time, or full time employment between 17/11/25 and 23/11/25</i>	0%	1.60%
		<i>% of caseload who exited employment services between 17/11/25 and 23/11/25 due to finding employment</i>	0.98%	0%
	Historical	<i>Average monthly % (and standard deviation) of caseload who achieved a 4-week employment outcome between July 2024 and July 2025</i>	3.15% (0.87%)	2.90% (0.76%)
		<i>Average monthly % (and standard deviation) of caseload who achieved a 12-week employment outcome between July 2024 and July 2025</i>	3.59% (2.05%)	3.12% (1.53%)
		<i>Average monthly % (and standard deviation) of caseload who achieved a 26-week employment outcome between July 2024 and July 2025</i>	2.81% (1.52%)	2.28% (1.18%)

All eligible employment consultants in the treatment group attended both the initial and refresher ASPIRE training sessions as part of routine professional development. Recruitment into research activities followed an opt-in informed consent process, with the System 2 research team visiting each job centre to explain the study and distribute invitations for three short online surveys. Employment consultants in the treatment group were also invited to participate in a 1-hour interview or focus group as well as field observations through separate consent processes.

To complement frontline perspectives, interviews were also conducted with three senior managers from participating providers to capture broader organisational and strategic insights into person-centred practice and implementation within employment services.

All employment consultants aged 18+ who worked with job seekers in Workforce Australia Services at one of the four participating job centres were eligible to participate in our pilot. For employment consultants, participation in the pilot involved undertaking training (treatment group only), completing three 5-minute surveys delivered online via SmartSurvey, and partaking in a 1-hour one-on-one interview conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams (treatment group only). For Provider A, employment consultants indicated they preferred to be consulted via an in-person focus group rather than an interview, which we accommodated.

All eligible employment consultants in the treatment group were automatically enrolled in our training as part of their routine professional development. No employment consultants were absent during the initial or refresher training sessions.

For recruitment into data collection activities, we followed an opt-in informed consent process. First, a member of the System 2 research team visited each participating job centre to meet with eligible employment consultants and outline what the research will involve and what to expect, including highlighting the consent process. Next, a member of the System 2 research team emailed each eligible employment consultant a survey link in Weeks 0 (Survey 1), 11 (Survey 2), and 20 (Survey 3) of the pilot. At the beginning of each survey, employment consultants had the opportunity to read a Participant Information Sheet and were asked to indicate their consent to continue to the survey. Finally, for the treatment group only, a member of the System 2 research team emailed employment consultants a link to a form with Participant Information to consent to take part in interviews and observations.

To supplement the employment consultant interviews/focus groups, which provided insights from the frontline, we conducted interviews with three senior managers from participating providers to capture more strategic insights.

Final sample sizes for employment consultants

Of the nine employment consultants in the treatment group, eight completed at least one survey and one completed all three surveys. Of the 10 employment consultants in the control group, seven completed at least one survey and three completed all three surveys. Eight of the nine employment consultants in the treatment group participated in an interview or focus group.

	Treatment	Control
Surveys		
Survey 1	6/9	6/10
Survey 2	6/9	4/10
Survey 3	5/9	4/10
At least one survey	8/9	7/10
At least two surveys	8/9	4/10
All three surveys	1/9	3/10
Survey 1 only	0/9	2/10
Survey 2 only	0/9	1/10
Survey 3 only	0/9	0/10
Survey 1 & 2 only	3/9	0/10
Survey 1 & 3 only	2/9	1/10
Survey 2 & 3 only	2/9	0/10
Focus group (Provider A) or interview (Provider B)		
-	8/9	NA

Employment consultant demographics

Variable	Control	Treatment
N	7	8
Age, M (SD)	38.9 (11.1)	45.0 (11.1)
Female, n (%)	7 (100.0)	5 (62.5)
Caseload, M (SD)	81.7 (38.6)	99.0 (14.3)

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation; n = number of participants; % = percentage of group total. Caseload refers to the number of active clients on each consultant's books at the time of the survey.

Final sample sizes for job seekers

	Treatment	Control
Surveys		
Survey 1	6 <small>(out of 15 job seekers who opted-in to the pilot, from a pool of ~1,048 eligible job seekers across Provider A and B)</small>	27 <small>(out of 47 job seekers who opted-in to the pilot, from a pool of ~1,064 eligible job seekers across Provider A and B)</small>
Survey 2	9 <small>(out of 23 job seekers who opted-in to the pilot, from a pool of ~1,065 eligible job seekers across Provider A and B)</small>	24 <small>(out of 57 job seekers who opted-in to the pilot, from a pool of ~1,108 eligible job seekers across Provider A and B)</small>
Survey 3	7 <small>(out of 24 job seekers who opted-in to the pilot, from a pool of ~1,112 eligible job seekers across Provider A and B)</small>	24 <small>(out of 57 job seekers who opted-in to the pilot, from a pool of ~1,122 eligible job seekers across Provider A and B)</small>
At least one survey	12	34
At least two surveys	7	23
All three surveys	3	18
Survey 1 only	1	6
Survey 2 only	3	2

Survey 3 only	1	3
Survey 1 & 2 only	1	2
Survey 1 & 3 only	1	1
Survey 2 & 3 only	2	2
Interviews		
-	5	3

Participation involved completing up to three short online surveys and a 1-hour virtual interview. Recruitment used a rolling opt-in process designed to support informed and voluntary participation. Job seekers were invited to express interest through emails distributed by job centres and posters displayed onsite with QR codes linking to a digital sign-up form. The System 2 research team then distributed survey invitations at multiple timepoints throughout the pilot and later invited eligible participants to interviews. Participants received GiftPay vouchers to acknowledge their time and contribution.

Across the five-month trial period, approximately 2,200 job seekers were eligible to participate, with 85 opting into the research component involving surveys and interviews. While all eligible job seekers were included in the administrative data analysis, participation in surveys and interviews was lower and uneven across sites, with one control site generating substantially higher sign-up rates than the others. This resulted in a larger control group than treatment group and introduced the possibility of selection bias. A breakdown of participation rates, survey completion, interviews, and participant demographics is provided in the Appendix.

All job seekers aged 18+ enrolled in Workforce Australia Services at one of the four participating job centres were eligible to participate in our pilot. For job seekers, participation in the pilot involved completing three 5-minute surveys delivered online via SmartSurvey and partaking in a 1-hour one-on-one interview conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams.

For recruitment into surveys and interviews, we used a rolling recruitment method and followed an opt-in informed consent process. First, a representative from each job centre emailed an expression of interest form to all job seekers on the site's Workforce Australia Services caseload, through which eligible job seekers could sign up to receive survey and interview invitations from the System 2 research team. These representatives also hung a poster in their job centres, where job seekers could scan a QR code to access the expression of interest form. The System 2 research team then emailed survey links in Weeks 0 (Survey 1), 11 (Survey 2), and 20 (Survey 3) of the pilot to all those job seekers who completed the expression of interest form. Before Survey 2, the expression of interest form was re-sent by a representative from each job centre to prompt any new job seekers to sign up. At the beginning of each survey, job seekers had the opportunity to read a Participant Information Sheet and were asked to indicate their consent to continue to the survey. Finally, a member of the System 2 research team emailed interview invitations in Week 17 of the pilot to all job seekers in the treatment group and a select group of job seekers in the control group who had previously completed at least one survey. Job

seekers received a \$25 GiftPay voucher for each survey completed and a further \$100 GiftPay voucher for completing an interview.

Across the 5-month trial period, approximately 2,200 job seekers were eligible to participate in the pilot, of which, 85 signed up to participate in surveys and interviews.¹ All 2,200 job seekers were featured in our administrative caseload data analysis, regardless of whether they signed up for surveys and interviews.

Of the 85 job seekers who signed up for surveys and interviews, 62 signed up before Survey 1, 18 signed up after Survey 1 but before Survey 2, 1 signed up after Survey 2 but before Survey 3, and 4 signed up after Survey 3 (leaving them eligible for interviews only). One job centre in the control group had higher sign-up rates than the other three job centres, leading the control group (n = 57) to be double the size of the treatment group (n = 24, plus an additional 4 who signed up exclusively for interviews) and pointing to a potential selection bias.

Job seeker demographics

Variable	Control	Treatment
N	29	9
Age, M (SD)	36.4 (13.1)	37.7 (8.7)
Female, n (%)	16 (55.2)	4 (44.4)
English main language, n (%)	27 (93.1)	9 (100.0)
Born in Australia, n (%)	23 (79.3)	8 (88.9)
Children/dependents, n (%)	6 (20.7)	2 (22.2)

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation; n = number of participants; % = percentage of group total.

¹ 2,200 is approximate only, as the number of job seekers on the caseloads of participating job centres is in constant flux.

Measures

Job seeker semi-structured interview guide

Scene setting (3min)

To start, it'd be great to hear a bit about your background:

- How long have you been going to [JOB CENTRE NAME]?
- How long have you been working with your current employment consultant?
- What kind of work or future are you hoping for at the moment?

Person-centred support (5min)

- What does “*person-centred*” support in employment services mean to you?

ASPIRE (35min) [each behaviour]

How important is it to you to get this support from your employment consultant?

- Why?
- How well does your employment consultant provide this support?
 - What makes you say that?
- Could you share an example of where your employment consultant did this [well/poorly]?
 - What made this un/helpful for you?
- Has your employment consultant gotten any better at providing this support over time? If so...
 - What did they change?
 - When did you notice the change?

Self-endorsed goals (5min)

For this section, I want you to think about goals that matter to you in any of these areas:

- Is there anything [your employment consultant has done / you wish your employment consultant had done] to help you reach your goals?
- To what extent do you feel you've made progress on goals that matter to you in the past six months?

Environmental changes (5min) – *Treatment group only*

Did you notice any changes inside the office where you have your appointments in the past 6 months?

- What did you notice? [*If they didn't notice, prompt them: Snacks; desk dividers; comfortable chairs / sofa; plants; community wall; ASPIRE posters*]
- How did these changes make you feel?
- Is there anything you would add or change?

Employment consultant semi-structured interview guide

Scene setting (5min)

To help set the scene, it'd be great if you could remind me a bit about your background:

- Can you tell me about your background in employment services?
- How long have you been working as an employment consultant at [JOB CENTRE NAME]?
- Roughly how many job seekers do you currently have on your caseload?
- Before this study, had you ever done training in person-centred case management?

Person-centred support (5min)

- What does “person-centred” support in employment services mean to you?

The government describes “person centred” support as: ‘providing tailored support, real pathways to work, and choice and control for the job seeker, with a plan based on their goals and circumstances rather than a standard compliance list.’ [paste it in the chat for reference]

- What do you think of that description?
- Have you ever seen an operationalised model of good “person-centred” practice?

Implementation of ASPIRE (30min)

You might remember that in the training and toolkit we gave you, we provided examples of what person-centred support might look like in practice – the ASPIRE behaviours [*share slide summarising ASPIRE*]. I’d love to ask you a few questions about these ASPIRE behaviours:

- How well do you think ASPIRE captures best practice “person-centred support”?
 - Are there any parts you disagree with?
 - Is anything missing?
- Since receiving our training and toolkit, to what extent do you feel you’ve been able to implement ASPIRE with your job seekers?

[If they struggled to put it into practice, probe with]:

- **What were some of the things that got in the way?** [*They will likely anchor on either their own capabilities, job seeker motivations, or systemic factors. If they don’t touch on systemic factors, probe on this*].
- **What would you need to make it easier for you to deliver person-centred support?** [*Prompt: This can be as an individual, from your managers, policy etc .. ask for their ideas on solutions!*]

[If they successfully put it into practice, probe with]:

- What were some of the things that allowed you to do this well? [*They will likely anchor on either their own capabilities, job seeker motivations, or systemic factors. If they don’t touch on systemic factors, probe on this*].
- What would you need to make it even easier for you to deliver person-centred support? [*Prompt: This can be as an individual, from your managers, policy etc .. ask for their ideas on solutions!*]
- Can you walk me through a recent example of when you put ASPIRE into practice?

- How did the job seeker respond *during* appointments while you were doing this?
- Did you notice any wider impacts on the job seeker's progress *outside* appointments?
- Did implementing ASPIRE ever 'backfire'? For example:
 - Did it create extra work for you?
 - Did it extend appointments or take up time during appointments that you wanted to spend on other things?
 - Did it lead to any negative responses from job seekers?
- After our study is over, how likely are you to continue implementing ASPIRE?

Training, toolkit, and environmental changes (12min)

How well did the *training* prepare you to implement person-centred case management with your job seekers?

- What did you find most useful?
- How could we improve it?

How well did the *toolkit* support you to implement person-centred case management with your job seekers?

- Did you use it? How? What parts?
- How could we improve it?

Since the training, have you had any meetings or discussions with your peers to support your caseload e.g. challenges, wins?

- Why/Why not?

How well did the *environmental changes* enhance your interactions with job seekers?

- What impacts did you notice?
- Should we change anything else?
- Do you think we should roll out our training, toolkit, and environmental adjustments sector wide

Senior manager semi-structured interview guide

Scene setting (5min)

To help set the scene, it'd be great if you could remind me a bit about your background:

- Can you tell me about your background in employment services?
- How long have you been working as a manager at [JOB CENTRE NAME]?
- Have you ever done training in person-centred case management?

Person-centred support (30min)

- What does “*person-centred*” support in employment services mean to you?

The government describes “person centred” support as: *‘providing tailored support, real pathways to work, and choice and control for the job seeker, with a plan based on their goals and circumstances rather than a standard compliance list.’* [paste it in the chat for reference]:

- What do you think of that description?

As you know, we gave training and a toolkit to employment consultants with examples of what person-centred support might look like in practice – the ASPIRE behaviours [share slide summarising ASPIRE]. I'd love to ask you a few questions about these ASPIRE behaviours:

- How well do you think ASPIRE captures best practice “person-centred support”?
 - Are there any parts you disagree with?
 - Is anything missing?
- As an organisation, how do you create the conditions for your staff to work in these person-centred ways?
 - How is good practice recognised or rewarded for employment consultants?

How easy or hard is it for you and your staff to deliver ASPIRE under the current Workforce Australia contract?

- Where do you experience the biggest tensions between:
 - monitoring/reporting on job seeker compliance
 - getting job seekers into work
 - delivering quality person-centred support

What would you like to see in the next Workforce Australia contracts to help you and your staff deliver person-centred support?

- How well do you think our training, toolkit, and environmental adjustments helped staff deliver person-centred support in light of these constraints?
- Do you think we should roll out our training, toolkit, and environmental adjustments nationally?
 - Is there anything we should change before rollout?
 - What is likely to get in the way of effective rollout?

Innovation and research (15min)

- To what extent are staff currently given space to reflect on their practice, discuss cases, and try new approaches?
- When it comes to trying new approaches or being involved in research, what risks do you weigh up?
- What drew you to participate in our research?
- What *system* reforms would make participation in research more feasible for your organisation? [*prompt if needed: Funding, reduced caseloads, access to results, recognition / incentives, time allocation, professional development*]
- What parts of this *project's* research processes could we have improved to make participation easier for your organisation?
- What currently stops your organisation from sharing best practice insights and working together on research with other providers?
 - What would make it easier?
- Is there anything you feel that you have learned about taking part in research through participating in this pilot?

What is the one change that would make the biggest difference to your ability to deliver good practice?

Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences?

Job seeker survey

1. Welcome

- You previously expressed interest in taking part in some 5-minute online surveys as part of the 'Building Agency and Trust' research study.
- This survey is the [first/second/third] of the three surveys.
- We will contact you separately about the remaining survey. If you would no longer like to take part, please email [x] so we can take you off our mailing list.
- If you'd like to read more about this survey, please click [here](#). Then, click "Continue to survey" below if you wish. Otherwise, you may close this window.

[page break]

2. Previous surveys

[Surveys 2-3 only] If you've completed previous surveys for us, you'll have answered the questions on the following pages before. Thank you for taking the time to answer them again, so we can see whether and how the experiences of job seekers might be changing.

[page break]

3. Unique ID

[Survey 1] So we can anonymously link your responses in this survey to any follow-up surveys you do for us, please answer these questions / [Surveys 2-3] So we can anonymously link your responses in this survey to any other surveys you've done for us, please answer these questions:

- What letter does your middle name start with? If you do not have a middle name, choose 'X'. If you have more than one middle name, just put the first letter of your first middle name. [forced response]
- What year were you born in?. [drop-down list from 2010 to 1925; forced response]
- How many letters are there in your first name? [drop-down list from 1-20+; [forced response]
- How many siblings do you have? [drop-down list from 0-10+; [forced response]

[page break]

4. Demographics

Before we start, please tell us a little bit about yourself:

- Are you still enrolled in employment services at [job centre name]? [forced response]
- What is your age? [forced response]
- What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Non-binary / gender diverse
 - Prefer not to say
 - Prefer to self-describe: [free text]
- Do you speak English as your main language at home?
 - Yes
 - No
- Were you born in Australia?
 - Yes

- No
- Do you have any children or dependents in your care?
 - Yes
 - No

[page break]

5. Survey questions 1/3

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each statement below. There are no right or wrong answers.

[matrix; 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree; randomised item order]

- In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
- The conditions of my life are excellent.
- I am satisfied with my life.
- So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
- If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

[page break]

6. Survey questions 2/3

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each statement below. There are no right or wrong answers.

[matrix; 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree; randomised item order]

- I feel satisfied with the progress I am making toward finding the kind of work I want.
- I feel motivated to continue working toward my job goals.
- I feel free to conduct job search activities in my own way.
- I feel free to decide for myself how to meet my points target.
- I feel like I can pursue my own job search or training goals.
- I feel confident that I can do well in all activities needed to secure a job.
- I feel capable of doing what needs to be done to get the job I want.
- I feel I can handle any job search or training activities competently.
- I feel supported by my employment consultant.
- I feel understood by my employment consultant.
- I feel that my employment consultant really cares about me.

[page break]

7. Survey questions 3/3

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each statement below. There are no right or wrong answers.

[matrix; 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree; randomise item order; single response only for each item]

- My employment consultant aligns support with what matters to me.
- My employment consultant gives regular, structured guidance.
- My employment consultant provides real choices in how I reach my goals.
- My employment consultant invites me to participate in the service.
- My employment consultant relays the reasons behind their suggestions well.

- My employment consultant expresses understanding and works with me to move forward.

[page break]

8. Demographics

To help us contextualise your responses, please tell us a little bit about your employment and educational background:

- How long have you been receiving support from employment services?
 - Less than 3 months
 - More than 3 months but less than 6 months
 - More than 6 months but less than 1 year
 - More than 1 year but less than 2 years
 - More than 2 years but less than 5 years
 - More than 5 years
- Which of the following best describes your current employment situation?
 - Unemployed and looking for work
 - Unemployed and not currently looking for work
 - Employed part-time
 - Employed in casual or temporary work
 - Other [free text]
- What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - Less than Year 10
 - Year 10 or equivalent
 - Year 12 or equivalent
 - Certificate I–IV
 - Diploma or Advanced Diploma
 - Bachelor degree
 - Postgraduate degree

[page break]

Claim your \$25 GiftPay voucher

Thank you very much for completing this survey! Your feedback will help us understand how employment services are working and how they can be improved.

To claim your \$25 GiftPay voucher, enter your email address (the same email address we sent the survey to) below. Your email will be stored separately from your survey responses, so your answers remain anonymous. Your voucher will arrive by email within 3 business days.

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact the research team at [email].

Employment consultant survey

1. Welcome

- [Job centre name] was selected to take part in the 'Building Agency and Trust' research study.
- This survey is the [first/second/third] of the three surveys.
- We will contact you separately about the remaining survey. If you would no longer like to take part, please email [x] so we can take you off our mailing list.
- If you'd like to read more about this survey, please click here. Then, click "Continue to survey" below if you wish. Otherwise, you may close this window.

[page break]

2. Previous surveys

[Surveys 2-3 only] If you've completed previous surveys for us, you'll have answered the questions on the following pages before. Thank you for taking the time to answer them again, so we can see whether and how the experiences of employment consultants might be changing.

[page break]

3. Unique ID

[Survey 1] So we can anonymously link your responses in this survey to any follow-up surveys you do for us, please answer these questions / [Surveys 2-3] So we can anonymously link your responses in this survey to any other surveys you've done for us, please answer these questions:

- What letter does your middle name start with? If you do not have a middle name, choose 'X'. If you have more than one middle name, just put the first letter of your first middle name. [forced response]
- What year were you born in?. [drop-down list from 2010 to 1925; forced response]
- How many letters are there in your first name? [drop-down list from 1-20+; [forced response]
- How many siblings do you have? [drop-down list from 0-10+; [forced response]

[page break]

4. Demographics

Before we start, please tell us a little bit about yourself:

- How many years in total have you worked as an employment consultant across your career? Count all programs (including but not limited to Workforce Australia Services) and all providers you have worked with.
 - 0-5 months
 - 6-11 months
 - 1-2 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 6-10 years
 - More than 10 years
- Approximately how many job seekers are currently on your caseload?
- What is your age? [forced response]
- What is your gender?
 - Male

- Female
- Non-binary / gender diverse
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self-describe: [free text]

[page break]

5. Survey questions 1/3

Please indicate your level of understanding of person-centred case-management:

- Unfamiliar: I have never heard about it before.
- Aware: I have heard about it before, but don't know anything about it.
- Novice: I have a basic understanding of it, but don't know how to apply it.
- Intermediate: I would feel comfortable applying it to the work I do with job seekers, with minimal supervision.
- Advanced: I would feel comfortable delivering training for other employment consultants on how to apply it in the work they do with job seekers.

[page break]

6. Survey questions 2/3

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each statement below. There are no right or wrong answers.

[matrix; 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree; randomised item order]

- I feel confident in my ability to align support with what matters to all job seekers.
- I feel confident in my ability to provide structured guidance and feedback that's supportive on how the job seeker is progressing toward their goals.
- I feel confident in my ability to provide job seekers' meaningful choices and genuine options.
- I feel confident in my ability to invite job seekers' participation in appointments using a collaborative approach that allows them to share their own ideas.
- I feel confident in my ability to relay the 'why' behind any requests I make and the benefits to the job seeker.
- I feel confident in my ability to express understanding of the job seekers' feelings and experiences as valid and move forward together.

[page break]

7. Survey questions 3/3

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each statement below. There are no right or wrong answers.

[matrix; 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree; randomised item order]

- I feel fairly satisfied with my job.
- Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.
- Each day at work seems like it will never end.
- I find real enjoyment in my work.
- I consider my job to be rather unpleasant.
- [Surveys 2-3 treatment group only] The ASPIRE training I received is helping me have more positive engagements with the job seekers I work with.

- [Surveys 2-3 treatment group only] The ASPIRE toolkit I received is helping me have more positive engagements with the job seekers I work with.

[page break]

Conclusion

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

Your feedback will help us understand how employment services are working and how they can be improved.

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact the research team at [email].

Table: Summary of survey measures

Cohort	Research question	Measure
Job seekers	6a	Need Satisfaction Scale Sykes, C. (2022). Thinking beyond “sticks” in Australian employment services: A self-determination theory perspective. Curtin University.
Job seekers	6b	-I feel satisfied with the progress I am making towards finding the kind of work I want. -I feel motivated to continue working towards my job goals.
Job seekers	6c	Satisfaction with Life Scale Diener, E., Emmons, R.A., Larsen, R.J., & Griffin, S. (1985). Development of the Satisfaction with Life Scale. <i>Journal of Personality Assessment</i> , 49(1), 71-75.
Employment consultants	7a	Please indicate your level of understanding of person-centred case-management: -Unfamiliar: I have never heard about it before. -Aware: I have heard about it before, but don't know anything about it. -Novice: I have a basic understanding of it, but don't know how to apply it. -Intermediate: I would feel comfortable applying it to the work I do with job seekers, with minimal supervision. -Advanced: I would feel comfortable delivering training for other ECs on how to apply it in the work they do with job seekers.
Employment consultants	7b	I feel confident in my ability to....: -[A] Align support with what matters to all job seekers -[S] Provide structured guidance and feedback that's supportive on how the job seeker is progressing towards their goals -[P] Provide job seekers' meaningful choices and genuine options -[I]: Invite job seekers' participation in appointments using a collaborative approach that allows them to share their own ideas -[R]: Relay the 'why' behind any requests I make and the benefits to the the job seeker -[E]: Express understanding of the job seekers' feelings and experiences as valid and move

		forward together
Employment consultants	7c	<p>Short Index of Job Satisfaction Judge, T. A., Bono, J. E., & Locke, E. A. (2000). Personality and job satisfaction: The mediating role of job characteristics. <i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i>, 85(2), 237-249. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.85.2.237</p>

Quantitative impact analysis

Analysis approach:

The following results should be interpreted with caution given the limitations outlined in the following section ([3D: Limitations](#))

All analyses were conducted in R (version 4.5.1). Each outcome was modelled with a linear mixed-effects regression:

outcome ~ treatment + provider × period + baseline_outcome + covariates + random effects

Baseline outcomes were mean-centred. For participants enrolled after the baseline survey was administered, baseline measures could not be collected; these participants were assigned the sample mean (0 after mean-centring) and retained to avoid further loss of observations from an already small sample. Covariates were drawn from the earliest available response, prioritising baseline where possible. For post-baseline covariates with the potential to be influenced by treatment (potential colliders), values were imputed as part of the best-worst case sensitivity analysis described below.

With only four centres, the centre-level variance was unlikely to be reliably estimable, and we found every model returned a singular fit at the centre level. The centre random intercept was therefore dropped from all models, retaining the individual-level random intercept only.

We ran two robustness checks alongside the main analysis:

1. **A stratified permutation** test cross-checked the model p-values by reshuffling treatment assignment within each provider. Only four reshuffles are possible given the design (two providers, two centres each), so the lowest p-value the test can produce is 0.25. When an outcome hits this floor, it means the observed result was more extreme than any of the alternative reshuffles.
2. **Sensitivity analyses** applied best-worst case bounds to covariates the intervention could plausibly have shifted (duration in services and employment status for job seekers, caseload for employment consultants).

Overall, no outcome reached statistical significance and we did not see meaningful evidence of backfire across the outcomes.

Job seeker outcomes (primary):

The job seeker model included 64 follow-up observations from 39 job seekers across the four centres. Covariates adjusted for in the model included: age, gender, English as primary language, country of birth, parental status, education, duration in services, employment status.

Outcome	β	SE	95% CI	p
Satisfaction with life	-0.09	0.27	-0.62 – 0.45	0.76
Employment progress	-0.02	0.23	-0.48 – 0.43	0.92

Needs satisfaction	+0.32	0.24	-0.14 – 0.78	0.19
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None of the three job seeker outcomes reached statistical significance and all intervals crossed zero. Needs satisfaction is the only outcome where the estimate, permutation result, and sensitivity bounds all pointed in a favourable direction. The estimate was positive (+0.32), the permutation result reached the floor of 0.25 with the observed effect favouring treatment, and the sensitivity analysis showed positive estimates across all best/worst scenarios (range +0.16 to +0.63). We read this as a weak positive signal rather than evidence the intervention worked.

Employment consultant outcomes (secondary):

The employment consultant model included 19 follow-up observations from 13 employment consultants across the four centres. Covariates adjusted for in the model included: age, gender, years of experience, caseload size.

Outcome	β	SE	95% CI	p
Confidence in practice	+0.12	0.27	-0.40 – 0.65	0.66
Knowledge of PCCM	+0.06	0.39	-0.70 – 0.83	0.87
Job satisfaction	+0.18	0.23	-0.27 – 0.63	0.47

None of the three employment consultant outcomes reached statistical significance and all intervals crossed zero. For knowledge of PCCM, only two of the five possible ordinal response levels (Intermediate and Advanced) were observed across the entire sample, in either arm, at any timepoint. This creates a ceiling effect where responses are clustered at the top of the scale with no room for treatment to shift them, so the regression result tells us little about whether the intervention shifted knowledge. Job satisfaction showed the same consistent positive pattern as needs satisfaction (positive estimate, permutation floor in the favourable direction, uniformly positive sensitivity bounds). Job satisfaction scores were very stable within consultants across the two waves (the consultant random intercept absorbed ~96% of the non-residual variance), leaving little within-person variation for the model to detect a treatment effect.

Administrative outcomes (exploratory):

The administrative model used centre-level weekly observations across the four centres. Each outcome was modelled on the centre's baseline value, treatment arm, provider, week since intervention onset, and the provider-by-week interaction. Week was coded as a continuous variable, with the week starting 24 November 2025 set to 0 (the intervention week, classified as post-intervention). The training was delivered on 26 and 27 November, so this week was conservatively classified as post-intervention. Baseline values were drawn from a single pre-intervention week per centre.

The planned model included a centre-level random intercept. The mixed-effects models did not converge reliably, so all three were estimated as linear regressions. Permutation tests and sensitivity bounds were not run for these outcomes given the centre-level structure of the data.

Outcome	β	SE	95% CI	p
Proportion of exits into employment	-0.075	0.043	-0.16 – 0.01	0.083
Appointment attendance rate	+0.015	0.037	-0.06 – 0.09	0.69
Placement rate	+0.002	0.002	-0.002 – 0.007	0.29

None of the three outcomes reached statistical significance. Proportion of exits into employment is the only model with $p < 0.10$ and the only directionally adverse estimate. We do not interpret this as a backfire signal. The two providers' exit rates followed meaningfully different trajectories over the trial period (provider-by-week interaction $p = 0.048$), and the estimate is partly capturing these provider differences rather than treatment effects. The use of a single pre-intervention week as the baseline reference further limits the reliability of the baseline adjustment.

Limitations

Findings from our pilot should be interpreted with the following caveats in mind. Some of these limitations were anticipated prior to trial launch in light of our design constraints (see [Design](#) section) while others emerged during rollout (see [Findings](#) section).

- Low statistical power:** We anticipated that the pilot would be statistically underpowered, as it was not feasible to recruit more than four job centres. Unsurprisingly, the linear mixed-effects models we estimated for each impact evaluation outcome produced non-significant results. We cannot be sure whether these results reflect a genuine absence of treatment effects, or alternatively, low power to detect such effects.
- Baseline inequivalence:** Given the small number of job centres participating in the pilot, randomisation alone could not ensure comparability between the treatment and control groups. To maximise baseline equivalence, we intended to recruit a pair of job centres within each provider that were strongly matched on historical outcomes data and potential confounding variables. However, this matching approach could not be implemented, because recruitment was constrained by the job centres that providers who were willing to work with us were able to make available. Within these constraints, providers nominated the two job centres they considered most comparable on a list of key characteristics. Although some degree of comparability was achieved (see [Sample](#) section), descriptive baseline survey and administrative data trends indicated the treatment and control groups were not equivalent on outcome measures prior to the intervention, and one job centre in the control group had substantially higher job seeker trial participation rates relative to the other three job centres (see [Sample](#) section). In addition, providers were unable to supply more than one week of baseline administrative data because their systems could not be retrospectively configured to capture the requested outcome measures. Taken together, these limitations reduce our ability to attribute any

post-intervention differences between the treatment and control groups confidently to the intervention itself.

- **Systematic missingness:** Roughly 2,200 job seekers were eligible to participate in the pilot, but only 85 signed up to participate in surveys and interviews, creating a risk of selection bias. Among those who signed up, only 12 job seekers in the treatment group and 34 job seekers in the control group completed at least one survey, while just 3 job seekers in the treatment group and 18 job seekers in the control group participated in all three survey waves, creating an additional risk of survivorship bias. The resulting sample is therefore unlikely to represent the full distribution of job seeker outcomes within participating sites. For example, job seekers who are least engaged with employment services may also be the least likely to participate in research activities; and participants who exited employment services after achieving an employment outcome were necessarily lost to follow-up.
- **Narrow intervention exposure:** The job centres participating from Provider B were comparatively small, with the treatment site comprising just one employment consultant. Although this reflects the operational reality of some job centres and is not itself a limitation, it presents a challenge for evaluation because it means, in Provider B, the intervention was directly tested on only one employment consultant.
- **Short follow-up:** The post-intervention measurement period was short relative to the timeframes involved in shifting complex outcomes such as wellbeing and employment. As a result, the pilot could only assess leading indicators of these outcomes, although some measures of lagged outcomes were included in case any early effects were observable.

In light of these caveats, we prioritise our process evaluation findings, which are less constrained by the above limitations and provide practical insight into how the intervention was implemented in practice. We weave in our preliminary impact evaluation findings where relevant, reporting descriptive cross-sectional trends that signal where the intervention is on the right track and whether there are signs of unintended backfire.

Supplementary figures

Figure A1. Satisfaction with Life

Jobseekers, mean score by condition across three survey waves

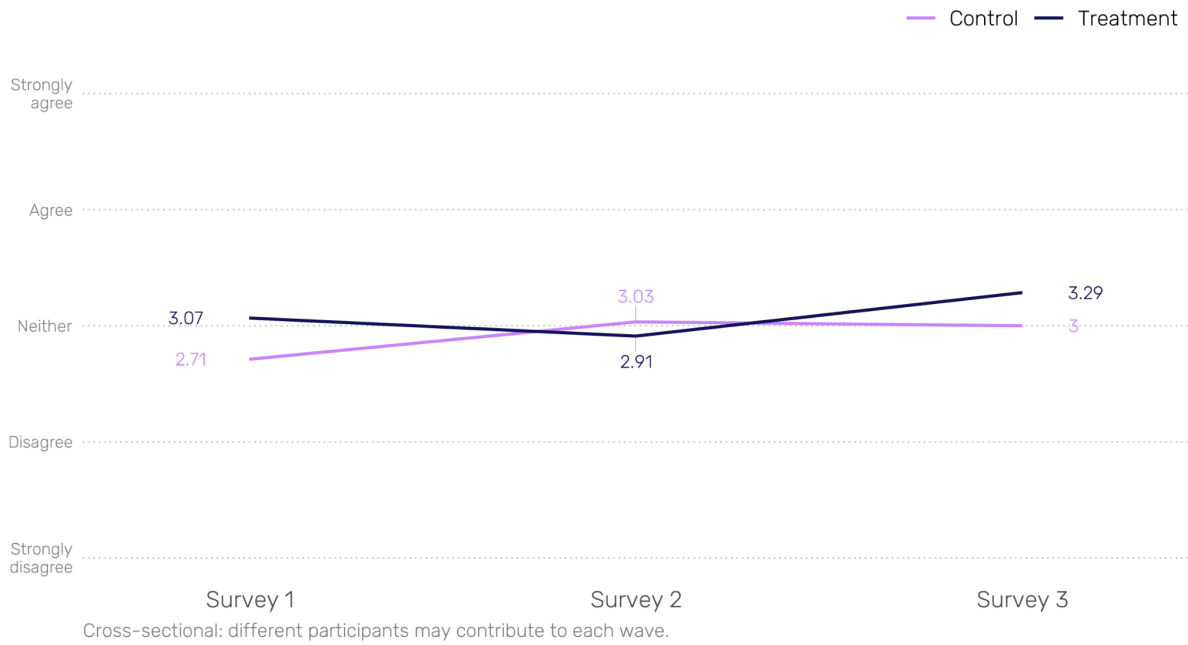


Figure A2. Employment Progress

Jobseekers, mean score by condition across three survey waves

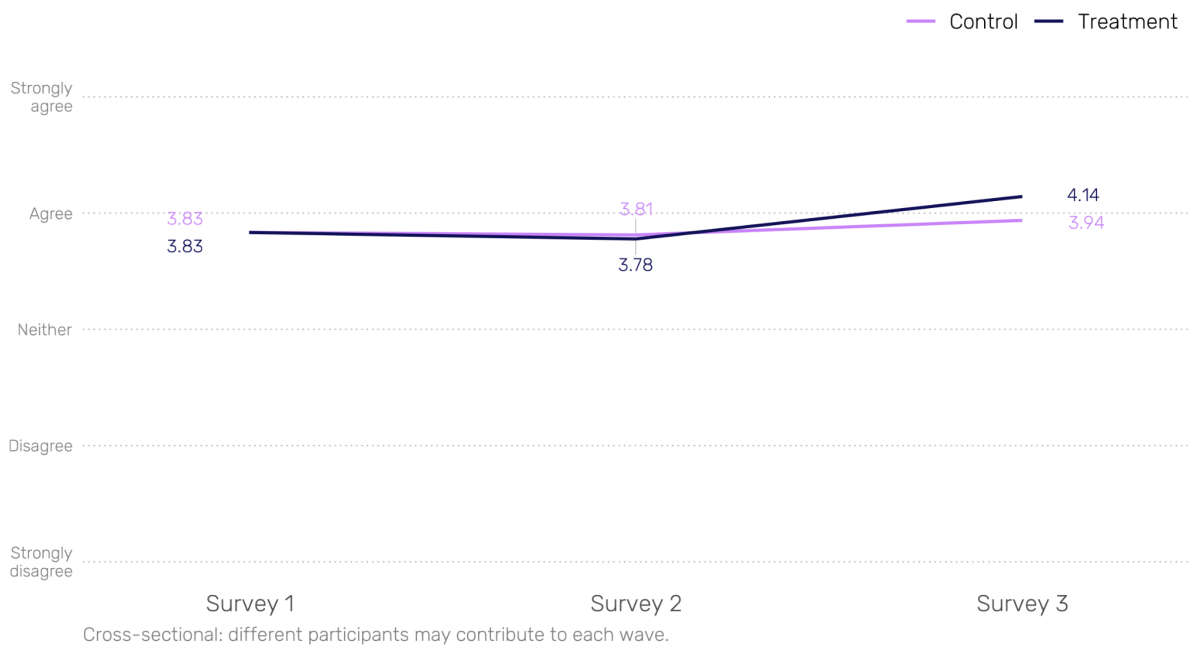


Figure A3. Need Satisfaction

Jobseekers, mean score by condition across three survey waves

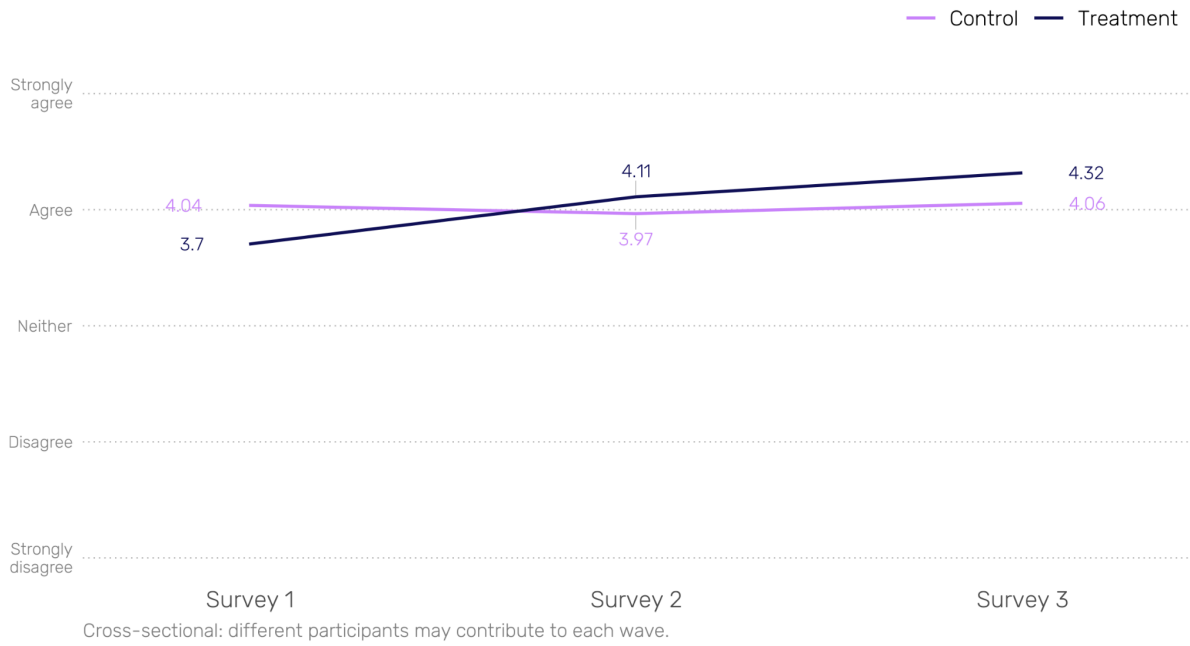


Figure A4. ASPIRE Receipt

Jobseekers, mean score by condition across three survey waves

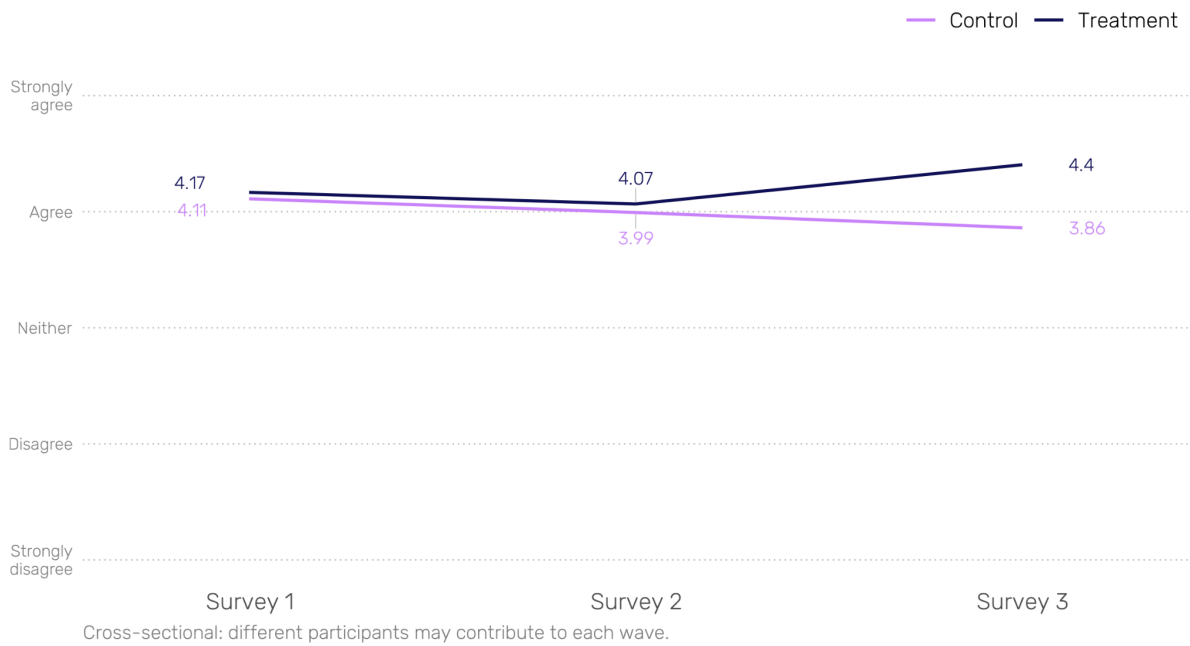


Figure B1. Confidence in Practice

Employment consultants, mean score by condition across three survey waves

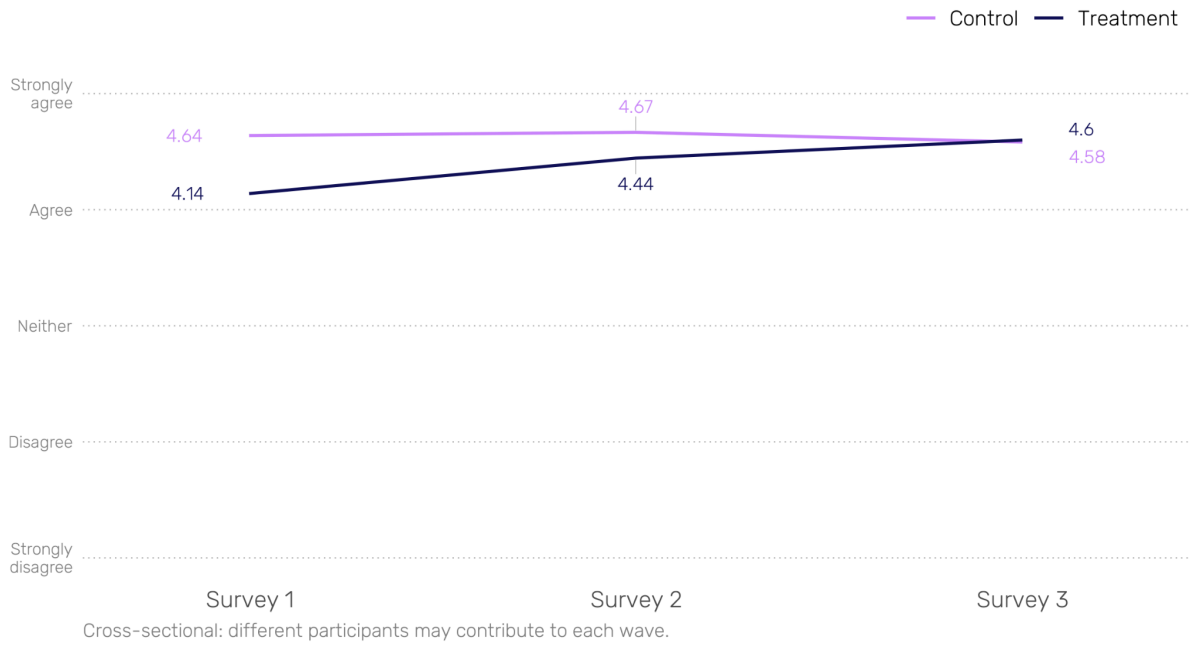


Figure B2. Job Satisfaction

Employment consultants, mean score by condition across three survey waves

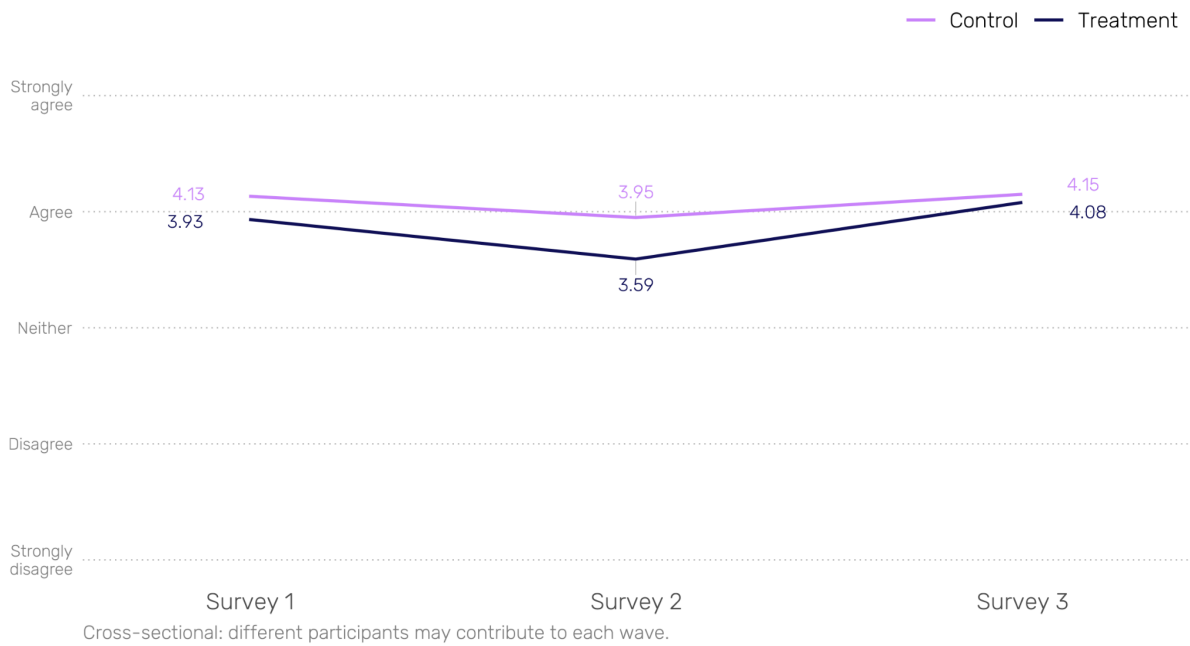


Figure B3. Understanding of PCCM

Employment consultants, mean score by condition across three survey waves

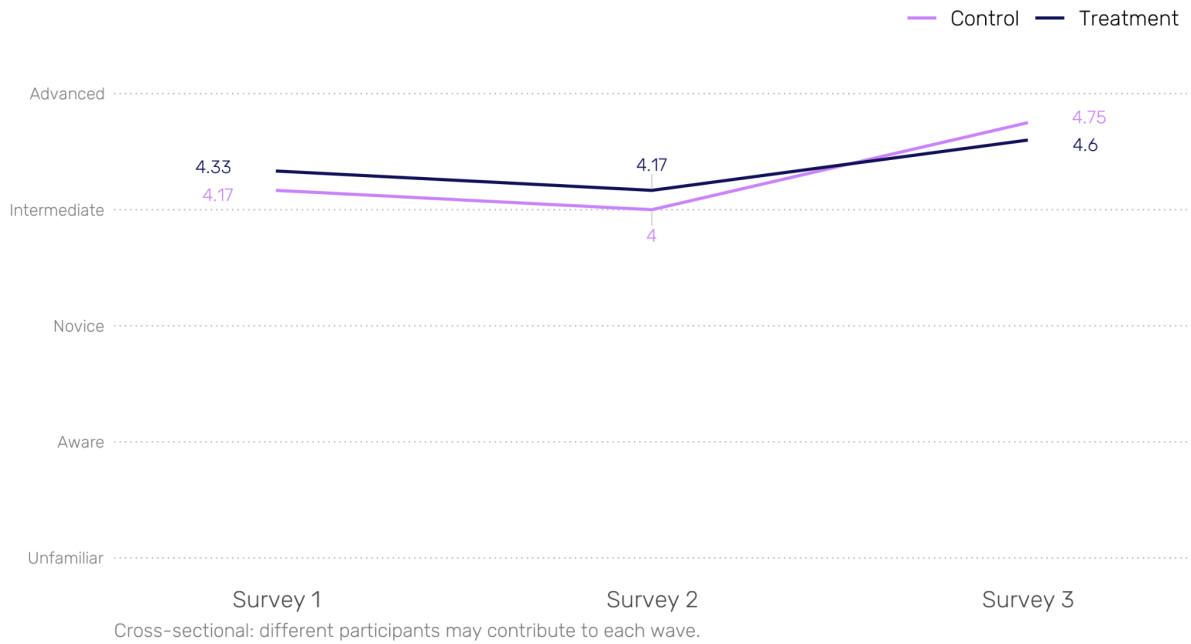
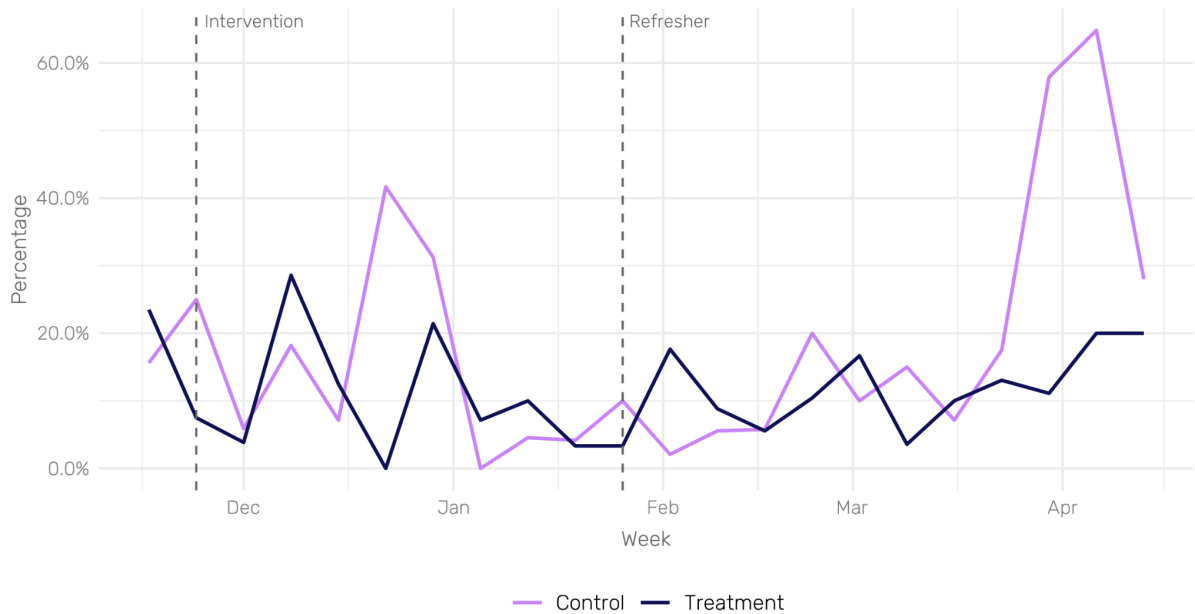


Figure C1. Proportion of Exits into Employment Over Time

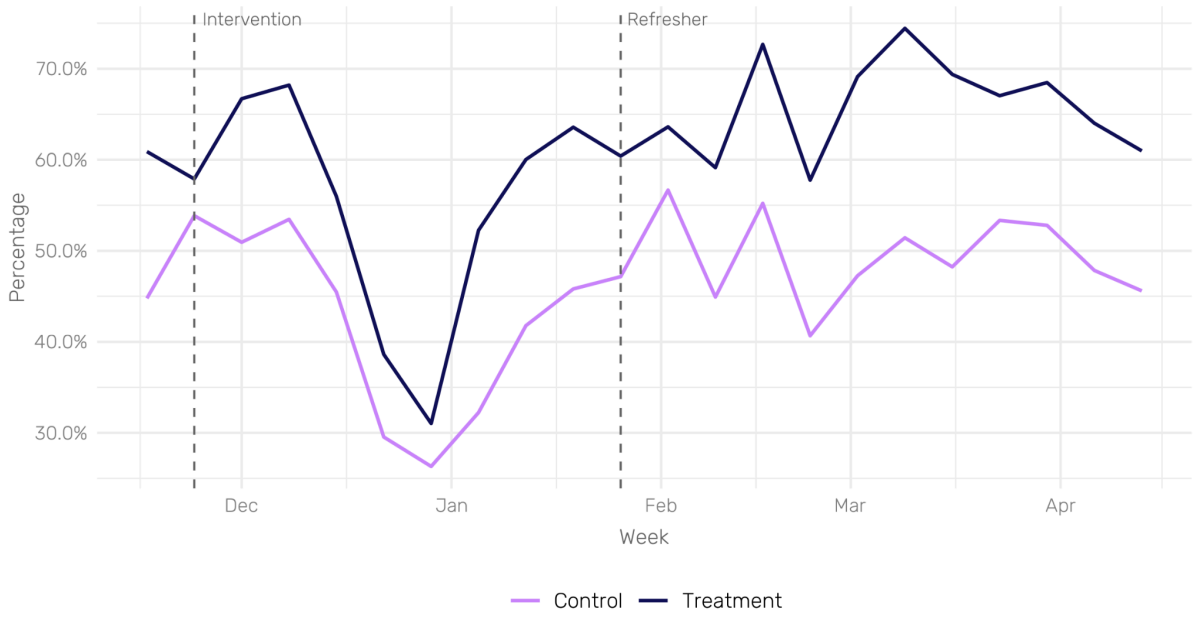
Centre-level weekly means by condition



Aggregated administrative data across participating centres.

Figure C2. Appointment Attendance Rate Over Time

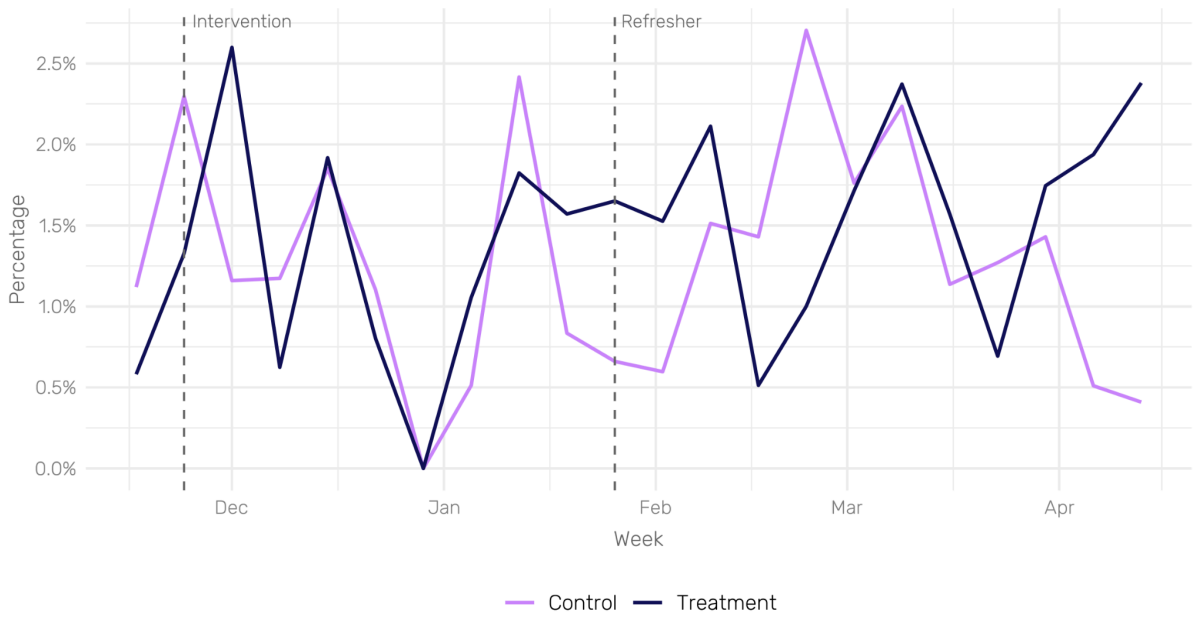
Centre-level weekly means by condition



Aggregated administrative data across participating centres.

Figure C3. Placement Rate Over Time

Centre-level weekly means by condition



Aggregated administrative data across participating centres.

Table: Data collection timeline

Month	November-25				December-25				January-26				February-26				March-26				April-26					
Date	3 / 11	10 / 11	17 / 11	24 / 11	1 / 12	8 / 12	15 / 12	22 / 12	29 / 12	5 / 1	12 / 1	19 / 1	26 / 1	2 / 2	9 / 2	16 / 2	23 / 2	2 / 3	9 / 3	16 / 3	23 / 3	30 / 3	6 / 4	13 / 4	20 / 4	27 / 4
Week	-	-	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	-	-
Admin data																										
Surveys																										
Observations																										
Interviews																										

The **training, toolkit, and environmental changes** were delivered in Week 1 of the trial. **Follow-up training** took place in Week 10 of the trial.