



# Try, Test and Learn Fund

Initiative: *Carers Connect to Education and Employment*

Location: Western Australia and Queensland

Using insights from the Priority Investment Approach, the Try, Test and Learn Fund is gathering evidence on new or innovative approaches to addressing barriers to work.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund will help achieve the objectives of welfare reform — that is, to develop a modern welfare system that increases the capacity of individuals, reduces the risk of welfare dependency and maintains a strong welfare safety net.

## What are we trying to achieve?

This project aims to help working-age carers into accredited education and training, setting them on pathways to work in the aged-care, home and community care, and disability-care sectors.

## What is *Carers Connect to Education and Employment*?

This project works with carers to identify their needs, motivators and barriers to education and employment, and provides them with a tailored pathway plan that includes referrals to education and training that will lead to work in the care sector.

Personalised support, including coaching and mentoring, and financial assistance, is also provided to help participants overcome barriers to engaging in education and training and to support them through their training/studies.

## What does the evidence tell us?

- Carers face a number of barriers in accessing employment. In particular, they have limited time available to work due to caring responsibilities and as a result they are at elevated risk of long-term welfare dependence.
- On average, working-age carers who currently receive income support are likely to be on income support for some or all of 34 years over their lifetime.
- If nothing changes, 81 per cent of this group will be receiving income support payments in 10 years, and 73 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.

## Fast facts

**Priority group:** Carers

**Target participant number:** 100

**Locations:** Western Australia and Queensland

**Trial period:** 21 months

**Total funding:** \$1.2 million

**Service provider:** AMA Training Services

**Potential future saving:** The purpose of these initiatives is to test whether an intervention works to reduce long-term reliance on welfare. If around 21 per cent (21) of participants move off income support because of this project, the savings to the welfare system are likely to outweigh the costs of the project.

## How is this initiative new and innovative?

This project conducted initial research to better understand the needs and motivations of the carer priority group in order to maximise recruitment of carers into the project and their participation in education and training. This research and the approach taken to recruitment provides important insights into what works to engage and support this traditionally hard-to-reach cohort.