

Motivational Interviewing reduces social assistance usage

In partnership with the Department of Growth, Enterprise and Trade and the Department of Family Services, SRDC piloted Motivational Interviewing at income assistance offices across Winnipeg. Motivational Interviewing – MI – is a collaborative, goal oriented style of communication designed to strengthen personal motivation and commitment to goals. SRDC used a quasi-experimental approach to assess the effectiveness of MI relative to the prevailing approach – Intentional Practice. Intentional Practice (IP) encourages case workers to have more deliberate conversations with clients to help them reach their goals, but does not specify how this should occur.

Overall, Motivational Interviewing clients were 6.8 percentage points more likely than IP clients to have exited income assistance within 9 to 12 months of study enrolment. This translates into substantial income assistance payments savings that more than covered case worker training costs and should continue to accrue over time. Based on the success of the pilot, Manitoba is contemplating the implementation of Motivational Interviewing in all of their Employment and Income Assistance offices in Winnipeg.

[Motivational Interviewing Research Findings](#) (PowerPoint document – August 2016)