

Southampton Strategic Assessment (JSNA)

HDRC evidence reviews

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1. HDRC evidence review service



The Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) offered an Evidence Review Service for Southampton City Council and those working in partnership with Southampton City Council.

An Evidence Review is a systematic process involving pulling together research and information from multiple sources on a specific topic. It is a robust approach which follows a framework and involves making sure that the findings are relevant and can be applied to the population of Southampton.

A range of reviews have taken place within the HDRC Southampton, relating to public health and health inequalities. The reviews offer a digestible summary of the information and research, which can be used to make more informed and better decisions to improve public health and reduce health inequalities.

The information presented here is not specifically tailored to Southampton. It provides an overview that may be applicable to Southampton.

2. Evidence reviews

The HDRC have created a range of evidence reviews so far, covering various topic areas. Various examples are available below, with a summary and a link to the full evidence review.

2.1 Fuel Poverty and health risk in England – evidence review

Fuel poverty refers to when someone cannot afford to keep their home at a reasonable temperature. This review highlights that Fuel poverty impacts older adults, children, single parents, and those living in cold or poorly insulated homes. It may lead serious health problems, or make them worse such as breathing issues, stress, poor mental health, and even increased risk of injury. Cold homes may also impact children's development and force families to choose between heating and buying food. Tackling fuel poverty means improving housing, making energy more affordable and working across health and social care to support those most at risk. More information is available below.

[Fuel Poverty and Health Risk in England – evidence review](#)

2.2 The impact of volunteer services for children – evidence review

This review looks at how volunteering and community projects affect children and young people. It found that the benefits of taking part in these activities include:

- boost mental health
- build confidence
- help young people feel more connected, improving their wellbeing.

These types of projects may also reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by offering structure and support, especially for those at risk.

[The impact of civic engagement, volunteering projects and schemes for children – rapid review](#)

2.3 The impact of English language proficiency on primary care consultations and GP workload - evidence review

This review explores how limited English comprehension skills affect GP appointments and increase workload. Patients with reduced understanding of the English language may struggle to:

- book appointments
- explain symptoms
- understand treatments
- follow medical advice

This leads to longer consultations and more repeat visits which is not currently reflected in GP funding. The review highlights the need for better interpreter services, culturally sensitive communication and support for health literacy to improve care, reducing inequalities.

[The impact of English language proficiency on primary care consultations and GP workload - evidence review](#)

2.4 Return on investment in parks - evidence review

This review shows that investing in parks brings big benefits for communities. For every £1 spent, parks can return more in value by boosting local business, improving health and supporting the environment. Parks help people to stay active and mentally well, reduce healthcare costs and make areas more attractive to live and work in.

[Return on investment in parks - evidence review](#)

2.5 Effectiveness of Proactive Technology-enabled care (TEC) in Adult Social Care

This review looks at how digital tools can help adults live independently and improve their wellbeing. Technology-enabled care (TEC) can reduce emergency service use, support better mental health and help people stay in their homes longer. Some services were shown to save money, while others were not cost-effective. Success depends on matching the technology to each person's needs.

[Effectiveness of Proactive Technology-enabled care \(TEC\) in Adult Social Care - evidence review](#)

2.6 Drug use and crime

The review looks at frameworks and programmes around the world that are based on dealing with community problems relating to drugs and crime. Successful programmes included collaborative working to bring in a range of services, local interventions and programmes which improved over time.

Identified problems included funding, poor teamwork and not enough information to check what is working.

[Drug use and crime - evidence review](#)

2.7 Evidence on interventions to address the negative effects of living in interim accommodation on homeless families - evidence review

The review identifies ways to help families who live in temporary accommodation, due to homelessness. Key approaches include mental health, social and financial support as well as dedicated support workers for adults and children. The review includes recommendations for local authorities.

[Evidence on interventions to address the negative effects of living in interim accommodation on homeless families - evidence review](#)

2.8 Young people engagement in health decision-making – evidence review

The review explores methods to engage young people in health decision-making. It highlights that the most meaningful youth engagement comes from long term approaches that build trust and empower individuals. Digital tools also allow flexibility and accessibility. A notable challenge for engagement is around power imbalances. Recommendations for addressing challenges are included in the review.

[Young people engagement in health decision-making - evidence review](#)