

How can economic development improve health and reduce health inequalities?

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19 November 2019, IGAU conference



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Partners



Background

- Economic determinants are core factors that affect health outcomes and health inequalities
- Work, income and education all key issues
- Health is an asset to the economy
- Life expectancy improvements stalling
- Increasing proportion of health-related unemployment
- 85% of economic development departments not as engaged as they could be in tackling the determinants of health



Current trends

- Automation
- Climate change
- Increasing policy and research attention – Industrial Strategy and many more...

The case studies

- Glasgow & Scotland
- Plymouth
- Leeds
- New Zealand
- Burlington, Vermont (USA)
- Saarland (Germany)
- Finland
- Sweden

Evidence

Causal chains

Overview ([McCartney et al](#) & [Naik et al](#) – results in press)

- National income
- Regulating markets
- Welfare provision
- Income inequality & inclusivity
- Promoting access to quality work
- Trade
- Urban regeneration

Local/regional levers

- Planning, land and assets
- Infrastructure development
- Capital, grants and procurement
- Regulation
- Finance
- Skills development
- Provision of services
- Labour market programmes

Innovative approaches

- **RSA** previous work
- New approaches to economic development are emerging
- More holistic, cross-sectoral, rooted in place
- Examples include anchor institutions, social enterprise, employee ownership
- May have potential health benefits
- There is a lack of evidence around many of these

Goals of a health enhancing economy

- Promoting social cohesion, equity and participation
- Encouraging access to health-promoting products
- Being environmentally sustainable

Lessons for UK cities and regions - 1

- Build understanding of the issues and draw on evidence or best practice
- Local leaders have a key role to play
- Engage citizens to inform priorities and build momentum for action

Lessons for UK cities and regions - 2

- Capitalise on local assets and use state levers
- Direct engagement between public health and economic development
- Provide joined-up services that address multiple needs

Lessons for national government

- Create a national macroeconomic context conducive to health and equity
- Empower local leaders
- Put health and wellbeing at the heart of policy

Cross-cutting lessons

- Reform governance and build alliances
- Measure success differently
- Manage complex economic transitions

Ongoing challenges

- Meeting people's needs across the life course
- Conducting sustainable, healthy economic development?
- Risks remain

What's next

Full report in January

Planning future work on

- the health impacts of businesses and
- to build evidence and practice around economic development for health

Thank you

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