



# Testing a Cash First Approach in Edinburgh

Wraparound support, income maximisation and  
crisis cash grants

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# Setting the scene

- Scottish Government Cash First Funding to deliver a Cash First approach Jan 2024-Sept 2026
- Building the foundations
- Mapping the existing provision
- Co-design of small scale tests of change



# A Cash First approach for people experiencing food insecurity

South West and North East Edinburgh

October 2024–Now

Family and Household Support

A drop in service providing one point of contact to connect people to the right support to address underlying drivers of poverty.



Income Maximization

A same/next day benefits check and access to money advice casework



Crisis Cash Grants

£30 crisis cash payment, fuel vouchers and support to apply for SWF Crisis Grant



Lightning Reach

Financial support portal which enables access to a range of personalised grant support – all in one place.

# How did we design the test of change?

## Listened to stakeholders

- Importance of one key person to help
- Based in community multi-purpose venue
- Systems that were connected up
- Quality conversations are essential

## Identifying Delivery Partners

- Building on capacity that already existed
- Testing in a new setting
- Working with established provision that could support the project to be scaled up

## Working out 'The How'

- Designing with Team Leads of 3 services
- Connecting CMS systems, agreed datasets & reports
- Identifying neighborhood(s) as test and control sites
- A joint operational process
- Working with practitioners to improve process in 'real time'

## Learning by design

- Being clear about what we wanted to learn
- Coordinator based on operational sites
- Weekly Learning Conversation with Team Leads
- Regular Learning Conversations with teams



# What did we want to learn?

Does offering Cash First Grant change the way people engage in other wraparound supports?

Does prioritizing a quality conversation change the way people engage in wraparound supports?

How do clients who receive a Cash First Grant feel about this response as an alternative to food bank referral?

Who accesses a Cash First grant and the Support element offered?



# How are we learning?

- By borrowing lots of elements of a Human Learning Systems approach!
- Reflective Learning conversations built into the process with teams directly delivering the approach
- Making changes and improvements as we go—continuous improvement
- Coordinator embedded in operational sites to allow for unplanned learning
- Monthly reports on cash grants given, follow up support engagement, income maximization support provided
- Feedback forms from clients
- Client stories and case studies





People need money support and support beyond money



Flexibility is key to helping people to engage in follow up support



Curious and quality conversations help address the hidden drivers of poverty

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# What we've learnt so far

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Help to address the immediate crisis and follow up support from a key person are what people value most



Integrating services increases engagement and access



Lots of learning we didn't expect and lots to still learn

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**Any  
Questions?**