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## **Evaluating the impact of case management on the health of long term Incapacity Benefit recipients in the North East of England**

This paper will introduce and outline a large research project which has been funded by County Durham Primary Care Trust (PCT). The level of ill health in the working age population in the North East of England exceeds that any other English region. Across County Durham there are over 40,000 people receiving Incapacity Benefit (IB) due to health problems, representing 12% of the working age population. County Durham PCT, in partnership with other local agencies is therefore implementing a major intervention to improve the mental and physical health of people in County Durham who have been in receipt of IB for three years or more. The intervention aims to provide recipients with a case manager who will offer individually tailored packages of support in order to ultimately lead to an outcome of health improvement. The main part of the research involves an evaluation of this intervention. Through a mixed methods approach, the evaluation will assess the impacts of the programme by comparing trends in IB recipients between intervention and non-intervention groups; undertaking quantitative data analysis, including economic evaluation and contextual analysis of place effects; and undertaking qualitative interviews with samples of programme users to understand narratives and experiences of IB recipients in more depth. This paper will explore several areas. Firstly, the background and context of long term sickness and incapacity in the North East of England. Secondly, it will present some of the initial findings from the evaluation, from both the intervention group and those in the control group who have not undergone the intervention, this group have been accessed via Jobcentre plus “Choices” outreach events. Finally, the paper will offer some reflections upon the NHS “world class” commissioning process.