

Policy pathways to justice in energy efficiency

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Project rationale

- Evidence suggests increased incidence of and vulnerability to fuel poverty amongst:
 - Older people
 - **Children**
 - **Disabled people/those with long term illnesses**
- Domestic energy efficiency policy aims to support these groups

Two gaps in knowledge

- There is very little evidence about how the needs of these groups are recognised or incorporated into policy decisions.
- There is no clear evidence on how energy efficiency policies actually affect these groups, and whether policy outcomes are consistent across the UK nations.

Project research questions

1. Has domestic energy efficiency policy acknowledged and responded to the needs of disabled people and low income families?
2. Are energy efficiency policies successfully reaching groups that are vulnerable to fuel poverty
3. Do these outcomes vary by different national approaches?
4. What lessons can be drawn for future policy pathways and practice on energy efficiency?

Methodology

- Quantitative analysis of national fuel poverty statistics where possible
- Qualitative interviews
 - National policy makers/stakeholders about policy development (n=18) (complete)
 - Stakeholders involved in policy implementation across 4 UK nations (n= 60) (ongoing)
 - Householders who are disabled/have young children (n= 40) who have received energy efficiency measures (just started, 3 down)

Emerging findings: from a household perspective

- **Restrictive/changing eligibility criteria** (across the 4 nations)
'By using proxies such as [welfare benefits]...if you are a low wage family or even a family with a disabled child but are working you never get picked up'
- **Barriers to take up**
 - Information, lack of trust in the energy industry (legacy of switching campaigns, FiT etc), capacity, fear
 - Eligibility checks/screening process hard going
 - Being asked to provide additional money
- **Mitigated by: impact of intermediaries/safe places**
 - For advice, help during eligibility checks
- **Installation:** the positive impact of a tailored approach v negative impact of one size fits all... *'How do you actually deal with all those issues in terms of 'I don't want my install today as I have a hospital appointment'*

Mike is disabled and lives in the PRS. He receives means tested benefits as a result of his disability...



Above this point eligibility is determined by national policy decisions

...this means he is eligible for ECO assuming that his home is suitable for retrofit

Below this point likelihood of receiving measures is determined by factors such as cost and data

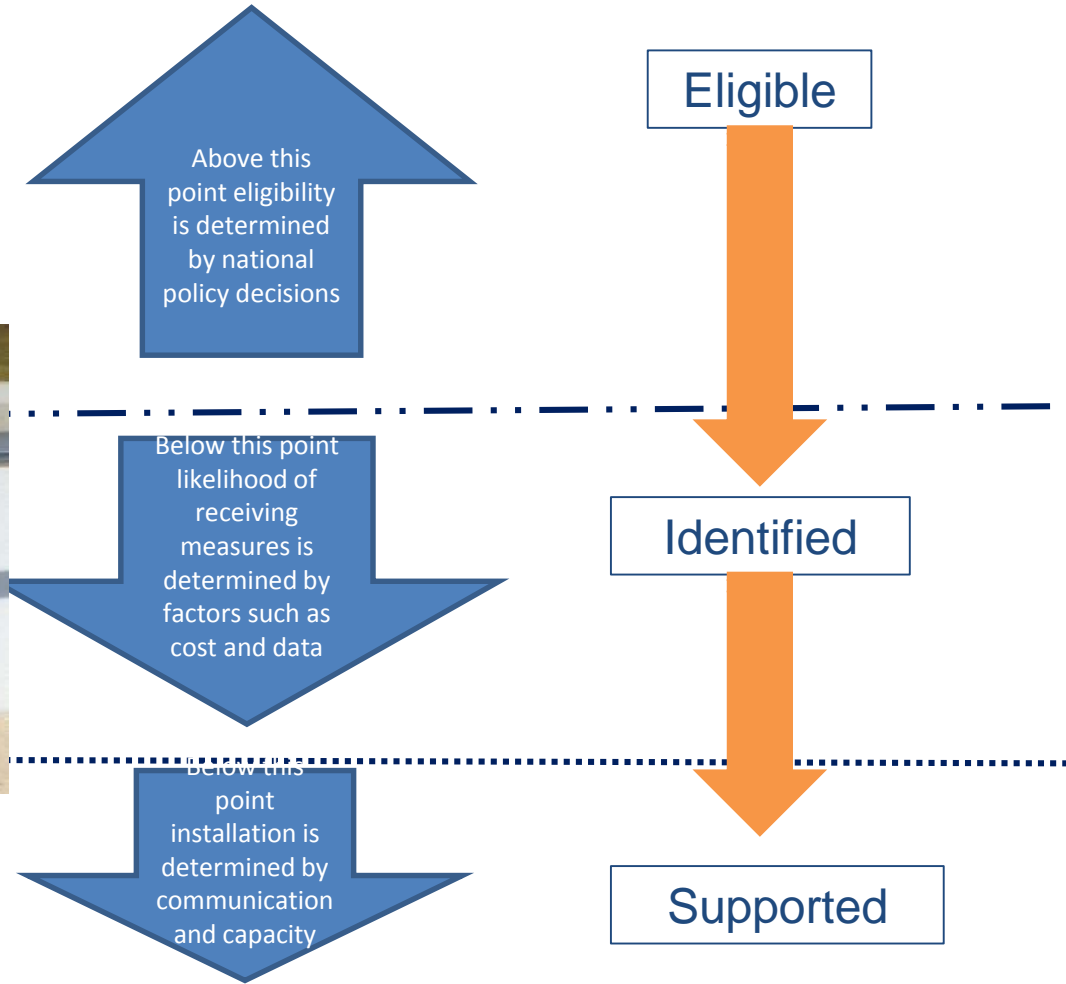
Mike received an entitlement check from a national charity supporting him with his condition. The charity has a partnership with an energy company.

Below this point installation is determined by communication and capacity

...Mike's family helped him clear his house and the partnership provided support throughout the process

UKERC

Mike's customer journey was successful because he was...



Emerging findings: from a policy perspective

- Lack of data – limited knowledge about who is receiving measures
- Supplier funded schemes:
 - Driven by competitiveness and cost effectiveness – doesn't necessarily align with the needs of vulnerable people

'we will turn away from a lot of people because they're too expensive to deliver to' (industry interview)
- Partnerships
 - Reported successes in terms of getting to most vulnerable households when linked to other funding sources (e.g. health)

A plea for more...

- We are especially keen to speak to:
 - LAs in Wales/Scotland/NI
 - NGOs
 - Installers
 - People working with vulnerable groups
 - Anyone working with ECO flex
- Vulnerable households...

Questions and comments

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