

ABSTRACT

Social problems are a serious disease

You cannot treat a serious illness with just addressing the symptoms. A management plan involving treatment of symptoms, causes and techniques to manage recovery is a more effective method.

Looking at social problems in the same way as a serious disease, it opens up more opportunity to address the root causes and flow-on effects. The flow-on effects are often the visible "symptoms", and if treated, may subside temporarily, but will likely resurface due to persisting causes. The persisting causes of social problems remain, and will continue to wreak havoc until a comprehensive management plan is implemented to address them.

This paper will explore the complex social problem of the inadequacy of social housing as a policy response for people with the capacity to work. The combination of social housing policy settings, behavioural factors and other circumstances create an incentive to remain unemployed or underemployed which perpetuates the welfare-dependent cycle over generations. The paper will apply the medical analogy and other analytical tools to explain why a single policy response is inadequate. To treat a complex medical condition you need a multi-faceted management plan. Social problems require the same structure to their treatment.

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