Mass Unemployment Events (MUEs)

### Impact of MUEs on workers

**Behaviour: Job loss leads to increased unhealthy behaviour**

- Drinking more
- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Drug misuse

**Increased risk to physical and mental health**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death from heart attack or stroke</td>
<td>x2.3</td>
<td>x1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death from alcohol related disease</td>
<td>x2.6</td>
<td>x1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>x3</td>
<td>x1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Long term increased risk of**

- Death (evident 20 years later)  
  - RIP x1.1
- Admission to hospital for alcohol related disease (evident 12-20 years later)  
  - x1.2
- Admission to hospital for self harm (evident 8 years later)  
  - x2.5

### Impact on wellbeing

- Higher anxiety and depression
- Loss of self-esteem and life satisfaction
- Financial hardship

### Impact on different groups

- Older, unskilled workers are at higher risk of remaining unemployed or only getting insecure, low paid jobs
- Younger, skilled workers are more mobile, adaptable and find new employment quicker
- Homeowners are less likely/able to move for work

### Impact of MUEs on households and families

Families provide vital support for workers facing redundancy, but can also be affected themselves

**Spouses**

- Spouses more likely to ‘suffer in silence’ and carry emotional burden
- Effect on spousal mental health almost as high as redundant workers
- Family dynamic may change. Changes to main income earner, or moving away for work
- Reduced family income causing financial difficulties
- Increased family stress and difficult family relationships

**Children**

- Negative effects on child health, education, and youth unemployment
- Risk of effects passing on to next generation (unemployment, lower earning)

### Wider impact of MUEs on communities

- Increased competition for jobs
- Loss of community links, social networks and increased social isolation
- Strain on communities that provide vital support for workers
- Strain on local businesses
- Home devaluation in some areas, homes more difficult to sell

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1 Figures presented are from studies of industrial plant closure, published after 2000. Most quantitative estimates are from large international cross-sectional studies analysing retrospective routine data which do not control for underlying health and health behaviour. 2 Information on community and family effects are from qualitative studies.
Workers that find good quality employment have:

- better health
- better wellbeing
- better job satisfaction
- better job security

Key steps

1. **Identify communities** at risk of MUEs and assess the potential impact
2. Develop an **early warning** approach for potential MUEs
3. Early mobilisation of a **multi-sector response**, including health and **community** perspectives
4. Early implementation of **tripartite support (re-employment, financial, health and wellbeing)** for redundant workers
5. Address the needs of **specific groups**, including those older and unskilled
6. Extend support to **family** members
7. Support the wider **community** and harness assets
8. **Evaluate** the impact of the response