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## Promoting Mental Health: the economic case

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# Promoting mental well-being in young people

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# Overview

- A. What is mental well-being?
- B. DISCOVER: A pilot study
- C. The Big One: HeadStart

# Mental wellbeing

- “Mental illness” - Diagnosable disorder
- Mental health - Absence of disorder?
- Positive mental health - Resilience / coping, growth, self-actualisation etc.
- Mental wellbeing - Subjective wellbeing + social functioning?

# The views of young people

Mental wellbeing ...

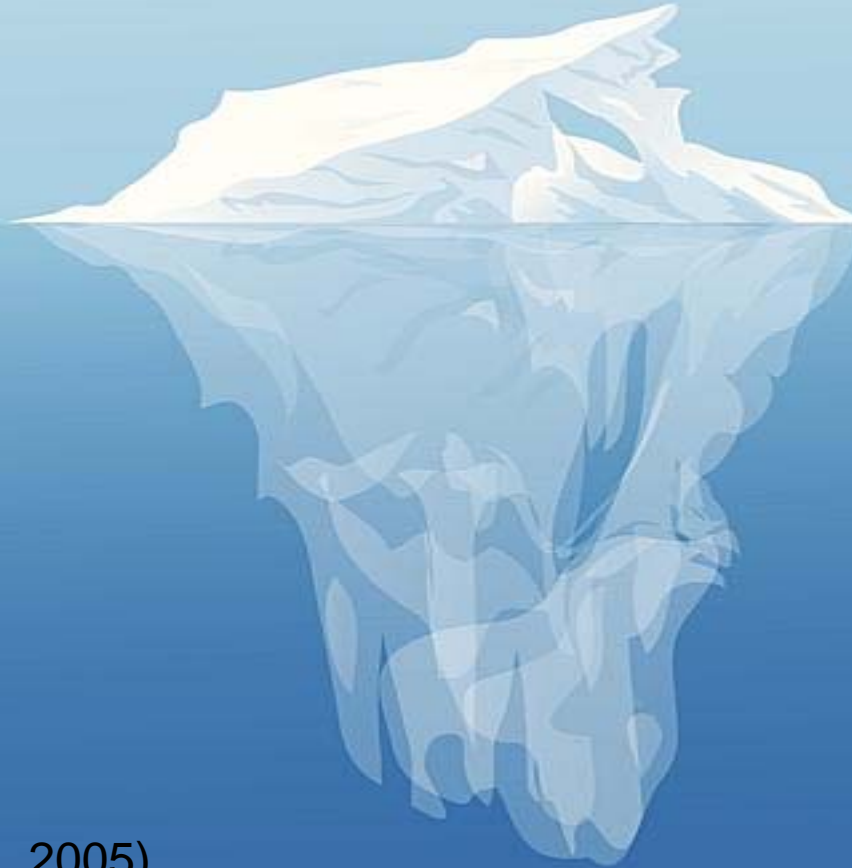
- “...means a person feeling like they are making a positive and useful contribution.”
- “...is broader than just emotional and mental health - it incorporates your economic wellbeing, and your physical health and wellbeing.”
- “...rests on knowing how to help yourself as well as how to seek support from others.”
- “...means flourishing in all aspects of your life.”

## Measurement - WEMWBS

14 positively worded statements, e.g.:

- “I’ve been feeling good about myself”
- “I’ve been feeling useful”
- “I’ve been dealing with problems well”

**Fewer than 25% of young people with mental health needs access CAMHS in the UK**



(Green et al., 2005)

# The views of young people

- Difficulties in developing relationships with others
  - Poor mental well-being constructed as young person being difficult, rather than distressed → shame
  - Poor self esteem
  - Low expectations, low aspirations
  - No experience of being or feeling worthwhile or valued
  - Lack of self-care → poorer physical health and wellbeing
- Not seeking help early as result of poor MWB

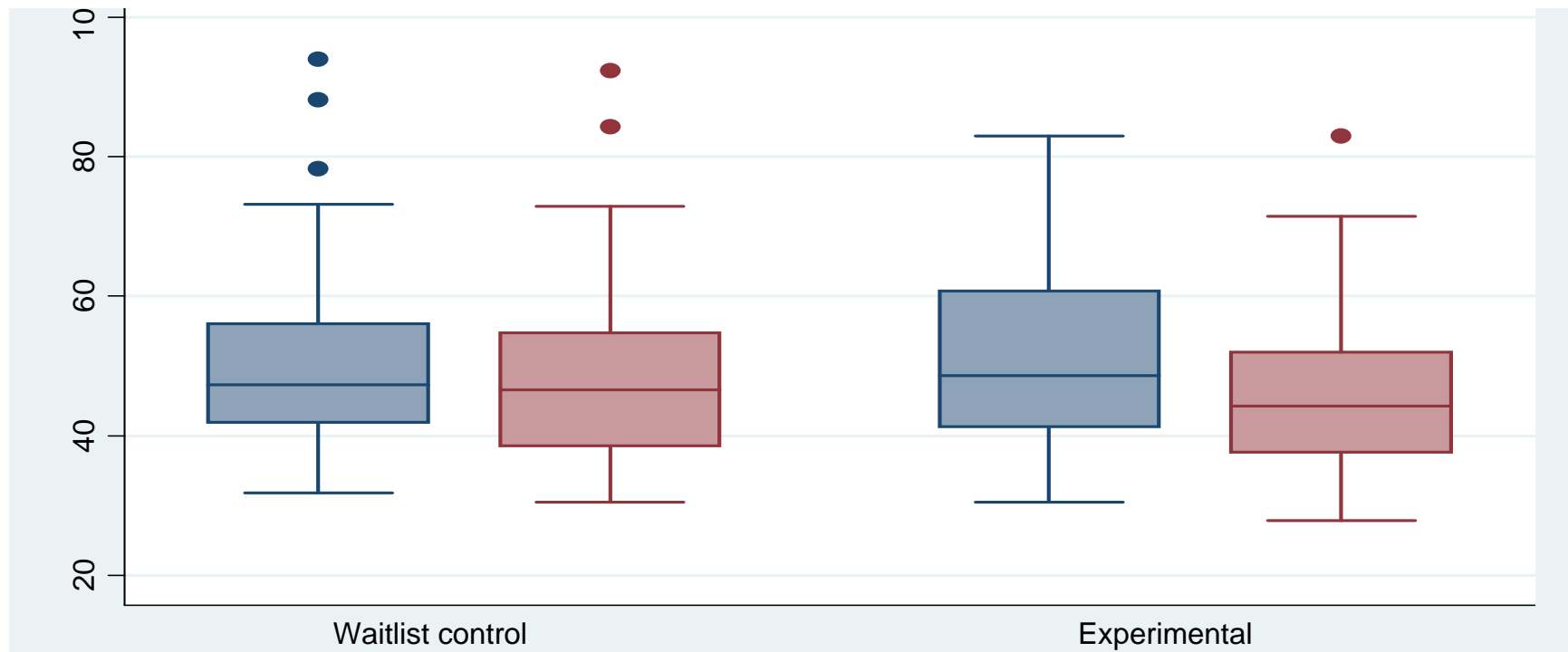


# DISCOVER

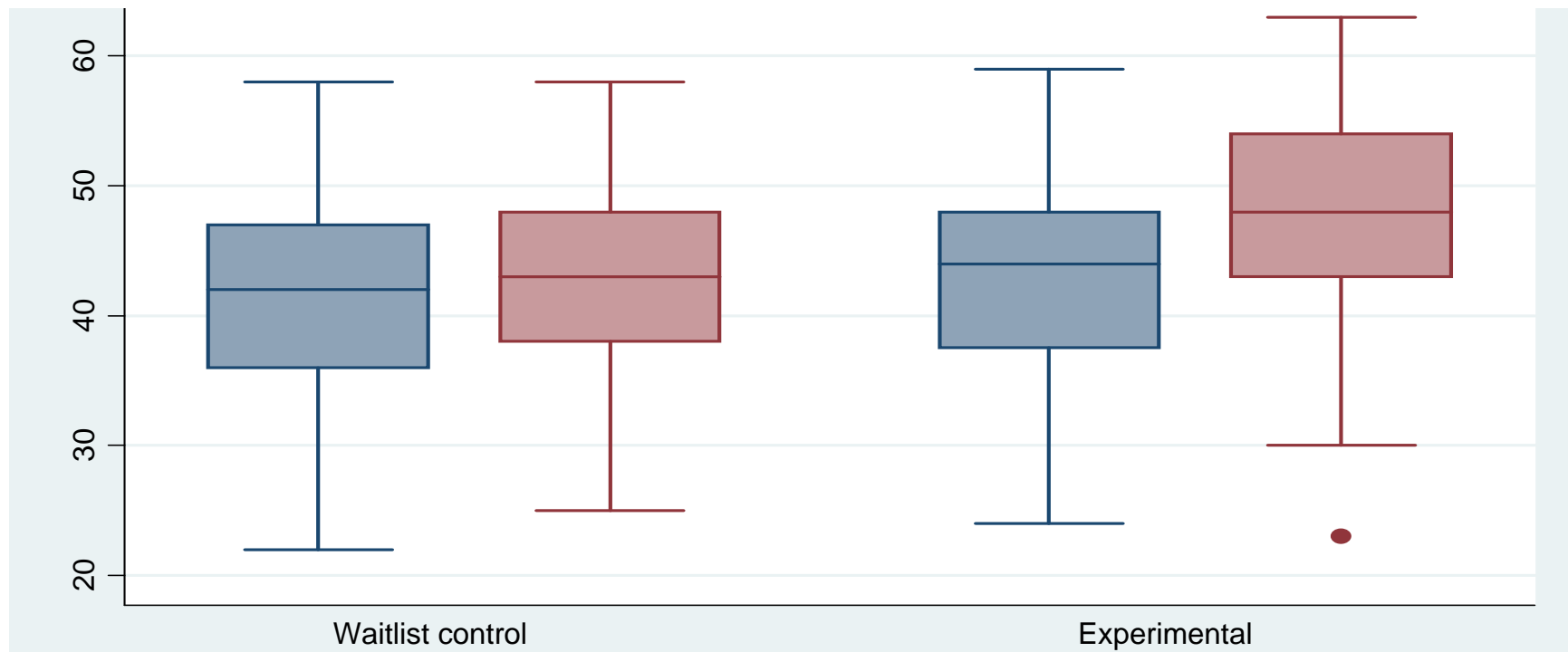
- “Early intervention for inner-city youth: CBT workshops for anxiety and depression in 16-18-year-olds” → “DISCOVER”
- School-based CBT workshops
- Recruited & randomised 10 schools
- 155 participants, very low drop-out → engagement work
- Aims:
  - Feasibility: Engage schools & participants; select outcome measures
  - Acceptability: Students rate the intervention positively
  - Accessibility: Diverse population recruited

Contact: June Brown, [June.Brown@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:June.Brown@kcl.ac.uk)

# RCADS Anxiety t-score



# WEMWBST



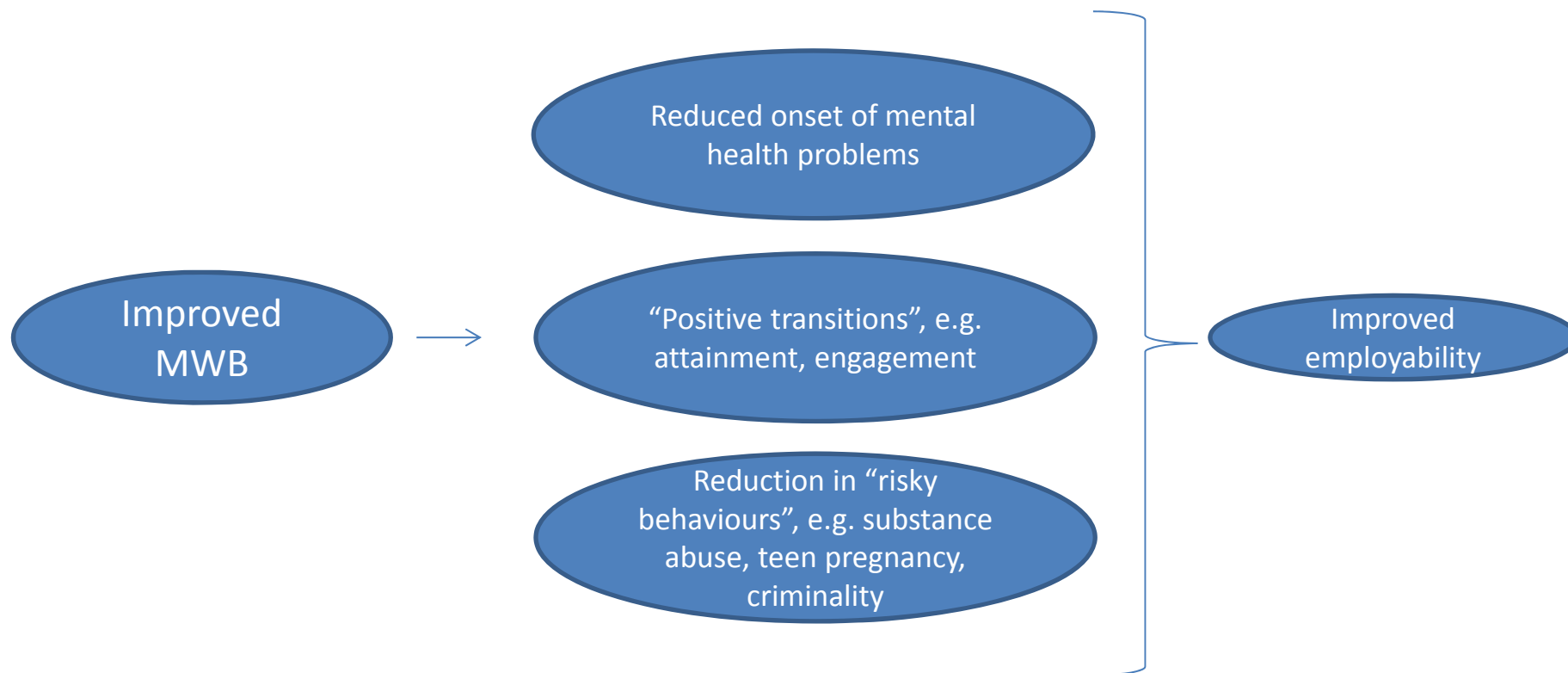


# HeadStart

- Big Lottery strategic investment
- Aim: Improve mental wellbeing of 10 to 16 year-olds
- Up to £75m in six local partnerships, 2016-2023:
  - Locally developed, cross-disciplinary, multi-layered and integrated prevention strategy
  - Development of local conditions to ensure strategy is sustainable
  - Develop robust evidence base around “what works”



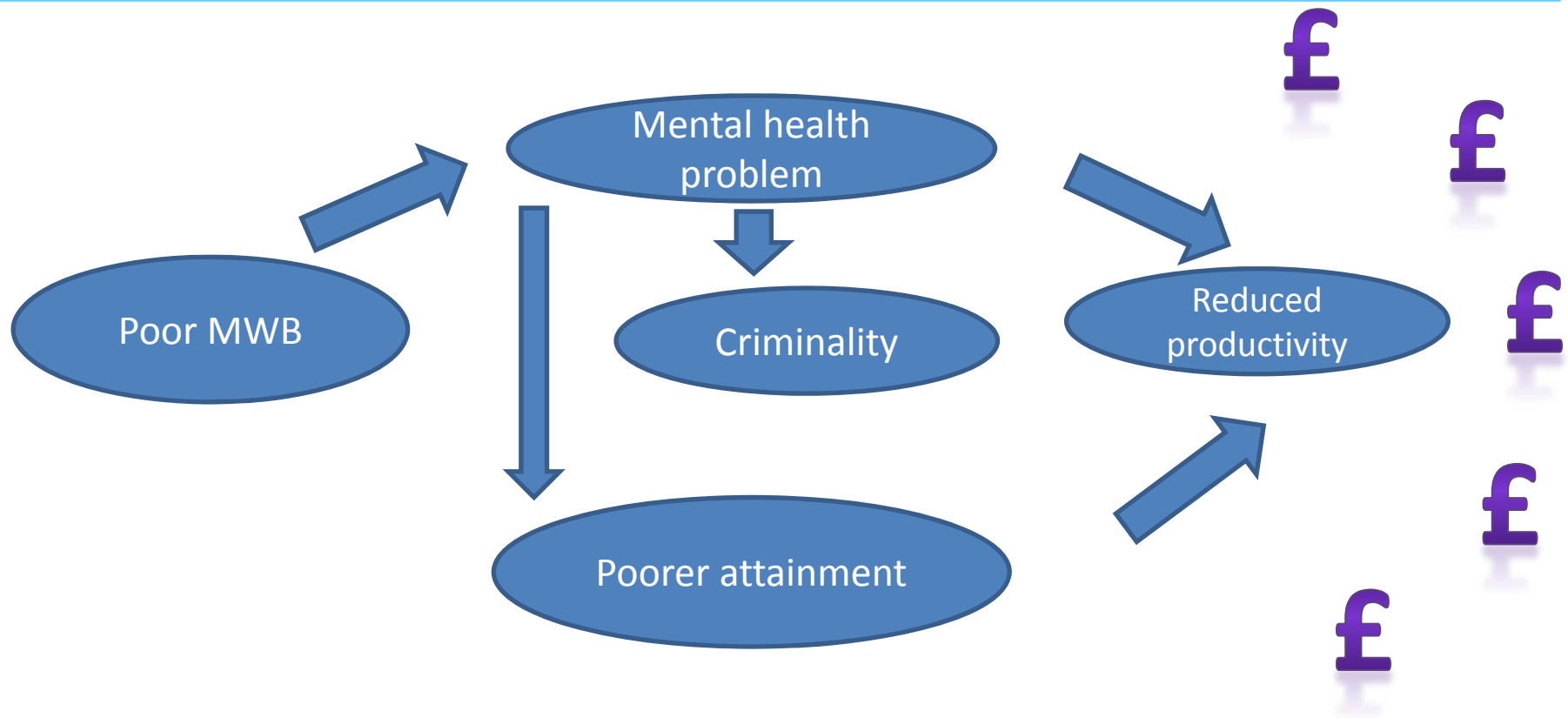
# HeadStart



# Economic evaluation of HeadStart

- Aim:
  - To develop models and frameworks to help understand the costs and potential down-stream savings from intervening early to improve mental wellbeing in young people
- Approach:
  - Calculate the costs of poor mental wellbeing
  - Estimate the (potential) cost savings from intervening (“cost avoided” - because problems were prevented)

# The costs of poor MWB



# The views of young people

Mental wellbeing ...

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## Discussion

- Nature of poor MWB has implications for access, service design
- Working effectively with young people, schools → time, resources
- Issue of effect size in low-level /preventative interventions
- How can we capture the nuances of MWB in economic evaluation? Do we need to?

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