

Encouraging Income Assistance clients to register at WorkBC

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Ministry of
Social Development
and Poverty Reduction



WorkBC

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Continuing Business Studies

SDPR and WorkBC



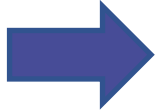
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WorkBC

- **SDPR provides income assistance (IA)** to individuals and families who have no other resources **to meet their basic needs.**
- WorkBC **supports** individuals in **finding and keeping a job.**
- **Target population:** employment-obligated IA clients.
- **The Problem:** only 8% clients who are referred to WorkBC Employment Services access those services.
 - WorkBC participation increases monthly employment rates by 2.3x

The intervention – a BI-enhanced reminder message

Barriers  Solutions

- Low motivation **gain frame**
- impersonal service **personalized**
- Lack of Service Awareness **information**
- cognitive overload **easy**
- forgetfulness

Subject: **WorkBC can help!**

Dear **<<Recipient>>**,

Did you know that WorkBC Employment Services can **double your** chances of finding work?

These are some of the great programs that WorkBC can connect you with:

- Job search, training, and placements
- Assistance with clothing, equipment, and transportation
- Interpreter and English language services
- Assistive technology
- Indigenous Skills and Employment Training

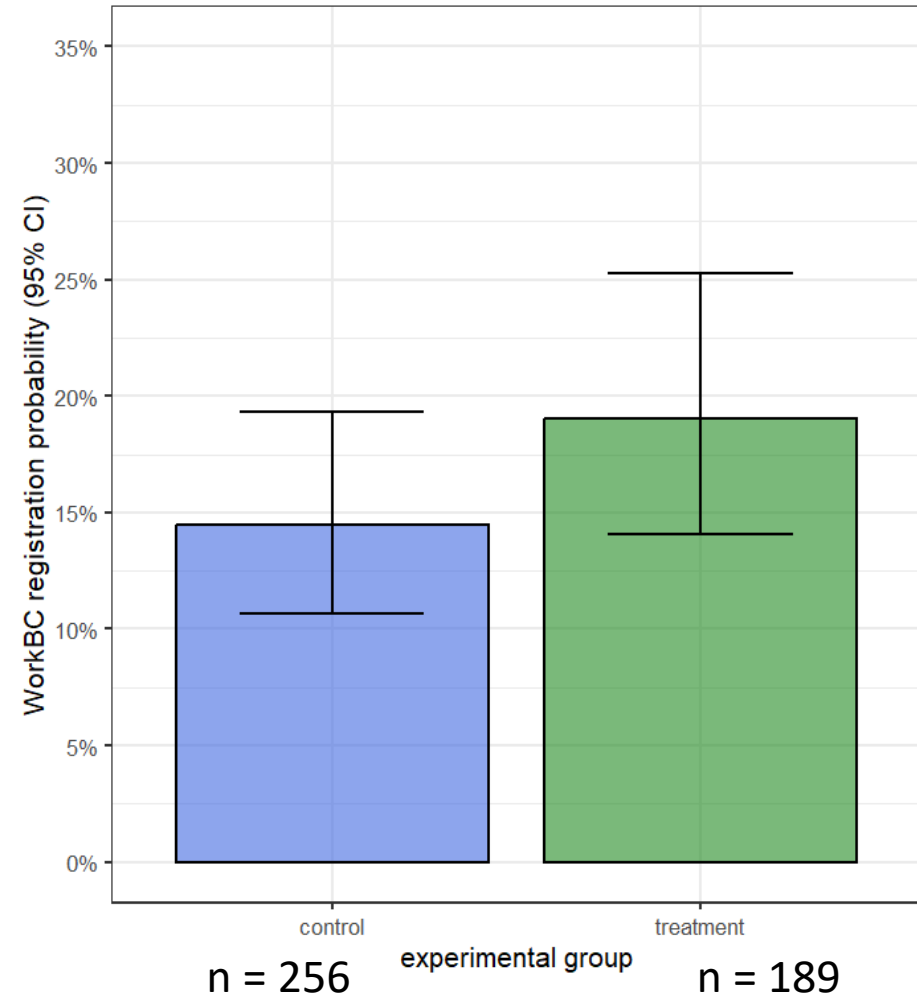
Click here to apply online, download the [WorkBC app](#), or visit **your** [local WorkBC Centre](#).

For more information, please contact WorkBC by phone at 250-952-6914 or 1-877-952-6914 (toll free), or by e-mail at wbcinfo@gov.bc.ca

WorkBC is looking forward to supporting **your** employment journey.

Results – main effect of treatment

- Ignoring other factors, our **Gain message** increased the **WorkBC registration rate** from **14.5% to 19.0%** ($p = 0.197$).



Results – Does the treatment interact with other factors?

We checked using a **causal forest** machine learning model

- An ensemble of decision trees which **quantifies variation in treatment effects due to interactions with other factors**, like age, education, etc.
- Is the effect of an intervention stronger or weaker for some subgroups in our sample than others, and if so, by how much?



Susan Athey

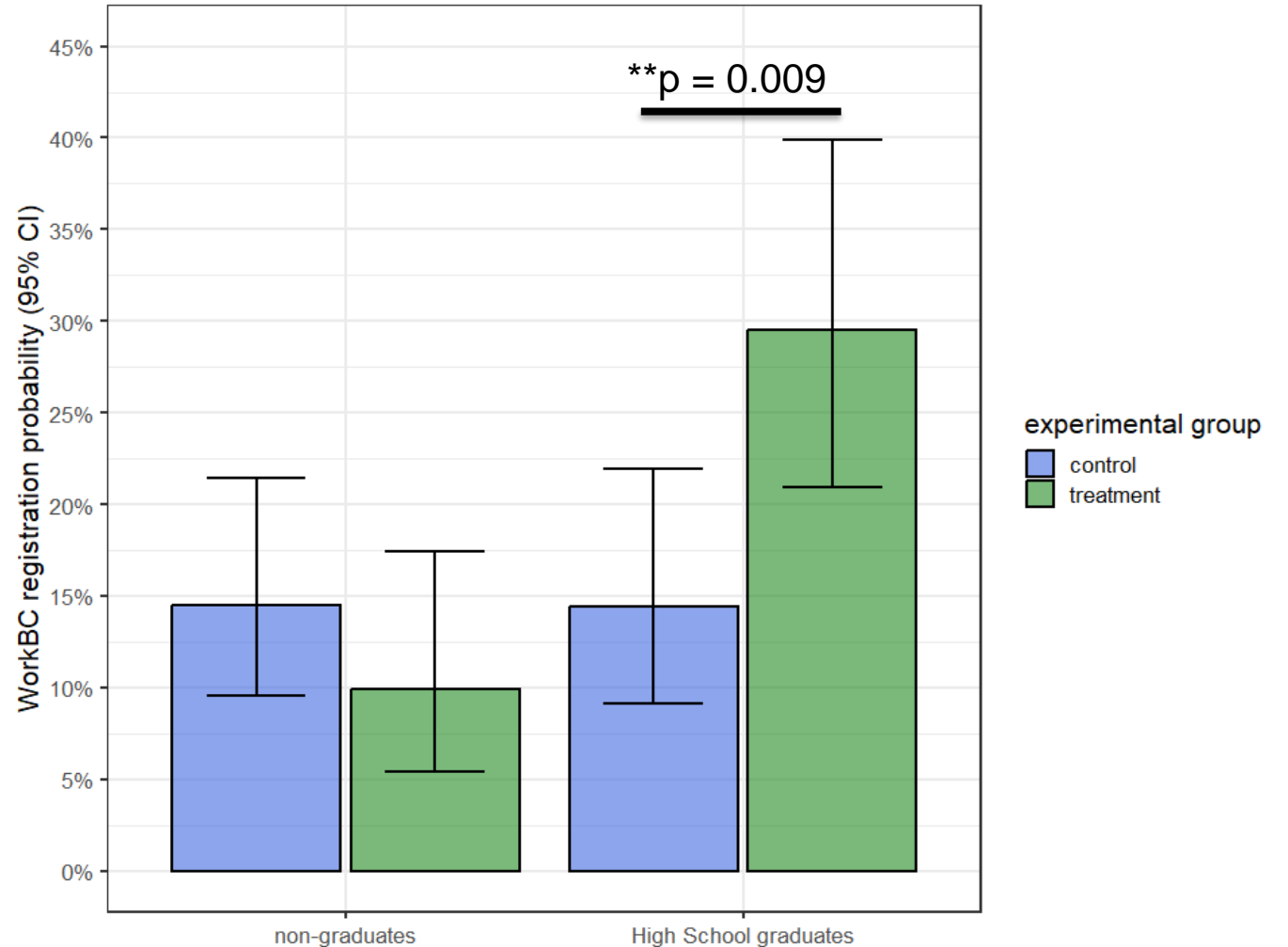
Athey, S., & Imbens, G. (2016). Recursive partitioning for heterogeneous causal effects. *PNAS*, 113(27), 7353-7360.

Athey, S., & Wager, S. (2019). Estimating treatment effects with causal forests: An application. *Observational Studies*, 5(2), 37-51.



Results – treatment by education interaction

- Statistically significant interaction between treatment and high school graduation status ($p = 0.013$).
- **Gain message doubles WorkBC registration rate (14.4% to 29.5%), but only among high school graduates.**



Recommendations

- **Implement the gain message, starting with high school grads**
- **Explore alternative options for helping clients with greater barriers.**
- **Support further research to evaluate employment outcomes.**

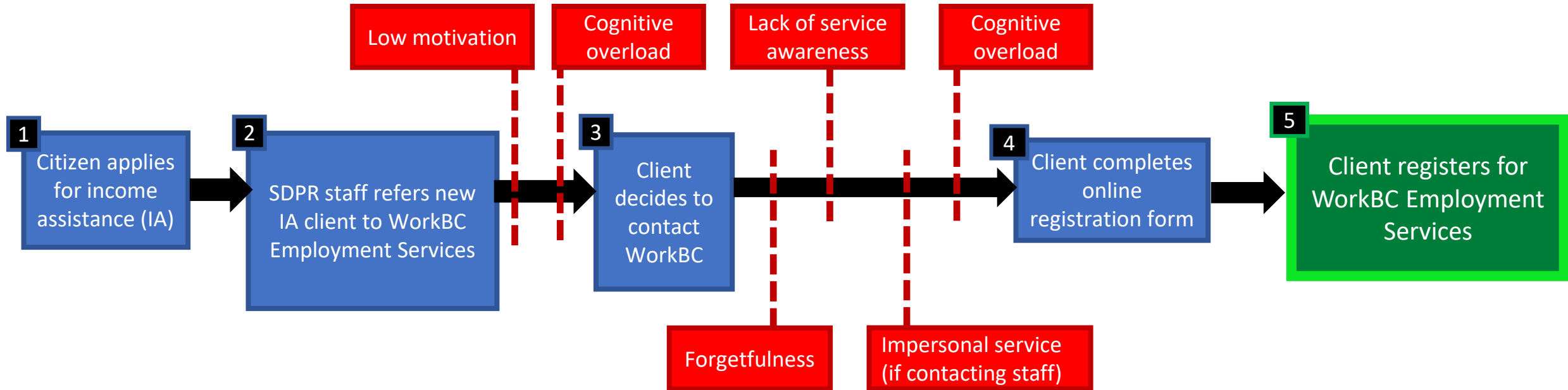


Q & A



Behavioural process map

(actions | barriers | target behaviour)

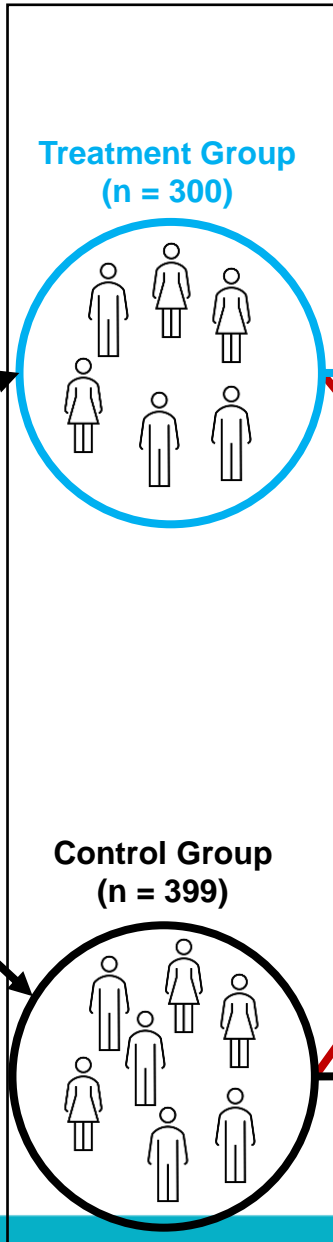


Target Behaviour:

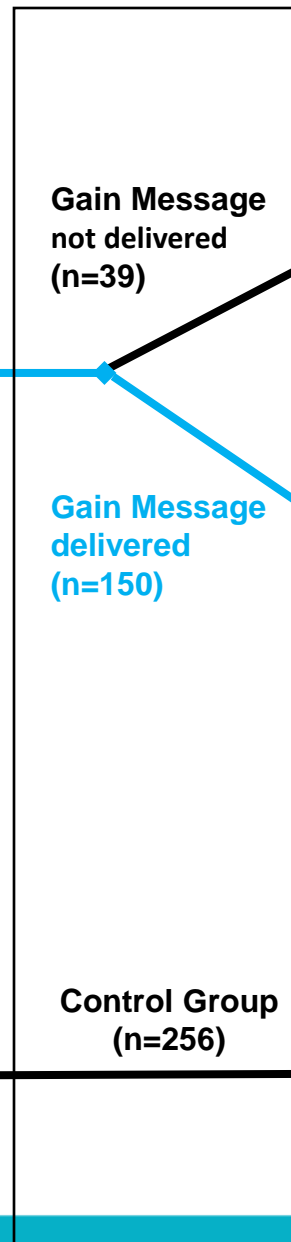
Client registers for WorkBC services.

Post-test Randomized Control Trial (RCT)

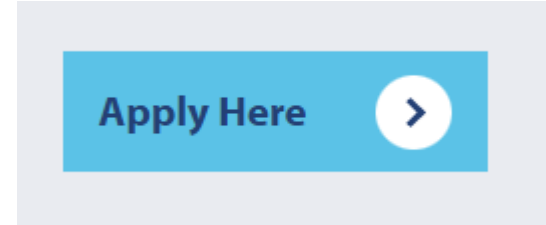
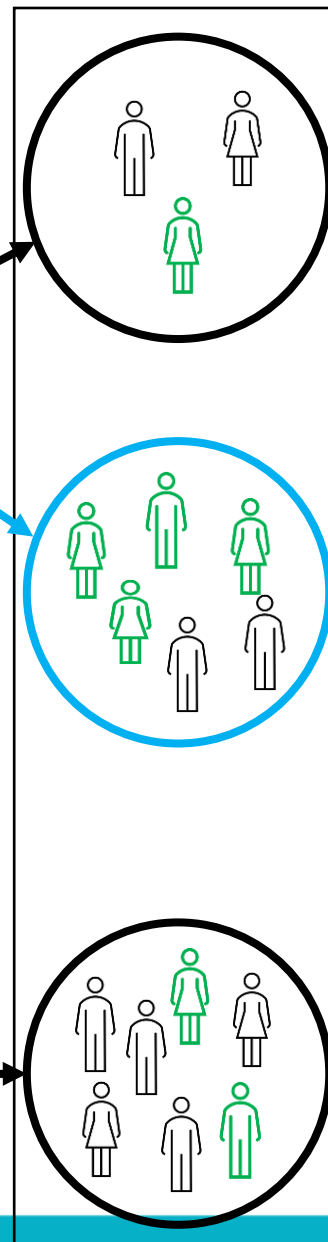
Data collected at time of
randomization (March 14th)





Intervention period
(April 5th to 19th)



Data collection 1 month after
intervention (May 19th)



-  = registered at WorkBC
-  = not registered at WorkBC