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Equal access for equal need? ‘Poverty Proofing’ education and healthcare settings

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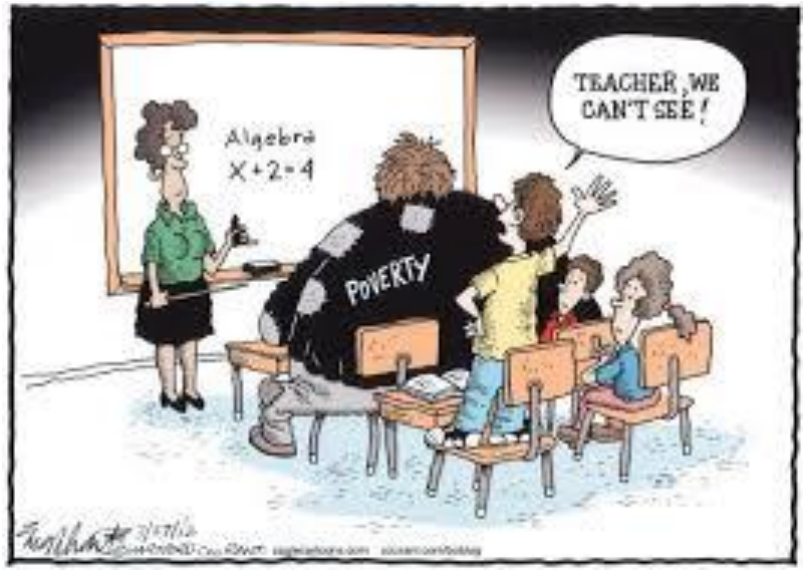
Part 1: Poverty Proofing the School Day

Problem – child poverty

- Child poverty rates in NENC are higher than average – 35% NE, 30% UK, 23% EU
- Poverty affects children's ability to access and benefit from education
  - 40% of children on FSM leave school without qualifications
  - 70% of parents report struggling to meet the costs of the school day



Response – ‘Poverty Proofing’

Because growing up can be hard

- ‘Poverty Proofing the School Day’ developed by Children North East (CNE)
- Audit:
  - School audit to identify how poverty affects the school day
  - Speaks to all students & questions staff, parents and governors
- Action plan:
  - Addresses stigmatising policies and practices
- Since 2014, 135 primary & secondary schools in NENC & 129 in other parts of England

Project (part 1)

- Retrospective evaluation of the impact of ‘Poverty Proofing the School Day’
- Conduct a natural policy experiment
- School-level data from the National Pupil Database
- Difference-in-differences analysis of ‘treatment’ and ‘control’ schools (with matching on pre-treatment characteristics e.g. location, size, type of school, pupil demographics)
- Outcomes: attendance, exclusions, attainment, FSM uptake

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Part 2: Poverty Proofing healthcare settings

Problem – Child Poverty

- Horizontal inequities in healthcare access: poorer people consume more healthcare, richer people access care at an earlier stage and consume more preventive and specialist care
- NHS has a legal duty to tackle inequalities in healthcare access
- Health Equity Audits – rarely used, rarely engaged with & rarely acted on

Response – Poverty Proofing Healthcare Settings

- CNE & Child Health & Wellbeing Network identifying range of primary & secondary healthcare settings for Poverty Proofing pilot
  - GPs
  - Dentists & opticians
  - Pharmacies
  - Hospitals
  - CAMHs
- Identify a range of issues mainly focused around costs

Project (part 2)

- Co-design a Poverty Proofing audit & action plan toolkit with stakeholders
- Data collection: healthcare setting observations(!), in-depth interviews, group discussions
- Pilot in three healthcare settings
- Process of feedback & refinement

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Thank you!