

# Place-Based Policy for Addressing Concentrated Neighbourhood Poverty

Code Red Rx: Prescription for Healthy Neighbourhoods

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# The Social Gradient in Health

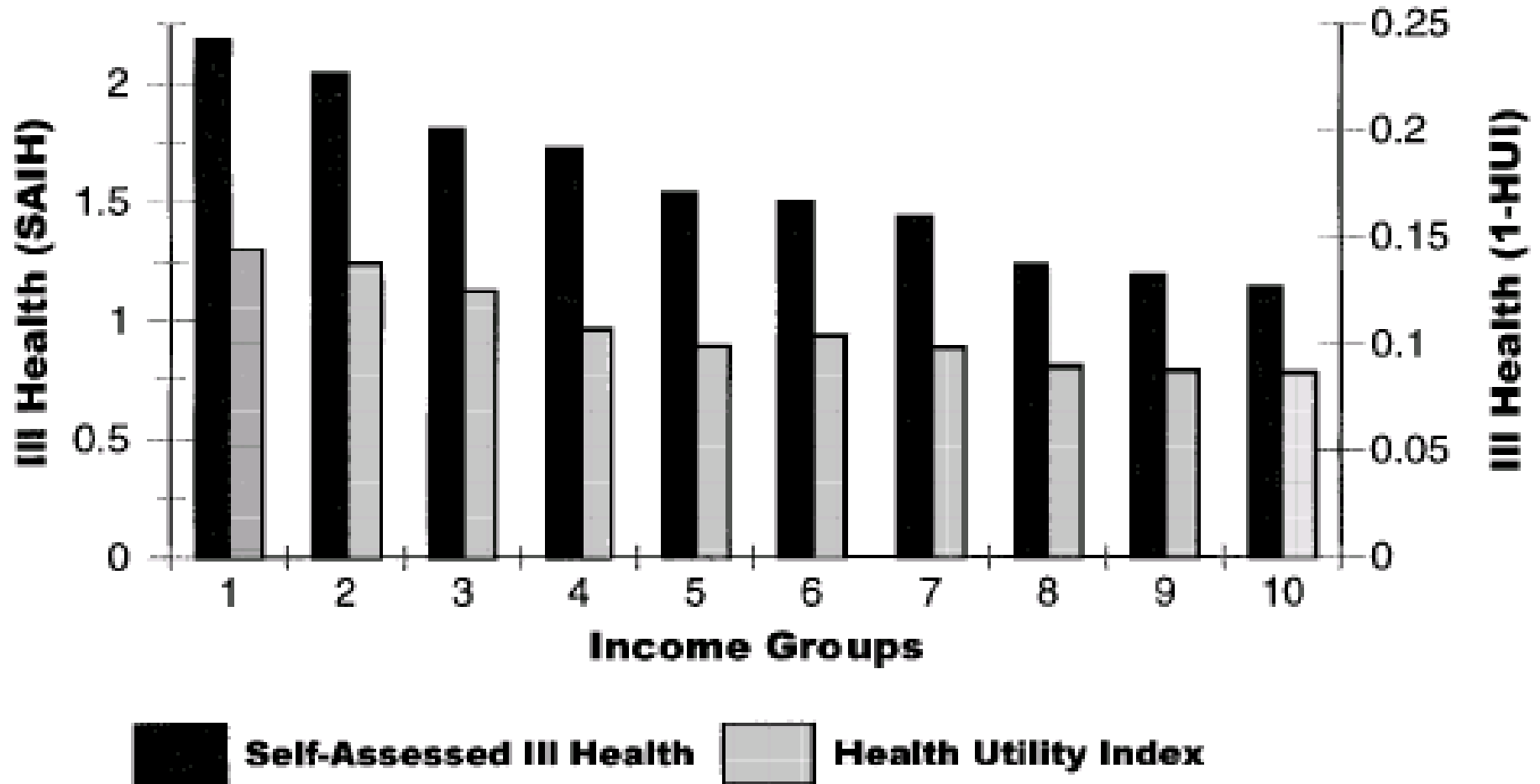


Fig. 2. Ill-health by income.

# Health is a Social Justice Issue

**“Health inequities”** are caused by social inequality.

**“Health inequities”** are differences in people’s health that are (Whitehead 1992) :

- Unnecessary
- Avoidable
- Unfair
- Unjust

# Good Health should be a Basic Right ...

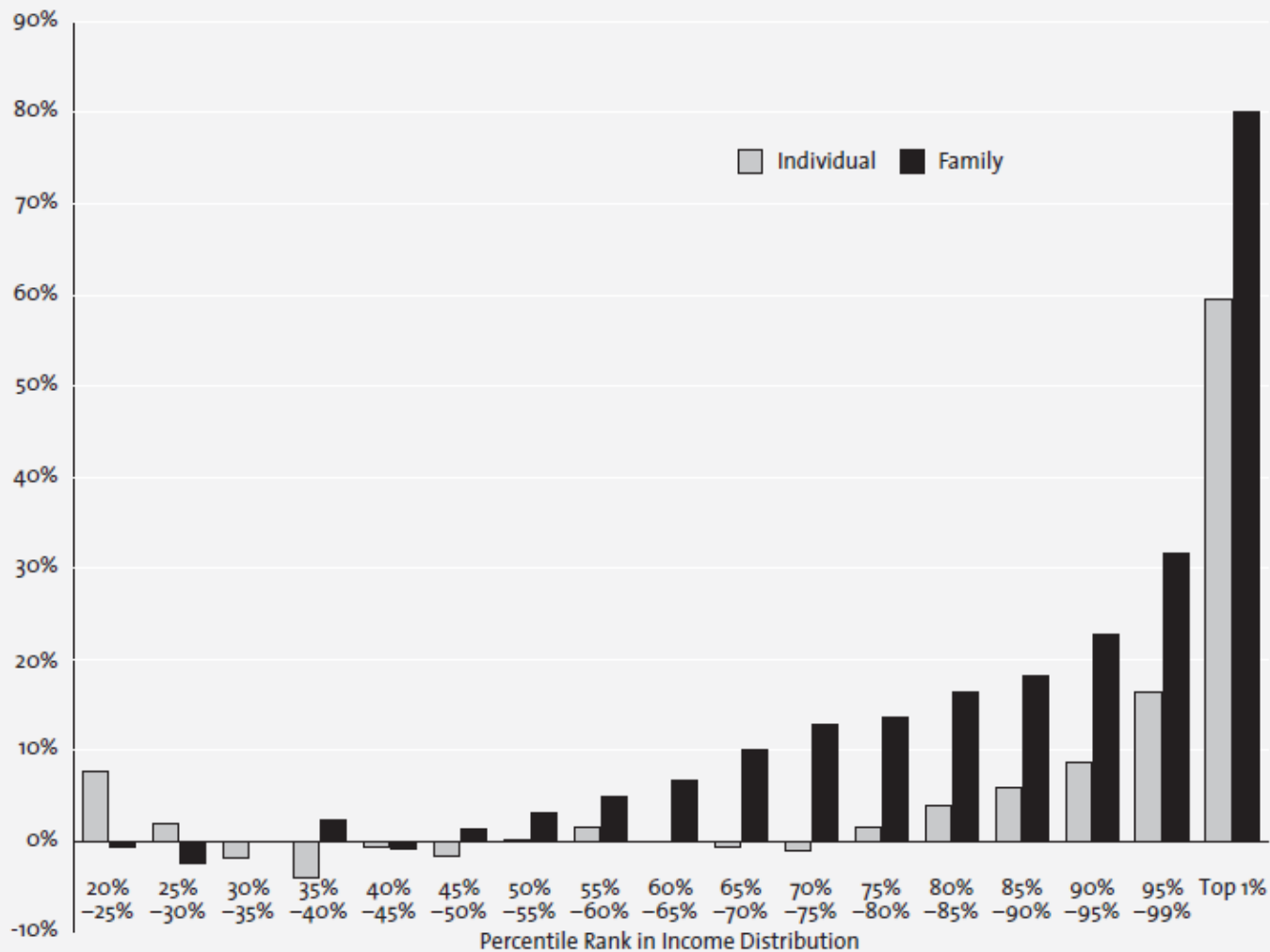
- The right to health cannot be separated from other basic rights such as
  - right to housing,
  - access to a good standard of living,
  - good education,
  - freedom from discrimination, and
  - freedom to participate in society
- (Braveman & Gruskin 2003)

# What is poverty?

“People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by...society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society.” (<http://www.socialinclusion.ie/poverty.html>)

# Why is Poverty So Problematic Today?

FIGURE 1 Percent Change in Real Taxable Income 1982–2004

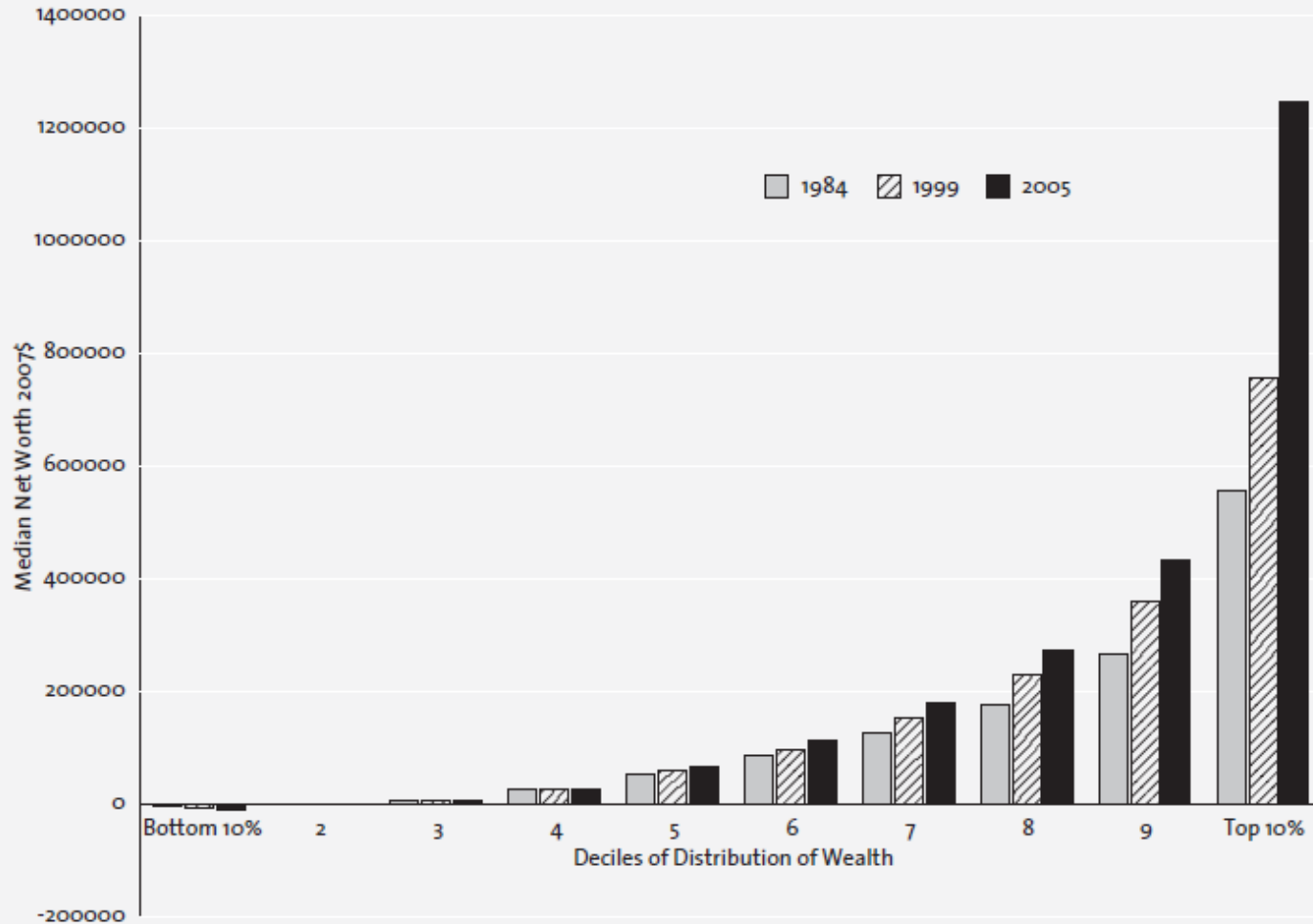


SOURCE Calculated from Murphy, Roberts and Wolfson (2007: Tables 4 and 5)

Source: Osberg (2008)



FIGURE 9 The Wealth of Canadian Families 1984, 1999, 2005



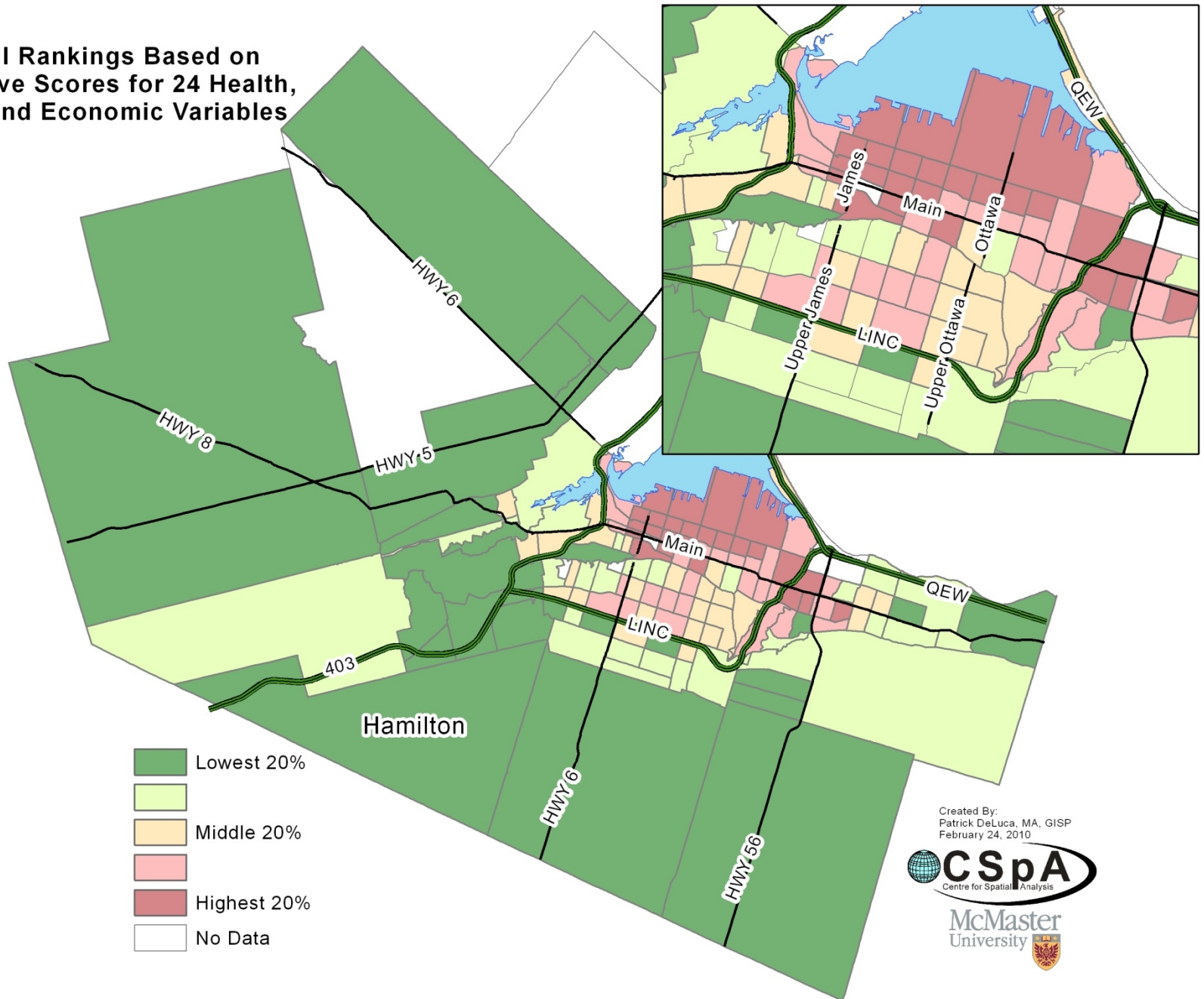
Source: Osberg (2008)



# Neighbourhood Disparities

- Are large in Hamilton
- Poverty is spatially concentrated
- People with low incomes:
  - tend to live in the least expensive and least desirable housing, wherever that may be;
  - often have poor education, poor skills, poor health, are immigrants, are aboriginal...
- Creates significant concentrations of marginalized people in neighbourhoods
- Why is this a concern?

# Overall Rankings Based on Cumulative Scores for 24 Health, Social and Economic Variables



# Concentrated Neighbourhood Poverty: Why Care?

- OECD's Territorial Development Policy Committee (TDPC): has raised concerns
  - Impacts on growth, investment
- Concentrated poverty: 'deprivation amplification'
  - Low-income and other marginalized people made worse off by living in a low-income neighbourhood
  - Effects can be self-perpetuating
- Neighbourhood environments operate as 'local opportunity structures'

# Is Place-Based Policy A Solution?

# Place-Based Policy: An Overview

- Place-based policy popular over last 15+ years in US, UK, Australia...now Canada
- UK most active with 'area-based initiatives':
  - E.g., New Deal for Communities, Health Action Zones
- Involves targeting defined areas for additional investment / programs to reduce inequalities
- Canadian examples:
  - Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC); Priority Neighbourhoods Strategy (Toronto); Vancouver & Winnipeg Agreements;
- Recommended by OECD Cities Report; McMurtry Report on Youth Violence, etc.

# Rationale for Place-Based Policy

- Identifiable geographic areas have high levels of social problems
  - Mainstream programs operate less effectively
- Individual disadvantage is exacerbated by area disadvantage – magnifies problems
- Important for social and political reasons to address disparities between areas
- ‘hard to reach’ populations? i.e. ↑ number of disadvantaged people touched by P-B policy?

# Rationale for Place-Based Policy

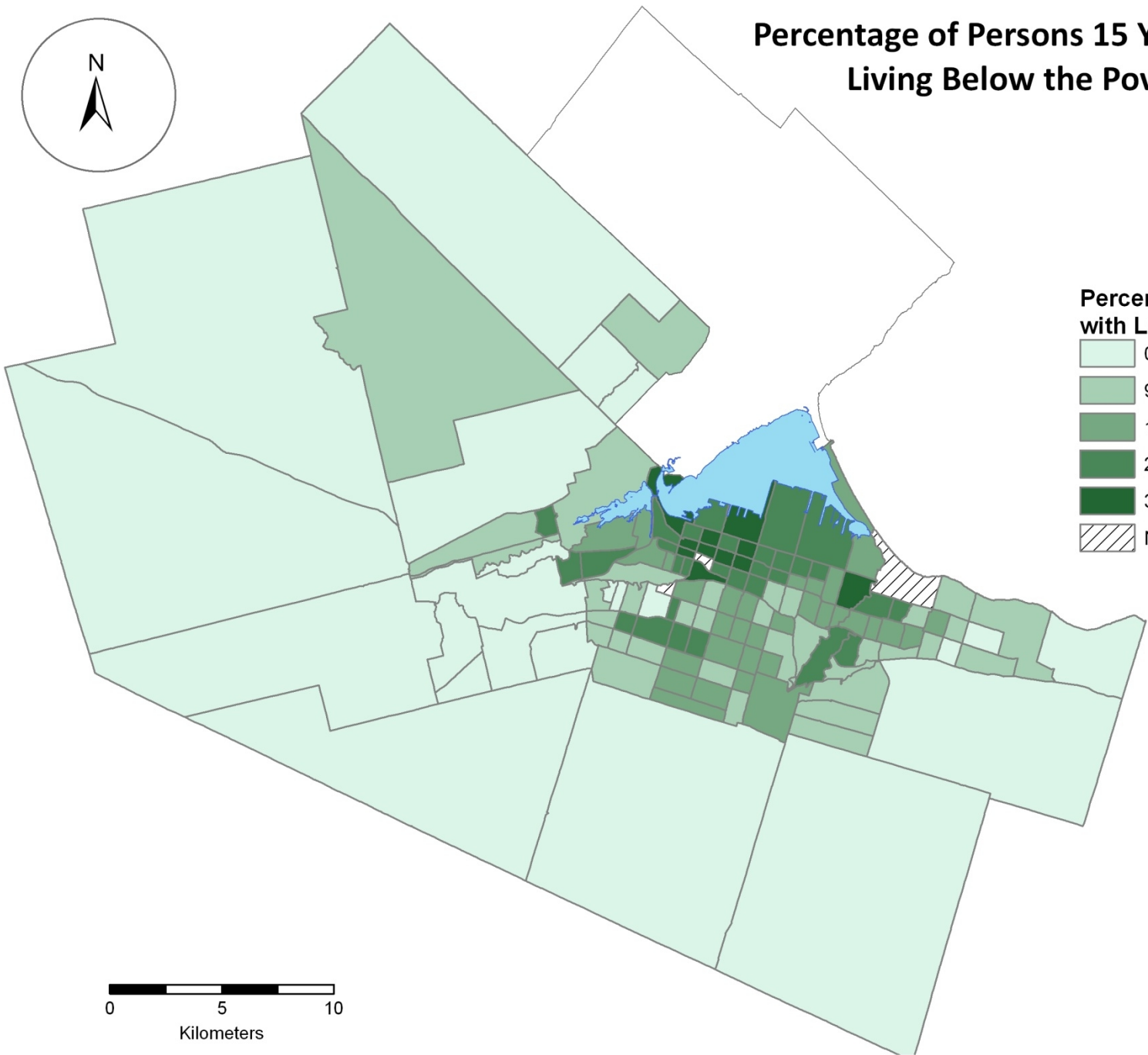
- Area (or place) targeted programs often have 'bottom up' approach – unlike mainstream
  - Depends on partnerships and capacity
  - More effective problem identification & solution delivery?
- Municipalities have policy levers to address spatial pattern of poverty; but not poverty per se
- Local programs can lead to ↑ confidence & capacity to participate in the community
- Successful area-based programs may act as pilots to change delivery of mainstream

# Rationale Against Place-Based Policy







- Most deprived people don't live in deprived areas (other forms of marginalization?)
- Place-based policies unfair to people not living in targeted areas

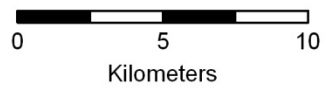


# Percentage of Persons 15 Years and Older Living Below the Poverty Line



## Percentage of Persons with Low Income

-  0 - 8
-  9 - 14
-  15 - 23
-  24 - 38
-  39 - 58
-  No Data

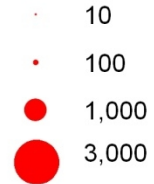


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Patrick DeLuca, MA, GISP  
January 18, 2011

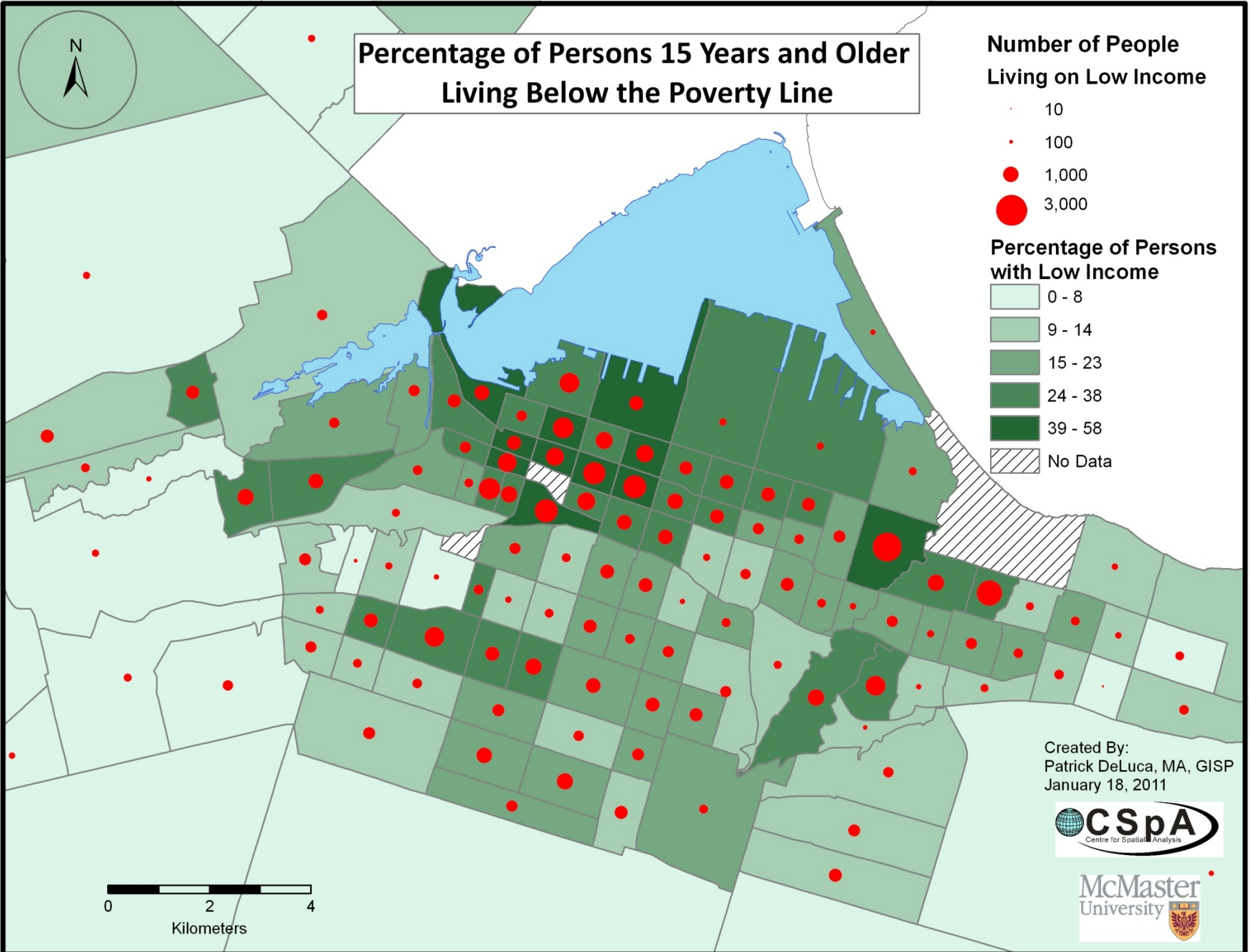
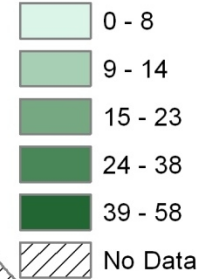


# Percentage of Persons 15 Years and Older Living Below the Poverty Line

## Number of People Living on Low Income



## Percentage of Persons with Low Income



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# Rationale Against Place-Based Policy

- Most deprived people don't live in deprived areas (other forms of marginalization?)
- Place-based policies unfair to people not living in targeted areas
- Place-based policies only displace, disperse or dilute problems – don't solve them
- Place-based policies may reduce the urgency to address problems at other levels
- Increased affluence can displace low-income households (i.e., gentrification)

# Place-Based Policy Example: New Deal for Communities (UK)

# New Deal for Communities (NDC) – United Kingdom

- Launched in 1998 to reduce gap between deprived communities and national avg
- £1.54B spent between 1999/2000 and 2005/06 across 39 communities
- 10-yr time horizon – critical
- Addressed 6 theme areas:
  - Poor job prospects, high crime, educational under-achievement, poor health, poor housing and physical environment

# NDC Delivery Model

- Community-led partnerships established priorities and engaged local providers to deliver programs, encouraged collaboration
- Both place-based and people-based initiatives undertaken
  - Medium-term results: greater success of place-based initiatives (e.g. community image/reputation)
  - This key to retaining middle-income households, however: may impact people outcomes later
- Intensive monitoring of impacts: household surveys of the same people every two years

# What Factors Can Municipal Policy Target to Transform Neighbourhoods?

# Place-Based Policy for Hamilton?

- **Local policy levers can / need to address:**
  - **Physical capital**: land, buildings, streets, heritage architecture, natural features, etc.
  - **Economic capital**: household disposable income, business capital, employment, etc.
  - **Human capital**: skills, knowledge, credentials, capacity, health & vitality – human capital dev't & retention
  - **Social capital**: collective efficacy, trust in neighbours & institutions, mutual reciprocity
  - **Cultural capital**: place identity and image, cultural knowledge, symbolic goods



# Research & Evaluation Strategies

- Longitudinal data on 4 types of household are essential : a) intervention areas; b) comparison areas; c) in-movers; d) out-movers
  - Unintended consequence of area-based policy: it changes the incentive structure for residential moving (and staying)
- New Deal for Communities (UK) is exemplary for its evaluation
  - Lead organization is Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- No rigorous evaluation => no course correction + trapped in perpetual pilot project

# Conclusions

- Great potential for place-based policy
- Well-matched to municipal policy levers
- Requires complementary action from senior gov'ts
- Canada a late-adopter ⇒ learn from elsewhere
- Need to be concerned about both the 'how' (governance) and the 'what' (content)
- Need to **prepare for success**:
  - predictable negative side effects, e.g. ↓ affordable housing
- Need rigorous research & evaluation and a vehicle for learning from experience

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