

125 *HEALTH EFFECTS OF JOB LOSS FROM A AUTOMOTIVE PLANT*

Around the world transnational corporations are withdrawing capital from communities in which they have had long term commitments and been providers of mass employment. This paper will report on data from the first wave of interviews from a longitudinal study of the closure of an automotive manufacturing plant in Adelaide, South Australia.

The study is based on detailed structured interviews with 380 workers exiting from the manufacturing plant and in-depth interviews with 40 of them. The research is a collaboration between housing, labour market and public health researchers and the interview collected data relating to each of these topics. The public health arm of the study was particularly interested in the extent to which social capital influenced worker's experiences following retrenchment.

This paper will draw on data addressing the issue of whether individuals' levels of social capital appear to buffer the effects of losing one's job and the extent to which losing one's job is perceived as having an impact on health by the workers. We will report on the range of experiences reported by our sample and represent typologies of workers based on their health status at the time they lost their job; their reactions to the situation and the extent of their social support.

The paper will conclude with discussion of the implications of our early research results for policies relating to the closure of manufacturing plants that are significant employers in a community and the responses that may be expected.