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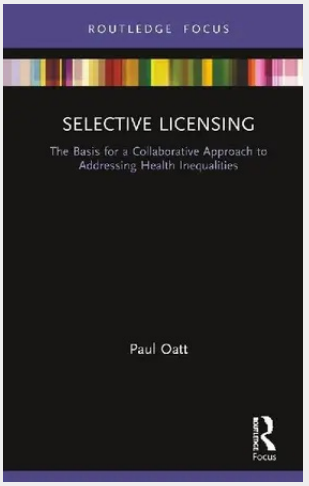
Selective Licensing

The Basis for a Collaborative Approach to Addressing Health Inequalities



In recent years, the private rented sector has overtaken social housing to become the main housing provider with some of the worse housing conditions that are linked to preventable health inequalities. This book seeks to expand upon previous research in the area with a focus on selective licensing and enforcement, using a case study to illustrate changes in working practices that have been bought about through new powers being made available to local authorities to issue civil financial penalties upon criminal landlords. The book examines the impact of this legislation on regulatory enforcement in the London Borough of Newham's property licensing scheme, delivered in a multi-agency partnership across its private rented sector, and the outcomes of combining the use of licensing and traditional housing inspections with use of civil penalties in alternative to prosecution to address some of the worse effects of poor housing. The study also considers the limitations of employing informal actions to address such issues as well as identifying both the barriers to collaboration and the most effective strategies for service delivery where agencies – such as the police, border agency, council tax and local planning, irrespective of inter-agency competition – work together to achieve individual and shared objectives in evolving partnerships. The findings here will be of keen interest to environmental health professionals, academics, and indeed those operating in local authorities themselves.

Based on a study of the London Borough of Newham, this book aims to show how the selective licensing tool available to local authorities can be used to improve housing standards and reduce health inequalities.

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