

Identification Number: 478/YHHE

Social Policy Research:
influencing policy and changing
vulnerable people's lives

1. Achievements of excellence

This nomination describes the achievements of an internationally recognised research unit that carries out world class, policy-related research, communicates its outputs to policy makers, practitioners, voluntary organisations, and service users, and influences change. The Unit was established in 1973 and has become one of the largest and most successful groups of applied social policy researchers in the UK.

“I have no doubt that, if asked to nominate the top 10 university-based social policy research institutes around the world, [redacted] would feature in the vast majority of lists. It has made an immense contribution to scholarship and collaboration that is widely recognised as being of global significance and impact.”

Professor Peter Saunders, Director Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Australia

For 35 years, the Unit has produced research on all aspects of the development, delivery and evaluation of policies and services to support children and adults made vulnerable by poverty, ageing, disability or chronic illness, and family crisis, abuse or neglect. It has had a major influence on policy and practice development for disabled or chronically ill children and adults, informal caregivers, income and employment support systems, looked after children and young runaways. In doing this, it has achieved a national and international reputation for applied research, the outputs of which have influenced research across the world. It has provided a model for similar research groups in other countries and has trained policy makers, practitioners and researchers from the UK and abroad. The Unit has also led the way in developing methods and approaches that enable disabled and older people and children, who have not had a voice in the past, to participate actively in research.

“This Unit is an exemplar of the sort of research centre the Prize was established to honour. It produces truly excellent research that not only has impact, but that is designed from the outset to have impact, on some of the most intractable and complex social problems facing the UK.”

Sharon Witherspoon MBE, Deputy Director, The Nuffield Foundation

Uncovering the extent, costs and consequences of childhood disability

The Unit has transformed knowledge about the extent, costs and consequences of childhood disability in the UK, and about how to intervene to support disabled children and their families. Before the early 1970s, the challenges faced by families bringing up severely disabled children at home were virtually invisible in the UK to the public and policy makers. This situation changed when the

'Thalidomide affair' led to a novel social policy experiment - the Family Fund - to provide financial support for the families of severely disabled children.

The Unit has its origins in a research project to monitor and evaluate the work of the Family Fund. From this came a stream of research that was internationally groundbreaking. This included:

- the first comparative study of the financial impact of having a disabled child
- the first intervention study of resource workers for disabled children and their families.

Subsequent work explored previously 'hidden' or newly emerging issues, for example:

- incontinence and continence services
- the housing needs of families with disabled children
- technology-dependent children
- mental health services for deaf children
- participation of disabled and ill children in local decision making about health services development
- disabled children's desired outcomes from health and social care services.

“[redacted] has been incredibly important in taking forward research about the needs of parents of disabled children and on the impact of child disability on family life.”

Professor Allan Colver, Donald Court Professor of Community Child Health, Newcastle University

Growing up disabled

Improvements in medical care and services mean that severely disabled children are now more likely to survive into adolescence and beyond. As a result, there is a more severely and multiply-disabled population of young people and adults living in the community. Again, our research transformed understanding through:

- exploring how disabled young people made the transition to adulthood in the first large-scale, national study of their lives
- demonstrating in a follow-up study how disadvantage started to accumulate as they grew up
- comparing disabled young people with their non-disabled peers to show conclusively how pathways for the two groups diverged, leading to much poorer outcomes for disabled young people.

Carers and caring

Until relatively recently, the six million family members and friends who support disabled children and adults or frail older people were taken for granted. The Unit's work reversed this situation, highlighting the importance of caring and its impact on carers' lives. This provided carers' organisations with material for their campaigns to have carers' needs recognised in community care policy.

Unit's Early Research on Carers

When	What	Impact
Late 1970s and early 1980s	Unit contributes to theoretical debates, especially the role of women as carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> carers issue highlighted within community care policy development.
1984	Unit carries out first review of evidence about number and characteristics of carers, impact of caring, and how to support carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> published nationally in 1985, second edition 1990; sold many copies, and was cited widely confirmed some aspects of previous assumptions about carers, challenged others highlighted missing knowledge or evidence set research agenda for Department of Health and other funders for years to come questions about caring, designed by the Unit, included in General Household Survey (GHS); this made it possible for the first time to estimate accurately that there were 6 million carers in Great Britain.
1986 onwards	<p>Secondary analysis of data from General Household Survey</p> <p>First studies, internationally, of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> financial costs of caring caring within marriage service to support carers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> showed that different types of carers were involved in different types of caring highlighted previously hidden role of male carers demonstrated that services were unlikely to support most heavily involved carers showed how caring responsibilities were shifting in response to social, economic and demographic changes. confirmed difficult financial circumstances in which carers of adults find themselves challenged assumptions about caring within marriage and the role of men as carers developed model of relationship between carers and services that has been highly influential both academically and in relation to service development.

“Their work about carers' financial, social and family difficulties was the hard evidence we needed to back up the work of the Carers National Association (now Carers UK) which called for greater recognition for carers. The ongoing work of the Unit continues to be significant in the current work of the carers movement.”

Baroness Jill Pitkeathley OBE, House of Lords

Other outcomes from this and our subsequent work on carers include:

- A short book - *Carers: Research and Practice* - distilled the results of the first coherent programme of research on carers. This was targeted at planners and practitioners, most of whom had not worked with carers before and were unfamiliar with the research evidence about how best to support them. Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal gave the opening address at the national conference to launch the book. It was reprinted rapidly and sold over 2,000 copies.
- Showing conclusively that carers' psychological health was affected by taking on caring responsibilities.
- Identifying which outcomes carers themselves want from health and social care services.
- Carrying out the first national survey of families from minority ethnic communities caring for a severely disabled child.

- Establishing what influences whether people become carers.
- Increasing understanding of carers' aspirations about paid work and retirement.
- Providing background information for the National Carers Strategy through analysis of large-scale data sets.
- Becoming a founder member of Eurocarers. The Unit is currently preparing a Policy Briefing on the prevalence and impact of caring across the EU. The European Commission will circulate the briefing to all member state governments.

“The unit pioneered a new focus on the needs of carers which has now become both mainstreamed in national parlance and enshrined in national policy in the National Carers Strategy 2008 as well as the 1990 Act. They have led the policy and research agenda in this area and it has underpinned national debate and policy.”

Dr Carolyn Davies, Research Adviser to the Department of Health and Department for Children, Schools and Families, Institute of Education

Measuring poverty and well-being

Poverty is associated with social exclusion, lowered well-being, and poor health and educational outcomes for children. However, finding an agreed way of demonstrating whether families and children are in poverty, in order to address its

causes, has taxed researchers and policy makers for many years. The Unit's work has tackled this problem through a stream of interconnected projects over the past 20 years.

The first stage of this work measured the living standards of groups at risk of poverty. For example:

- before the Unit's work in the early 1980s, little was known about the living standards of the growing numbers of lone-parent families
- analysis of living standards at different stages of the life course showed how badly older women did on any measure of living standards.

The second stage identified factors that might influence these risks. Work here included:

- examining who received additional social security payments for fuel and whether these were adequate
- establishing what influences whether older people retire with adequate pension provision
- exploring why some people do not take up benefits to which they are entitled
- understanding incentives and barriers to paid work for different groups.

The third stage established budget standards for different groups by exploring how to establish a family budget standard for the UK and building a profile of indicators of living standards at different income levels.

This work led to the first attempt to measure social exclusion and to assess both social exclusion and poverty in a way that was internationally comparable. Most recently, the Unit has explored the outcomes of poverty for children in order to develop new indicators of children's well-being. These have been used to develop experimental local indices of child well-being for the Department of Communities and Local Government. Both streams of work have led to influential research on the comparative well-being of children and families across the world that has stimulated national and international debate. Examples of this debate are in the supporting material.

"In the 1990s ... succeeded in breathing new life into the method of budget standards ... This work received wide acclaim and it has since been replicated in several continental European countries. The methodology developed by will undoubtedly serve as an important source of inspiration in the further evolution of poverty measurement in a comparative European context."

Professor Bea Cantillon, Director of the Herman Deleeck Centre for Social Policy, University of Antwerp, Belgium



National and international debate followed a report from Unit experts that placed the UK's children at the bottom of a league table for child well-being in 21 industrialised countries.

The Unit in the future

The Unit has 38 members of staff, including five professors. Our current structure is of four specialist teams and a support team. The structure has evolved over time and we review its fitness for purpose regularly. In this way, we remain able to respond to emerging challenges for social policy by developing and growing new research areas. Examples of novel areas of and approaches to research we are currently developing include:

- using longitudinal approaches to understand how choices made by disabled children and adults and frail older people affect their longer-term quality of life and well-being
- understanding the long-term outcomes of being 'in care'
- evaluating interventions that attempt to manage the boundaries between health and social care
- work on mental health problems in families and in the labour market
- exploring the development of a single benefit system.

We continue to recruit the best young postgraduates in social policy and related fields and support them to become independent researchers, thus ensuring the long-term health and growth of the Unit. Our continued success in open, peer-reviewed, competition for research funds is a testament to the success of this strategy and our strength for the future.

The Unit has recently been accepted as a founding member of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) School for Social Care Research. This is a £15 million initiative to transform the evidence base underpinning social care for adults.

The Unit's selection

The Unit was selected following an invitation to all Departments and Research Units within the host University for nominations. A panel of the University's three Academic Co-ordinators, who represent Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences, together with the Deputy Vice Chancellor, reviewed these submissions. The Panel, following thorough scrutiny of all the applications, unanimously chose the Unit's submission.

2. Value and benefit to the institution

The Unit is almost entirely self-funding and has a successful record in attracting research income, amounting to £14.6 million over the last ten years. The projected research income for next year is almost £2.2 million. Research grants have been awarded by a wide variety of funders including the following government departments: Department of Health, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Children, Schools and Families. Other funders include NIHR Service Delivery and Organisation R&D Programme, Economic and Social Research Council, National Audit Office, European Commission and charities such as Barnardo's, Cancer Research UK, Children's Society, Nuffield Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Big Lottery.

We make a major contribution to the University directly via the Research Assessment Exercise. A large proportion of our staff is included in this return and their high quality publications, high levels of esteem and substantial research income have made a major contribution to the institution's strong performance over the last four assessments. This generates income to the University of over £0.5 million per year and helps to attract more funding and good quality academic and support staff to the Unit's parent Department.

The Unit has developed and grown in size over the years to become a respected and trusted independent source of advice for policy makers at national and local level, voluntary organisations and service users alike. This, alongside others' work in the health field, has established the University as a leader in applied social research.

The Unit has supported the development of career paths for applied social researchers, and we are committed to maintaining people in post so that they can have a long-term career in research. This is relatively unusual in the UK, where research posts tend to be seen as a stepping-stone to a more conventional academic career. This has two outcomes for the institution. On the one hand, we have a stable core of very experienced and well-regarded researchers in their respective fields who have been promoted as they have developed; for example, five people have become professors while in post in the Unit. On the other hand, many people have developed as researchers within the Unit, enabling them to move directly into senior posts elsewhere, thus enhancing the institution's

reputation as a nurturer of national and international research capacity and academic talent.

3. Value and benefit to the wider community

"This Unit has played, and will continue to play, a vital role in carrying out high quality research that meets the necessary academic standards vital for credibility and change across all sectors of public policy. However, very importantly, it also has a unique track record in combining academic excellence with the rare ability to ensure that its research findings are influential and well understood by a wide range of key stakeholders in order to bring about change."

Dr Phillipa Russell CBE, Chair, Prime Minister's Standing Commission on Carers, and The National Children's Bureau

Transforming knowledge and policy for disabled children and their families

The Unit established and managed for many years the first national database on severe childhood disability in the UK (the Family Fund database). This underpinned research that advanced knowledge about the cause and impact of specific disabling conditions at a time when very little was known about them. As the database grew, it also became an invaluable source of information about children with rare and sometimes newly described conditions.

Examples of questions explored via use of Family Fund database

- sex linkage and learning disabilities
- epidemiology of Perthes Disease, scoliosis and congenital dislocation of the hip
- epidemiology of epilepsy and Hunter/Hurler/Scheie syndromes
- epidemiology of visual defects in infancy
- epidemiology of Stills Disease
- relationship between rubella and spina bifida
- relationship between length of gestation, birth weight and spastic diplegia
- development of very young children with Down's syndrome.

The Unit's early study of the financial impact of bringing up a disabled child influenced the shape of the UK social security system designed to support families of disabled children. Other outcomes from our work based on Family Fund data include:

- reduction in the age limits for receiving Attendance Allowance

- extension of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance to children under the age of five
- abolition of the means test for families of disabled children applying for Disabled Facilities Grants
- expert help and support to the Office for Population Censuses and Surveys for the first national, representative sample survey of disabled children
- regional disability registers in Tayside, Merseyside and Yorkshire Regions, Sheffield, Newcastle, Derbyshire, Gloucestershire, Northumberland and other areas established or improved.

“The Unit's work with disadvantaged children is in my view invaluable and quite unique.”

Dr Martin Bax, Emeritus Reader in Child Health, Faculty of Medicine, Imperial College London

Influencing services for disabled children and their families

Recent estimates suggest that almost one in ten children are disabled or have a long-standing illness. The Unit's research has influenced the ways in which services support these disabled and ill children and their families:

- The Unit showed how valuable key workers are for families of disabled children and then carried out work to implement and evaluate key working services.
- The Unit developed and hosted the UK-wide charity Care Co-ordination Network UK, helping it to become self-supporting. The Network promotes and develops key working and care co-ordination for disabled children and their families.
- The Early Support Programme and the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services recommended key working systems. Service standards for developing key worker services were based on the Unit's evaluation of their effectiveness and costs.
- CLIC (now CLIC Sargent) used the Unit's research on the support needs of children with cancer and their families to develop their services.
- The Department of Health used the Unit's evaluation of specialist mental health services for Deaf children to influence the future funding and shape of these services.

“[The study] enabled us to make some realistic predictions about the level of need not currently being met ... the most powerful part of the evaluation was the information about families' use and experience of non-specialist services.”

National Health Service Commissioner, 29 July 2008

We developed 'self-help' and information resources, such as a leaflet, *Coming up to 16*, and an information booklet, *After 16 What Next?* inspired by the findings of the national

survey of disabled young people. The booklet, published by the Family Fund, ran to ten editions and became the single most important source of information for disabled young people and their families.

Staying put in older age

A major influence on older people's quality of life is whether they can remain in their own homes as they experience increasing frailty and, if they do, whether adequate and appropriate support is available. Since its earliest days the Unit has carried out research that has evaluated and influenced the development of services and policies that enable people to stay in their own homes:

- Evaluation of the 'Staying Put' project - an early voluntary sector project designed to provide housing adaptations and support to help older people to remain at home - enabled the voluntary organisation to extend the successful scheme.
- The Unit carried out a stream of evaluations of dispersed and personal alarm systems and 'community alarms' designed to allow vulnerable older people to call for help in emergencies, and of services delivered in older people's own home to help them remain there.
- Work for the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust influenced the Trust's plans for future housing provision for older people. This then influenced other providers of housing for older people.
- Research for North Yorkshire County Council social services department helped them devise alternatives to residential or nursing home care and to shape their Community Care Plan.

Influencing the shape and take-up of social security benefits

The Unit's research on social security benefits has repeatedly influenced the shape of individual benefits as well as influencing national and international debate.

“We have had a long and productive relationship with various members of [redacted] and have drawn on their expertise in support of various strands of our work. We use [redacted] publications and research expertise to brief SSAC members on welfare and employment issues, produce SSAC Occasional Papers and promote discussion at our annual Stakeholder Seminars.”

Sir Richard Tilt, Social Security Advisory Committee Chairman

Some examples of benefit changes influenced by the Unit are given below:

Project	What did we find?	What impact did we have?
Claiming Family Income Support (FIS)	<p>People did not understand whether they were eligible for FIS.</p> <p>People did not understand the claim forms.</p>	<p>National take-up campaign improved levels of take-up.</p> <p>FIS claim forms were redesigned.</p>
Evaluation of the Invalid Care Allowance (ICA)	<p>High level of financial difficulties for carers.</p> <p>Difficulties increased after end of caring - through death or admission to care.</p>	<p>Increase in the earnings limit for people claiming ICA. A premium for carers dependent on income support.</p> <p>Premium extended to 8 weeks after death or admission to care of person being cared for.</p>
Financial impact of the death of a child with a life-threatening or life-limiting condition	Families could face a drop of income of up to 72 per cent when child died.	Child Benefit extended for up to 8 weeks after death of a child.

Research into the changing circumstances of people receiving income support recommended an in-work benefit for childless couples and single people. After experimental implementation in 1996, this benefit was eventually incorporated into the Working Tax Credit system. This same work also recommended a separate social assistance benefit for pensioners; the Minimum Income Guarantee (now Pension Credit) was introduced shortly after and is now claimed by three million people. Other work by the Unit has led to change in the structure of social security appeals and to the development of employment programmes for sick and disabled people.

“I would go so far as to say that it is impossible to write in many of these areas [social security and child support law] without referring to the important empirical studies that [Unit] has carried out over the years.”

Judge Nicholas Wikeley, Emeritus Professor, University of Southampton

Improving policy and practice for children and young people in and on the edges of care

Around 60,000 children and young people are looked after by local authorities, because of family difficulties, abuse or neglect. Unit research about the costs, working and outcomes of the care system and about the role of residential and foster care has provided new evidence about this highly vulnerable group. Before our work there was no national picture of children in the care system that

described the types of children served, their care 'careers', and the patterns of movement and placement they experienced. Our work demonstrated what makes an effective placement in residential or foster care and what influences the success of the placement.

The Unit is at the forefront of research on young people leaving care, and our work led to recognition that young people need transitional support as they leave care and start adult life. Findings were incorporated in national standards and then national guidance on best practice in leaving care, and this was followed by the first UK legislation on leaving care.

“ [Unit] has also provided a national lead in research and policy making on adolescents ‘in care’ or on the edge of care. Pioneering work in the eighties opened up the debate and led to improved understanding of the needs of care leavers. The work of the unit crucially informed major policy change in this area and fed directly into the Leaving Care Act 2000 ... as well as related policies in Scotland and Wales. Similar development in Ireland and Norway has also been influenced by the work.”

Dr Carolyn Davies, Research Adviser to the Department of Health and Department for Children, Schools and Families, Institute of Education

Unit work on vulnerable groups of children and young people at risk has provided new knowledge about running away from home or care, missing young people and social work responses to unaccompanied asylum seeking children. Outcomes from this work include:

- establishment of the first refuge for children in Glasgow
- National Service Framework for runaways
- Department of Health national guidance
- Local Government Association/Association of Chief Police Officers guidance on procedures and practices in caring for missing children; this guidance is currently being updated and re-issued for 2009.

“It is extremely difficult to get an accurate idea of the number of children who run away each year because many cases are not reported, but a 2005 report commissioned by the Children's Society together with [Unit] gives a detailed and accurate picture of the problem and the facts are very unsettling.”

Professor Tanya Byron, Government adviser on children and new technology, advice column in *The Times*, 26 August 2008

4. New developments and different approaches

The Unit's distinctive contribution is its spotlight on under-researched areas of social policy and practice. The issues that are the focus of our research - social security systems for poor families, services for severely disabled children and adults or frail older people, the workings of the care system for troubled children - are rarely the focus of public concern, except when things go wrong. The Unit is committed to developing methods and producing good research evidence that can help to improve the health and well-being of some of the most vulnerable groups in the community.

"There is no question that the Unit leads the world in boundary-crossing, policy relevant, theoretically-informed research and knowledge brokerage in understudied and marginalized fields."

Professor Patricia McKeever, Bloorview Kids Foundation Chair in Childhood Disability Studies, University of Toronto, Canada

Involving disabled adults and children, and other service users in research

The Unit has a long-standing commitment to methods and approaches that enable disabled children, particularly those with communication difficulties, to participate both in research and in decision-making about their own lives.



A young person who uses alternative methods of communication and his personal board. The board displays some of the choices he made during an interview to describe who and what is important to him.

Many of the Unit's projects have involved innovative methods that allow disabled children and young people, children in care and young offenders to communicate their views and experiences. Examples include:

- young people acting as expert advisers in a project attempting to improve communication between health and education services
- exploring how children often seen as 'hard to reach' can participate in research
- developing outcomes for disabled and ill children, to be used within *Every Child Matters*, based on their own accounts
- working with a group of young people and health staff to develop guidelines for NHS staff to use when involving children and young people in health services development.



The NHS guidelines

"One ward sister is quoted as saying: 'It really did change my whole outlook on nursing ... I became from that point on the person who was always saying: 'Why are we doing this? Why do we need to do it like that? Have we asked patients what they want?' ' ' "

The Guardian, Society 9

October 2002 'Research on asking what young patients need: Bed, bored and ignored'

Building on these new approaches, the Unit ran a series of training courses for others interested in carrying out meaningful research with children.

What did the course do?

Equip people with skills and understanding so that they can do research that works with children to elicit their views.

Why was it needed?

Understanding that we need to do research with children rather than on them was limited.

Who participated?

Health professionals
Social care professionals
Voluntary organisations
Academic researchers

What impact did it have?

It helped develop research that works with children, including those with communication difficulties. Participants have completed PhDs and major research projects, using the knowledge and skills they gained on the course. Others have carried out research with children in their own organisations.

“Even more importantly in recent years, the Unit has been consulting with disabled children and young people themselves in order to get their take on life. The Unit has developed methods for involving young people in research and the Unit has organised important courses to enable other researchers to learn how best to involve young people.”

Professor Allan Colver, Donald Court Professor of Community Child Health, Newcastle University

Projects on services for Deaf or hearing impaired children and adults also involved developing new approaches to research, using Deaf researchers and the innovative use of sign language. The Unit produced a videotaped guide to Deaf people's participation in research, funded and distributed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The most recent project on mental health services for Deaf children again used Deaf researchers and innovative techniques to gather children's own views.

The Unit also has three standing groups of advisers - of disabled young people, parents of disabled children and young people, and disabled adults, carers and older people - who comment on all aspects of our work.

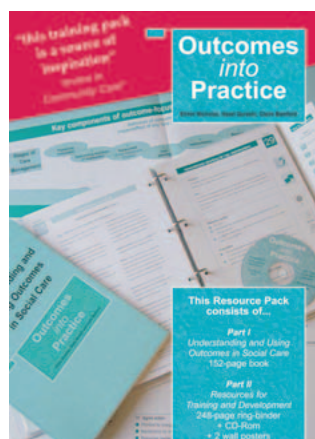
“Finding out the experiences and views of service users, both adults and children, has been an important component of the Unit's work for many years as has the need to communicate research findings to a wide range of people including policy makers, practitioners and people in the wider community.”

Dr Janet Lewis AcSS, Research Director of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation 1986-2002

From inputs to outcomes in social care

The Unit's research has shifted the focus in policy, routine practice and performance management away from service inputs towards outcomes, in adults' and children's social care. It did this by:

- establishing what outcomes older people, disabled adults, carers, and disabled children and their families want from social care
- working with social care providers and commissioners to explore incorporating a focus on outcomes when assessing need or commissioning and delivering social care
- working with a network of health and social care managers, trainers and researchers to test and produce a resource pack



that would facilitate training in the outcomes approach

- distributing 500 copies of the pack via a national conference jointly organised by the Unit and *The Guardian* and through subsequent sales.

The Health and Social Care Change Agent Team at the Department of Health (now the Care Services Improvement Partnership) adopted the network and continues to emphasise an outcomes approach in social care planning and provision.

The Unit's work was used by other researchers to develop, for the first time, outcome-based measures of social care activity for adults (the OPUS and ASCOT measures). These then informed quality-weighted outputs for National Accounts and a Quality Measurement Framework (led by the Office for National Statistics). These developments are important because measurement of the performance, quality and cost-effectiveness of public sector activity now concentrates on impact; introducing outcome measures has enabled this change.

The outcomes for carers identified by Unit work are included in guides to the 2000 *Carers and Disabled Children Act* and further work on outcomes for disabled children and their families influenced the way in which the *Every Child Matters* outcomes are interpreted for disabled children.

New approaches in UK social work research

Research on social work has historically depended on small scale and qualitative approaches. The Unit has advanced methods in UK social work research by using large-scale longitudinal studies, multi-level modelling, randomised controlled trials (RCTs) and by rigorous use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. These have led to new understanding of what contributes to positive and negative outcomes for children and young people in the care system and, specifically, of the contribution of quality of care to those outcomes. Ongoing work to assess the effectiveness of formal interventions, using RCTs, is mould breaking.

“In the area of child protection and vulnerable children, the Unit is arguably on the cutting edge in seeking to use randomised controlled trials to see if some interventions may help young people who are themselves vulnerable and at risk, but are also acting in a way that threatens community peace and safety. ... The innovative role of the Unit is to be one of the few places that both understands the multi-faceted needs of these children and young people, and also has the methodological skills to try to do a proper trial to see if this intervention yields promising results.”

Sharon Witherspoon MBE, Deputy Director, Nuffield Foundation

Influencing social security systems internationally

The Unit has pioneered new methods using standard model families, and the use of vignettes in order to compare policies across the world. These have contributed to the Unit's international comparisons of: benefit systems (including studies of child benefit packages); the incomes and living standards of older people; disability benefits; social assistance schemes and, most recently, child support regimes.

“Highly influential, in both European academic and policy circles, have been the Unit's comparative studies on minimum income protection schemes, (child) poverty and child benefit packages. ... Methodology developed by the Unit has become a standard in the field and is now applied in several recent comparative studies of income protection methods and levels in Europe.”

Wim van Oorschot, Professor of Sociology, Honorary President of the European Network for Social Policy Analysis, Tilburg University, The Netherlands

Policy makers from emerging nations have looked to the Unit for advice on setting up their own systems. A series of visits, research consultancy and training from members of the Unit enabled the Republics of Albania, Macedonia, Kyrgyzstan, Romania and Slovakia to learn from the UK.

Influencing generations of policy makers, practitioners and researchers

The Unit differs from other groups by working close to practice and policy, both during research and when disseminating results, and has always tried to ensure that the wider community benefits from research. We put time and energy into talking with groups concerned with the findings of our work, whether service users, voluntary organisations, implementation teams in local authorities, or those at top levels in national or international government. In this way, policy and practice are kept up to date with findings, and transferring knowledge enables improvement in the lives of the people who are the focus of our work. Examples of groups we have talked to and advised in this way are in the supplementary material.

However, the Unit has always maintained a critical stance on current policy and practice and we publish in international, refereed journals to validate this independent position and to influence other researchers.

The Unit has hosted many visitors, both short-term and long-term. These have included senior policy makers, junior policy makers who have worked as researchers in the Unit before returning to government, and visiting research fellows, from both the UK and abroad. A recent highlight among contacts with senior policy makers was a two-day visit of the Work and Pensions Committee to the Unit in 2006. There have

been strong links with Australia, Canada, South Africa and Norway over many years. Visits from Australian (Social Policy Research Centre) and Norwegian (Institute of Applied Social Research) researchers influenced the development of research units when they returned.

“When I visited the Unit sometime ago in [redacted], all the group made an exceptional welcome to me, offering all their help to my research in Spain. During the three years I can feel really fortunate for having this support and friendship. I think, sincerely, that researchers in the Unit are not only relevant scientists in the international context but also a special human group, supportive and extremely considerate with other colleagues.”

Professor Jorge Fernández del Valle, Department of Psychology, University of Oviedo, Spain

Thirty researchers have gained PhDs while working at the Unit, and many have gone on to senior positions in other universities and organisations. Examples include professors at the universities of Bath, Dundee, Hull, Kent, Leeds, Leicester, Loughborough, Manchester, Nottingham, Oxford, Queen's Belfast, and the University of New South Wales, Australia; and senior researchers in government departments in the UK (including DCSF, DH, DCLG, Cabinet Office, ACAS,) and in Australia (Department of Finance, Department of Social Security).

Unit staff have taught at the Civil Service College and at the Department of Work and Pensions Summer School for many years; one member was the Summer School Director for four years. These links prompted a flow of civil servants to the University to undertake Masters courses and Doctorates. Recognising the expressed need for post-graduate training, a civil servant was seconded to the University to develop a Masters course in Public Service Management. This is now offered as a distance-learning course in public policy and administration, which trains students from across the world.

“A succession of Government Ministers and senior civil servants (and members of Select Committees) have made their way to [redacted] to gain insights on how social problems can be overcome, on the basis of sound research evidence. I have also attended Summer Schools for civil servants from the relevant government departments and witnessed first hand [redacted]'s intellectual input to policy formulation.”

Lord Richard Best OBE, House of Lords, Former Director of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation

5. Validation

The University attaches the highest importance to the scientific quality and social impact of its academic centres, and the Unit's overall progress and well-being is subject to regular scrutiny by the University.

The importance and value of the Unit to the University is illustrated by the investment of £5.3 million to relocate the Unit and construct new research facilities to support its work, alongside those of related research groups.

The Department of Health's Director of Research and Development regularly reviews the scientific quality of the Unit's work. This involves rigorous scrutiny of the Unit's research and comprises a visit from panels of independent academic experts and refereeing of outputs by international experts. Each review has led to a recommendation that the Unit should be funded for new programmes of research.

- *The Unit's 'research on sociological aspects of disability in young adults was assessed as being without equal'. (1994)*
- *'A well-deserved and established reputation for providing policy relevant research, often in previously under-researched areas, and for adopting innovative and inclusive research methodologies'. (1999)*
- *'Researchers in the Unit have made a seminal contribution to our knowledge [about carers] over the years'. (2004)*
- *The methodological work with children and the user advisory group is a 'considerable achievement'. (2004)*

Twenty of the Unit's staff were entered in the University's social policy and social work submission in the 2008 national Research Assessment Exercise. The work was ranked in the top ten in the country, with over two-thirds of research activity classed as of international or world-leading excellence. The subject panel referred specifically to the particular strength in social policy research and the 'excellent or outstanding' impact on policy and practice.

"Over a sustained period, social policy has been one of the key elements in establishing the national and international reputation of the University. There is little doubt that the Unit is known nationally and internationally for its contribution to social policy research methods, increasing our understanding of disadvantage and the ways in which effective policy and practice can help to combat the effects of disadvantage on vulnerable groups. The Unit also makes an important financial contribution to the University, which will receive over £0.5 million annually as a result of its strong performance in the Research Assessment Exercise."

Professor Alistair Fitter, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research)

As well as actively disseminating findings to practitioners and policy makers, the Unit publishes widely in leading academic journals - in the past ten years alone, staff have published 270 papers in the academic press. Unit members are also active on journal editorial boards. We receive a continual stream of requests to provide advice to both government and non-governmental bodies, to provide research advice, to review papers for academic journals and research grant applications, to work as members of research granting bodies, to contribute to policy development, and to give keynote and plenary speeches to conferences across the world. In the past two years alone, three Unit staff have acted as Special Advisors to separate House of Commons Select Committees. Examples of these activities are in the supporting material.

Two members of the Unit have been honoured for their contribution to services to child poverty (CBE, 2005) and child welfare (OBE, 2006). The first Director of the Unit was awarded the Social Policy Association Lifetime Achievement award, the second was a Founding Academician of the Association of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences, and others have become Academicians subsequently.

"I have no doubt that the lives and living standards of countless UK citizens have been improved because of [redacted]'s work. This is an academic institution that truly deserves a public accolade."

Lord Richard Best OBE, House of Lords, Former Director of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Social Policy Research:
influencing policy and changing
vulnerable people's lives

Supporting Material

Friday 13th March

Department of Health
Room 163
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS

Tel: 0207 210 5392
Fax: 0207 210 2701

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: The Queen's Anniversary Prize Competition

I write on behalf of the Department of Health (England) in support of the submission by the [REDACTED] at the [REDACTED] to be considered for the 2009 Queen's Anniversary Prize.

The [REDACTED] is one of a small number of national centres of excellence that receive long-term funding from the Department. These centres are subject to regular high-level review, covering scientific quality as well as policy relevance. It is testimony to the excellent standard of the Unit's work in both these respects that our funding of its adult social care programme has been long-standing.

The work of the [REDACTED] has had considerable impact on policy development, both directly in specific areas of policy innovation and more indirectly in framing wider debates. Its well-established research on outcomes in social care, in particular, has made a central contribution to shifting policy-making away from a service focus to a more outcomes-centred approach.

More directly, the work of the [REDACTED] on the experiences of carers, disabled adults and older people contributed to the evidence underpinning the White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' and the Department's National Carers Strategy. The influence of its research on carers has been particularly significant; its outcome framework for carers was included in the accompanying Guides to the 2000 Carers and Disabled Children Act.

The Unit's most recent direct impact has been from its evaluation, with external colleagues, of our 'individual budgets' initiative. The availability of personally-held budgets for social care is high profile policy commitment, and rigorous and detailed evaluation is essential to guide its implementation. The findings of the [REDACTED] evaluation have, and will continue to have, direct and considerable impact on the future shape of this policy area, particularly if the approach is extended to cover health services.

More generally, the Unit's adult social care research programme will assist the more personalised delivery of care – a central policy objective. Its ability to do so is enhanced by a long-standing commitment to working closely with service users and carers - the 'end users' of its research. This contribution is further strengthened by close working between the adult care team and those in the [REDACTED] childhood disability team.

[REDACTED] research has been important at local as well as central government levels. Close links with local delivery agencies have been developed, ensuring that the findings of the Unit's research are 'translated' as directly as possible to front-line work. Central to this has been a particular strength of the Unit's research – not always true of academic researchers – of being able to communicate complex ideas and information meaningfully to informed lay audiences.

In summary, I strongly commend the work of the [REDACTED] in the adult social care field. It has made an invaluable contribution, over the many years of our funding, to evidence-based policy making in the Department. Its work is of excellent quality and its impact in key policy areas has been considerable. It should also be noted that the Unit is an academic body. Its high quality science has been a vital source of methodological innovation in social care research. It staff contribute actively to academic life in the host University and to the quality of debate in the field more widely. The intellectual standing of the Unit has been most recently recognised by the appointment of the Director of its DH funded programme to the new School of Social Care Research recently established by the National Institute of Health Research.

I hope you find this information helpful in making your decision. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further details. I would be pleased to be informed of the outcome of the process.

Yours sincerely

David Behan
Director General for Social Care,
Local Government and
Care Partnerships
DB/CP/122

Professor Dame Sally Davies
Director General Research &
Development Directorate



TRIBUNALS
JUDICIARY

JUDGE NICHOLAS WIKELEY
JUDGE OF THE UPPER TRIBUNAL
ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS CHAMBER

5 March 2009

Dear Vice-Chancellor

Thank you for your letter of 16 February. I am delighted to write in support of the nomination of the [REDACTED] at the [REDACTED] for the Queen's Anniversary Prize competition.

My own background is as a legal academic, with a particular expertise in social security and child support law. These are areas of law which cannot be understood in purely legal terms – the wider social context is crucial. I have therefore been familiar with the work of [REDACTED] for many years. The research at [REDACTED] has been important in informing my own work as an academic. I would go so far as to say that it is impossible to write in many of these areas without referring to the important empirical studies that [REDACTED] has carried out over the years.

I know that [REDACTED] has a very strong reputation both nationally and internationally. As well as its high standing amongst social policy academic experts and socio-legal scholars, the Unit's work is clearly valued highly within the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), judging from my own discussions with civil servant policy makers in the past. I have spent two extended periods of research leave in Australia, and I know from my time there that [REDACTED] is regarded as a world class centre of excellence in social policy research by legal and social policy colleagues at the University of Sydney and the University of New South Wales. Similarly, one of Germany's top social security law experts, Prof Karl Bieback in Hamburg, has mentioned to me several times the very high regard in which he holds [REDACTED]'s work.

[REDACTED]'s work has been important both in theoretical and applied terms. This is particularly so in the field of social security tribunals. The work of Professor [REDACTED] and others at [REDACTED] has done much to help us understand the dynamics of social security appeals and how appellants engage with appeals processes (both before and at hearings). As well as informing the academic debates on administrative justice, the work at [REDACTED] has also had an impact on the way tribunals themselves operate – for example, I know that the tribunal judiciary relied on the [REDACTED] study of the old medical appeal tribunals to redesign judicial training in that area of work and so (one hopes) improve the service offered to the public. In my other main area of work, child support, I know that the work of [REDACTED] and others has been highly influential in improving our knowledge of the dynamics of the child support population, including the particular issues faced by non-resident parents. Again, this work is recognised world-wide as amongst the best in the field.

I hope this is sufficient to show how highly I value the work at [REDACTED]. Space does not permit me to refer to the many other excellent projects.

I have now left the University sector to become a full-time member of the tribunal judiciary, so I should make it clear I am writing this in my personal capacity and as an Emeritus Professor at the University of Southampton.

Yours sincerely

Nicholas Wikeley
Judge of the Upper Tribunal

cc Prof [REDACTED]

Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber),
Harp House, 83 Farringdon Street, London EC4A 4DH

Bloorview

RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Bloorview Research Institute
150 Kilgour Road
Toronto, ON Canada M4G 1R8
Tel: 416 425 6220 ext. 3500
Toll-Free: 800 363 2440 ext. 3500
Fax: 416 425 1634

March 5, 2009

Dear [REDACTED]

I am very pleased to submit this letter unreservedly supporting the [REDACTED] nomination of the [REDACTED] for the 2009 Queen's Anniversary Prize. Since the mid 1980's my work has been greatly enhanced by the Unit's innovative and foresightful research about childhood disability and chronic illness, family carers and housing. I was so impressed by the world-class quality and high policy-relevance of the research conducted by the Unit that I arranged to spend six weeks working with researchers there in 1996 during a sabbatical leave from the University of Toronto. Subsequently I have visited the Unit several times for short periods and I continue to eagerly wait for new publications. In recognition of the Children and Youth Groups' cutting edge methodological work, I plan to invite members to participate in a workshop about conducting research with disabled/chronically ill children that I'm organizing for the Fall, 2009. This interdisciplinary workshop will include graduate students and junior and senior researchers from a number of faculties and departments at the University of Toronto, the Hospital for Sick Children and Bloorview Kids Rehab.

There is no question that the Unit leads the world in boundary-crossing, policy relevant theoretically-informed research and knowledge brokerage in understudied, marginalized fields of study. As indicated on the Unit's outstanding, user friendly website, for almost 4 decades, the goal of this large and enormously successful group of applied social policy researchers has been to enhance the development, delivery and evaluation of policies and services relevant to persons "made vulnerable by poverty, ageing, disability or chronic illness." The unit has been steadfast in its commitment to redressing the range of significant issues that face these burgeoning populations but rarely are the focus of public attention. The generalizability and applicability of its research findings and dissemination approaches are particularly strong in countries that have mixed economies and publicly funded health and social care systems. Almost entirely self-funded, the Unit has maintained its ability to make significant contributions to policy development at all levels of government in the United Kingdom through robust partnerships with voluntary organizations and service users. It came as no surprise to me that in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, more than 2/3 of the Unit's research activity was considered internationally excellent.

In conclusion, the Unit has had an enormous positive impact on research, policy and services for disabled and chronically ill persons and their carers within and beyond the United Kingdom. Methodological innovations developed by Unit researchers are being appropriated world-wide to enable older, disabled and very young people to participate directly in research and policy activities that concern them. I hope that this brief testament to the Unit's international impact reflects the depth of my endorsement of your nomination of this wonderful group of scholars for the 2009 Queen's Anniversary Prize!

Sincerely Yours,



Patricia McKeever, PhD
Bloorview Kids Foundation Chair in Childhood Disability Studies
Senior Scientist, Bloorview Research Institute
Professor, Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto

The Nuffield Foundation

27th February 2009

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

28 Bedford Square
London WC1B 3JS
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Fax: 020 7323 4877
www.nuffieldfoundation.org

Dear Professor [REDACTED],

I am delighted to write in support of the Unit's nomination for the Queen's Anniversary Prize competition.

This Unit is an exemplar of the sort of research centre the Prize was established to honour. It produces truly excellent research – rigorous, objective and robust, but also innovative. It does so by producing research that not only has impact, but that is designed from the outset to have impact, on some of the most intractable and complex social problems facing the UK. It produces research using a range of appropriate methods, from small-scale studies to randomised control trials – requiring a truly unique range of skills. In short, I cannot think of another unit in the area of social policy and social care in the UK that has had more impact, over a longer period, and whose reputation rests on the production of a broad and deep body of research.

This unit covers problems that are of deep concern to social policy and hence to government. This includes policies on children and families, child protection and vulnerable children, care for older people, and various elements of welfare reform. These are difficult and intractable problems and in many cases we do not have very good scientific knowledge about what interventions may make things better, or even a very good descriptive picture of what is happening on the ground. They are areas where there are many competing voices and interest groups. And they are areas which, between them, account for a high proportion of state and private welfare spending.

In this area, the Unit is, quite simply, pre-eminent. It has been so for some time, but has maintained this pre-eminence by never standing still, but continuing to push forward its research agenda and its methodological skills.

Much of the original research on reforming care of older people – thinking more about packages of care and about the boundaries of home-based care – has been done here. They have brought a much-needed international comparative element into the debate, and are listened to with the highest interest in the Department of Health, and in the various reviews of long-term care (including those funded by independent foundations, like the Kings Fund).

In the area of child protection and vulnerable children, the Unit is arguably on the cutting edge in seeking to use randomised controlled trials to see if some interventions may help young people who are themselves vulnerable and at risk, but are also acting in a way that threatens community peace and safety. A number of interventions are underway to see if they can help children, whether they arrive from social services or youth justice services, to feel supported, and noticed, and therefore gradually to cease anti-social or even criminal activity. This is no soft option: the interventions involve intensive foster care. But the innovative role of the Unit is to be one of the few places that both understands the multi-faceted needs of these children and young people, and also has the methodological skills to try to do a proper trial to see if this intervention yields promising results. That hard-edged thinking gives the Unit real voice and weight and several government agencies are working with them, with bated breath, awaiting the results. The Unit knows that not every social intervention is suitable for a randomised trial, but it knows enough to know which ones might be, and to be able to work with social agencies to try to deliver this sort of evidence. If it comes off in even one or two areas, it will deliver very powerful evidence of a sort that it is extraordinarily rare in social care and social policy.

Finally, the Unit has worked hard to ensure that its research from the inception has an impact on policy, practice and on the lives of real people. In some areas of its work, the Unit has set up special consultation groups of those whose lives are affected by social services (older people needing care for instance) to ensure that its research agenda is shaped by their needs and concerns. It consults regularly with government (and has core funding from the Department of Health for some of its work, and receives grants from the Department of Children, Schools and Families for much of its work on vulnerable children). But while its portfolio of work reflects a desire for the research to have impact on policy planning, and on the lives of people who may benefit from it, this is not at the expense of rigour or innovations in research design.

That the Unit has held its position over thirty years is itself a rarity, and has given it a long-term impact that few other centres of its kind can claim. I do hope you give the Unit serious consideration, as it would be a most worthy winner of the Queen's Anniversary Prize.

Yours sincerely



Sharon Witherspoon MBE
Deputy Director



Professor
Director, [redacted]

2 March 2009

Dear Professor [redacted],

I refer to your letter of 25 February in which you asked if I would be willing to write a letter of support for your submission for this year's Queen's Anniversary Prize competition.

As you know, I have been aware of the work of the [redacted] for more than two decades, much of it in my role of Director of the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) here in Australia. During that time, I have kept in close contact with successive [redacted] Directors, have had an active on-going research collaboration with Professor [redacted] and have maintained close contact with many individual [redacted] researchers.

This experience makes me well qualified to comment on the role and contribution of an institution that has set the standard for similar research centres and institutes around the world (including in Australia). I like to think that much of my own success in building the capacity of SPRC during my tenure as its Director between 1987 and 2007 is a reflection of the many lessons learnt from studying how well [redacted] managed to position itself at the borderline between academic scholarship and policy analysis and exert such a profound influence on scholars and practitioners in a variety of social science disciplines and across a range of policy areas.

The professional experience of [redacted] has been a guiding light for us, not only in terms of the importance of establishing and maintaining good links with those working at the coalface of policy, but also with influencing the ideas and practices of leading scholars in the many fields on which successful social policy research must draw. [redacted] has made countless valuable contributions over the years to British social policy, most noticeably in the fields of poverty, budget standards, social security design and delivery, disability and housing research, and the whole area of social care more generally. These topics span much of what constitutes the discipline of social policy and [redacted]'s role in defining the scope of the discipline, in raising its profile in the social science community generally and in making a series of important contributions – some of them fundamental – to social policy analysis make it a worthy contender for the Queen's Anniversary Prize.

I might also add that much of this activity took place in an era when [redacted] was one of a very small number of institutions working in a university setting on practical policy issues. [redacted] was at the forefront of a movement that was once rare but is more commonplace today, and it is all too easy to forget that its efforts in forging new approaches to developing productive collaborations between academic researchers and government policy makers were innovative at the time they were being developed. In showing not only that this could be done, but achieved with such independence and professionalism, producing so many positive benefits to both sides of what can be the difficult interface between research and policy, [redacted] has shown leadership in a venture that has produced major spin-offs in many countries.

I have no doubt that, if asked to nominate the top 10 university-based social policy research institutes around the world, [redacted] would feature on the vast majority of lists. It has made an immense contribution to scholarship and collaboration that is widely recognised as being of global significance and impact. The work of you and your colleagues (past and present) has been an inspiration to others in the field, just as your scholarship has deepened our understanding of the causes and consequences of, and solutions to, social problems in the fields of income support and social care.

I hope very much that your nomination for this year's Queen's Anniversary Prize will receive the success that it deserves. You have my full and enthusiastic support and my on-going admiration for your work and how you go about it.

Peter Saunders

Professor Peter Saunders
Australian Professorial Fellow
UNSW Scientia Professor
Research Professor in Social Policy



Leading education
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Institute of Education
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Thomas Coram Research Unit
Institute of Education
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London WC1H 0AA
Tel +44 (0)20 7612 6957
www.ioe.ac.uk/tcru

[redacted]

27th February 2009

Dear Vice Chancellor

I understand that [redacted] at [redacted] is being considered for the Queens Anniversary Prize competition. I believe the Unit would be a very appropriate and deserving winner of this award. They have made a very significant contribution to UK policy and practice in the fields of health and social welfare. Their work is widely recognised for both its scientific excellence and its contribution policy and practice both in the UK and overseas. It is influential at both national and local levels as well as in relation to the life and experiences of individuals in the form of users and carers across the age range.

The Unit has driven forward debate in important area of policy by their innovatory approaches and new ways of seeing things. They have highlighted under-recognised areas of need and services (or the absence thereof) and brought these to national attention. The widely recognised scientific excellence of their work has made them influential players on the national and international stage. There are numerous examples of their influence in research and policy debate and impact on national policy making.

The Unit's work has broken new ground in relation to older people by highlighting the importance of independence and standards of care required to promote it. It also played a crucial part in shifting the focus from service inputs to outcomes. Their work informed the 1990 *NHS and Community Care Act* and, in the wake of this, stimulated significant change in service delivery at local level.

The unit pioneered a new focus on the needs of carers which has now become both mainstreamed in national parlance, and enshrined in national policy in the *National Carers Strategy 2008* as well as the 1990 Act. They have led the policy and research agenda in this area and it has underpinned national debate and policy.

In relation to young disabled people, the unit has offered a key national lead. They were key contributors to the evidence base and framing of the 10 year plan for health services to children and young people published in *National Service Framework for Children Young People and Maternity in 2004*. Influential work on key workers and multi agency working was a crucial input to *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme and continues to be influential in the ongoing *Aiming High for Disabled Children* programme.

[redacted] has also provided a national lead in research and policy making on adolescents "in care" or on the edge of care. Pioneering work in the eighties opened up debate and led to improved understanding of the needs of care leavers. The work of the unit crucially informed major policy change in this area and fed directly into the *Leaving Care Act 2000* and associated guidance (the most recent legislation in this area), as well as related policies in Scotland and Wales. Similar policy development in Ireland and Norway has also been influenced by the work. More recent work has continued to explore policy implementation and the experience of young people on the ground.

The work on young people leaving care is just one strand of an extensive and influential programme of work on child welfare which is recognised as of outstanding scientific merit both in the UK and overseas. The work is characterised by a concern with the quality of care and how this is experienced by children and young people. The work has influenced national debate and the development of research and policy.

Thus the unit has had a crucial impact on both research and policy across a wide area in the UK and overseas and I have no hesitation in recommending them unreservedly for this award.

Yours sincerely

Carolyn Davies

Dr Carolyn Davies,
Research Adviser to Department of Health (DH) and Department for Children Schools
and Families (DCSF)
Institute of Education
University of London



For Quality of
Life of Older
People in Care

The Relatives & Residents Association

24 The Ivories
6-18 Northampton Street
London N1 2HY

Tel 020 7359 8148
Fax 020 7226 6603
Email info@relres.org
Web www.relres.org
Advice 020 7359 8136

4 March 2009

Dear Professor [REDACTED]

Queen's Anniversary Prize nomination

I am writing to support, very enthusiastically, [REDACTED] nomination for submission for this year's Queen's Anniversary Prize competition.

I have known the work of the [REDACTED] for many years, having first had rewarding links with the Unit and its Director, the late [REDACTED], when I was undertaking research on long-term and community care at the MRC Medical Sociology Unit in Aberdeen in the early 1980s. I had further close contact with the work of the Unit in the 1990s when I was conducting research on the Social Fund for the Policy Studies Institute at a time when the Unit also had a programme of Social Fund-related research underway. Apart from those specific pieces of work, I always found it valuable to keep in touch with [REDACTED] work because it has represented the best in challenging, topical and ground-breaking research. It has had a finger on the pulse of social policy development, and has always been willing to apply a critical gaze on the playing out of policy in practice.

In more recent years, having become part of the 'user of policy research community' (first during the 1990s at the Centre for Policy on Ageing and now, even more directly, at the Relatives & Residents Association), I find that [REDACTED] work is as relevant and important as it has always been. In particular the research that [REDACTED] researchers have conducted on carers, personal budgets, informal care, the role of relatives and friends in relation to money management and long-term care policy in general has provided voluntary organisations like mine with invaluable - and reliable - research evidence for

the cases we argue in the public domain and with government. At the R&RA, we often have insights drawn from the real-life experiences of our members and other members of the public which lead us to develop arguments for policy change and/or improvement. Our problem is that without sound evidence to substantiate our arguments, it is difficult to influence policymakers as powerfully as we otherwise might. Being able to turn to a body of research produced by a consistently top-rank unit like [REDACTED] is a huge asset. [REDACTED] work on evaluating the personal budgets pilot projects is an excellent case in point. Similarly, work in recent years on risk, outcomes, and international comparisons of long-term care have all been valuable.

[REDACTED] provides an extremely important source of evidence to the 'user community' on which voluntary organisations can base their arguments for a better deal. It is widely respected for this and deserves recognition for the contribution it makes to policy development in this country.

I am delighted to support the nomination.

Yours sincerely

Dr Gillian Dalley
Chief Executive

The Baroness Pitkeathley OBE



HOUSE OF LORDS
LONDON SW1A 0PW

3 March 2009

Dear [REDACTED]

I am delighted to support the submission to nominate the [REDACTED] for the Queen's Anniversary Prize.

The main contact has been through [REDACTED] and the work done on carer issues. In the early days of the carers' movement when I was campaigning to get the carers issue onto the political agenda, the evidence produced by the Unit was of the utmost significance. Their work about carers' financial, social and family difficulties was the hard evidence we needed to back up the work of the Carers National Association (now Carers UK) which was calling for greater recognition for carers.

The ongoing work of the Unit continues now to be significant in the current work of the carers movement. Even though we now have three Acts of Parliament specifically for carers, a National Strategy and a Standing Commission, carers' needs are still not being adequately recognised and I know the evidence sought and updated by [REDACTED] remains of the utmost value.

With best wishes



GEINSPIREERD VANUIT DE KATHOLIEKE TRADITIE

Tilburg, 04-03-2009

Dear Professor,

It is a great pleasure for me to be able to express through this letter the high esteem I have for the academic work of the Unit. It is especially its contributions to international comparative research that I would like to emphasise here.

During the many years that I am in close contact with the excellent social policy research centres in the UK, the Unit always stood out as the one with an explicit international orientation and significance, which is manifested in several ways. I will only name a few of these.

Highly influential, in both European academic and policy circles, have been the Unit's comparative studies on minimum income protection schemes, (child) poverty and child benefit packages. These studies were among the first international comparative poverty studies that went beyond a mere accounting and comparing of income levels, by introducing new perspectives on distinguishing between incomes and expenditures of households, and on country specific income-expenditure "packages". The packages-methodology developed by the Unit has become a standard in the field and is now applied in several recent comparative studies of income protection methods and levels in Europe.

The Unit's international influence is also manifested in its seminal work on benefit delivery. It is especially the work on the (non) take-up of benefits (as e.g. Family Credit), which has inspired, I would dare to say, all colleagues in Europe who investigate the degree to which benefits and services are actually delivered, or not, to the intended target groups, and who are interested in the actors and processes that play a role in (failing) delivery. The Unit's views on the various levels at which processes take place (scheme, administration, client), as well as its critical approach to simple trade-off models, have had a major impact in the field.

The fact that the Unit plays a pivotal role in the development and governance of the Foundation for International Studies on Social Security (FISS) underlines my view that the Unit is a well-recognized and highly regarded institution in international circles. Through FISS the Unit contributes substantially to the academic and policy relevant social policy debates at a global level. Its conferences and seminars attract the most influential academics and highly ranked policy makers in the field.

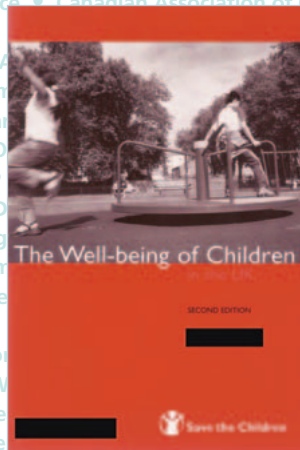
I am familiar with several EU policy debates in the fields of work and employment where the Unit's work on (child) poverty has informed policy makers and researchers, and with several benefit reforms in the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark, where the outcomes of the Unit's work on benefit take up was taken as a frame of reference.

I have no hesitation in recommending the Unit for the award from the Royal Anniversary Trust.

Yours sincerely,

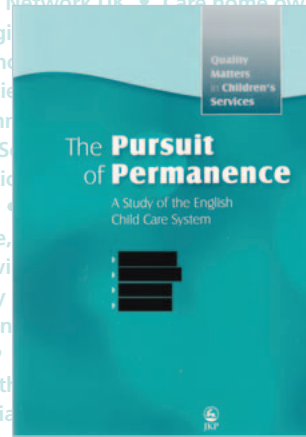
Wim van Oorschot
Professor of Sociology
Honorary President of the European Network for Social Policy Analysis

Publishing our research



"The two volumes seemed to me to be powerful in shifting policy thinking towards a holistic notion of childhood"

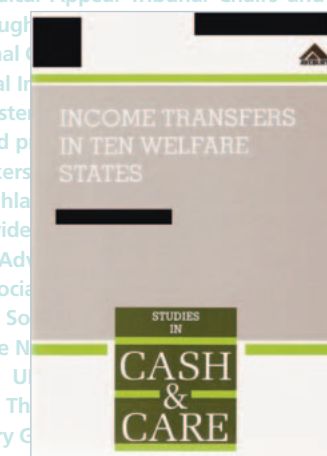
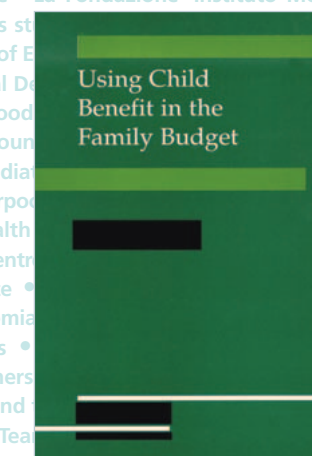
John Rowlands OBE, former Adviser on Children's Social Care Policy to the Department of Health and the Department of Education and Skills



"The 'care careers' of looked after children: The first major study of children in England's care system for 20 years has proven more far-reaching than its predecessor"

June Statham, Professor of Education and Family Support, Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, article in *Community Care*, 10 April 2008

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Transferring knowledge

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Services Inspectorate • Social services s

sickle cell and thalassaemia • Society of Friends

Speech therapy managers • Student nurses • Swedish National Carers' Association

Town and country planners • Trainee GPs • Trinity Consortium on Ageing • UNICEF • UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre • UNICEF Regional Office in Central

helped to impro

organisation - su

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EN'S VIEWS

BRITAIN is the worst

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Psych

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Socia

South Africa Human Sciences Research Council • Spastics Society •

London Borough of Westminster • Transferring research Count

nal Chairs and Members • Medical genetics students •

Association of Educational

national Deaf People's

neighbourhood Energy

orkshire Council •

urses • Paediatric

Trust, Liverpool

Regional Health

ENSE staff • SHAC

Members • Social

workers with interest in

Expert advice to international governments and other international organisations

- Anglo-Norwegian Child Welfare Group
- Australian Department of Social Security (family budget standards)
- Council of the Baltic States Child Welfare Programme
- Danish Council of Organisations of Disabled People
- European Commission Daphne Programme (missing children and children at risk of sexual exploitation)
- European Observatory on National Family Policies - Co-ordinator
- European Union COST Action 19: child welfare (economic well-being working party)
- European Union COST Action 19: child welfare (time/space working party)
- European Union Group of Experts on the National Action Plans for Social Inclusion
- French Ministry of Social Affairs and Division of Research and Statistics (disability policy)
- International Labour Office Social Security Department
- Netherlands Council for Work and Income (contracting out employment services for unemployed and disabled people)
- Netherlands Council for Work and Income (sheltered and supported employment)
- Republic of Macedonia, Ministry of Labour and Protection and Statistical Office
- Romanian Department of Labour and Social Protection
- United States of America Government, at Rutgers University, New Jersey - informants about UK benefits and services

Expert advice to UK government and Parliament

Specialist advisory roles

- Northern Ireland Assembly Health and Social Services Committee Enquiry into Social Security Parity, 1984
- House of Commons Social Services Committee, 1986
- House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee (child poverty), 2004
- House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee (welfare reform), 2007
- House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee (poverty), 2008
- House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee (carers and employment), 2008

Expert advice

- Cabinet Office
 - improving the life chances of disabled people
 - self-employment
 - Roundtable Discussion Group, Third Sector and Care Leavers
 - Roundtable Discussion Group, Social Mobility for Care Leavers
 - Social Exclusion Unit (national service framework for young runaways)
- Department for Children, Schools and Families/Department of Health Commissioning Support Programme
- Department for Education and Employment
 - employment policies for disabled people
 - *Every Child Matters* outcomes
- Department for Education and Skills
 - *Every Child Matters* Green Paper
 - Green Paper Care Placements Panel
 - Sure Start's work with children and families with special needs
 - national guidance on young runaways from home and care
- Department for Work and Pensions
 - housing benefit reform
 - reform of incapacity benefits
 - Child Poverty Stakeholders Forum
 - Committee Inquiry on Child Poverty
 - Housing Benefit Reform Steering Group
 - Minister for Employment and Welfare Reform's Child Poverty Advisory Group
 - Minister of State, on reform of incapacity benefits
 - Roundtable Discussion Group on Welfare Reform Green Paper with Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
 - Technical Committee on the Measurement of Child Poverty
- National Action Plans for Social Inclusion Panel
- Department of Employment (disabled people in the labour market)
- Department of Environment
 - housing for older people
 - provision of energy advice within home energy efficiency scheme
- Department of Health
 - acquired hearing loss training package
 - Rehabilitation advisory group (continence)
 - Children, Young People and Maternity Services National Service Framework External Working Group on Disabled Children
 - Children, Young People and Maternity Services National Service Framework Research Group
 - national guidance on children who go missing from home or care
 - Task Force 3, Marmot Commission Review of Health Inequalities
- Department of Health/Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, national guidance on best practice in leaving care
- Department of Social Security
 - partial incapacity provision
 - restructuring disability benefits
- Employment Service (labour market flexibility and long-term unemployment)
- Expert Panel on Barriers to Employment and Training for Young People Leaving Care, chaired by Baroness Morgan
- Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Well-being
- House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee Inquiry into Benefit Simplification
- Inland Revenue (tax credits)
- National Audit Office
 - benefit take-up
 - decision making and appeals
- Office for Population Censuses and Surveys/Department of Health and Social Security (national disablement surveys)
- Office of the Children's Commissioner for England
 - bullying
 - disabled children
- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Hull Partnership Liaison Board)
- Scottish Executive, Care 21: *the Future of Unpaid Care in Scotland*
- Serious Case Reviews Advisory Group
- Social Services Inspectorate
 - Care Management and Assessment
 - Short-term Breaks for Carers
- Welsh Assembly, Independent Task Group on Child Poverty

Expert advice to local government and voluntary sector

- Advisory Group for Fostering Network
- Association of Children's Hospices
- Bradford City Challenge
- Bristol City Council Equal Opportunities Unit
- Child Poverty Action Group Housing Benefits Survey
- Childhood Cancer and Leukaemia Group Psychosocial Working Group
- Children's Society Research Unit
- City of York Children's Trust
- CLIC Sargent
- Electricity Consumers Council
- Energy Action Grants Agency Charitable Trust
- Every Disabled Child Matters campaign
- Family Fund Committee
- First Key (national standards for leaving care services)
- Independent Care Consultants
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation Child Poverty Strategy Technical Group
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation Housing Benefit Reform Forum
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation Long-Term Care Reform Group
- Local Government Association/Association of Chief Police Officers
- Low Income Tax Reform Group
- Martin House Children's Hospice
- National Consumer Council
- National Gas Consumers' Council
- National Missing Person's Helpline
- North Yorkshire Health Authority
- North Yorkshire Social Services Department
- North Yorkshire Welfare Benefits Campaign
- YMCA
- York District Health Authority

International visiting fellows and visitors

- Richard Alston, Opposition spokesman on social security, Australia
- Jacob Brevelin, Department of Health and Social Welfare, Norway
- Bettina Cass, University of Sydney, Australia
- Brit Denstad, Director of Institute of Applied Social Research (INAS), Norway
- Hans Emanuel, Foundation for International Studies on Social Security, Netherlands
- Axel Hätland, Institute of Applied Social Research (INAS) Norway
- Brian Howe, Minister of Social Security, Australia
- Asbjorn Johannessen, Norwegian State College of Public Administration and Social Work, Oslo, Norway
- Ilan Katz, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Australia
- Randi Kjeldstad, Institute of Applied Social Research (INAS), Norway
- Arnlaug Leira, Institutt for Samfunnsforskning, Norway
- Louise Levesque, University of Montreal, Canada
- Marit Lorentzen, Institute of Applied Social Research (INAS), Norway
- Francie Lund, Centre for Social and Developmental Studies, University of Natal, South Africa
- Patricia McKeever, University of Toronto, Canada
- Dr Dan Meyer, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA
- Vladimir Mikhalev, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Moscow, Russia
- Deborah Mitchell, Australian Department of Finance, Social Security Division, Australia
- David O'Hara, Director of Social Work Training, JRF Kennedy Institute for Handicapped Children, John Hopkins University, USA
- Toyo Okamura, Kyusyu Sangyo University, Japan
- Andrew Podger, Department of Finance, Australian Federal Government, Australia
- Vic Rogers, Director, New South Wales State Office Department of Social Security, Australia
- Linda Rosenman, Department of Social Work and Social Policy, University of Queensland, Australia
- Peter Saunders, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Australia
- Marietta Steenvorden, Netherlands Institute of Care and Welfare, Netherlands
- Kathleen Taperell, Health and Welfare Programme, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra, Australia
- Lars Inge Terum, Institute of Applied Social Research, Norway
- Cheryl Tilse, University of Queensland, Australia
- Peter Whiteford, University of New South Wales, Australia
- David Willis, Millbank Memorial Trust, USA
- Ian Wingett, Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health, Australia

Academic and policy visitors from:

- Albania, Australia, Canada, China, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, New Zealand and the European Commission
- Institute of Local Government, Aarhus, Denmark
- Norwegian Research Council for Applied Social Science
- Slovak Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and the Family
- Victorian State Government, Australia

Membership of national and international research boards

- British Association for Adoption and Fostering Research Group Advisory Committee
- Canadian Institute for Health Research Emerging Team Grants Panel
- Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO), Disability Theme Group
- Children's Society
- Department for Children, Schools and Families, Children's Research Liaison Group
- Department of Health (previously Department of Health and Social Security)
 - Commissioning and Advisory Group for Research on the Expert Carer Programme
 - Expert Group to Establish National Priorities for Research on Complex Disabilities
- Department of Health/Department for Education and Skills
 - research initiative on Costs and Effectiveness of Children's Services - Co-ordinator
- Department for Education and Skills research initiative on Quality Protects - Co-ordinator.
- Economic and Social Research Council (previously Social Sciences Research Council)
 - Dissemination Committee
 - Family Research Sub-committee
 - Large Grants Panel
 - Public Services Programme Panel
 - Research Centres Board
 - Research Evaluation Committee
 - Research Priorities Board
 - Social Policy Research Board
 - Sociology and Social Administration Sub-committee

- Youth, Citizenship and Social Change Panel
- Estonian Research Assessment Exercise, International Assessors for Social Policy and Social Work - Chair
- Eurocarers EU Network Executive Committee
- European Research Network on Foster Care
- Family Fund Trust Research Committee
- Foundation for International Studies of Social Security - President and General Secretary
- Help the Hospices Research Programme on Carers
- Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa
- International Association for Outcomes-Based Evaluation and Research in Child and Family Services
- International Network of Leaving Care Researchers
- International Research Group on Transitions to Adulthood for Young People Leaving Public Care
- International Social Security Association Advisory Board
- International Social Security Association Research Committee
- International Society for Child Indicators
- International Sociological Association, Research Committee 11 (Ageing)
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation
 - 'Independent Living' Single Programme Committee
 - Community Care and Disability Committee
- Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust
 - Advisory Committee on Mental Handicap Research
 - Advisory Group on Disability
- Multiple Sclerosis Society Research Strategy Working Group
- National Association for Colitis and Crohn's Disease Social and Psychological Research Committee and Awards Panel
- National Lottery Charities Board Social Research Advisory Panel
- National Statistics Advisory Committee
- NHS Research and Development Commissioning Panel
- Nordic Centre of Excellence Programme on Welfare Research 2007-2011, Scientific Advisory Board
- Nuffield Foundation, Child Protection and Family Justice Advisory Panel
- Shelter Research Committee
- Spastics Society

Membership of editorial boards of scholarly journals

Editor

- *Child and Family Social Work*
- *Children and Youth Services Review*
- *Disability and Society*
- *Journal of Health Services Research and Policy* - associate editor
- Reviews editor, *Disability and Society*
- Reviews editor, *Journal of Psychiatry and Mental Health*
- Social science editor, *Journal of Gender Studies*

Guest editor

- Special edition, *Benefits*
- Special edition, *Child and Family Social Work*
- Special issue, *Child: Care, Health and Development*
- Themed issue, *Social Policy and Society*

Board member

- *Benefits*
- *Care in Place*

- *Child and Family Social Work*
- *Child: Care, Health and Development*
- *Children and Society*
- *Children and Youth Services Review*
- *Health and Social Care in the Community*
- *Health Policy*
- *International Social Security Review*
- *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*
- *Journal of Social Policy*
- *Journal of Social Security Law*
- *Journal of Social Work*
- *Primary Health Care Research and Development*
- *Research Matters*
- *Social Policy and Administration*
- *Social Policy and Society*
- *Social Services Research*
- *Social Work and Social Services Review*

Non-governmental committee and board memberships

- Age Concern England Board of Trustees and Executive
- Association of County Councils Social Fund Monitoring Steering Group
- Association of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences
- Association of Research Centres in the Social Sciences, Executive Committee and Chair
- Bereavement Research Forum Steering Committee
- British Deaf Association Executive Council
- Care Co-ordination Network UK Executive Committee
- Carers UK - Board of Trustees
- Child Poverty Action Group
- Directors of Research Centres in the Social Sciences Executive Committee
- Disability Alliance
- Executive Councillor, British Deaf Association
- FACTOR - UK Mental Health Research Network
- Faculty of Public Health
- Family Fund Management Committee
- Family Fund Trust - Trustee
- Health Advisory Board
- Institute for Public Policy Research, Social Policy Advisory Board
- JRF Housing Benefit Reform Forum
- JRF Technical Group on Strategy to Abolish Child Poverty
- Motor Neurone Disease Association Care Centre Review Panel
- National Energy Efficiency Forum
- National Fuel Poverty Forum
- National Repetitive Strain Injury Association Management Committee
- National Statistics Advisory Committee
- Neighbourhood Energy Action Group
- NSPCC Network for Research on Children, Young People and Families
- Oxfam UK
- Queen's Nursing Institute
- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
- RNID Community Service Committee
- Shelter Policy Advisory and Project Committee
- Social Care Institute for Excellence, Partners' Council
- Social Policy Association Chair and Executive Committee
- Social Research Association Executive Committee
- Socio-legal Studies Association Executive Committee & Treasurer
- Thalidomide Trust - Trustee
- UK Budget Standards Committee
- UK Children's Cancer Study Group Psychosocial Working Group

