



RESEARCH NEWS 10

**JANUARY
2015**

Recent publications, reports and on-going research in the Making Research Count Universities

Making Research Count is a collaborative national research dissemination network based regionally in the social work departments of the Universities of Bedfordshire, Brighton, Central Lancashire (UCLAN), East Anglia (UEA), Keele, King's College London, Northumbria in association with Teesside, Salford, West of England (UWE), York and The Open University.

All 12 social work departments are actively engaged in research activity, generating research publications, reports and journal articles, as well as in the education of social work professionals, both at qualifying and post-qualifying levels. This RESEARCH NEWS highlights some recent or current research undertaken in the departments in our network. There are electronic links to the published reports or departmental resources.

No One Noticed, No One Heard: A Study of Disclosures of Childhood Abuse

This report describes the childhood experiences of abuse of 60 young men and women and how they disclosed this abuse and sought help. These young people experienced high levels and different kinds of violence, including sexual abuse and family violence.

It is often asserted that young people who experience abuse do not talk about it. The face to face interviews for this study show that a majority of young people did attempt to disclose their abuse to at least one person. Indeed, 80 % – 48 of the 60 young people in the study – attempted to disclose the abuse before they were 18 years old. Some of these disclosures led to protective action and some did not.

Research has suggested that sexual abuse is unlikely to be disclosed – and yet 38 of the 44 young people (86 %) who experienced sexual abuse did disclose during childhood; 66 % attempted to disclose when the abuse was happening. However, just like many high profile cases, not all of these disclosures were “heard” or acted upon. Young people generally made more than one disclosure. Of the 203 disclosures in childhood that were made, 117 disclosures (58 %) were acted upon by recipients.

Suffering abuse is a distressing experience. It should be no surprise that, when disclosures were ignored, denied or badly handled, this added to the negative experiences of the young people in this study.

The full report is available at: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/research-and-resources/no-one-noticed-no-one-heard/>

Debbie Allnock, University of Bedfordshire, and Pam Miller, NSPCC.

Jobs First: learning from the evaluation

Are you working with people with learning disabilities who want to get a job?

The Jobs First study examined how people with moderate to severe learning disabilities could use their Personal Budget and combine it with other funding streams to increase their employment chances. They were encouraged to do this by staff who urged them to think Jobs First and sought to make this happen.

The evaluation reported that more people under the Jobs First schemes were working although many who were not working appeared to have lost interest in getting work. Jobs First was felt to be useful in ‘clarifying the pathway’ needed to improve support for people with learning disabilities to get paid jobs. Practitioners were mainly positive about the value of employment for people with learning disabilities; their attitudes were important. Good supported employment services were also crucial to positive outcomes.

The evaluation stresses the importance of practitioners’ attitudes and roles in supporting employment goals for people with learning disabilities. Many agreed that there was some potential in the use of Personal Budgets to purchase employment support, although it proved impossible to ‘braid’ or combine funding streams into a single budget. Savings were thought to be possible long-term, in reducing the need for long-term use of day services or support worker time.

Final evaluation report and other document at <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/policy-institute/scwru/res/roles/jobs.aspx>

Dr Martin Stevens, Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King’s College London.

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Understanding the Mental Capacity Act 2005 Offences

Implemented in 2007 in England and Wales, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 is concerned with decision-making for adults who are unable to make decisions for themselves and supporting their best interests. Two new offences of 'wilful neglect' and 'ill-treatment' were also created under Section 44. Part of a 5 year study (Evidem), funded by the National Institute of Health Research, explored knowledge and use of the MCA offences in interviews with dementia care practitioners and with local authority adult safeguarding staff.

We interviewed 279 practitioners in London and South-East of England, many of them two or three times over 3 years. Awareness of the new offences was growing, and views were generally positive, but understanding of the Act itself ranged from partial to non-existent. Many reported confusion with regard to legal terminology, such as the definition and boundaries of the word 'wilful'. Some were concerned about what needed to be provided as evidence.

Practitioners may be increasingly called upon to provide advice on whether an alleged victim or perpetrator lacks decision-making capacity in cases of suspected abuse or neglect. They need to be aware of the new criminal offences to ensure that people with dementia, among others, are not abused and that abusers are brought to account.

See: International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/gps.4147/abstract>

Kritika Samsi, Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College London.

Developing a safeguarding outcome measure for inclusion in the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)

This project, funded by the Department of Health, helped to develop a survey for councils to use with adults at risk to gain feedback about their experiences of safeguarding investigations.

This work is potentially of great value to adult social services departments and Safeguarding Adults Boards. Currently there are no national safeguarding outcome measures that focus on people who have been through an adult safeguarding investigation. This lack of data means it is not possible to make comparisons between councils as there is no national benchmark for whether adults at risk feel safer after a safeguarding investigation. It is therefore hard to identify best practice in a systematic way in adult safeguarding - or to share it across councils. The lack of outcome data also has implications for resource allocations. Commissioners have little way of comparing how well their council is performing in relation to others and whether more money or other resource is needed for effective safeguarding.

Phase One involved cognitively testing the survey and staff guidance to ensure they were commonly understood. The outcome measure (the seven question survey) was tested with 40 adults at risk (or their family, friends, carers or advocates) and the accompanying guidance with 12 council staff.

In Phase Two the survey was piloted in 44 councils. The primary purpose was to establish if councils can practically use the survey to measure if adults at risk and those that support them think the safeguarding process is effective and to see if the survey would be cost-effective.

The ultimate aim is to add such an outcome measure to the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) <http://ascof.hscic.gov.uk/Outcome>.

The study was carried out by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC), the Social Care Workforce Research Unit (SCWRU) and NatCen Research.

For more information contact: caroline.norrie@kcl.ac.uk or jill.manthorpe@kcl.ac.uk.

What can be learnt from Serious Case Reviews?

Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) for adults are commissioned to examine the ways in which local professionals and agencies worked together to safeguard a vulnerable adult or they are set up following harm or death of a vulnerable adult where there are concerns about agencies' actions or engagement. There is no national system in England for their collation or analysis.

Jill Manthorpe and Stephen Martineau, from the Social Care Workforce Research Unit at King's College London, have been collecting as many SCRs as they can find and analysing them by different themes. They recently drew together their findings in an article presenting the analysis of 21 SCRs where the person who was at risk of harm, harmed or died had a learning disability.

Three themes were presented: staff relationships; family and carers; and biography and chronology to draw out material relevant to social work policy and practice. At a time when the English government has announced plans for SCRs for adults to move to a statutory basis as Safeguarding Adult Reviews, the article draws attention to their potential as learning materials, but also the risks of seeing them as presenting a full picture of practice. The case for local flexibility is argued.

See *British Journal of Social Work* (2013) 1–18

<http://bjsw.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2013/08/28/bjsw.bct142>

The same study has also investigated SCRs where the person who died or was at risk of harm had dementia.

See Serious Case Reviews into Dementia Care: An Analysis of Context and Content *Br J Soc Work* first published online November 21, 2014 doi:10.1093/bjsw/bcu135

A further publication has focused on what SCRs have to say about the use of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in practice.

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Social Care Practice with Carers: What social care support is provided to family carers and what support do family carers want?

Better ways of supporting carers providing unpaid care to family members and friends are needed to help prevent the negative consequences that prolonged intensive caring sometimes has. Without these changes, it will become increasingly hard to support the growing numbers of older adults and people with disabilities needing support.

The Care Act 2014 created a number of new rights for carers. It aims to place carers on an equal footing and those for whom they care in terms of rights to support. Local councils with social services responsibilities (CSSRs):

The Care Act 2014 strengthens the rights and recognition of carers in the social care system, including, for the first time giving carers a clear right to receive services. In the run-up to implementation of the Act, this study maps different types of social care support for family carers across England.

Using information from commissioners, carers' leads, voluntary organisations, social care workers with a specific remit to support carers, and family carers themselves, this mixed methods study used interviews, surveys and secondary data analysis to ask:

- How do carers access information about social care support?
- What are carers' experiences of assessment?
- What support is provided by carers' workers whose tasks involve providing specific support to family carers?

The draft research findings are available: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/policy-institute/scwru/res/roles/practices.aspx>

Jo Moriarty, Jill Manthorpe, Michelle Cornes and Shereen Hussein, Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College London. The Project Advisory Group and Social Care Workforce Research Unit Service User and Carer Advisory Group provided advice and support. Carers and carers' workers commented on these findings in five separate workshops.

Risk, Safeguarding and Personal Budgets: Exploring relationships and identifying good practice

There are fears that people using Personal Budgets, particularly Direct Payments, to arrange their care and support may be at greater risk of abuse and neglect than people using conventionally commissioned care services, particularly if they hire unregulated care workers, or rely on relatives or others to manage their money. However, there are predictions that Personal Budgets may enhance safety through increasing people's control over their own care. This study aimed to establish whether people using Direct Payments or Managed Personal Budgets are more likely to be referred to the council with a safeguarding concern than people using conventional services, and if they are at higher risk of certain types of abuse.

The study also explored the perspectives of managers, social workers, people using council funded social care and family carers, about the impact of personalisation on safeguarding (keeping people safe from abuse and neglect) and to understand any practice changes around personalisation and safeguarding.

This study of national safeguarding and personal budgets data found no strong evidence to suggest higher levels of safeguarding referrals among people with Managed Personal Budgets or using Direct Payments compared with all social care users. In the three councils studied in depth, there were similar proportions of safeguarding referrals for people with Personal Budgets and those using council commissioned services. However, there was a statistically significant higher proportion of referrals for financial abuse and abuse by home care workers among people using Personal Budgets. Discrepancies between national data, summarised to the council level and individual level local data, suggest we need better national data – enabling us to be more confident that national summaries reflect the sum of individual cases.

Helping people to balance risk and choice when they use Direct Payments or Managed Personal Budgets is now one of the most important practice activities for social workers. Monitoring (particularly financial monitoring) and review are important ways of identifying potential risks of abuse. Processes for investigating safeguarding referrals are similar for Personal Budget users and other adults at risk. Direct Payment and Managed Personal Budget users reported a lack of information about managing risk and funding options, plus insufficient support for being an employer. Many said they did not know that the council had investigated a concern about their possible abuse. These experiences contrasted with professionals' views that they provided information and support while they were investigating these concerns.

The draft research findings are available at: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/policy-institute/scwru/pubs/2014/reports.aspx>

Martin Stevens, Jill, Manthorpe, Shereen Hussein, Mohammed Ismail, John Woolham, Kritika Samsi, Karen Baxter & Fiona Aspinall, NIHR School for Social Care Research and Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College London.

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Building Effective Responses: An Independent Review of Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Services in Wales

Researchers from the Connect Centre for International Research on Interpersonal Violence in the School of Social Work at the University of Central Lancashire were commissioned by the Welsh Government in 2013 to conduct research into violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence services in Wales.

The research involved analysis of statistical data to estimate prevalence rates; a mapping survey across Wales, interviews with key stakeholders; consultation groups with service users and a semi-systematic review of the international evidence on the effectiveness of service responses..

The study found that domestic abuse continues to be the most prevalent form of violence against women although there has been a rapid increase in rates of reported sexual offences in the last year. Key recommendations for the Welsh Government include ensuring secure and continuing funding for those interventions for which there is good evidence, such as IDVA services and school based prevention programmes, as well as working with higher education and training organisations to develop a skilled workforce in this sector across Wales. The review also recommended testing of the One-Stop-Shop model and new approaches for interventions with perpetrators of domestic abuse in Wales.

The study will inform the forthcoming Ending Violence Against Women and Domestic Abuse (Wales) Bill and implementation of the legislation.

The full report and summary are available at: <http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/building-effective-responses-independent-review-violence-against-women/?lang=en>

Vashti Berry, Nicky Stanley, Lorraine Radford, Melanie McCarry and Cath Larkins. Connect Centre, University of Central Lancashire.

Social work in the 21st Century

This seminar on 9th May 2014 saw delegates debate current issues in social work with Isabelle Trowler, England's Chief Social Worker for Children and Families, and Lyn Romeo, England's Chief Social Worker for Adults.

Kersten England, Chief Executive of City of York Council, formally welcomed Isabelle and Lyn to York, describing York as a place where social workers help people to live the lives they want to live.

Topics debated with the Chief Social Workers included the future of adult social workers, the integration of health and social care, the role of the principal social worker, and how do social workers deal with increasingly complex cases.

This event was in partnership with the International Centre for Mental Health Social Research and in a packed afternoon programme we heard fascinating presentations from 2 of the Centre's PhD students. Jonny Lovell presented a very personal perspective on self-disclosure in mental health. Tracee Green shared her research and experiences of parenting assessments, from the perspective of researcher and social worker.

The audience also posed questions to an expert panel including Dr Paul Edmondson-Jones, Director of Public Health; Jon Stonehouse, Director of Children's Services, Education and Skills; Eoin Rush, Assistant Director, Children's Specialist Services, of City of York Council and Saleem Tariq, Director of the Children's Social Care Service, of Leeds City Council. Areas covered included the impact of financial cuts, and moving from care management to social work and preventative work.

Jonny and Tracee's presentations can be found on our website.

<http://www.york.ac.uk/spsw/news-and-events/events/mrc/2013-14/mrc-9may14-sw21stcentury/>

Dr Martin Webber, Director of the International Centre for Mental Health Social Research, and academic lead for MRC at York, has blogged about the day. Read what he has to say here.

<http://martinwebber.net/?p=1486>

If I didn't get along with my worker ... I'd probably still be getting in trouble.

Innovatory participatory research with young people in contact with Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) has revealed key findings about the importance of and strategies for relationship based working. The research, carried out by Cath Larkins and John Wainwright at The Centre for Children and Young People's Participation, UCLan, involved a steering group of six YOT staff, a core group of four young people in custody who planned participatory research activities and interviews with a further 46 young people in contact with a YOT.

The research showed that, with young people's agreement, building communicative and trustful relationships between YOT workers and young people's families is a key strategy that can help reduce offending. Issues of 'race', ethnicity and experiences of racism appeared to be largely absent from YOT practice but addressing this appeared central to engaging young people in pathways out of offending behaviour. Young people also asked for access to recreational facilities – sports centres, gyms, cycle tracks and so on - to ensure their access to constructive leisure activities.

The steering group has implemented the research recommendations to develop their practice aiming to improve outcomes for young people. The research was the basis of training delivered to youth justice practitioners in Finland in September 2014.

Project report available from Cath Larkins at CLarkins@uclan.ac.uk

Cath Larkins and John Wainwright, The Centre for Children and Young People's Participation, School of Social Work, University of Central Lancashire.

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Reaching Out or Missing Out: Approaches to outreach with family carers in social care organisations

Outreach is advocated as a way of improving the uptake of services among underserved populations and of filling the gaps between mainstream services and the populations they are intended to support. Despite the policy emphasis on providing better help for family carers, research consistently shows that many of those providing unpaid care to a family member or friend report difficulties in finding out about the assistance to which they are entitled.

My open access article presents results from a concurrent mixed-methods study, which aimed to describe different ways of working with family carers in adult social care departments and to collect the views of a range of stakeholders about the advantages and disadvantages of the approaches that were identified.

See *Health and Social Care in the Community* (2015) 23(1), 42–50

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hsc.12119/abstract;jsessionid=9F622417F4AF946E814F3F21C53569D9.f04t01>

Jo Moriarty, Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College London.

Evaluation of the Social Work Practices with Adults Pilots

Independent Social Work Practices (SWPs) originally emerged in England in a government consultative Green Paper 'Care Matters: Time to deliver for children in care' (Secretary of State for Education and Skills, 2006). This was followed by the report from a Working Group set up to examine this proposal and report on its feasibility. This report argued that smaller social worker-led organisations, independent of local authorities, could improve the morale and retention of children's social workers, reduce bureaucracy, and facilitate professional decision-making. It hypothesised that such a model could have a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people as well as the workforce (Le Grand, 2007).

In November 2010 the then Secretary of State for Health, Andrew Lansley MP, announced a new programme to enable social care workers to:

- 'Spend more time with the individuals in their care and reduce the bureaucratic burden on individual social workers.
- Take decisions much closer to their clients, resulting in a more responsive service.
- Feel empowered with more control over the day-to-day management of the practice.
- Make use of the increased financial flexibility to deliver better outcomes by stepping back and thinking creatively about resource use.
- Enjoy their jobs more' (Department of Health, press release, 2010a).

The decision to pilot Social Work Practices with Adults (SWPwAs) over a period of two years was announced shortly thereafter in late 2010 (Department of Health [DH], 2010).

Over the following year local authorities were invited to submit applications to become pilots. Seven pilots were approved which ran from June 2012 until March 2014.

The evaluation report on SWPwAs is available at:

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/policy-institute/scwru/pubs/2014/reports.aspx>

Jill Manthorpe, Jess Harris, Shereen Hussein, Michelle Cornes and Jo Moriarty, Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College London.

The Views of Step Up to Social Work Trainees

The first two Step Up to Social Work (Step Up) programmes have been a master's level professional qualifying training route into social work over an 18-month period in England. The programme was intended to attract academically high achieving candidates with experience of working with children and families into the social work profession. The intention was also to allow employers and universities to develop the training within the requirements set by the then General Social Care Council (GSCC). The first Step Up programme involved eight regional partnerships (RPs), bringing together 42 local authorities, and 185 trainees started the training in September 2010. The second programme involved ten partnerships of 54 local authorities, and 227 trainees embarked on the training in March 2012.

In the first programme each RP was linked with one of two universities – Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and Salford University – commissioned to validate the training provision in line with GSCC's requirements and award the master's degree. On the first Step Up programme these universities also provided the teaching directly in some RPs but in others a different university did so. By the second programme only one of the by then ten RPs adopted the former model with most working directly with MMU or Salford or with another university.

Questionnaires were distributed to both cohorts at four points: at the start of the training (T1), after six and 12 (T2 and T3) months, and then at the end of the 18 months (T4). The data reported here are in terms of the number of respondents to the questionnaires rather than the whole Cohorts.

This evaluation report, available at

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/policy-institute/scwru/pubs/2014/reports.aspx>, was designed to capture the experiences of the first two cohorts of trainees.

Mary Baginsky and Jill Manthorpe, Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College, London