Welcome

Welcome to the 6th edition of the newsletter. In this we wish to bring you up to date with ongoing initiatives and events aimed at profiling our social work research and continuous improvement in Northern Ireland.

We continue to move forward in that all important journey of building and maintaining the culture of evidence informed practice and continuous improvement. Details of some of the initiatives are available on the Health and Social Care website. http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/swresearch/

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Forward Planning

Opportunity to engage in dialogue on research and evidence.

5th Annual Social Work and Social Care Research Conference 7th March 2018

This will provide the opportunity for researchers and practitioners to showcase and share their practice with others.

More details will follow on call for abstracts on page 7.

“Creativity requires input, and that’s what research is. You’re gathering material with which to build”.
Jene Luen Yang
Research and Continuous Improvement Implementation Board

This group was established in June 2017 with representation from across the statutory sector and continues to meet.

One of the tasks undertaken was the conduct of a “Scoping Exercise”. This was to ensure that we have a “common purpose” for future discussions on research, evidence and continuous improvement and to inform decisions on appropriate governance and infrastructure arrangements for taking work forward.

Scope of the exercise

The Scoping exercise had three strands;

- Processes developed to support research, evidence and continuous improvement
- Processes developed to establish synergy
- Potential areas that might benefit from research.

Responses were received from:-
- Health and Social Care Board
- Five Health and Social care Trusts
- Probation Board NI
- Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency
- Youth Justice Agency
- Department of Health

This proved to be a useful exercise in terms of providing a narrative baseline in terms of where organisations are to date. A wide range of initiatives are underway with evidence of synergy in a number of areas.

The Implementation Board considered the responses at the meeting of 15th December 2017. A summary version of the responses is available on the Social Work Research and Continuous Improvement website under Scoping Exercise: http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/our-work/social-care-and-children/swresearch/
UK Policy Framework For Health and Social Care Research

Regulators and government departments who promote and protect the interests of patients, service users and carers across the four UK nations have set out the key principles in a new UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research.

The 19 principles of good practice in research are for those who manage and conduct health and social research in the UK.

Bill Davidson, Joint Head of Policy at the Health Research Authority, who chaired the group that produced the framework, said:

"Health and social care research has clear benefits, but it relies on people. They give their money to fund and their time to participate in research. It crucial that in return that research is planned, regulated and conducted in a way that inspires confidence."

The principles set out in the Framework recognise the benefits of research and stress the importance of a proportionate approach to risk, and promote appropriate safeguards. By doing this it is intended that people will feel confident about taking part in research, researchers will find it easier to do high quality ethical research, and more funding will go into the research itself, not into navigating bureaucracy before it starts.

The new guidelines replace separate Research Governance Frameworks in each UK country with a single, modern set of principles for the whole UK. It has been developed by the Health Research Authority and the health departments in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, following public consultation.

Since the previous frameworks were issued over ten years ago, the environment for health research has changed considerably, with technological developments and shifts in societal attitudes meaning a number of new areas needed to be addressed.

For details on the changes and for a full copy of the framework see:


The policy framework applies to health and social care research involving patients, service users or their relatives or carers. This includes research involving them indirectly, for example using information that the NHS or social care services have collected about them.

"This framework largely sets out what should already be happening, so it is not an onerous new addition to researchers’ workload," said Bill Davidson. "By following these principles, we are confident of creating an environment where applying to do research is simple and quick, patients and the public are involved at every step, and safer, more effective care is developed through ethical and scientifically sound research for the benefit of society."

"Often we are too slow to recognise how much and in what ways we can assist each other through sharing expertise and knowledge”

Owen Arthur (Politician)
Social workers and service users recognised for their success in research, evaluation and evidence in Northern Ireland

The spotlight shone brightly on research and evidence in social work in Northern Ireland at a celebration event hosted at Antrim Civic Centre in December 2017.

The event saw the Deputy Chief Social Services Officer, Jackie McIlroy, award 17 individuals who successfully completed various modules of the post qualifying research methods programme at Ulster University during 2016-2017. This included Evidence Informed Practitioner and Organisation module for social workers and the equivalent service user and carer module Using Evidence to Inform Professionals and Organisation module and the Research and Evaluation in Social Work module. The awards recognised the hard work, enthusiasm, persistence of all involved and their commitment to make a difference in social work services.

“Investing in science education and curiosity driven research is investing in the future”

Ahmed Zewail

Back row (L-R) - Brian Taylor and Johanna O’Shea (tutors) Jackie McIlroy, Campbell Killick (tutor) Adrian Graham, Simon Darby, Francis Kavanagh, and Veronica Callaghan (host on the day). Front row (L-R) -Carole Kirk, Liz Tanner, and Jenni Rice
The success and achievement of participants was echoed by Professor Brian Taylor, Ulster University. Brian drew particular attention to the unique and innovative developments within the programme namely the two equivalent modules in evidence and research and evaluation. These have recently been academically accredited by the Ulster University at post qualifying certificate and post qualifying diploma level respectively. In addition he reminded delegates of the key role of service users and carers in the assessment process. Brian thanked all involved in supporting candidates throughout their training.

In concluding her presentation, Jackie McIlroy encouraged successful candidates to continue to disseminate their work and findings in abstract submissions, posters, written articles and oral presentations at local, national and internal research and evidence conferences. "I wish you luck as you go forward as our research and continuous improvement champions".

A special note of thanks and appreciation are extended to colleagues in the Northern Trust, Marie Roulston, Veronica Callaghan, Caroline McGonigle and Lynda Logue for their superb hosting of the event and for making everyone feel welcome on the day. At this event we also heard about the recent launch of the Northern Trust’s Research Strategy.

Booklets of all the abstracts from 2016-2017 and from the previous year
Ulster University is the academic partner for the NISCC Individual Assessment Route, which enables candidates to gain academic as well as professional credit for their efforts. Over the years since 2007, the University has offered a variety of group and individual support sessions to social workers availing of this opportunity.

You will be pleased to hear that for 2017-18 we are offering a series of workshops that will support candidates who wish to develop their skills and knowledge in developing the use of knowledge in practice, knowledge transfer, implementation science, becoming a research champion, developing a research minded culture. This is in response, in particular, to interest amongst social workers who have completed the two modules within the Research methods Programme, but who still require additional credits to complete their NISCC Leadership Award and the UU MSc Professional Development in Social Work. This will further extend their knowledge and skills. However, the sessions will be of interest also to a wider range of social workers. The broad aim is to support the development of the knowledge and skills required to implement the Social Work Research and Continuous Improvement Strategy.

The Workshops in 2017-18 will address three main topics:

1. Dissemination through writing for publication
2. Oral or poster conference presentations
3. Interpersonal research and evidence leadership

To participate, candidates should register for requirement(s)-module(s) of the Independent Assessment Route with academic credit through NISCC in the normal way.

Please draw this to the attention of appropriate staff in your organisation, and look forward to hearing from prospective candidates.

Further details from Johanna O’Shea, Lecturer in Social Work: j.oshea@ulster.ac.uk

“Don’t leave inferences to be drawn when evidence can be presented”
Richard Wright
HSCB and HSC R&D Division Social Work and Social Care Research Conference

5th Annual Social Work and Social Care Research in Practice Conference
7th March 2018, 9.30am - 4.00pm
Belfast Castle, Antrim Road, Belfast BT16 5GR

Call for Oral Presentations and Poster Presentations

HSCB and HSC Research and Development Division are pleased to announce their call for Oral Presentations and Poster Presentations for their forthcoming conference.

The theme of the Conference is:
How do we know if social work makes a difference? Issues in evaluating complex interventions

Professional in Practice (PfP) Accredited Event

Please complete this form and return in electronic format to SWSCRResearchConference2018@hscti.net on or before Wednesday 31st January 2018.

Title: 
Surname: 
Organisation (if relevant): 
Current Position: 
Co Presenters Names: 
Tel No.: 
E-mail: 

Guidelines for Presentation Abstracts

Using a maximum of 500 words, please give a clear indication of the focus and aim of your presentation. All abstracts should be relevant to the theme of the conference and be informative, concise and address the following:

<table>
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<th>Research study</th>
<th>Systematic Reviews</th>
<th>Innovations and Practice Developments</th>
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<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Background and Content</td>
<td>Aim of review</td>
<td>Background and context</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aim of Study</td>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Aim and objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Search and review methodology</td>
<td>Outline main content</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Processes used</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Summary of findings</td>
<td>Evaluations and outcomes</td>
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<td>Conclusions and Implications</td>
<td>Conclusions and Implications</td>
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Abstracts should be word documents, typed in “Arial” 14 point font, using 1.5 spacing please underline the name of the presenting author.

All submissions will be peer reviewed for inclusion and of those selected, a number of these will be identified for oral presentation.

Peer review will take account of:
- Relevance to the conference title
- Originality and creativity of approach
- Perceived impact on social work practice and services
- Accuracy and presentation

Please indicate if you wish for your abstract to be considered for:

☐ Oral Presentation
Length of presentation is 15 minutes (10 minutes plus 5 minutes discussion)

☐ Poster Presentation
Posters will be displayed during the conference on the 7th March 2018. All entrants need to prepare to display posters on date of conference and be available to respond to questions from delegates during this time. Guideline as follows:
- Posters must be A1 size and can be paper or cloth
- Poster presenters are responsible for hanging their poster prior to conference commencing
- Poster presenters are responsible for removing their posters after the conference.

Submissions must be made in electronic format on or before Wednesday 31st January to SWSCRResearchConference2018@hscti.net
Decisions, Assessment, Risk & Evidence in Social Work (DARE): 5th International Symposium

2nd and 3rd July 2018, Templeton Hotel, Templepatrick

This biennial DARE conference series brings together researchers, educators, policy makers and senior practitioners to share developments on topics such as professional judgment; decision processes; assessing and managing risk; evidence creation; synthesis and dissemination; ethical aspects of decision making.

Abstracts are invited for oral and poster presentations by 31st January 2018. For further details please visit the conference website: www.ulster.ac.uk/dare

HSC R&D Division Forthcoming Event

6 February 2018 10.30-3.30pm
Linen Suite, Mossley Mill

The HSC R&D Division would like to invite you to a workshop to discuss the findings from phase 1 of the Review of the HSC R&D Infrastructure. The aim of the workshop will be to consult on the proposed plans to address the main issues highlighted in this survey with key stakeholders. Please note that registration will be at 9.30am but we aim to start promptly at 10.30am.

Keynote Speakers:

Dr Nicky Williams, Director of Support & Delivery, Health and care Research Wales
Professor Ian Young, Director of HSC R&D Division & Chief Scientific Advisor, Department of Health (NI).