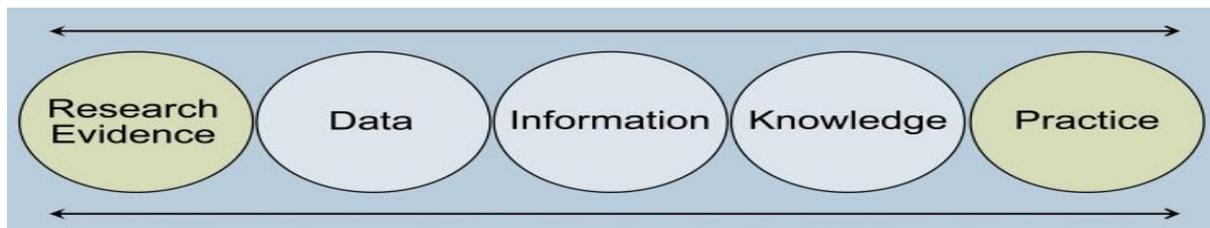


Social Work Research and Continuous Improvement Strategy 2015-2020

Moving On More than Words

**Report of discussions held at engagement
event 3rd June 2015**



Introduction

From the outset it was agreed that communications and visibility was necessary to keep the Social Work Research and Continuous Improvement Strategy alive. In June 2015 the Health and Social Care sector hosted an event entitled: *Moving on- More than Words* which had this dual purpose to the fore.

The stated aims of the event were to:

- Demonstrate and show the visible commitment by the Social Work Leadership in Northern Ireland for the Strategy and for its implementation ;
- To bring together those interested in social work research to keep the momentum;
- To provide feedback on the outcomes of the consultation exercise on the *draft* Strategy; and,
- Facilitate dialogue about moving forward in relation to the implementation phases.

The target audience was:

- Staff within the health and social care organisations, inclusive of senior managers, other managers and practitioners
- Service users and carers
- Academia and other stakeholders

Outcomes

Attended by a wide range of stakeholders the event was successful in all of these areas. Participants got the opportunity to hear speakers from the Department, Health and Social Care Board and Trusts, and through the use of Podcasts, colleagues from academia who highlighted the importance of getting evidence into social work practice and who endorsed the cultural shift envisaged by the Social Work Research and Continuous Improvement Strategy. Participants also got the opportunity to reflect and on the many opportunities that already exist for staff to do so. Through the use of a Podcast by INVOLVE, a Service User and Care Organisation, the ultimate value of engaging service users and carers in research related activity was reinforced.

Issue 3 of the Newsletter *Supporting Research, Evidence and Knowledge - Exchange in Social Work and Social Care* provides further details on the outcomes of the event.

The key element of the event was to facilitate engagement and dialogue with participants. The remainder of this report provides the outcomes from round table discussions, led by each of the Directors of Social Work within Trust. The feedback will help shape and inform the direction of the next phase of the work in terms of the Strategy's implementation.

Acknowledgments are extended to the HSC Leadership Centre and Campbell Killick (South Eastern Trust) for their support at the event.

Anne McGlade
Social Work Research Lead
Social Care and Children Director
HSCB
12-22 Linenhall Street
Belfast BT2 8BS
028 95 363017
Email: anne.mcglade@hscni.net

Feedback from Workshops

Group 1 – Led by Cecil Worthington Belfast Trust

Building leaders throughout the organisation

<p>How can we energise leaders at middle management and team leaders to endorse the research and evidence agenda and ensure they can support other staff in this activity.</p>	<p>Very important to embed the principles of research and evidence informed practice through 1:1 supervision, team meetings and social work forum.</p> <p>Practitioners influence the research agenda and how it influences their practice.</p> <p>Have champions within the organisation – those who have engaged in the research course and annual event to celebrate achievement.</p> <p>Utilise skills in the organisation. Use of language in research terms.</p>
<p>What good practice already exists to build upon?</p>	<p>Dementia services. Mental health recovery.</p>
<p>What other supports are needed?</p>	<p>Practitioner control of research (how do we engage practitioners?).</p> <p>Research course - equity with other academic courses.</p> <p>Need to create systems to support research in day to day practice / career pathways.</p>

Moving on building and maintaining collaborations

<p>What are the things that we need to do to make this happen? What opportunities exist to support this? What other supports do we need?</p>	<p>Establish strong links with academia e.g. Stranmillis. How to use IT – hubs, KE, internet etc. Collaboration with voluntary sector re: service user input to research.</p>
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Group 2 – Led by Paul Morgan Southern Trust

The social work professional engaged in setting the research agenda

<p>How can practice issues from the ground be better identified to advance future directions?</p>	<p>The word research provokes social workers – you need to be an expert - Need to engage staff at every level and promote the fact that research can be at different levels.</p> <p>Helping people to realise what they are already doing and build on that. Build on experiences that students have.</p> <p>Build network with confident people.</p> <p>Helping people to understand research methods.</p> <p>Engaging with service users from the start.</p> <p>Importance of collecting data in a consistent way when called upon for research.</p> <p>Need to align the needs and priorities.</p> <p>Evidence based tools are used but needs to help staff make links i.e. NICE, UNOCONI.</p> <p>Need to take ownership of research priorities. Move away from anxiety around research – you don't have to be an expert.</p> <p>Collect data in a useful way. Look for opportunities to streamline the ethical approach.</p>
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Examples of good practice.	Social work strategy has innovation scheme which encourage practitioners to take on work and develop it further.
How do other service users and carers, academia, voluntary sector and others feel they can also inform this agenda?	<p>Shared priorities are very important – existing networks and forums.</p> <p>PPI could be used as a basis but improves the communication.</p> <p>Practice work is outlined in journals such as child care in practice (not research as such but good at practice). Challenge in trusts – what we might see as the “burning issue” is not what service users think.</p> <p>Missed opportunities i.e. audits activity such as supervision audits take a lot of work but tell us very little.</p> <p>Researchers could provide more feedback to organisations from interviews and focus groups.</p>

Moving on building and maintaining collaborations

<p>What are the things that we need to do to make this happen?</p> <p>What opportunities exist to support this?</p> <p>What other supports do we need?</p>	<p>Collaboration.</p> <p>PPI.</p> <p>What networks are there?</p> <p>Need to identify regional priorities in collaboration.</p> <p>Approach needs to be <i>why</i> are you researching a topic and <i>what outcome</i> we want from it, i.e. CSE – making children safer.</p> <p>Ethics – streamlining the process.</p> <p>Collaboration.</p> <p>Understand how collaboration could work.</p> <p>QUB are involved also in smaller scale priorities but funding also plays a role- look at what already is there.</p> <p>Scoping out of existing networks.</p> <p>Involving people about regional priorities – next 5 – 10 years.</p> <p>Importance of linking research and evaluation of outcomes.</p> <p>Using the outcome of research to make a difference.</p> <p>Don't have to develop new things – however scope different networks.</p>
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Group 3 – Led by Brendan Whittle South Eastern Trust

Building on exiting opportunities

<p>What do we need to do to capitalise on these opportunities?</p>	<p>Incorporate research into job descriptions. Make research relevant. Allow time within the job role for research. Address the void at the end of the research methods programme i.e. next stage. Access and support to local funding for research projects. Partnerships/forums for researchers/ academics/service users/employers to look at relevant research priorities. How do we support staff to access research and use it in their practice? - They come out a competent research professionals and turn into procedural beings; - Are our organisations research friendly? - How do we develop a culture of inquiry? Knowledge transfer – how do we ensure knowledge changes practices. Model of supervision – builds a culture of enquiry but does this work well in practice??</p>
<p>What is working well?</p>	<p>Collaboration with universities with Trust based projects e.g. direct payments. Number of staff who have engaged with research over 21 years. HONNI, SCIE, Knowledge Exchange.</p>
<p>What others supports are needed?</p>	<p>Further engagement with service users in developing the research questions – looking at continuous improvement. <i>Culture change is needed.</i> Keeping the momentum going.</p>

	<p>Give staff time to engage – release. New research module – literature review rather than new research. Practitioners need to know what research is – knowledge, how this helps them to do their job better, they need to be active. We need to ask the right questions.</p>
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Moving on building and maintaining collaborations

<p>What are the things that we need to do to make this happen? What opportunities exist to support this? What other supports do we need?</p>	<p>Forum with shared agenda – maybe around particular areas of practice – regional or Trust. Clarity about benefits or research to the organisation. Be careful about the categories we place people into. Training re: service users to engage and inform in research. Need research Leads within organisations to channel information through. Existing forum could be used with identification of research priorities becoming part of the agenda. Accessing research events – using the research assistant – funding to buy Social Work time for backfill. How do we engage individual service users? – not all service users in organisations represent everyone. Building “job plan” – research time into roles Creative small pots of money which will allow projects – at practitioner level. Popularisation and mainstreaming of research findings.</p>
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Group 4 – Led by Marie Roulston Northern Trust

Building on continuous professional development

<p>What does Professional in Practice (PIP) offer us in the research and critical application of evidence?</p>	<p>Professional in Practice (PIP) provides an underlying framework and used to embed culture of leadership. Offers confidence from global best practice Need bottom up approach. Promotes research-mindedness among social workers. Promote the link between line manager and practitioner. Allow for recognition. Using local research as well as national research. Build on collaboration with service users. Implementation plans need to be worked on as it could take 18 years.</p>
<p>How can we best capitalise on this framework. Is there anything else that needs to be done to support staff in this?</p>	<p>Create awareness of Professional in Practice (PIP) (road shows). Coaching and mentoring needs to be supported, and use of supervision. Build a proactive culture around evidence based practice – this needs leadership. Create a learning culture – informal feedback. Develop a culture which supports learning and evidence. More focus on making time for reflective practice. This needs to be built into practice. Formalised programmes are important and necessary – skills analysing evidence. Learning “on the go” – doesn’t always have to be formal programmes. Practitioners need to showcase practice – research, practice and to publish. Needs a culture to voice challenges in practice and learn from them. Develop leadership.</p>
<p>What does this mean for services, service users and carers?</p>	<p>Should get a better service. Service users want evidence informed services. Use local evidence and knowledge. Reduce bureaucracy – Where we “want a new form – get rid of four.” Should focus the research priorities.</p>

Moving on building and maintaining collaborations

What are the things that we need to do to make this happen?

What opportunities exist to support this?

What other supports do we need?

Building a community of practice and research
Verbalise what the research question is -- questions come out of this.

We need to ask practitioners what the research questions are – empower them at ground level. Need to capture better the struggles of practitioners including those in residential- are practice based research.

Practitioners have - Ask practitioners and ask students.

Need to know what practitioners are struggling with.

Lack of service user engagement- Involve service users and carers in research the itself.

Draw on the information we have and use it
Create a forum.

We always focus on problems now; we need to focus on solutions.

Remember something small can make a significant change –

One page reviews can be competent in this -

Develop research networks and use of this

Research networks exist – Dementia; Maternity Clinical Research Networks- Use.

Delegated Statutory Functions (DSF) – engage research in this.

Workshop with service user groups.



Group 5 – Led by Kieran Downey Western Trust

Better sharing of research and evidence

<p>What do we need to do to commit ourselves to the sharing of research and evidence and good practice so that we can all learn from this together?</p>	<p>Need for an outcome framework connected to strategy. Need for time to map out what already exists. Need to ensure that information is filtered down. Aiming high and taking lessons from other professions – joint posts etc. Co-production – voice of re service users and carers: is activity heard and influences work? Outcomes – how do we know what we are doing is making a difference. Outcomes framework linked to key prioritises Tap into the regional advisory group and R&D office. Reducing bureaucracy. Partnerships – meaningful engagement. Family support – getting back to basics.</p> <p>Adult services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outcomes, - Co-production – getting alongside, service users/carers.
<p>What opportunities exist and how can we better capitalise on these?</p>	<p>Need to map out what currently exists. Need to take lessons from other professions. First steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outcomes framework which identifies mapping out what already necessary hooks exist, - Project Board – more mapping out of what already exists and other work requirements? - Aim high – joint posts, - Key prioritises – adult/children’s services. <p>Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outcomes Framework – greater dealings about what will success look like, - Mapping out what already exists – particular to project boards and filter down – develop awareness of all,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Aim high – take lessons from other professions – might be joint posts with academia.
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Moving on building and maintaining collaborations

<p>What are the things that we need to do to make this happen? What opportunities exist to support this? What other supports do we need?</p>	
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Additional comments

1. As part of Research Strategy – centralise point to manage the methods for engagement with other sectors. This will also allow for identifying emerging themes and working progress.
2. Ensure service users are actively involved not just to pay lip service to this.
3. Need a mechanism to see what happens to research once produced – how it is utilises, references in other research and used in practice.
4. If seeking out research participants ensure evidence gathered is utilised and treated in a respectful manner.
5. NICVA – voluntary sector – research network.
6. Need more fellowships – areas of Learning Disability ; Autism and Dementia
7. Commission for Older People (COPNI) works with older people who are very often vulnerable and rarely engaged about the services that are often life changing for them i.e. withdrawal of domiciliary care etc. or intermediate care.
8. Commission for Older People (COPNI) actively seek research participants who may be “harder” to reach and therefore have greater need.
9. There is a need to ensure any research is utilised and mainstreamed where possible
10. Not always a report to the Patient Client Council to fulfil Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) - there are other ways. Need to seek out other participants and mechanisms.
11. Joint leadership.
12. Knowledge Exchange Networks already exist – we need to utilise these.
13. Strategy – starting with social work and HSC sector.
14. Not just new research but developing a research and evidence culture.
15. Involve – greater public involvement in research – user controlled research.
16. Outcomes focus – measurement based on evidence.
17. Collaborations are important.
18. Using information to improve service outcomes.