

## Conference Programme

### Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September

12:00 – 14:00	Arrival, registration and lunch	
14:00 – 16:30	PhD Workshop Parallel Session A, Sessions 1 – 4	Griffiths
	Poster Presentations	Flowers Theatre
16:30 – 17:00	Refreshments	
17:00 – 17:30	Welcome and Introductions: Dr Janet Melville-Wiseman, Chair JUCSWEC Professor Kay Marshall, Head of the School of Health Sciences, The University of Manchester Professor Sam Baron, Chair of the Joint University Council (JUC) Dr Pat Cartney, Co-Chair of JUCSWEC Teaching and Learning Committee and Senior Lecturer in Social Work, The University of Manchester	Flowers Theatre
17:30 – 18:30	Keynote 1: Colum Conway, Chief Executive Officer of Social Work England 'Social Work England – The Journey so Far', followed by a Question and Answer Session Chaired by: Professor Sam Baron	Flowers Theatre
19:00 – 22:00	Conference Dinner Music provided by Vernon Jazz	Carriage Restaurant

### Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September

09:15 – 09:30	JUCSWEC Future Conferences Strategy and Launch of JSWEC 2020 Dr Janet Melville-Wiseman, Chair of JUCSWEC Professor John Devaney, Chair of JUCSWEC Scotland Committee Jonathan Scourfield, Professor of Social Work / <i>Athro Gwaith Cymdeithasol</i> Cardiff School of Social Sciences / <i>Ysgol Gwyddorau Cymdeithasol Caerdydd</i> and Chair of the JSWEC2020 Organising Group	Flowers Theatre
09:30 – 11:00	Keynote 2: Professor Danielle Turney, Professor of Social Work, Queen's University Belfast 'Using relationships to make a difference: critical care ethics and humane practice'	Flowers Theatre
11:00 – 12:30	Parallel Session B, Sessions 5 - 10	
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch	Carriage Restaurant
	JUCSWEC Officer Meeting	Griffiths
13:00 – 14:00	Poster Presentations	Flowers Theatre
14:00 – 15:30	Parallel Session C, Sessions 11 – 16	
15:30 – 17:00	Parallel Session D, Sessions 17 – 22	
17:00 – 17:30	Plenary and close – JUC-SWEC Officers	Flowers Theatre

## Abstracts and Presenters

### Parallel Session A

Session	Room	Chair	Presentations
PhD Workshop	Griffiths	Dr Joanna Rawles and Dr Dharman Jeyasingham	Stacey Stewart Lindsay Giddings Rosemary Oram Meanaz Akhtar Lucy Porteous Mthoko Sampson
Session 1	Lindsay	Jill Childs	Emma Reith-Hall Anne-Marie Glover Dale Van Graan Gillian Buck Sarah Shorrocks
Session 2	C.P.Scott	Sam Baron	Catherine Foster Clive Diaz Munira Khan Amy Lynch Clive Diaz
Session 3	Cavendish	Pat Cartney	Richard Martin Deborah James Philippa Tomczak Felicity Morrow Sukey Tarr
Session 4	Marquis	Alison McInnes	Tamsin Waterhouse Johanna Woodcock Ross Andrew Murphy Eleni Skoura-Kirk Aidan Worsley
Posters	Flowers Theatre		

### **Evaluation, consideration and education; a tool to enhance social work practice when working with mothers with violent partners (ID10)**

Mrs Stacey Stewart

Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, United Kingdom

Social work is viewed as a supportive and empowering profession in which there are clear standards of advocacy and protection, however, there are reports that social workers behaviours are oppressive (Douglas and Walsh 2010) and can reflect that of a perpetrator (Keeling and Van Wormer 2012).

In order to explore this further and as part of the authors PhD research, a tool was developed in order to understand, assess and evaluate social work practice with mothers with violent partners. Derived from the Duluth model of power and control (DAIP 2017) and the Knowledge and Skills Statements for Social Workers in England and Wales (Department for Education 2018), the tool depicts different behaviours that have been evidenced by perpetrators or social workers.

The project used a Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodology and the tool was validated and trialled within a pilot study before being used to collect data. Both mothers who experience child protection social work and child protection social workers themselves took part, in order to co-create knowledge. This presentation shares

further detail and information about the tool, its validation and how it can be applied to inter-disciplinary research, education and practice that involves victim/survivors of domestic abuse.

### **Understanding why children's social workers stay – an interpretative phenomenological analysis. Reflections on the pilot study (ID83)**

Miss Lindsay Giddings

Keele University, Keele, United Kingdom

There is an oft-quoted statistic that suggests that the average career length of a social worker is eight years, compared with sixteen years for nurses and twenty-five years for doctors (Curtis et al, 2010). Much of the research relating to the topic of the social work workforce considers stress, burnout and intention to leave (Tham, 2007; Evans and Huxley, 2009; Webb and Carpenter, 2012). As a registered social worker with more than eight years' frontline experience working with children and families, I am interested to know not why people leave, but why people stay.

My project will utilise a qualitative approach, using focus groups initially followed by semi structured interviews, to seek to understand why people have stayed in their roles in frontline children and family social work for more than eight years. Their satisfaction at work and their thoughts on their own resilience will also be explored, to seek to understand whether these workers feel that they had intrinsic resilience before they started their careers or if they have developed this throughout their careers. Both the focus group data and the data from the semi structured interviews will be analysed using interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA).

I held a focus group as a pilot, and this presentation will focus on reflections on this process and the learning from my pilot. The purpose of the pilot was to build an argument for using IPA to analyse focus group data – a contentious issue. Secondary to this, the pilot allowed the researcher to start to develop skills in data analysis. As a result of the pilot, I am confident that IPA is an appropriate method of analysing the data collected through the focus groups.

### **Deaf parents and safeguarding – cultural-linguistic perspectives on parenting assessment (ID38)**

Rosemary Oram

University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

This research study focuses on one particular community of approximately 80-90,000 people in the UK, typically referred to as "Deaf with a capital D". Its members hold a strong deaf identity centred around their own culture and their use of British Sign Language (BSL) – a visual language recognised as an official UK language in 2003, following a long campaign.

The study concerns parenting assessments integral to child safeguarding professional processes and practices when they involve Deaf parents. Through the researcher's professional work in family courts, it has been observed that the number of child removals relating to Deaf parents and child protection is notably high, leading to an open question about the degree of cultural competence to be found in the current social work system in England, for Deaf parents subject to safeguarding concerns.

The overall aim is to examine, from the perspective of both Deaf BSL-using parents and social work professionals in England, the current state of social work practice with regard to parenting support/interventions and the

parenting capacity assessment process involving Deaf parents, ranging from initial contact through to family court proceedings. Employing a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, qualitative data will be elicited using semi-structured interviews for the first phase, followed by two subsequent studies.

Relatively little material has been identified in relation to parental perspectives of safeguarding, even when expanding the search globally to include other cultural linguistic minority groups whose first language is not English, thereby necessitating a change of strategy. One of the studies will now be conducted earlier in the timescale, exploring practice wisdom in order to supplement the available literature.

Study One will focus on specialist social workers in a senior role, known as expert informants, possessing 5 years or more experience of working with Deaf parents in parenting assessments in England. Following the advance provision of a topic guide, participants will be asked to share their expert knowledge and views on best practice which will offer insights to support the latter studies. Ethical approval has been granted by the University of Manchester.

Due to its current status, Study One is yet to yield results. However, the researcher recognises a possible area of concern regarding the level of cultural competence within a welfare system for Deaf people which has changed extensively over the years. The history of social provision for Deaf people will be discussed, encompassing church missionaries and generic social workers, and how the application of the social model of disability, as opposed to the cultural linguistic model, impacts Deaf people in the current system of mainstream services. Additionally, in light of the diminishing number of specialised roles (e.g. Social Workers with Deaf People), the cultural implications will be explored by offering examples of potential pitfalls in parenting assessments with culturally Deaf people. The researcher would be interested in receiving feedback on the future direction of her work from her peers.

This PhD is funded by the ESRC.

## **Understanding how carer identity is experienced and negotiated through the lens of young British Pakistani women (ID74)**

Miss Meanaz Akhtar

University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom

*"I don't see myself as being a carer...I just think I'm doing it 'cause obviously she's my mum and I care for her. I wouldn't say I'm actually her carer."* Sara.

Sara is aged 18, she assists her Mum with her daily living and informs that the support she provides her Mother can be in excess of 36 hours per week. Most health professionals would recognise Sara's role as a 'carer', however, Sara can't relate to this title.

'Young Adult Carers' are young people aged 16-24 who provide unpaid care for a family member with an illness, physical disability, mental health condition and/or an addiction. Although, we recognise that young people with caregiving responsibilities can be at a disadvantage in health, education and social mobility. We have very little understanding how caregiving is experienced by different ethnic groups, in particular among South Asian communities, where filial obligation is rooted in cultural practices and duty bound.

My research focuses on the experiences of young British Pakistani women (aged 18-24) who provide day-to-day support to family member(s) and balance this with either higher education or employment commitments. Through participant generated photographs, these young women combined 'photo' and 'voice' to share rich and personal insights into the challenges, motivations and resilience in relation to their caregiving responsibilities. One of the

interesting findings that came from this research was how these young women negotiated their daughter and carer identity in private and public arenas and through selected images and rich narratives this presentation aims to share insights into British Pakistani women making sense of their 'carer' role.

## **How do parents of looked after children experience relationships with professionals during the reunification process? A critical analysis (ID77)**

Mrs Lucy Porteous

University of Portsmouth, Portsmouth, United Kingdom

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this research is to find out how parents of looked after children experience relationships with social workers and other professionals during the reunification process. Reunification being the term used when looked after children are returned to the care of their birth families / families of origin.

### **Background**

Relationship-based practice is considered a key tenet in social work and is central to successful outcomes (Hingley-Jones and Ruch, 2016; Ruch, Turney and Ward, 2018; BASW, 2018). However, in the field of reunification, studies have focused more on *what* needs to be done rather than *how* it should be done. For example, the guidance on reunification practice (Reunification Practice Framework), provides a detailed pathway for practitioners and supports local authorities fulfil their duties under the Children Act 1989, but also promotes relationship-based practice and collaboration with families (Wilkins & Farmer 2015).

So how do the parents of looked after children experience relationships with social workers and other professionals during the reunification process? A review of current literature identified themes of *engagement, power, inter-personal skills* and *challenge* which fit with a relational approach. These themes will form the basis of a qualitative study which aims to answer this question and provide further guidance for practitioners working with families during reunification.

Services for children and families are currently set against a backdrop of poverty and austerity (Featherstone, Gupta, Morris and White, 2018) and creeping privatisation (Jones, 2018). Therefore, a critical approach will underpin the research.

### **Methodology**

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with parents of looked after children during the reunification process. These will be critically analysed using a phenomenological approach. Participants will be recruited through a local authority in the south of England.

### **Progress**

I am currently completing my ethics to submit for review. I am also undertaking service user involvement also known as public and patient participation (PPI), to reflect on my interview schedule and the impact that my status as a social worker might have on the interview process.

### **Key words:**

Reunification, Looked after Children, Relationship-based practice, Phenomenology, Service User Involvement, public and patient participation, PPI

## References

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## The Concept of Power in the Family Group Conferencing (FGC) Process (ID85)

Ms Mthoko Sampson

Foucault (1998: 63) professed 'Power is everywhere' and 'comes from everywhere', this suggests where there is a relationship there is power. Ortner (1989:12) contends that there is no such thing as 'practice on an equal political playing field', 'asymmetry, inequality, domination and the like' are intrinsic to the relations imperative to practice theorists. This dialectic of structure and human action is always set within a certain temporal and spatial context which demands an awareness of issues of power. There are different aspects of relationships that manifest in the FGC process, it is also where different dimensions of power play out. Power between social services and families, power between family members – perhaps the male/female dynamic and power between children and adults in the family. This chapter in my PhD research looks at the concept of power dynamics as they play out in the FGC arena.

Social workers are said to have a dual mandate of care and control (Lyle, 2012). This refers to social workers' powers and responsibilities to use interventions to support children and their families to help them keep the children safe whilst also using the legal powers to enforce safeguarding and promote the welfare of vulnerable children, 'inevitably this contradicts power-sharing practices' (Connolly & McKenzie ,1999 pg 66). Lupton and Nixon (1999) asserted that some of the basic goals of FGC are the reduction of power imbalances between family and social services, the appreciation and valuing of knowledge and resources within a family and helping parents and children feel that with some help and support from their own network they will be able to change their situation.

The feminist theory argues the family has 'traditionally legitimated the commission of violence against women and children' (Kelly, 1988). Robertson (1996) Lupton and Nixon (1999) echo these concerns relating to the reproduction and reinforcement of family power imbalances during private family time, particularly along dimensions of gender and generation. With the knowledge of widespread violence against women in families coming to the attention of social welfare and the prevalence of male offenders in child abuse (particularly child sex abuse), many welfare professionals and potential family participants have voiced concerns about possible male dominance or aggression in the FGC. Holland et al (2005).

This chapter further looks how power dynamics affect children in the FGC process, how power plays out between them and adults in the family arena. One of the key ethos of the FGC process is the involvement of children, how then does this power play out? Are children heard in the process and can this power be abused to disadvantage the children?

## **Transforming teacher-learner relationships in social work education. What are the gaps and how can we mend them? (ID20)**

Mrs Emma Reith-Hall

Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, United Kingdom

Stakeholder involvement is thought to improve the quality of social work education (Croisdale-Appleby, 2014; Berry-Lound et al., 2016) although few approaches and strategies for achieving effective collaborations have been articulated. The concept of gap-mending - an analytical tool that helps teachers, researchers, students and service users to reflect upon what, in their practices, increases, maintains or mends gaps (PowerUs, 2011) have enabled one HEI to begin transforming its teacher-learner relationships, resulting in more inclusive and equal practices. Gaps between academics and students are increasingly being recognised in Higher Education. 'Engaging students and staff effectively as partners in learning and teaching is arguably one of the most important issues facing higher education in the 21st century' (Healey 2014, p. 7). The rationale for involving students in their own education is hard to ignore, and is particularly relevant to social work, given the humanitarian, democratic and social justice principles on which social work is based (British Association Social Work, 2012). In practice however, the extent to which students are actively involved in designing and delivering the social work curriculum remains fairly limited, and traditional power dynamics still operate.

We began to reflect on whether the British co-trainer model, which had facilitated effective relationships between academics and service users and carers might inadvertently be contributing to, or reinforcing the gap between educators and students, causing a categorical or binary pair (Tilly, 2000), in which the former is often seen as 'stronger, more powerful and more legitimate' (Heule et al., 2017). We speculated that mending the gap in one relationship may have opened up a gap in another. This is an uncomfortable thought for social work academics, but acknowledgement of the power imbalances inherent in our educational institutions and organisational practices is an important step in overcoming them.

Gap-mending strategies offer a way of challenging more traditional power dynamics within the learning environment, creating opportunities for academics, service users and carers and students to engage in mutual learning processes and collective knowledge production. Taking a preparation for practice module as a starting point, first we opened up the personal testimonies session to any stakeholder with lived service user or carer experience, hence service users and carers, academics, practitioners and students can share their personal testimonies side-by-side. Second, opportunities for peer feedback on students' developing skills were increased, so that educators no longer hold the monopoly on feedback-giving practices. And third, drawing on social pedagogy's 'common third', video exemplars of practice skills are now co-produced by students, academics, and service users and carers - contributing to the teaching of subsequent cohorts.

As the proliferation of routes into social work continues, new and stronger collaborations will be required. To mend the gaps in key stakeholder relationships, we will be required to create more egalitarian disciplinary communities of practice – a challenge that promises to be 'both difficult and destabilising, effortful and provocative' (Healey et al., 2014, p. 21).

## **'Life Changing' Social work Education: Reflections on Partnership based approaches to Social Work Education (ID45)**

Ms. Anne-Marie Thérèse Glover

University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom

Partnerships between universities and employers are now an increasing approach to social work education; Step Up is a government initiative developed to address issues of recruitment and retention, and provide effective preparation for staff entering the challenging context of children and family social work practice. Local Authorities form Regional Partnership groups and secure DfE funding to work with a commissioned HEI to design and deliver a social work qualifying programme; the 6<sup>th</sup> Cohort of this programme will be commencing in January 2020. With high vacancy rates and numbers of agency staff within Children's Services' settings, a programme that offers access to social work education can offer many benefits to employers. Both early and more recent evaluations of the Step Up programme note this approach indicates a number of benefits, most significantly more effective partnership working between Universities and Local Authority employers.

This presentation will reflect on feedback and experiences of students, HEI and Regional Partnership staff experiences of those involved in a Step Up to Social Work Regional Partnership, and the presenter's role as a social work academic with experience of designing and delivering such programmes in partnership with local employers.

It will consider notions of partnerships and relationships, well enshrined in social work policy and practice, but relatively less so in social work education. Locating these within the literature, it seeks to advance appreciation of these approaches to social work education, suggesting that collaboration can offer effective preparation of students for future employment. It will highlight the potential of these programmes to offer both life-changing and widening participation access to education.

The presentation will also introduce the presenter's Doctoral study, focusing on how these relationships are framed, enacted and understood, and their potential influence on partnership-based approach to social work education.

### **Developing Strategic Relationships within a Teaching Partnership: a case study of what helps and what hinders (ID49)**

Mrs Dale Van Graan<sup>1,2</sup>, Assoc Prof Susan Watson<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Developing Together, Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom. <sup>3</sup>Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom

In 2015 the DfE and DoH introduced teaching partnerships to support the development and maintenance of high standards of social work education and post-qualifying professional development. Formal collaborations between higher education providers of social work programmes and local government employers of social workers, teaching partnerships are employer-led initiatives to raise standards by jointly developing, delivering and owning curricula and post-qualifying professional development frameworks.

A Partnership is

"...an accredited collaboration between higher education institutions and employers which deliver high quality training for social work students and qualified practitioners and equip them to practise to specified standards in statutory settings" (DfE and DoH, 2016 p2)

This was in response to concerns raised by two reviews of social work education in 2014 (Croisdale-Appleby and Narey) and the recommendations of the Social Work Task Force (2009), SW Reform Board (2010) and the Munro review of child protection (2011).

A pilot of 4 partnerships were funded in 2015-2016; this was increased by 11 from 2017-2018. An evaluative study of the first pilot was carried out in 2016 and in May 2019 Baginsky, Manthorpe and Hickman presented the views of representatives of 11 of the 15 partnerships existing during 2017-2018. Of particular relevance to this case

study are the findings about the impact of relationships. It is suggested that, where strong working relationships had existed between partner employers and HEIs prior to the creation of the formal partnership, local authorities' proposals were being implemented and, in general, where this was not the case, local authorities tended to prioritise their own goals and universities assumed the lead in much of the partnership work.

The teaching partnership 'Developing Together' was created and funded for 2 years from March 2018; this is a complex collaboration of one HEI, two PVI employers, one social enterprise and 6 LA employers representing both adult and children's services. This formalised an existing long-standing alliance between these employers and HEI. The Partnership is accountable to an Operational and a Strategic Board and appointed a six people to take key roles in driving particular aspects of delivery. They were recruited from a range of sources, including from within the previous alliance but not a partner agency, from partner agencies and from the HEI provider. The latter is one of the PE Consultants and also the lead author of this abstract; she also concurrently retains a role within the HEI.

Progress in achieving some Partnership goals has been surprisingly slow, which we suspect may be partly attributable to the re-establishment of these working relationships, at all levels across the Partnership. We are interested in the impact of these relationships on the achievements of the Partnership to date; the barriers to progress and the extent to which they may or may not have been overcome. The midway stage of the Partnership is an opportune time to seek members' views about what is perceived to have helped and hindered our work, in terms of existing and new relationships at all levels of this strategic organisation.

### **Theorising peer mentoring in criminal justice as a critical relational practice (ID41)**

Dr Gillian Buck

University of Chester, Warrington, United Kingdom

Peer mentoring by criminalised people is a growing relational practice, which currently lacks a coherent theory. Drawing upon an ethnographic study of peer mentoring in the North of England, this paper addresses this gap by arguing that four core precepts underpin the work; precepts that can be traced throughout the literature but have not yet been formally drawn together or recognised. These are: *The Identity Precept*, which considers mentoring as a form of identity work; *The Pedagogical Precept*, which conceives of mentoring as a critical educational activity; *The Fraternity or Sorority Precept*, which has regard for the collective nature of the practice; and *The Politicisation Precept*, which recognises the often politicised nature of such work. This framework recognises that peer mentoring not only aims for personal change, but also has broader manifold objectives, which have not been fully acknowledged to date. It illuminates how peer mentoring is concerned with personal and collective wellbeing, together with individual and social justice. As political action, peer mentoring may present a solid challenge to authoritarian and punitive justice, or it may simply represent pacification through the granting of limited power. The aim of this paper is not to 'test' any of these precepts, but to draw upon them to shed light on current practices within criminal justice settings. The tensions between the self and the collective and the personal and the political presented here also have broader relevance for critical, relational social work with a range of marginalised populations.

### **Practitioner Perspectives of Working within a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) (ID61)**

Dr. Sarah Shorrocks<sup>1</sup>, Dr Michelle McManus<sup>2</sup>, Prof. Stuart Kirby<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Central Lancashire, Preston, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Public Health Wales, Wrexham, United Kingdom

Over recent years, serious case reviews have concluded that a lack of information sharing between agencies has resulted in vulnerable individuals being unnecessarily exposed to harmful or abusive situations. In response to

such criticisms, safeguarding policies and guidelines now advocate a need for safeguarding agencies to work more collaboratively, so that vulnerability can be identified and managed at the earliest opportunity. To reflect this move towards agency collaboration, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) were introduced in 2010, with the co-location of practitioners aiming to increase information sharing and joint decision-making. The extent to which MASH has increased collaboration between safeguarding agencies has not been well documented, making it difficult to establish whether the recommendations of serious case reviews have been transferred into everyday practices.

This presentation therefore, explores the operational functioning of one MASH site in the North of England, with practitioner experiences illustrating the extent to which MASH can be considered a multi-agency approach to safeguarding vulnerable people. It will be argued that whilst information sharing and trust between agencies has improved, the extent to which MASH can be considered a multi-agency approach to risk management is limited. Such limitations include the lack of a common governance structure, unified management systems and formalisation of practices and procedures. Subsequently, multi-agency collaboration does not instantly occur due to co-location, rather practices and processes need to be planned, implemented and reviewed regularly.

### **Forecasting Outcomes in Children's Social Care (ID58)**

Dr Catherine Foster, Dr David Wilkins, Professor Donald Forrester

Cardiff University, Cardiff, United Kingdom

Relationship-based practice is at the heart of good child and family social work in England. Yet in addition to forming collaborative and empathic relationships with parents and young people alike, social workers in statutory children's services must also make significant decisions about what should happen for children and their families, in some cases with lifelong consequences.

Recent years have seen a growing interest in the use of technology to support decision-making, including machine-learning and artificial intelligence. Part of the allure of new technology is that it offers to improve upon human-decision, which has been frequently criticised in Serious Case Reviews and elsewhere. One might argue that we know more about when social work decision-making goes wrong than when it goes right (or certainly that we hear more about social work decision-making when it goes wrong).

In a number of current and related studies, we aim to explore how good social work decision-making can be, and how it can be measured, supported and improved. We do so by measuring the accuracy of social workers' forecasts about the future (as a form of correspondence analysis) – what do they think is going to happen next for the child and family? What services will be most helpful? How will parents behave differently if this or that support is provided (or not)? Drawing on the work of the Good Judgement Project (Tetlock et al., 2016), we aim not only to measure social work decision-making but to improve it (Chang et al., 2016).

Pilot data from workshops so far show that social workers can make forecasts based upon case file information, but also how difficult this is. From a small and unrepresentative sample, we found that social workers were reasonably accurate at predicting process-based outcomes (will the child remain on a child protection plan for the next twelve-months?) but no better than chance in relation to behavioural outcomes (will the child's school attendance improve in the next three months?). We also found some intriguing associations with professional characteristics, such as that less experienced workers made more accurate forecasts than more experienced workers.

We are also undertaking an online randomised controlled trial (RCT) and additional workshops with a recruitment target of n=600. The RCT asks social workers to read real-life referrals and forecast what will happen next (while

we already know what happened from the case file). Participants are then randomised to one of four conditions; three training interventions and a control reflection task. The workshops follow a similar format but with the same interventions explored in more depth.

The overall aim of the project is to find out how individual forecasts relate to decision-making and how human-led decision-making can be best supported. Social work is a human profession. If we want to keep it that way, we need to rise to the challenge of improved decision-making.

### **Children in care's participation in decision making (ID53)**

Dr Clive Diaz

Cardiff University , Cardiff, United Kingdom

The concept of service user participation in the delivery of services that affect them has gained momentum over the last thirty years. This study considered how meaningfully young people participate in decision making about their lives. The study looked in depth at a key meeting – the Child in Care Review – and examined the extent to which children and young people are able to participate in these meetings and retain a level of control over their lives.

The research, undertaken in two local authorities in England, explored the perspectives of children and young people, Social Workers, Independent Reviewing Officers and Senior Managers in individual qualitative interviews. 35 young people, 11 social workers, 8 IROs and 7 senior managers were interviewed. The interview data was analysed thematically. Most young people said that they found their review meetings frustrating and stressful, often attributing this to poor relationships with social workers and negative feelings towards meetings. The study considered barriers and enablers of meaningful participation for young people in care. Barriers were found to include social workers having high caseloads and time pressures; high turnover of social workers; professionals lack of understanding and training; children's negative experiences of reviews (including feeling blamed and shamed), and the process not being child-centred. Key enablers were the quality of the relationship between child and professional, and young people chairing their own review. The study considered in depth what young people felt the attributes were that 'great' social workers had and how this impacted on their relationship with them. Interestingly despite all young people having had many allocated social workers over the years they could all remember at least one who was a 'great' social worker.

The young participants were very aware of the workload pressures that Social Workers faced and how bureaucratic processes often seemed to translate in to them not receiving a good service. The Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers highlighted the importance of children's participation, but in practice because of high caseloads and problematic organisational cultures they were rarely able to give young people the opportunity to meaningfully play a role in decision making.

The study found a significant disconnection between Senior Managers' views and all other participants' perspectives on the challenges faced by social workers in terms of caseloads and workload pressures. Senior Managers appeared to have limited awareness of the caseload and bureaucratic pressures that frontline workers faced. Indeed young people often seemed to have a better understanding of the pressures that social workers faced than senior managers. The study concludes that as a vehicle for participation the Child in Care Review is still not working well, however the development of children chairing their own reviews offers some hope for the future. This practice could be built upon to ensure that children and young people leave Local Authority care with the best possible chance of becoming confident, stable and empowered adults.

## **Defining social work communication skills for children in looked after and leaving care services: developing a practice coding framework (ID39)**

Ms Fiona Newlands, Ms Amy Lynch

University of Bedfordshire, Luton, United Kingdom

There have been few attempts to define and measure the effectiveness of communication skills between frontline practitioners and service users. This paper focuses on how we understand what constitutes good practice in direct work with children and young people (CYP) in care or leaving care. The study is part of a wider programme of research on social worker communication skills both in practice conversations and supervision sessions. It builds on an existing frameworks which describe and measures skills in child protection social work (Whittaker et al, 2016; Bostock et al., 2019). In this presentation we focus on three research questions; firstly, can we identify and define core practice skills? Secondly, can we create a coding framework that incorporates these skills to help understand the quality of practice? And finally, can we reliability code on the practice skills framework? This presentation is the first of two presentations from the project (Presentation 2: Supporting the development of strengths-based social work practice with children and young people – the role of practice-coaching (Lynch & Newlands, 2019)).

In consultation with children and young people, practitioners and managers we adapted the existing practice framework to include skills relevant to work with CYP. Each skill was mapped on to a five-point scale indicating a practice quality score. Researchers and practice development coaches based at the local authority undertook inter-rater reliability training in order to allocate a practice quality score to each skill. Reliability was calculated using Intra class correlation (ICC) and Krippendorff's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007). Between September 2017 and October 2018 we collected 88 audios of direct practice conversations between practitioners and CYP and applied to framework to understand the level of practice quality in the local authority.

The practice framework comprised of five skills which were grouped into relationship building skills and respectful authority skills. Relationship building skills included child focus and empathy. Respectful authority skills included purposefulness and clarity of issues. Researchers and practice development coaches reached a good- excellent level of reliability across all practice skills. The application of the framework provided a score indicating the quality of practice for each skill. The level of individual practice quality ranged from level 1 to level 5 across the skills with an average practice quality score of 2.69.

The study aimed to provide a framework to develop our understanding of practice conversations between practitioners and children and young people in care. Through the development and application of the framework we have established a practice quality tool that can be used by children's services to enhance practitioners skills in direct work with CYP.

## **Supporting the development of strengths-based social work practice with children and young people – the role of practice-coaching (ID37)**

Ms Amy Lynch, Ms Fiona Newlands

University of Bedfordshire, Luton, United Kingdom

Developing a clear strengths-based model of social work practice has been identified as a critical feature of improving outcomes for children and families. This paper explores the impact of one such model on the quality of social work practice within children looked after and leaving care services. It is based on a practice research project between the University of Bedfordshire and a London borough. The objectives for the project were to develop and introduce a strengths-based practice model and provide 1-1 practice coaching for social workers in the organisation's children in care and leaving care service.

The research team had a dual role: to support the implementation of the practice model by co-creating a practice framework and to evaluate the impact of the model on practice. The evaluation included analysis of practice quality and exploration of the views of participating social workers. This presentation will focus on both the impact of practice coaching on the quality of social work practice and the views of social workers on the practice model and practice coaching. It is the second of two presentations from the project (Presentation 1: *Defining social work communication skills in services for children looked after and leaving care: developing a practice coding framework* (Newlands and Lynch, 2019))

We adopted a mixed-method approach including observations and audio recordings (n=88) of direct practice (including before and after coaching) to assess the quality of direct practice; and interviews (n=12), focus groups (n=3) and surveys (n=40) (towards the end the project) to explore the views on the practice model and participation in coaching. Participants included social workers, managers and children and young people in care or leaving care. We coded the audio recordings of direct practice to identify the level of practice quality using the co-created practice framework. We analysed the focus group, survey and interview data using thematic and descriptive analysis.

The overall level of practice quality was significantly higher in the group of audio recordings where practitioners had attended coaching. Social workers and managers were positive about the practice model and participation in practice coaching. They shared examples of how coaching and feedback using the practice framework had helped develop direct social work practice. Barriers to implementing the practice model and coaching were related to elements of the organisational culture and wider context; the nature of social work and practical challenges.

The organisation successfully implemented a strengths-based practice framework and through coaching, enabled staff to do skilled direct work. We conclude that practice coaching is an important way of supporting social work practice development but specific conditions need to be created for it to be a success. Implications for social work organisations include a call to reflect upon:

- what support is offered to offered to social workers to develop their practice;
- opportunity presented by coaching as a mechanism to support practice development;
- the conditions that need to be in place to support development of practice, including a potential coaching model.

## **Barriers children in care face complaining about social work practice (ID56)**

Dr Clive Diaz

Cardiff University , Cardiff, United Kingdom

Despite the introduction of guidelines and procedures aimed at encouraging and supporting children and young people in care to complain about the services they receive, they still face barriers to doing so in practice. Furthermore only a tiny minority of children in care complain about the services they receive despite research clearly outlining that many young people in care are not satisfied with the service they receive. In 2017, almost one in ten children in care surveyed by Ofsted reported that their foster carers or staff at children's homes rarely or never helped them when they were upset. While national statistics on complaints from looked after children are unavailable, the best indication of their rate of occurrence comes from Ofsted's 2013-14 statistics on fostering. From the data submitted by all 152 local authorities across England, a total of 216 complaints were reportedly received from children in foster care. That equates to 0.4% of the 53,369 children reported to have been placed in foster care that year. Of the 216 complaints made by children and young people, local authorities reported that 87 were not upheld (40%).

This study explores what happens when children in care are dissatisfied with the services they receive. Specifically, this study examines the complaints procedure for children in care, in conjunction with highlighting how these

children express their views and how these views are managed by professionals. The findings are based on semi-structured interviews with children in care, social workers, senior managers and independent reviewing officers from one English local authority. Thematic analysis of this data identified five emergent themes: (1) complaints by children in care are managed at the lowest possible level, (2) senior managers have an overly optimistic view about children in care being informed of complaint procedures and being encouraged to do so, (3) children in care are worried about complaining, which is recognised by professionals, (4) children's voices are often not heard and (5) when issues are clearly defined, independent reviewing officers have some degree of success in resolving complaints from children in care.

The study found that despite the introduction of guidelines and procedures aimed at encouraging and supporting children and young people to complain, children in care are still wary about making complaints about the services they receive. Further barriers to complaining for children in care were also identified within this study, including gate-keeping by professionals, power imbalances and the existence of a 'blame culture'. Given that a complaints mechanism was built into the Children Act 1989, partly, in an attempt to give a formal voice to children in care, it is concerning that it remains largely unused. While a complaints process now exists, as long as children face barriers in using it, it will remain largely ineffective. IROs and advocacy services nevertheless play an important role in ensuring that children's views (including grievances) are heard and taken seriously by professionals.

### **How is knowledge used in statutory social work supervision? (ID18)**

Mr Richard Martin

Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, United Kingdom

Evidence based practice is regarded as a central element of efficiency and effectiveness in health and welfare professions. It presupposes a linear model of knowledge production and transfer, and it assumes that knowledge use and application is rational. However, in Social Work practice, knowledge use is more tacit, being derived from personal reflection and dialogue drawn from experience, rather than empirical knowledge. Theory is often retrospectively applied to clients' social circumstances in an intuitive and implicit manner. This approach can sit well with a profession concerned with complex human relationships, although it is also criticised for its selective use of empirical evidence.

Supervision is centred on three, interrelated dimensions; administration, education and support. Systematic reviews of supervision in child welfare found good supervision is correlated with perceived worker effectiveness and a commitment to supervision as the process of knowledge production and transfer to develop best practice has provided an impetus for research. In Ofsted inspections of local authority children's services, management oversight and regular structured supervision meetings are strongly associated with effective practice in the protection of children. The welfare of children is a legitimate driver for improving practice. However, it can also be a driver for performance management, making it less likely that there will be a focus on reflection, education and support.

This research addresses an identified gap in empirical evidence by understanding what happens in social work supervision and how this supports the educative dimension. Recent reviews of supervision research indicate that the current evidence base for the effectiveness of supervision is inadequate. This being based largely on small scale studies and evidence derived from anecdotal accounts and workers' perceptions. Models for, and types of, supervision are often unspecified in studies and vary considerably across studies and, it has been argued, that while supervision remains ill-defined and lacks an evidence base, it will continue to be difficult to do in local authority children's services.

The methods for this study are based on qualitative, interpretive approaches from discourse analysis and ethnography. A conceptual model developed for understanding how supervision is situated in the institutional context of children and families' social work will be presented. This micro /macro continuum as a critical model for analysing the relationship between knowledge and power in social work supervision can inform reflexive dialogue. This can generate insights and produce co-constructed accounts of supervision as a collaborative process for understanding the role of supervision in practice.

An ethnomethodological approach as a theoretical framework for discourse analysis will be proposed to make sense of the sequencing of knowledge use within supervision discussions and for understanding how supervision is done and what actions make it work. Ethnography as a method for situating and problematising discursive knowledge within the institutional mechanism for categorisation, resource allocation and performance monitoring will also be proposed. Recommendations will consider what can be learned through using this model and how an ongoing dialogue between supervisory activities and knowledge can support effective supervision practices in the children and families social work.

### **Preparing for Grenfell: An auto-ethnographic inquiry of relationship-based supervision (ID47)**

Professor Deborah James<sup>1</sup>, Dr Hellmuth Weich<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MMU, , Manchester, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom

#### Introduction

This paper arose from our work to design and deliver supervision for workers employed by The Social Work Company at the Grenfell Support Service. These workers were employed by The Social Work Company, which held part of the delivery contract for the service that was commissioned by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The service was set up shortly after the fire at Grenfell Tower in London, United Kingdom in 2017. The Grenfell Support Service was there to help surface the needs of the residents, access relevant support and to integrate the Borough's services on behalf of the residents. The Social Work Company is a company limited by guarantee. As part of its duty of care to its employees, it contracted the two authors of this paper to provide clinical supervision for staff.

In preparation for our work at Grenfell, we practised hearing each other. The aim of this paper is to show the dialogic, relational bases of our preparatory work and as such, share the ontological basis for our relationship-based supervision approach. The ontology was informed by the blend of narrative-based theory (White and Epstein, 1990) and inter-subjective methods (Kennedy, Todd and Landor, 2011) that we were experienced with. However, these theories are located in our minds; individuals, who, like the workers out there, have internal worlds that have been shaped by the pain that has infused us and the places that formed us.

#### Method and Materials

We video-recorded a narrative interview where the second author, Hellmuth Weich, interviewed the first author, Deborah James. The interview was based, on a poem that Deborah had written. In this paper, we present the poem, the video recording of the discussion of it and use auto-ethnography to surface the new realisations that arose in this dialogue.

#### Analysis

In retrospective analysis of the discourse and our reflections on the personal biographical narratives underpinning the discourse, we show how through the narrative interview a thread emerged between the micro worlds of the

supervisors and the macro narrative of the social world that, it could be argued, set the social conditions for the fire.

#### Discussion

We discuss the social structuring of personal biographical memory and consider the role of binaries in the formation of values. Returning to the core concept of relationship-based supervision, we draw out the conceptual resources that narrative and arts-based analytical methods might add to the tools already available for supervision practice in social work.

### **Practitioner Emotions in the Penal Voluntary Sector: Voices from England and Canada (ID27)**

Dr Philippa Tomczak<sup>1</sup>, Kaitlyn Quinn<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

Mixed economies of service provision have seen increasing numbers of service users funnelled into services provided by voluntary, rather than statutory, sector organisations. In countries around the world, the voluntary sector provides services to meet human needs related to social problems including: housing and homelessness, forced migration, community violence, domestic violence and criminalisation. Other public services increasingly reliant on volunteering include, *inter alia* health and social care. Thus, many individuals with complex needs now fall within the remit of organisations that are neither social work led nor inclusive of social work staff. Voluntary organisations and volunteers comprise a large and rising proportion of the social service workforce, but their experiences have received minimal analysis. Despite the recognised importance of emotions in the helping professions, voluntary sector practitioners' emotional experiences are largely unknown. Using original data from semi-structured interviews and ethnographic observation, gathered through two separate research studies in England and Canada, we address this gap. We examine the impact of emotions on the wellbeing of paid and volunteer penal voluntary sector practitioners (i) relating to their organisational contexts and (ii) in relationships with service users. Practitioners are affected by their often fraught organisational contexts and the emotional complexities of working with criminalised individuals. Overlooking these experiences and reproducing positive, evocative assumptions of 'citizen participation' can facilitate the downloading of the double neoliberal burdens of voluntary sector competition and 'helping' marginalised populations onto individual practitioners, who are too often ill-equipped to manage them. In our datasets, emotional experiences were significant for the wellbeing of diverse practitioners, ranging from front-line volunteers who delivered programming up to the most senior levels of organisations. Our data illuminates the overlapping contexts of diverse emotions in the penal voluntary sector *across borders*, pushing practice-oriented conversations toward transnational perspectives, raising possibilities for transnational solidarity, the development of critical social theory and praxis, as well as collective action against shared austerity realities and the harms thereof.

### **How do we care for care itself? Towards an ethnography of self-directed support: some methodological considerations (ID15)**

Miss Felicity Morrow, Dr Martin Kettle

Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow, United Kingdom

This forms the initial methodological formation of a PhD research project exploring the social care policy self-directed support (SDS) in Scotland, outlined in the Social Care (SDS) (Scotland) Act 2013. SDS is Scotland's flagship personalisation policy for adult social care which aims to maximise choice and control for people who receive

services in the community. As SDS has been implemented across all 32 local authorities (LAs), a picture is emerging of regional inconsistencies and inequalities in service delivery and provision. Audit Scotland (2017) revealed, “there is no evidence that authorities have yet made the transformation required to fully implement the SDS strategy [and] not everyone is getting the choice and control envisaged” (p.5).

It is argued an innovative methodological approach of combining multi-modal ethnography with Freeman and Sturdy’s (2015) three phase policy translation framework “inscribed- embodied- enacted” (p.1) offers an original method for SDS data collection. This PhD research aims to conduct fieldwork in a LA within Scotland. This approach will enable the ethnographer to follow and move with the policy, as it is inscribed, embodied and enacted by various actors and objects.

This paper will discuss a purposed multi-modal ethnographic approach which blends a medially of critical ethnography, sensory ethnography and mobile ethnography (Madison,2011; Ferguson,2014; Pink,2015). This combination will enable the researcher to move beyond exclusively observing and instead, “takes us beneath surface appearances, disrupts the status quo, and unsettles both neutrality and obscure operations of power and control” (Madison, 2012,p.5). This paper will explore the importance of research engaging with the senses especially within the context of a caring profession (Pink, 2015). Consideration will be given to the importance of including movement into the data-collection process to expose that policy is alive and moving through translation (Ferguson, 2014). An overarching critical ethnography aims to promote social justice through engaging critically with the discourses, whilst envisioning alternative possibilities for ordering the social world (Madison, 2012).

Finally, the theoretical policy framework of Freeman and Sturdy’s (2015) three phase model which characterises forms of knowledge as, “inscribed-embodied-enacted”(p.1) enables the ethnographer to consider where knowledge can potentially be located, and ultimately how it may move within the policy landscape. Discussion will focus on how utilising ethnography could enable the researcher to see SDS as embodied by the actors, inscribed into objects, and enacted by individuals, exposing the multiple translations of the policy. The ethnographer will witness selective meaning making resulting in dynamic and continuous re-assemblage of SDS. What is translated and what is left out? It is proposed that this schema is therefore a device which could serve social work researchers to analysis and understand the knowledge process within differing social policies.

SDS remains under-researched and therefore this innovative theoretical frame and subsequent empirical research could support in working towards more effective implementation across Scotland. ‘It is by staying in the thick of things, by analysing care’s non-innocent politics that our responses can be slowed down enough to make them more care-ful’ (Martin et al., 2015,p.12).

### **Transformational Experiences or Volunteer Tourism? (ID60)**

Ms Sukey Tarr, Mr Richard Martin, Ms Shannon Povey, Ms Rosie Tunney

Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, United Kingdom

During the summer of 2018 undergraduate and postgraduate students from the University's Department of Social Work & Social Care were given the opportunity to volunteer in Calais for a two week period with a project providing mobile education to destitute refugees living in the area, after the removal of the 'the jungle'. The project was financed by the Go Global Fund (at Sheffield Hallam University) which encourages students to broaden their horizons and enhance their skills and future employability by undertaking an international activity while studying.

Students and involved staff reported their experiences as transformational, deepening their understanding of the global refugee context and social work values in practice. Some students took this further and began involving themselves with the refugee communities locally. Some are returning to Calais this year.

However further reflection on these reported outcomes raised a number of questions for facilitators about the real impact of such experiences on the learning and development of students training for careers as social care professionals. Questions were also posed about volunteer tourism and whether funded, brief, experiences with marginalised groups were ethical.

The seminar will provide an overview of the project and a summary of its findings. Students who went to Calais will offer first hand experiences. It will then provide a review of related literature to promote discussion around the following questions:

- To what extent can the provision of opportunities, such as this, broaden horizons and enhance skills?
- How long do transformative experiences last and what is the impact on the developing professional?
- Do such experiences benefit marginalised groups?

It is envisaged that by problematizing and discussing this mode of learning the seminar will be able to make recommendations about how experiences, to extend student learning about working with marginalised groups, might be developed in the future.

### **Education; a tool for challenging discrimination and oppression. Lessons learnt from the Certificate in Mental Health and Deafness (ID22)**

Ms Tamsin Waterhouse, Mr Ric Bowl

University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom

The Certificate in Mental Health and Deafness has been running at the University of Birmingham for nine years. Over this period we have developed expertise in teaching and supporting a group of students with very different communication needs including those who are Deaf, deafened, deafblind, hearing impaired and hearing. The course has developed a reputation for inclusive teaching which takes into account the varied needs of the students. Deaf people in particular have had access to a University education and some have gone on to obtain jobs in the field of mental health and deafness. We therefore see a direct link between the course and the strengthening of the social service workforce. We believe that the course is emancipatory and transformative for both Deaf and hearing students and goes some way to addressing the disadvantages and oppression which Deaf people experience when living in a hearing world. We aim to share our learning from the running the course with a focus on how to make reasonable adjustments, how to address communication needs, and how to create an inclusive educational environment.

### **Eliciting the in-situ reflexive reasoning of social workers in culturally sensitive communication situations: Forum Theatre as emancipatory method (ID21)**

Dr Johanna Woodcock Ross

University of Kent, Chatham Maritime, United Kingdom. UCL University College London, London, United Kingdom

A recent multi-national curriculum review argued for greater attention to cultural sensitivity and religious literacy for the diversity encountered daily by social workers, citing “a dearth of research underpinning the sorts of skills needed” (Crisp and Dinham, 2019, p.5). Despite highlighting interpersonal dynamics, organisational and socio-cultural obstacles in face-to-face communication, existing studies lack investigation into social workers’ reflexive reasoning for their communication action during the actual moment of it taking place. Sociologist Margaret Archer (2000) posits that it is within such moments of inner deliberation of reflexivity that individuals consider how best to mediate their personal concerns with the demands of existing social contexts to decide upon courses of action – that within such internal conversations, communication agency becomes possible. Yet, for trainers/educators seeking to address the aforementioned skill deficit of their qualified social workers or students on qualifying programmes, this raises a dilemma, for it is ethically inappropriate to stop social workers within their real-time interactions with service users to examine thoughts and feelings. My paper speaks to this gap of emancipatory education method. Underpinned by Archerian theoretical scaffolding, in this paper I propose the emancipatory/transformational methodology of community-based, participatory theatre – Boal’s (1979) Forum Theatre method – as a methodology to powerfully provoke social workers’ deep reflection upon how their communication agency is influenced through pre-existing structurally induced (sometimes oppressive) actions and circumstances. Throughout, I draw upon findings and reflexive extracts from my doctoral research on social workers’ communication with parents of practising religious beliefs to illustrate the practicalities of what is involved in utilising the method. The research used qualitative methods within intensive case study design to generate data of the substantive event of social-worker-with-Christian-parent-communication (the ‘speech-act’) and agential meanings of action signifying contextual/experiential understanding:

1. Forum Theatre performance to 31 volunteering qualifying and qualified social workers
2. Unstructured qualitative interviews with 12 volunteering Christian parents to provide the basis of the Forum Theatre performance script.

First, the paper describes Boal’s approach in removing the distinction between actor and audience. Both are ‘spect-actors’ who watch a scripted scene unfold of everyday experience (in this case professional actors depicting a scenario of social-worker-with-parent-communication), and are sufficiently agitated/provoked/moved by it to adopt a role within it and change the character’s actions. Second, the paper argues how Forum Theatre is theoretically founded upon the relationship between reflexivity and agency (Archer, 2000; Nellhaus, 2010). Each agent is self-present in the performance, and through such embodiment makes deep connections between the drama scene and their everyday life experiences. Third, the centrality of the performance ‘facilitator’ is highlighted as prompting audience involvement to make explicit their implicit recursive reflexive considerations, and then to enact agency by taking on a role to change the drama. Boal’s Forum Theatre method, though rarely reported in social work, showed power in its encouragement of inter-relational, in-situ, embodied recognition of the service user experience of the communication to then provoke social worker spect-actors to move beyond their usual bureaucratized responses.

### **Assessing the communication and relationship-building skills of social work applicants: an evaluation of the use of actor role play (ID28)**

Mr Andrew Murphy

University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom

#### Summary

Communication skills and the ability to form relationships are crucial for effective social work. This paper will critically discuss the outcomes of a two-year pilot scheme using actor-led role play to assess social work applicants’

communication skills. Outlining the origins and aims of the exercise, the presentation will use data from the admissions process and subsequent student performance on the programmes to examine the impact of the actor role play. The presentation will conclude with reflections on the suitability of role play to assess the communication and relationship building skills of social work applicants.

## Background

The University of Nottingham (UoN) is a member of the 'D2N2' Teaching Partnership, which funded the introduction of a standardised role play to assess communication skills as part of the admissions process for social work applicants. Funding was allocated to cover the 2018 and 2019 admissions cycles. The aim was to support the identification and recruitment of students with the potential to be excellent social workers. The exercise was incorporated into the existing admissions process, which includes a group discussion, written exercise and interview.

## Findings

Data from the 2018 admissions cycle showed that the role play exercise had a minimal impact on outcomes: only 6% of decisions to offer places were a sole result of the role play score. There was a correlation between interview score and role play score. The 2019 admissions cycle is still ongoing at the time of writing: final data will be included at the conference. Initial data suggests that the impact is in line with the 2018 results. The 2018 BA and MA cohorts have completed Assessment of Readiness for Direct Practice (ARDP). An analysis of the role play scores for those students who failed ARDP shows the majority of these students scored above average in the role play.

Observations of the role play has found that many applicants do very short role plays, possibly due to anxiety, which can limit their ability to evidence their communication skills.

## Discussion

Following evaluation of the outcomes, a decision has been made to discontinue the role play exercise for future admissions cycles. This is predominantly because the impact on outcomes does not justify the costs and logistical complexities it created. Other important factors are the ethical issues in using actors rather than service users and the impact of applicant anxiety on performance in the role play.

The evaluation has led to reflection on how to assess the potential communication and relationship building skills of applicants, given their centrality to social work practice. This has fed into a larger review of our admissions process. The session will conclude with an overview of our revised admissions process, which will include a longer, holistic assessment of applicants' communication skills with service users.

## **"Nothing out of the ordinary": Social Work lecturers' experiences of Video-Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP) as a vehicle for promoting attuned interactions in the classroom (ID54)**

Dr Eleni Skoura-Kirk<sup>1</sup>, Ms Sarah Brown<sup>1</sup>, Mrs Anne Kelly<sup>1</sup>, Ms Rhian Taylor<sup>1</sup>, Mr Ruben Martin<sup>1</sup>, Dr Andrea Honess<sup>2</sup>, Ms Michelle McCaffrey<sup>3</sup>, Dr Tom Parkinson<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Kent, Medway, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>University of East Anglia, Norwich, United Kingdom. <sup>3</sup>Psychology Interacts, Canterbury, United Kingdom. <sup>4</sup>University of Kent, Canterbury, UAE

The quality of social work education and its effectiveness in producing competent, knowledgeable and ethical practitioners has been under the microscope in recent years. The review by Croisdale-Appleby (2014) clearly identifies the need for social work educators to be trained in how to educate students (p. 48). At the same time,

ongoing professional development for the social work workforce is established as crucial in advancing the quality and standing of the social work profession (PCF, 2019). However, not much information exists on the professional development of social work lecturers and their skills in promoting transformative and empowering educational experiences. What skills do we need as educators in order to promote meaningful interactions in the classroom, create inclusive learning environments and foster participation and critical engagement by students?

Our proposed presentation reports on our experience as a collaborative team (5 social work lecturers at the University of Kent, one lecturer from the University's Learning and Teaching Enhancement Centre and two educational psychologists) using Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP) as a means to address the above concerns. VERP is a method of professional development that is well established in applied psychology, social service and pre-tertiary education settings, but has rarely been used in higher education. VERP uses video to promote reflection and enhance attuned interactions (e.g. encourage contributions, validate student input, facilitate deeper discussions; Kennedy, Landor and Todd, 2015). This is a strengths-based approach which looks at what is working well in order to 'do it more'.

Our proposed presentation will focus on two phases of this work. First, we will describe the 'how'- the way in which the use of VERP was implemented. In our collaborative work, social work lecturers filmed their classroom interactions and chose short clips as examples of good practice, subsequently bringing these to shared reviews with the educational psychologists. Second, we are going to present initial findings from the evaluation of the work. These are based on reflective commentaries written by the social work lecturers on the learning achieved through VERP. The team's experience of VERP is already highlighting the importance of recognising the subtle ways in which lecturers can model inclusive interactions, making visible what happens in these 'discretionary spaces' (what might seem like 'nothing out of the ordinary', yet it is significant and creating change). Through our shared reviews we have started to not only recognise areas of good practice, but also to enact pedagogical changes (e.g. in how we set group discussions, use of physical spaces and movement in the classroom to encourage student interactions).

The presenting team will argue that VERP is a powerful means by which to promote a collaborative and inclusive pedagogy in social work education. It is a particularly effective and empowering form of reflective practice due to its strengths-based nature and the way in which analysing video evidence can unveil impactful micro-interactions. Furthermore, it is an approach that is practical and can be applied to suit the needs of individual educators' or teams' particular pedagogical enquiries.

### **Social Work regulation – comparing outcomes in Fitness to Practice proceedings for social workers, nurses and doctors (ID17)**

Professor Aidan Worsley<sup>1</sup>, Doctor Sarah Shorrock<sup>1</sup>, Doctor Ken McLaughlin<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Central Lancashire, Preston, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, United Kingdom

Currently, in England, UK, social work is about to be subject to its third regulator in seven years. Building on several previously published articles on this theme (e.g. Leigh et al 2017), the authors have examined the policy journey of regulation, its processes and the experiences of social workers going through Fitness to Practice proceedings related to their working environment. More recently, the authors have considered international social work regulation, looking specifically at case studies of England, New York (the US has state based regulation) and New Zealand. Building on a clear, risk orientated, theoretical approach (e.g. Rothstein et al 2013), we found that different countries were at different points along the professional 'regulatory journey' – but three key considerations in analysing this position were found to be (i)the control of the definition of the role and function

of the social work task, ii) the construction of the notion of public interest and, finally, (iii) the attitude to risk within the regulator and its political sphere of operation.

Taking this learning into another sphere, the authors now wish to consider how regulatory outcomes around fitness to practice proceedings compare across different professions. By examining publicly available secondary data in the UK, this research develops a reasoned, methodological approach based on Comparative Policy Analysis (e.g. Marmor, 2017) to consider what the relevant factors may be in arriving at disposals for similar types and seriousness of breaches of regulatory standards across three contrasting professions: social work, nursing and medicine (doctors). Exploring these challenging and markedly different outcomes, the researchers explore the evidence for ethical and value-based decision making processes and ask the question whether there is a role for a regulatory function of ‘moderation’ that ought to apply to ensure that similar offences are disposed of in a similar way across professions. Should, for example, social work fitness to practice disposals be more shaped by public perceptions of the profession than other similar professions? How might (and should) concepts of fairness and social justice be implemented by a regulator’s regulator function such as the Professional Standards Authority in the UK - which oversees the regulatory bodies of several health-related professions? Conscious of the international nature of this issue, the authors then consider how this learning may apply to social work regulation across the world given the different stages of its journey and the often rapidly changing nature of the welfare society in general.

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### Parallel Session B

Session	Room	Chair	Presentation
Session 5	Cavendish	Bob Cecil	John Devaney Peter Nelson Matthew Quaife
Session 6	Griffiths	Pat Cartney	Dan Burrows Robert Lomax Sam Baron
Session 7	C.P.Scott		Workshop – Janet Melville-Wiseman Reclaiming the power of transformational teaching when students’ faith-based views about sexuality call into question their fitness to practice
Session 8	Flowers Theatre	Jill Childs	Harry Ferguson Gail Mann Alice Butler
Session 9	Marquis	Jo Rawles	Ffion Evans Jane Pye Carmel Halton
Session 10	Lindsay		Discussion Group Alison McInnes and Janet Walker Developing the JUCSWEC International Strategy

## **Implementation of a mental health screening tool with young people who have experienced trauma: Increasing the capacity of non-specialist mental health practitioners to identify the needs of children and young people (ID63)**

Professor John Devaney<sup>1</sup>, Dr Michael Duffy<sup>2</sup>, Dr Colm Walsh<sup>2</sup>, Professor Gavin Davidson<sup>2</sup>, Dr Paul Best<sup>2</sup>, Dr Lisa Bunting<sup>2</sup>, Dr Declan French<sup>2</sup>, Dr Ciaran Mulholland<sup>2</sup>, Dr Andrew Percy<sup>2</sup>

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### Introduction

There is a clear and unambiguous evidence base highlighting the increased risk for children who have been maltreated through abuse or neglect of experiencing a range of poorer outcomes throughout the lifecourse. Exposure to childhood maltreatment has been associated with a broad range of trauma-related psychopathology (e.g., PTSD, anxiety, suicidal ideation, substance abuse), and with aggressive and violent behaviour. Yet there is also evidence that children who have been maltreated can benefit significantly from therapeutic interventions. These interventions may be focused on specific types of maltreatment, such as sexual abuse, or may focus on delivering a very specific intervention to address the impact of a range of maltreatments and their sequela, as children rarely experience one form of harm in isolation of other adversities. It is clear that while the systems and processes for identifying and protecting children from immediate harm are robust, there is significant concern that the impact on children of abuse and neglect is often under assessed, and that children's needs for therapeutic intervention and support often go unrecognised, with potential life-long consequences. This study sought to assess how practitioners working for a large third sector social care organisation could be supported to better identify some of the therapeutic needs of maltreated and vulnerable children.

### Aim

To explore the feasibility and acceptability of training and supporting non-mental health practitioners to incorporate a screening tool for PTSD, anxiety and depression (CRIES-8) into routine assessment processes for children aged 10yrs-18yrs attending a service for maltreated and vulnerable children.

### Method

34 staff working for a large third sector children's organisation were trained in relation to trauma, assessment of trauma and the use of standardised instruments. Staff were then expected to follow a protocol for using the screening tool as part of routine assessment with all children referred to their service. A sample of the children were then assessed by a specialist mental health worker who was blind to the initial screening to assess the accuracy of the original screening.

### Findings

The majority of the staff trained did not undertake the additional screening with children they were working with, whereas a minority of staff did so routinely. The outcome of the majority of screenings were verified when quality assured by specialist mental health workers. A high proportion of the children with whom the screening process was undertaken were identified as having high levels of trauma-related psychopathology, and in need of specialist mental health services.

### Conclusions

The mental health needs of children already in the child welfare system are often going unidentified, in spite of the awareness of practitioners of the deleterious effects of maltreatment. While the introduction of screening tools can support professionals to identify such children, the beliefs of individual practitioners, and the organisational

culture can impede the successful introduction of routine screening using well regarded standardised instruments and protocols.

### **Still seldom heard and hard to reach - still drinking? NEET young people, alcohol consumption and multi agency intervention in a northern town (ID23)**

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The notion of transition in the move from childhood to adulthood and education to employment has been central to understanding young people's drinking behaviour, but little is known about how the drinking patterns of those not in education or employment develop over time. This paper reports on research undertaken in 2008 and repeated in 2018 which aimed to examine the drinking habits and drinking careers of young people not in education employment and training who are traditionally described as hard to reach. In depth qualitative interviews were undertaken with 39 young people with a focal point of the interview being the use of a graph which provided a visual portrayal of the peaks and troughs of usage, and allowed comparisons to be made within and between cohorts. The conclusions indicate changes have occurred over the ten year period which reflects international trends in reduced alcohol consumption in young people. In the first study alcohol was an important part of young people's social lives and part of having fun. Current findings indicate many young people described as NEET are drinking little or no alcohol. Experimental drinking occurs at a young age and can include risky and harmful behaviour but has been grown out of by the age of 17. A small number are drinking heavily for adaptive reasons to overcome adverse life experiences. Parental drinking can be a constant back drop to childhood and a young person's wellbeing. The paper considers the implications for social work and multi-agency intervention in balancing supporting positive change balanced against potentially adverse impacts of punitive economic sanctions on wider measures of wellbeing and isolation.

### **'Giving up?' An exploration of professionals' views on depression, self-harm and suicide in older people living in long-term care settings (ID52)**

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**Objective:** The UK is an ageing nation. The numbers of older people aged over 65 years and 85 years are to rise steadily over the next two decades. 5% of adults aged 65 years and over will require care in the form of living in a long-term care setting. A proportion of older adults in long-term care experience mental health problems such as depression, self-harm and suicidal behaviours, manifested in the phenomena of 'giving up'. Older people with long-term physical health conditions are especially vulnerable, and passive suicide ideation and behaviour may reflect the impact of age-related losses, decreasing sociality, life course experiences and the personal characteristics and beliefs associated with the development of a wish for the end of life. Mental health professionals continue to support this service user group from community and long-term care settings. However, there is little research on the perspectives of these professionals working with older people in long-term care who may be showing signs of 'giving up'.

**Method:** This was a descriptive and exploratory study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with mental health professionals from social work and nursing backgrounds to elicit their perspectives and opinions of working with older people and their carers in long-term care, who have experienced depression, self-harm or suicidal behaviours.

**Results:** Findings showed that mental health professionals had observed the phenomena of 'giving up' among older people in long-term care but it manifests in variable forms. Professionals highlight factors such as ageism, poor quality of care and inadequate working conditions that can contribute to the distress experienced by older people. Recommendations include personalised care plans, relationship based practice and guidance from policy and professional bodies.

**Conclusion:** There is a need for social work education and post qualifying training to embed the needs of older people in general, those in care, and those with mental health problems. Ageism remains prevalent and requires action from professionals across the sector in addition to existing measures from government & other sectors. This should include further consideration of preventative interventions to improve the experience older adults face when transitioning into long-term care.

**Keywords:** *older people, long-term care, depression, self-harm, suicide, perspectives, professionals*

### **Social work for 'liquid old age'? Choice and individualism in hospital social work (ID64)**

Dr Dan Burrows

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This paper explores the values enacted by social workers involved in hospital discharge planning for older people. The data are derived from an ethnographic study of a hospital social work team responsible for planning and arranging packages care prior to elderly patients' discharge. The study set out to explore the nature of statutory hospital social work, how hospital social workers do their work, and how social work fits into the hospital context. The setting chosen was a large general hospital in an urban area, with a social work team of ten qualified practitioners. The primary methods of data collection were participant observation and semi-structured interviews with social workers, clinicians, patients and carers. It is noted that the practice of discharge planning represents a highly individualistic form of social work, in which respect for individual choice is an imperative guiding social workers' actions, unless the individual's mental capacity to make that choice is compromised. The individualistic nature of care planning work is understood not only in terms of neoliberal policy making, but also within the wider socio-cultural context of individual freedom, choice and responsibility described by Bauman as 'liquid modernity'. Age-derived uncertainties of physical and mental health, fluctuations of social and financial status, and dramatic changes in close interpersonal relationships, combined with dependency on forms of care that are not dependable, can result in older people existing in a state of ongoing precarity, which might be summarised in Bauman's terms as 'liquid old age'. It is argued that the social workers observed in the study facilitate and produce liquid old age through their advocacy of individual choice, and that this can be either liberating or detrimental depending on the individual's circumstances. Where mental capacity is not in doubt, social workers frequently advocate for positive risk taking for older people in contrast with both family members and medical professionals, who tend to urge the safest possible option. A care plan is not understood by social workers to be unsuccessful even if it results in an older person eventually coming to harm, if it has produced a reasonable amount of time in which the person has been able to live as they choose. While advocating individual choice, social workers experience moral discomfort if they consider that a person's choices are likely to cause them imminent harm, yet acknowledge that they are both legally and morally unable to prevent this. It is argued that irrational or self-destructive decisions taken by older people may come about as a result of a lifetime of disadvantage, marginalisation and oppression. Willingness to advocate on older people's behalf must therefore be accompanied by a critical gerontological approach that addresses the cumulative effects of disadvantage, the complex interplay of family relationships and the pervasive influence of ageism. Only when such powerful forces in the lived experience of an older individual are addressed can free choice be truly meaningful, and only then can social work with older people be truly said to be liberating.

## **Bouncing back or building up? – A critique of the concept resilience in relation to social work practitioners and their employing organisations (ID32)**

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The overall aim of this paper is to critically discuss the findings of a literature review undertaken in 2018 by Author 1, exploring the concept of resilience and social work. The findings will be illustrated throughout by drawing on examples from current research on retention and staff well-being in rural and urban English local authorities by Author 2 in association with Community Care. The overall conceptual framework for the paper is that of the core significance of relationships and relations-based practices within social work organisations, and between social workers and service users. The well-being of services users is, in part, linked to the well-being and resilience of social work practitioners: high sickness rates and high turnover of staff depletes the consistency, experience, and knowledge base service users are being offered, and shatters solid relationships.

The paper is presented in three parts.

Firstly, the paper critically discusses the theoretical debate regarding the concept and role of resilience in social work. The paper focuses on the experience of social workers practising in England and students currently undertaking professional training. The activity of social work is widely reported to be very stressful for individual practitioners but it is also valued and has meaning for them. Taking Grant and Kinman's (2013) tripartite approach – the individual, the environment, and the interaction between those two domains - the concept of resilience is critiqued. The paper suggests that the quality and resource of resilience is present and accessible to many people; 'ordinary magic' as Masten (2001) wrote.

Secondly, the paper will focus on how the individual might be seen to grow their resilience. The evidence of whether resilience can be acquired, learnt or taught is considered. The critique that such a focus on the development of individual practitioners' resilience may shift attention away from considering the macro structural issues that impact on employees' experiences and services users' lives will also be made.

Thirdly, the paper considers how resilience in social workers can be generated and supported organisationally. The relationships that practitioners form, that support communication, trust and change, are mediated by their experience of the organisations they work for. If social workers are to stay in front-line practice for an extended period it is important for employers to consider their role in developing practitioner resilience, the evidence suggests. Some of the possibilities and limitations of organisational practices in relation to resilience (e.g. work-based stress in neo-liberal organisations; the impact of austerity measures reducing resources, etc.) will be examined.

The paper briefly concludes that the evidence suggests the healthy lives and well-being of service users can only be promoted by a social work profession that also values the welfare of its members.

## **Rethinking reflective practice in social work: Research findings on the limits to reflection in action (ID26)**

Professor Harry Ferguson

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Reflective practice is a core concept in social work and probably the most well known theoretical perspective across the entire applied professions of teaching, health and social care. Especially since Schon (1983) developed the concept of 'reflection in action' good professional practice has been based on the theory that practitioners

need to think purposefully about what they are thinking, feeling and doing while they are doing it and afterwards engage in 'reflection *on* action'. But despite its popularity there has been very little actual research into how, or indeed if, practitioners do actually reflect in practice (White et al, 2007, p. 19). Virtually no knowledge exists of how social workers reflect in action because so little research has studied them *in action* while they are actually doing the job. This paper draws on my ethnographic studies of social work practice in child protection, in which I have observed and audio-recorded the face to face encounters between social workers and children and families, mostly on home visits, and incorporated questions about reflective practice in interviews (Ferguson, 2016; 2017).

Evidence was found that social workers thought about what they were doing while they were doing it and either continued as they were doing or tried to adjust their questioning style, focus and behaviour in light of this self-monitoring. Critical reflection where workers sought to practice in anti-oppressive ways was also evident. However, in some of the practice that was observed the practitioners did not experience themselves as reflecting in action, and nor did they want to. The demands of face to face work on home visits were so great that on some occasions workers tried not to think or be analytical about that complexity while they were in it. To have reflected in action at such moments in a manner suggested by the literature would have been counter-productive as workers feared losing composure and not staying safe. The decision not to reflect was not based on theoretical or principled objections but made existentially in terms of what was needed to survive particular situations. It arose to protect the worker from unbearable levels of anxiety and was rooted in the defended nature of the self. I argue for the need for the theory of reflective practice to be underpinned by a much more sophisticated theory of the (defended) self and how it is used than is currently fashionable and for much greater acknowledgement of the limits to reflection and how and why it is sometimes better not to reflect.

### **Exploring agency and reflexivity in relation based interventions; a Critical Realist approach (ID59)**

Gail Mann

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Many of us would tacitly acknowledge that the nature of the relationship we form, whether we are providing or receiving care, can materially contribute to both the experience of care and the pattern of outcomes that emerges. We may equally recognise that provision of relation-based care can be enabled or constrained by the structural and cultural contexts within which care is designed and delivered.

This paper will argue that Critical Realism, and in particular Margaret Archer's Realist Social Theory provides a framework through which we can examine care relationships and their contribution to outcomes, by examining two dovetailing aspects of the care relation. The first aspect makes use of Archer's theory of reflexivity and its pivotal role in the realisation of individual agency, characterising reflexivity as our human ability to internally balance our primary concerns in life with our unchosen social circumstances. Archer's theory enables a closer look at the nature and role of individual reflexivity in the care relation, in particular where an individual's power of reflexivity is weakened: a) internally (described by Archer as fractured reflexivity), b) externally (by challenging social circumstances), or c) both. Applied empirically, theory about the nature and influence of individual reflexivity in care and support relationships has the potential to improve insights into key relational mechanisms, and how these contribute to patterns of outcomes for people.

The second aspect steps back from an individual focus to a service and system level and uses Archer's morphogenetic framework, to investigate more broadly the 'conditions of possibility' for the relation. The morphogenetic sequence holds that there are pre-existing structural and cultural conditions which shape the way we provide services, but which also have the potential to be shaped and changed by individual and collective activity within services and the wider system. With a focus maintained on the way that the 'one to one' care relation operates, morphogenetic theory enables us to step back and investigate, what it is about the structural

and cultural context for that relation which enables or constrains its effects. Identifying these influencing forces could provide insights into the structures and cultures which are facilitative of, and nurturing to, relation-based care. In this PhD research Archer's theory is being applied in these ways, to investigate the role of relationships in one to one social interventions in the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise sector.

### **The imagined social worker: how social workers and society view social work values (ID12)**

Dr Alice Butler, Janine Bolger

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This paper considers the idea of actual and imagined 'social work values' in the context of two related studies. While there is ample literature and guidelines available regarding social work values and ethics, there is far less that considers how social workers themselves perceive their values and still less that considers how social workers are visually depicted in the media, what we term 'the imagined social worker'. In this paper, we combine these two strands to examine whether the social worker's own perception of professional values matches society's imagined social worker.

We begin by reviewing our research on the way that social workers perceive themselves and their profession. In our study of social work graduates, over two-thirds of respondents entered the social work profession for altruistic reasons and we note that a similar proportion had experience of or had received services from a 'caring profession', putting values at the core of their motivation. Those who had no experience of social work were attracted to the profession because of these perceived values, raising an interesting point about the perception of the social worker in society.

Our paper draws on this point and highlights the way that the imagined social worker is constructed in stock images hosted on image repositories that newspaper and other media sources use to source images for their news coverage. While the images tagged 'social worker' are generally staged with posing models, they warrant investigation as they are the images that accompany news stories and, as such, are the visual depictions of social workers put forth into the public imagination. We examine the values and core attributes that these images highlight and we show that the imagined social worker is presented as caring, empathetic and, generally, smiling. Most of the 'imagined social workers' are young, and there is an almost even gender split in our sample of images.

Society's imagined social worker matches with social workers' own views of the profession's values, which reinforces our finding that many social workers enter the profession because they have 'heard good things' about it. This suggests that the imagined social worker is a positive figure. We point, however, to the gender and age discrepancies in the stock images, contending that the imagined social worker is much younger than then actual social worker, and the imagined social worker is more likely to be male than his actual counterpart.

Our paper offers an in-depth examination and exploration of what it means to be a social worker from the perspective of social workers, and what values are embodied in society's imagined social worker. Our findings highlight that despite challenges to the profession including austerity, neoliberal policies, increasing managerialism, and the challenges posed by integration and specialisation, altruistic values and a desire to improve society remain at the core of social work, both actual and imagined.

## **Traversing the City Traversing the City (ID11)**

Ms Ffion Evans, Mr Alex Withers

MMU, Manchester, United Kingdom

This is a discussion paper based on a case study from Undergraduate Social Work teaching practice. We start from a position of recognizing *that* social work does not take place in contained and controllable environments, nor only within a domestic or office setting. The problems Social Workers are tasked to support people with, take place in a relational, fluid, and unpredictable and multiplicitous 'social' environment (Massey, 2005). Within our practice backgrounds, we recognise the growing invisibility of student and practitioner's understandings of key theoretical concepts associated with the impact of neo-liberalism and austerity on individuals and communities (Fenton, 2014).

We designed an interactive and participatory teaching session that required students to be 'with the world' (Freire, 1972) as opposed to being just 'in' it, and journey, out of Manchester using a local bus route, the 192. The bus travels from an urban location, Central Manchester, to one that is suburban, Hazel Grove in the county of Cheshire. The communities the route traverses have a nuanced and dynamic landscape of economic and cultural diversity.

Drawing on a mobilities research paradigm, the session asked students to observe the 'structural' fabric of the communities they encountered, seeking out resources, 'assets' and people to help expand their knowledge. They were encouraged to think and look at what they encountered. What did they find, why was it there, and just as importantly, what was missing, and why?

This session revealed a number of insights which will enable us to develop further teaching with students around this area, and support students/practitioners to integrate concepts of place-based and mobile perspectives into the ways in which they undertake and think about practice.

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## **Learning from Rural Social Work: Can community-based social work enhance wellbeing for social work practitioners, communities, families and individuals? (ID30)**

Ms Jane Pye<sup>1</sup>, Mr. Harris Kaloudis<sup>1</sup>, Mr Matthew Devlin<sup>2</sup>

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This presentation will draw upon a small-scale piece of exploratory research into the experiences of social workers practising in a rural setting. The overall aim of this piece of work was to investigate if and how rurality impacts on social work practice. 12 social workers with experience of working in a rural context from a variety of social work teams and services located in one local authority were interviewed about their everyday practice experiences. The interview data was analysed and revealed 6 main themes – the significance of travelling in the working lives of social workers, the lack of available services for those assessed to be in need, working in small communities as a

distinct experience, being part of a dispersed team, the importance of living rurally and social work as intrinsically motivating.

There is an ever-growing body of evidence which indicates that social workers based in all contexts are increasingly facing very real practice challenges created by political factors such as cuts to services and managerialist organisational settings. These challenges mean that social workers' sense of fulfilment and satisfaction in their professional role can become compromised. The 6 themes identified in this research reveal several very real challenges relating to this current context of social work faced by social workers practising in a rural setting. But, what is particularly interesting is that social workers found creative ways to mitigate some of these challenges. Further to this, at times social workers were able to transform challenges into opportunities to engage in fulfilling and effective practice. In particular, the themes of working with a lack of services within small communities provided some thought-provoking questions about the ways we have organised social work services in England. Perhaps an alternative model of service provision, based around the idea of community social work, could be relevant here. Social workers talked about how the opportunity to work within and alongside communities provided opportunities for innovative practice, develop real relationships with communities, families and individuals and to feel a close connection with the community. This resulted in social workers feeling invigorated, motivated and fulfilled by their role. It is suggested that this results in a more effective social work practice thus increasing the wellbeing of communities, families and individuals as the wellbeing of the social worker practitioners working in this way.

#### **Building relationships between legal and social work personnel: Serving the best interests of the child in child protection and welfare hearings (ID40)**

Dr Carmel Halton, Dr Gill Harold

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This presentation will focus on findings from a research project entitled A Social and Economic Analysis of the Use of Legal Services (SEALS) in the Child and Family Agency (Tusla). This research was funded under the Irish Research Council's Research for Policy and Society scheme, with Tusla as strategic partners.

The research took place in a context where social work increasingly brings practitioners into contact with the legal system. Child protection and welfare (CPW) practice, in particular, is viewed as one of the most legally intensive speciality within the social work profession. Over the last 25 years, the legal profession and the courts have come to play an increasingly prominent role in the handling of CPW cases in Ireland.

Key to meeting this challenge is the formulation of inter-professional relationships within the CPW system. Relationship-based practice has been widely explored within social work scholarship (for examples, see Howe, 1998 and Ruch, 2005). This discourse has been understandably and justifiably dominated by considerations of practitioner-service user relationships, with an important emphasis on relationships between social workers, children and parents.

In this paper, we draw attention to another significant relationship within the CPW domain; that between social workers and the solicitors who go on record for them during CPW proceedings. Our emphasis here is on the concomitant challenges of ensuring that children's best interests remain central to proceedings during the configuration of these inter-disciplinary relationships, which until now have garnered only peripheral attention in social work scholarship, and indeed in legal scholarship. While there are examples of reflection on inter-professional relationships in the CPW system (see for example the consideration of social work-guardian ad litem relationships in Taylor, 2007 and Burns et al, 2017), inter-professional relationships, specifically with solicitors,

remains only minimally-explored.

The CPW hearings, observed by the researchers, constitute a space, which is laden with tensions between individual, private, professional and family identities and the public setting in which they are performed. In this presentation we will examine social workers' and solicitors' experiences of the child welfare court process and the configuration of relationships with between these professionals in the court and beyond into child protection practice. These research insights are informed by the researchers' observations of 'in camera' child welfare hearings and qualitative interviews undertaken with both child protection and welfare social workers and solicitors who go on record for Tusla.

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#### Parallel Session C

Session	Room	Chair	Presentation
Session 11	Cavendish	Jo Rawles	Jonathan Scourfield Patricia Cartney Jen Lyttleton-Smith
Session 12	C.P.Scott	John Devaney	Catherine Murgatroyd Janet Melville-Wiseman Bob Cecil
Session 13	Marquis	Jill Childs	Shivani Mishra Ann Marie Hayes
Session 14	Griffiths	Janet Walker	Kirsten Morley Ian Cummins Maria Brent
Session 15	Lindsay	Sam Baron	Stephen Cowden Martin Kettle Louise Whitehead
Session 16	Flowers Theatre	Alison McInnes	Julie Morton Pamela Graham Yohai Hakak

#### Do income inequalities within local authorities predict child protection rates? (ID29)

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The recent focus in the UK on child welfare inequalities has demonstrated that there are stark differences in intervention rates between areas, according to their relative deprivation. There is a social gradient in all four nations of the UK, with the most deprived lower super output areas (and their equivalents) having the highest rates of child protection plans and children looked after and these rates steadily decrease as deprivation decreases. This presentation will consider a different issue, namely whether inequalities within local areas (as opposed to between areas) are associated with child protection rates. The analysis attempts to replicate an American study by John Eckenrode and colleagues which found there was such an association. Gini coefficients – a standard measure of income inequality - were calculated at local authority level for the whole of England and Wales. Dependent variables were numbers of children on child protection plans or registers in local authorities per 10,000 child population and the same rate for children looked after. As in the American study, control variables were local-authority-level rates of child poverty, welfare benefit receipt, qualifications, infant mortality and ethnic diversity. A general additive regression model was used for multi-variate analysis. At the time of writing this abstract, the results are not yet known, but they will be ready for the conference by September.

### **Manchester Poverty Truth Commission: Transformation via relationship building (ID36)**

Dr Patricia Cartney<sup>1</sup>, Ms Sinead O'Connor<sup>2</sup>, Ms Lizzie Bassford<sup>2</sup>

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Poverty Truth Commissions (PTC) have been running for almost a decade. The first PTC started in Glasgow and since then several cities have introduced them e.g. Salford and Leeds. The presenters have recently joined the newly formed Manchester PTC. Two presenters work as co-facilitators of the group and one person is member as a social work educator in the city. Our work is just beginning – with lots of potential and links to social work at a community level to promote social integration and social and economic wellbeing.

The opening question for the Manchester PTCs is ‘What if people who have directly faced poverty were involved in decisions around poverty?’ The key principle of PTCs is that decisions about poverty must involve people who directly face poverty. This involvement follows a clear path where relationship building is the key to progress. Fifteen people with direct experience of living in poverty have been recruited to join the Commission (the ‘Grassroots Commissioners’) and have met weekly to form their relationships and to tell their stories. A meeting has also been held with fifteen civic and business leaders from across Greater Manchester (the ‘Public Life Commissioners’).

The Manchester PTC has just been launched with Grassroots and Public Life Commissioners meeting together at an open event in the community. Our commitment now is to meet in person monthly to listen closely to the stories of people experiencing living in poverty, talk to each other and to explore what living in poverty means to individuals and to Manchester. Public Life Commissioners are not there to represent our organisations or to provide all the answers. The aim of the meetings is to work collaboratively as a full group and to focus on building trusting, respectful working relationships. There is a key focus on co-production and generating collective wisdom as a way of identifying issues to work together on to seek to tackle how poverty and inequality is manifested in the City and in the lives of individual citizens. Our commitment is to meet in person for half a day a month for a year and to eat and think together about which overarching themes/concerns are most beneficial for us to collectively address and seek to tackle.

Drawing on the above the aims of the conference presentation will be:

1. To explore the role of Poverty Truth Commissions and identify work that has been done in other cities to date - exploring their ‘local flavours’.

2. To outline the thinking and processes behind the work of PTCs in more depth and to focus on the importance of relationship building as a key way of promoting social change and social wellbeing.
3. To report on the current experience of the Manchester PTC to date.
4. To make links with social work practice and debate with colleagues the potential transfer of learning from PTCs to social work education and practice – and vice versa.

### **'The Fluffy Stuff': Struggles with Co-Production in Child and Family Social Work (ID19)**

Dr Jen Lyttleton-Smith

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Co-production is a relatively new concept within public participation and purports to add an additional 'enhanced' layer of participation in public decision-making. Described by Bovaird as a 'revolution' in public service delivery (2007: 846), its principles provide an opportunity for service user participation to go beyond consultation and extend to taking an active role in delivering public services and producing outcomes. To discuss how the concept and practice of co-production is being understood and used by children's social workers, I share interview data generated within a Welsh children's services department - where co-production has been implemented nationally under the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 - as part of the 'Talking Changes' project looking at children's participation and wellbeing measurement in children's social care. While the paper is based on preliminary findings and analysis, the issues raised already indicate a range of key areas where further development, guidance, and training would be helpful. Particular points of interest include the tension of balancing meaningful co-production with child protection concerns; difficulties in establishing and maintaining professional boundaries with children during co-productive practice; and cultural change within an organisation accustomed to prescriptive practice. My findings raise concerns regarding the current capacity of public welfare services to enact co-productive processes with children and young people in care, however they also suggest passion and drive within sector professionals to develop this capacity, given the right support and resource. I offer clear recommendations for policy and organisational development to improve the co-production offering for children in care, and to help guide the design and implementation of co-productive approaches with vulnerable children and families.

### **Power, Professionalism, and Pedagogy: The Possibility of Academic Resistance to User/Carer Involvement in Social Work Education (ID75)**

Ms Catherine Murgatroyd

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Fundamentally, Service User /Carer (SU/C) involvement in Social Work education, if implemented effectively, is an extension of progressive and anti-oppressive Social Work in that it seeks to use relationships, education, and the sharing of power as the mechanism through which to enhance wellbeing, and promote positive outcomes for those on the margins of society. As part of an internal evaluation of User Involvement processes at one UK University offering a range of qualifying and post qualifying social work programmes, a scoping review of literature was undertaken. In addition to the widespread agreement regarding the necessity and benefits of involvement, and detailed discussion regarding a broad range of factors that can serve as barriers to effective involvement or as facilitators, there emerged a pattern of opposing tensions, or competing, sometimes conflicting priorities, that academic staff are required to grapple with, balance, and manage. From achieving involvement that is meaningful,

balancing the requirements and preferences of competing stakeholders, ensuring diversity whilst developing real relationships, offering training without compromising authenticity, payments without exploitation with a limited budget, and the transferring of power to students, as both partners and consumers, and service users as co constructors of knowledge. This occurs in an environment of bureaucratic and University business operations, validation requirements and standards of regulators (HCPC), Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and the Higher Education Academy (HEA). In addition to this, though not explicit, is the impact and complexity of fluctuating power relations between all stake holders in the education environment. It is argued that currently most research originates from enthusiastic institutions leaving the voices of Academics who struggle, or who are resistant, unheard, and that best practice user involvement for all institutions can be further informed by additional research that affords a broader pool of academic staff the opportunity to speak freely and congruently about the realities of Service User involvement, and experiences of empowerment and oppression within the contemporary organisational and political climate of Higher Education(HE). This paper advocates for further research in this area, and possibly the use of advanced interviewing techniques to afford Academics a safe space to be congruent.

### **Improving ethical standards through service user involvement in social work research ethics approval (ID66)**

Dr Janet Melville-Wiseman

Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, United Kingdom

The active involvement of recipients of health and social care services in the development of the knowledge base is well established and its value undisputed. The organisation INVOLVE began work in 1996 as part of the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) and with specific aims that include “*to promote the empowerment of the public to become more involved in research*”.<sup>[1]</sup> This is also recommended by the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research<sup>[2]</sup> and the Code of Ethics for Social Work Research (Butler 2002). It also provides a unique opportunity to design impact into research from the beginning.

Since the establishment of INVOLVE much work has been undertaken to regard public involvement as an ethical issue which should be reviewed by Research Ethics Committees (RECs). The Health Research Authority (HRA) now makes it a requirement for researchers to demonstrate how the public has been involved in the design and application for ethical approval and provides useful guidance on how to do that. However, ethical approval of research within the social work community is currently managed by a diverse range of organisations with their own approaches and standards. For researchers based in universities the route is determined by their own internal REC which will signpost to external bodies where appropriate. Some of those decisions are determined by the legal requirements directed by the HRA such as projects wishing to involve people who lack capacity to consent or those accessed through their connection to NHS services as a patient or carer. In addition the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) will review projects involving 4 or more social services departments in the UK. Individual local authorities will also have a process of approving projects to be undertaken in their area of social services responsibility. However, it is not clear if there is a consistent approach by RECs to the involvement of service users as advisors in the design or the ethical approval stage of projects.

Through an interrogation of current policy and practice, the paper explores the need for a discrete, contemporary and cohesive approach to relational ethics within social work research. Proposals are made to revise Butler’s paper on a Code of Ethics for Social Work Research (Butler 2002) to advance our ethical standards in relation to the human beings we trouble as participants or ignore as experts in the ethics of our research.

*Reference*

Butler, I. (2002) A code of ethics for social work and social care research. *British Journal of Social Work*. **32**, 239-248

[1] <http://www.invo.org.uk/about-involve/terms-of-reference/>

[2] <https://www.hra.nhs.uk/planning-and-improving-research/policies-standards-legislation/uk-policy-framework-health-social-care-research/>

**Using service user narratives to promote relationship-based skills & understanding within the classroom :a study of impact and affective learning (ID67)**

Dr Bob Cecil

canterbury christ church uni, canterbury, United Kingdom

This study reports the findings of an instrumental qualitative case study exploring the impact of service users' stories in social work education. Various mandates within the UK - legal, practice, the service user movement - have led to closer involvement of service users within social work. However little attention has been given to the impact of such involvement within the curriculum. Located within a social constructionist paradigm, this study interrogates one aspect of involvement - stories of personal experience told by service users themselves -and shows their creative potential within the classroom . It explores impact from the standpoint of students and service users as well as social work academics. Drawing on data from depth individual and group interviews, students' reflective written assignments and participant-as-observer methods, thematic networks were constructed and analysed. Emotionality strongly emerged as one of four Global Themes carrying important pedagogic messages for professional education and detailed how experiences such as childhood sexual abuse, trauma and living with enduring mental health needs may be taught through narratives. Data contained rich insights into participants' emotional reactions and how these could be used to enhance interpersonal skills and understanding . Complemented by observations of the wider story-telling process, these accounts revealed sources of tension and conflict but also how affective knowledge and reflexivity may be harnessed in the classroom with implications for personal and professional development. The paper concludes by revisiting the nature of affective learning and urges greater attention to ethical dimensions including interpersonal dynamics and how these may be managed.

Key Terms

Service user, narratives, storytelling, stories, relationship-based practice pedagogy, impact, emancipatory learning, social constructionism.

**Practicing Autonomous Social Work Practice through Life Skill Education Model: Action, Reflection and Transformation (ID79 )**

Dr Shivani Mishra

Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, India

This article considers the significance of life skill education program in social work practice — the research aimed at developing and sharpening intervention skills of social work students during field learning. Researcher had participated and guided a forty-one social work students in eight modules of life skill education viz. Understanding and managing emotion, effective communication, understanding self, empathy, critical thinking, problem-solving,

decision-making and creative thinking. They were imparted seventy-two hours training in life skill education through drama followed by intensive fieldwork. In the training program, the drama-in-education is a method to teach the life skill enhancement program. The prime focus of this qualitative study is to enable social work students to learn and practice the core set of life skills through participatory methods such as drama, games and reflection. This effort direct social work students to practice autonomous social work practice in the field. This research follows a participatory action research methodology. The present research paper has highlighted the significance of life skills training in autonomous social work practice and student-directed projects. The findings indicate that the uniqueness of this training program enabled students to address the gap between academic learning and field learning. The results also suggested that the quality of the students' fieldwork is significantly dependent on their critical reflection and reflective inquiry with the target groups in their field setting. Lastly, the researcher suggested that how living educational theory help to develop and practice the module of life skill education.

### **Critical Reflection: A Contemporary Social Work Virtue (ID80)**

Miss Ann Marie Hayes

Leeds Trinity University, Leeds, United Kingdom

The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) is the profession-owned, overarching framework for continuous social work education and professional development in England since 2012. One of the nine domains of professional capability, against which the practice and progress of social work practitioners is measured, is 'Critical Reflection and Analysis.' Despite a lack of clarity and coherence concerning the ways in which Critical Reflection is understood and utilised in practice, social workers are mandated to evidence how 'Critical Reflection' informs and provides a rationale for professional decision-making and interventions. Ideas relating to 'reflection' and 'reflexivity' are privileged over any 'critical' dimension, resulting in a failure to connect personal learning and considerations of identity with the 'self/other' continuum. Building upon narratives obtained through individual interviews with social work practitioners with different levels of experience and specialisms, this research explores how social workers construct the concept of Critical Reflection. It acknowledges the diverse meanings of Critical Reflection in widely varying fields and professions, across research and practice traditions, and explores whether it is understood and utilised as a practice value or tool, and whether it makes any difference to social work practice. Drawing upon both professional and personal perspectives, whilst attending to the influences of context and organisational requirements, it questions whether the impact of Critical Reflection is such that it should be regarded as a (social work) virtue, as an embedded and embodied way of being, and therefore more than simply a tool to support practice. If Critical Reflection is acknowledged as supporting social workers to connect more profoundly with service users and the challenges they face, the Socratic challenge for 'ethical and compassionate engagement with the world and its dilemmas - despite organisational constraints - is more likely to be met, giving rise to a social work practice utilizing virtue to promote human flourishing through increasing understanding and blame reduction.

### **Using the Power Threat Meaning Framework in social work education (ID42)**

Kirsten Morley

Centre for Social Work, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom

**Summary:**

How do we support social work students to explore trauma-informed and relationship-based approaches when working with mental distress? This January the University of Nottingham began using the Power Threat Meaning Framework (PTMF) as the basis for a challenging and values-driven programme of postgraduate learning. People with lived experience from grassroots community organisations have been involved in the planning, delivery and assessment of this module, which offers a critical perspective on existing biomedical power structures and focuses closely on social work values and social justice. Students were also sensitively supported to explore how power has operated within their own lives in order to enhance their own reflective practice and capacity to become competent, compassionate practitioners. This presentation offers the opportunity to share experiences from using this Framework in social work education as a basis for exploring how best to respond to mental distress in a values-driven way.

## **Background**

Within a neoliberal operational context, social work's distinct role in challenging dominant biomedical paradigms is becoming increasingly eroded. Social workers need now more than ever to reaffirm the values base of their profession. This module aims to encourage social work students to re-establish the centrality and power of personal narratives and to explore trauma-informed approaches in the social work encounter as informed by the PTMF. The Framework's emphasis on reclaiming narratives and alternatives to diagnosis, along with understanding the ways that power operates in people's lives, is also directly aligned with the values base of social work.

## **Findings and discussion**

Student and contributor feedback on this module will be explored in the presentation, along with an overview of the strengths, challenges and limitations encountered in using the Framework for social work education. It is hoped that discussion following the presentation will open up a space for collaborative values-based learning to enhance future social work practice.

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## **Narratives of reform: The Mental Health Act (MHA) in England and Wales from the 1983 MHA to the Wessley Review (2018) (ID2)**

Dr Ian Cummins

Salford University , Salford, United Kingdom

This paper will examine mental health legislation in England and Wales since the introduction of the 1983 MHA to the proposed reforms outlined in the Wessley Review that was published in December, 2018. Reform of mental health legislation reflects two potentially conflicting strands. One is the state's power to incarcerate the "mad", the other is the move to protect the civil rights of those who are subject to such legislation. The failures to development adequately funded community based mental health services and a series of Inquiries in the 1990s led to the introduction of Community Treatment Orders in the 2007 reform of the MHA. The paper will conclude that the development of mental health policy has seen a shift towards more coercive approaches in mental health

## **Everybody has a story but what is that story really saying? An exploration of Social Workers experiences of working with self-neglect (ID4)**

Mrs Maria Brent

Kingston University, London, United Kingdom

This research study is work in progress and forms part of my doctoral thesis. It is motivated by my own experiences as a social worker working with adults who self-neglect. The introduction of the Care Act (2014) and the supporting statutory guidance has identified self-neglect for the first time as a type of possible abuse. This has resulted in a flurry of activity within local authorities to develop policy and procedures to inform organisational responses and direct practice. However, there is limited attention given to the experiences of social workers who are working with adults who have capacity but who are neglecting their personal care and/or domestic environment. Social workers can struggle to find a way to support those viewed as self-neglecting, particularly in balancing issues of human rights, mental capacity and a duty of care. The experiences of social workers warrant exploration to allow them to critically reflect on their practice when working with these often challenging cases and to consider their support and development needs going forward.

### Overall aim

- To explore social workers' experiences of working with adults who have capacity but self-neglect.

### Research questions,

- Consider the impact of working with self-neglect.
- Explore the challenges of balancing the service user's right to autonomy with issues of capacity and a duty of care
- Reflect on how personal and professional values may be challenged by working with people who have capacity but self-neglect.
- Identify what learning and development needs may support practice.

A qualitative, case study ethnographic research design is drawn on for this study. The rationale is that it allows me to get up close to practice to observe the interaction between service users and social workers during home visits. Interviews are undertaken with social workers both pre and post visits to explore how they experience these situations and the visits are also observed. The aim is to be alongside social workers to gain insights into their subjective realities when working with people who self-neglect. 9 interviews have been undertaken to date with a further 4 being planned. Emerging early findings have identified that social workers' experience significant organisational pressure to conduct complex work in a limited time. There is an overwhelming weight of responsibility and social workers' struggle with balancing a person's right to autonomy with issues of risk and protection. The sensory and emotional impact of self-neglect work is also not recognised. However, despite these challenges social workers' have a strong sense of respect and affection for the people they are working with. Human relationships are key. Early findings identify what may help is supervision that explores the sensory and emotional impact of self-neglect work and draws on theoretical frameworks to inform practice, i.e. cycle of change, joint working and managers who understand the complexities of self-neglect work helps. Also 'tough love', a process of negotiation with the person to encourage them to accept support alongside new models of working that gives more time to build relationships.

## **Safeguarding or Surveillance: a critical exploration of the implications of PREVENT for Social Work Education (ID6)**

Dr Stephen Cowden

Coventry University, Coventry, United Kingdom

This presentation seeks to understand and examine the significance of the Prevent Counter-Terrorism initiative within Social Work in the UK.

The presentation will begin by trying to open up a discussion on different theories of what causes 'radicalisation' and what factors drive this. This issue is crucial in terms of how we understand the politics, ethics and effectiveness of the Prevent policy.

I will then look at how policy shifts have situated 'radicalisation' less as a security issue and more of a 'safeguarding' issue. This is important for the way has brought Social Work directly into the orbit of Prevent and Channel, as radicalisation is now being seen as an aspect of Social Work's concern with the 'vulnerability' of children and young people involved in wider forms of exploitation, including CSE.

The workshop will consider the implications of this for Social Work Education as well as looking at evidence into how this policy is working in practice. In this context it is really important to consider those critical voices which argue that Social Work is being drawn into the ideological monitoring of Muslim young people, families and communities. The presentation will conclude by discussing some alternative policy directions which emphasise the importance of a human rights and gender equality perspective in Social Work.

## **Whose Risk is it anyway? A study of Self Directed Support in Scotland (ID13)**

Dr Martin Kettle, Ms Felicity Morrow

Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow, United Kingdom

Background and purpose

This paper connects directly to conference themes of social work research and practice in a changing society. It is based on research into the implementation of Self Directed Support (SDS). SDS is the Scottish Government's flagship policy in respect of adult social care, with its stated focus on increasing choice and control for people in receipt of services. The passage of the Social Care (Self-Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 enshrines these principles in legislation and placing duties on local authorities in respect of how they deliver it. However, its implementation continues to be regarded as inconsistent and service users' experiences as poor and similar developments elsewhere have been critiqued for their emphasis on marketization and a move towards the privatisation of risk. Despite the centrality of SDS to Scottish Government policy, there is a limited evidence base. This is, as far as is known, the first Scottish study to explore SDS from the perspective of service providers.

Methods

A mixed methods approach was used, with three aspects:

- An online survey sent out SDS leads in each of the 32 Scottish areas
- Interviews with 11 SDS leads.
- Four focus group discussions with social care providers.

The results of the online survey were analysed using Survey Monkey. The focus groups and interviews were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.

### Findings

There were several themes that emerged from the findings. Firstly, involvement of service providers in strategic discussions about SDS remained extremely variable, with processes dominated by local authorities, with the consequence that creativity was often stifled. Secondly, Option 2, the process whereby people in receipt of services were intended to have as much choice and control as possible over services without assuming the financial responsibility, remained poorly understood and applied very unevenly across Scotland. Thirdly, despite this there were identifiable pockets of creative practice, often driven by a need for innovation as a consequence of external factors, for example staff recruitment. Finally, risk continues to be a central theme, both for local authorities who were concerned about financial and reputational risks and for providers, who saw their creativity being stifled by risk-averse local authority practices.

### Conclusions and implications

Despite the stated intention of encouraging choice and control, the issue of risk still has a very powerful influence in practice around SDS, and ways need to be found to facilitate honest dialogue and ownership of risk. As well as identifying the implications for practice, this study makes a contribution to the study of policy implementation, and the framework developed by Richard Freeman and colleagues of "Inscribed- embodied- enacted" (Freeman and Sturdy, 2015) has potential to deepen our understanding of the implementation of SDS. This paper concludes by making recommendations as to how that framework might be used in further research.

### Reference

Freeman, R. and Sturdy, S., (2015) Knowledge in policy: Embodied, inscribed, enacted, Bristol, Policy Press.

## **Adult Safeguarding fights back - this time it is personal - or is it? (ID8)**

Mrs Louise Whitehead, Mr Peter Nelson, Ms Jane Foggin, Dr Dave Johnson

Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, United Kingdom

Adult safeguarding has been the recipient of much criticism regarding policy, process and practice, brought to widespread public attention following media exposure and which subsequent initiatives have sought to address. The Care Act 2014 gave a statutory basis to safeguarding reforms and brought together the concepts of personalisation and wellbeing, whereby all safeguarding adults work is to be person-led, outcome-focused, engage with the person and enhance their involvement, choice and control, intending to improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety. This approach and inherent values are operationalised in the initiative Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP). The research reported in this paper sought to explore managerial understanding and the current level of implementation of MSP within statutory and private service providers in one area in the north of England. The data collection adopted a constructivist epistemological perspective and undertook semi-structured interviews with middle managers in 17 organisations in one safeguarding board area. These included local authority adult services, police, fire service, housing and private care providers amongst others. The data was subject to framework analysis. A key finding is that policies and procedures may be in place across organisations but the extent to which they are implemented depends on the organisational culture and whether value change as well as policy change has occurred. The paper concludes by identifying a typology of organisational implementation which agencies and service providers can use to understand their journey in the implementation of Making Safeguarding Personal in practice.

## **Transforming understandings of racism in contemporary social work education: Using a conceptual review to identify gaps and challenges (ID35)**

Dr Julie Morton<sup>1</sup>, Dr Dharman Jeyasingham<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Salford, Salford, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom

Social work education's approach to racism has evolved from a significant requirement for social work students to learn to be anti-racist and anti-discriminatory (CCETSW 1989; 1991) to race being one 'difference' among the many axes of intersection which have to be understood and responded to (BASW England, 2018) via cultural competence.

The review reported on in this paper aimed to provide an up-to-date overview of research relating to black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of social work education. It was carried out with two key objectives. The first was to analyse dominant ways in which BME student experience was articulated in current literature in order to identify prevalent concepts of racism. The second objective was for this review to inform, influence and shape future research with the aim of transforming the quality of social work education practices.

Conceptual reviews typically focus on conceptualisations of a topic rather than evaluating a body of literature's methodologies or assessing findings. Reviews therefore explore how topics are understood through different theoretical or epistemological frames. Conceptual reviews are a useful means to identify tacit assumptions, unarticulated understandings and the formal definitions of a topic.

Peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2008 and 2018 were reviewed. Searches undertaken identified 18 articles that met criteria. Both researchers read all articles, and noted key themes and concepts. This was refined through re-reading and discussion. The process of analysis was therefore iterative and interpretative.

Recurring concepts identified in the literature were: subtle racism, institutional racism, cultural difference and pedagogical solutions. These concepts shape understandings of racism in the academy. They are connected to institutional drivers for diversity, the desire of social work as a profession to be inclusive, and teaching responses to what are perceived as 'deficits' in BME students' approach to learning.

The review exposed gaps in current understandings of racism and how it operates in social work education. Existing approaches are largely unreflexive with minimal attention to societal and institutional contexts of race. The paper offers suggestions for research which could address these gaps in order to challenge existing approaches and potentially transform teaching practices.

### References

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[https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/Detailed\\_level\\_descriptors\\_for\\_all\\_domains\\_wi\\_digital\\_aug8.pdf](https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/Detailed_level_descriptors_for_all_domains_wi_digital_aug8.pdf) (accessed 17 September 2018)

## **The therapeutic relationships between horses & young people**

Pamela Graham

Northumbria University, Newcastle, United Kingdom

Drawing on empirical research addressing the role of horses as therapeutic partners for young people who have been identified with 'low self-esteem', this paper seeks to explore why and how horses are able to play this role with such success.

Other researchers have observed that encounters with horses 'can facilitate the exploration of feelings and intuition' for humans and enhance understandings of 'self, nature, relationships and communication' (Rothe et al, 2004 p. 375). Hausberger et al. (2008 p. 4) has highlighted that horses tune into emotional 'cues that may be transmitted by humans through different channels: voice, posture, expression and pheromones'. This paper proposes that, just as Winnicott (1967) used the analogy of a parent's face serving as a mirror to help the child develop their sense of self, the horse can act as a 'mirror', reflecting human behaviours and an awareness of their effects, back to humans. This partnership with horses is of particular value for young people for whom life may have been chaotic and not provided experience of relationships characterised by respect and trust.

Through learning to care for and ride horses, young people in the study had opportunities to have a first-hand experience of the size difference and potential power of the horse; an Other through which they could re-encounter their self (Levinas, 1969). This elicited feelings of wonder, elation, anxiety, fear and frustration. Yet through learning to recognise horses' body language, young people developed greater capacity to both appreciate the ways in which horses communicate their emotions or intentions, and to respond sensitively. They learned how to coordinate their experiences, feelings and signals in order to form a partnership, rather than a dynamic characterised only by dominance or submission. This was balanced with an awareness that they needed to be consistently attentive, or else the balance of expectations and control would shift.

### **The immigration of social workers to and from the UK: cultural differences and national habitus (ID16)**

Dr. Yohai Hakak, Ms. Gladys Bozorgisaran, Ms Glory Alad, Ms Simona Anton, Ms. Shirley Onokha, Ms. Lucy Stroudley, Mr. Kwaku Amponsah, Ms. Sophia Bosah, Ms. Olutokunboh Francis

Brunel University, London, United Kingdom

The UK has for many years relied on social workers trained abroad to meet shortages, especially within child-protection services (Simpson, 2009; Walsh et al., 2009; Welbourne et al, 2007). In 2009 the General Social Care Council had on its lists 7512 international social workers who were trained abroad, and their qualifications were recognised as comparable to the UK demands, and a 2011 study found that about 10 percent of UK social workers qualified abroad (Hussein, Manthrope and Stevens, 2011). According to the National Minimum Data Set for Social Care from 2017, about 12% of Adult social workers gained their qualifications abroad. Currently social workers practicing with children and families are still on the UK immigration authorities' list of "shortage occupations" and the reliance on international social workers to meet workforce shortages is expected to continue. But, despite the relatively large number of social workers involved and the impact these have on wider society, there is relatively little research exploring the migration journeys of this group, their experiences, their unique perspective and training, as well as the obstacles they face and what can be done to help them overcome these. Especially missing are interpretive studies that are sensitive to the specific national and cultural context in the countries of origin and its interaction with the UK professional and cultural context. This lecture will present findings from a mixed-method research aiming at closing some of these gaps with specific focus on cultural differences and using the concept of national habitus. The project is conducted by Seven MA social work students, each studying the migration of social workers from one country to the UK; another student examining the migration of UK trained social workers to Australia. Possible implications for practice and training will be discussed.

## Parallel Session D

Session	Room	Chair	Presentation
Session 17	Marquis	Bob Cecil	Helen Scholar Mark Gregory Hellmuth Weich
Session 18	Flowers Theatre	Pat Cartney	Angie Bartoli Caroline Shore Peter Ayling
Session 19	Cavendish	Jill Childs	Louise Isham Julie Lawrence Nell Warner
Session 20	Lindsay	Janet Walker	Polly Cowan Lee Sobo-Allen Jackie Lelkes
Session 21	Griffiths	Alison McInnes	Boris-Paschal Bagonza Amanda McBride George Dake
Session 22	C.P.Scott	Janet Melville-Wiseman	Workshop NICE – Resources for Social Workers

### **Recruitment and Retention of Local Authority Child and Family Social Workers: Findings from Year 1 of a 5-year study (ID34)**

Dr Helen Scholar<sup>1</sup>, Professor Hugh McLaughlin<sup>2</sup>, Ms Su McCaughan<sup>1</sup>, Dr Sarah Pollock<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Salford, Salford, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, United Kingdom

The aim of this presentation is share findings from the first year of a DfE funded 5-year research study to collect robust evidence on recruitment, retention and progression in child and family social work. The study seeks to understand recruitment issues, career pathways, and how these differ according to demographics (age, ethnicity etc), different educational entry routes, roles and responsibilities, region, Local Authority types and local labour markets.

National statistics in 2017 (DfE 2018) suggested 30% of social workers were aged 50 or more, with an annual turnover of 14% and a national vacancy rate of 5%. High staff turnover impacts upon service provision; may affect public confidence; limits opportunities for individual and organisational learning; and offers a low return on investment in social work education (RiP, 2015). Poor retention in social work results in a workforce with insufficient numbers of experienced staff capable of dealing with the complexity of the work, and of providing appropriate leadership

The study's specific objectives are to:

- Explore what attracted respondents to child and family social work and how they feel their training path has prepared them for this career.
- Investigate career aspirations
- Distinguish how the experience of performance management, CPD and Knowledge and Skills Statements impact on retention and progression.

- Identify specific issues facing particular groups (e.g. those considering career breaks, BME, those with caring responsibilities).
- Understand pull/push factors that lead to social workers remaining in post, moving within children's services or leaving the profession.

Importantly the study will also seek to find out where social workers go when they leave and why.

The first year (Wave 1) of the study was concluded in March 2019 and comprises three core components:

- Preliminary face-to-face qualitative interviews with 25 child and family social workers in five different local authorities, to explore issues around recruitment and retention and inform questionnaire development;
- A mixed-methods online and telephone survey, which achieved completed responses from 5,621 local authority child and family social workers (a response rate of around 28%) in 99 local authorities: amounting to more than one in six child and family social workers in England
- Forty follow-up qualitative telephone interviews with a structured sample of 'stayers' and 'leavers' – defined as those who indicated that they planned to stay in local authority child and family social work over the next 12 months, and those who indicated they were planning to leave

This presentation will report on the qualitative findings from the preliminary and follow-up interviews. These interviews provide an important insight into the state of English child and family social work, and the factors influencing social workers' experiences, well-being and career plans.

### **The role of space in the supervisory relationship (ID9)**

Mr Mark Gregory

University of East Anglia, Norwich, United Kingdom

Supervision is viewed as an integral part of social work practice, however relatively little is known about what actually happens within supervision and between supervisors and social workers within the supervisory relationship. This presentation will draw on preliminary analysis of interview data with supervisors and social workers, taken from a wider ethnographic study on supervision. My research has taken place across four child and family social work teams in two local authorities; in total twenty-two full participants (five supervisors and seventeen social workers) were interviewed, had a formal supervision session recorded, and were involved in participant observation of informal supervision in the office space.

Interview data have been analysed thematically with a theoretical lens that is broadly psychosocial, with the aim of 'getting beneath the surface' to understand how the relational nature of supervision interacts with how social workers think and feel about their work. Drawing on the theme of *space*, I will look at the way that the supervisory space is framed, constructed and used by social workers and supervisors within the study. From the data, I identify three different ways of thinking about space: physical, emotional, and cognitive. I will explore how these conceptions of space interact and how they enable social workers to make sense of their case work, their role, and the interplay between their personal and professional selves. In doing so, I will explore some of the factors that promote the creation of space within the supervisory relationship, as well as highlighting some of the potential barriers to or inhibitors of such a space.

As this presentation will be based on an ongoing analysis, I will conclude with some thoughts about how the idea of space in the supervisory relationship can be further explored and how it links to the ways in which social workers think and feel about their work. I will also briefly consider what the implications for practice may be of thinking about the importance and value of creating, promoting, and utilising space within supervision.

## **Developing a clinical supervision model for support workers at Grenfell (ID55)**

Dr Hellmuth Weich<sup>1</sup>, Prof. Deborah James<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, United Kingdom

This paper describes the development of a clinical supervision model for one third of the workforce employed at the Grenfell Support Service. The service was set up by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea shortly after the fire at Grenfell Tower in London, United Kingdom in 2017. The Grenfell Support Service was for the people who lived in and around Grenfell Tower (referred to as the residents) by providing an integrated, person-centred service to residents. The Social Work Company – a company limited by guarantee - held part of the delivery contract for the Grenfell Support Service. As part of its duty of care to its employees, it contracted two academics (the first and last authors of this paper) to provide clinical supervision for staff.

Social workers and others in the caring professions are expected to provide a compassionate and nurturing environment to service users. This is especially important in a challenging environment such as Grenfell or other disasters and tragedies. The obvious question to ask is if workers providing services in these settings should also be provided with a nurturing environment. For us, the focus of the nurturing environment needs to be on providing a mirror of the kind of relationship we want workers to have with families. The focus moves away from competency and resilience to a relationship-based approach to both supervision and practice. It is with this point, the insufficiency of current supervision models in social work, that a new model was needed to provide this nurturing environment. This new model is nested in a narrative of relationship-based practice that we turn to in order to describe the model of supervision for the workers employed by The Social Work Company at the Grenfell Support Service.

### Methods and material

This paper will outline the context and process of developing a model for supervision uniquely geared towards the needs of workers in a setting such as Grenfell. We will provide a narrative account of the development of the approach to supervision and outline the theoretical models that underpinned individual and group supervision, namely a narrative, appreciative inquiry for individual supervision and VIG (Video Interaction Guidance) for group supervision.

### Analysis

In order to reflect on the implementation of this framework, we will provide a retrospective narrative analysis of our experiences in implementing this twofold model in practice. This analysis will pay specific attention to the evolution of the model in terms of the theoretical developments and how these were applied in practice.

### Discussion

The discussion will include examples of the lay-out of group and individual supervision, with examples of questions and themes of conversation used in practice. We will conclude with a consideration of how this model of supervision can be used by various professional groups in challenging environments such as Grenfell.

## **Towards a smoother transition: A three-phased transitional model into management (ID3)**

Dr Angie Bartoli

Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, United Kingdom

The transition from practitioner to manager appears to be an uncertain time for social workers. The literature suggests a pessimistic view of social workers transitioning into management (Cousins, 2004; Kadushin & Harkness, 2002). Much of this is associated with how engaging in prior learning serves to prepare newly appointed managers for their new roles (Hair, 2013). Based on a research study, this presentation will show how the situation is multifaceted and needs to be considered within the context of career progression, individual social workers' levels of confidence to seek promotion and opportunities for promotion.

From the perspective of relationship-based practice and the study's emerging themes, three key strands are identified as important: professional development, line management support and peer support networks and mentoring. Based upon this study, this presentation will introduce a new model of transition which is underpinned by principles of relationship-based practice which serves to enhance the wellbeing of social work managers and their organisations. The research participants confirm a commitment from employers to support aspiring managers in terms of preparation for their new managerial role. This included an array of learning experiences, but the approach adopted by organisations was inconsistent and varied in degrees of satisfaction.

The findings from this study reveal that transition is differentially experienced according to a number of factors yet appears smoother when conceptualised as a *phased* transition incorporating key points along the transitional process. In contrast to other models which propose a linear trajectory to transition with an identified end point, this model is conceptualised as a repetitive cyclical process. It rotates between three phases: pre-transition, upon transition and during transition. A three-phased visual model will be presented to demonstrate how this reflects the complexity of transition and the multiple locations of support necessary to optimise a smoother transition whilst enhancing wellbeing and strengthening relationships within organisations.

## **Social Work Values and Professional Formation in the Republic of Ireland: What Role Does Education Play? (ID43)**

Ms Caroline Shore

University College Cork, Cork, Ireland

Social work is a profession intrinsically occupied with and underpinned by ethics and values. Although international literature recognises a lack of consensus around one prescribed value base for the profession, in the Republic of Ireland we are guided both by the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Social Workers (CORU, Social Workers Registration Board), and by the Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW) Code of Ethics. The latter remains the 'go to' document for many social workers, and its Values Statement refers to unique and intrinsic individual human worth; self-determination; freedom of expression; and "the assertion and protection of ...human rights" (IASW 2007).

Given the centrality of the social work value base within the profession, it is incumbent upon those of us involved in the education of future practitioners to ensure that graduates leave our programmes with a commitment to the values required for building trusting, reciprocal relationships; promoting wellbeing; and supporting people to transform their lives. We must have confidence that our future practitioners recognise the complexities and challenges involved in applying these values in practice.

Arising from a teaching puzzle, this paper discusses the findings of a small scale research study. The study explored student perspectives on how values development was facilitated through professional socialisation on the first year of a Master of Social Work programme. Qualitative surveys incorporating a case study vignette were completed by students at discrete points over the academic year and views on the influence of college-based and fieldwork placement learning were gathered. Subsequent focus groups to probe deeper into student perceptions were also facilitated. The first year students' understanding of the values critical to the profession were compared to those of their final year peers and those of a cohort of social work academics from North and South of the border.

The findings indicate that students arrive to the teaching and learning environment with a general attunement to the ethos underpinning the social work value base, but their primary frame of reference for responding to dilemmas at this stage is their personal belief system. Through immersion into the social work programme, students become more aware of the influence of these personal values on their decision making. The fieldwork placement is viewed by students as a 'testing ground' for their values in practice and an opportunity to observe applied social work values in the actions of qualified practitioners.

At the end of the first year of professional formation there was no consensus found between this cohort of MSW students and their second year peers, or social work academics, regarding a coherent ethical value base for the profession.

The study found that the role of academic and practice educators is critical in facilitating students to begin integrating the professional value base into their sense of self. Modelling of applied values by 'passionate' and 'authentic' academics and practitioners was illuminated as a key influence in student formation for ethical professional practice.

### **'Just look up at the stars': Empathy and emotion in social workers' relationships with children: a visual and phenomenological study (ID24)**

Mr Peter Ayling

University of Worcester, Worcester, United Kingdom

**Context of study:** While empathy is frequently identified as a basic skill within social work training, it is less clear how workers use this skill within their work with children, or how the challenges of contemporary practice might affect workers' abilities to sustain empathy within their relationships with children. This presentation will present initial findings from a doctoral research study which seeks to understand the lived experiences of social workers, in their use of empathy and their emotional responses to the children with whom they work.

**Method:** The project utilises a multi-method exploratory approach combining a visual research method with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This innovative study design aims to enable participants to reflect on their practice and emotions through an externalised image-creation task, using small world objects and symbols. The image-creation task forms the first stage of a semi-structured interview process with participants. Visual methodologies have been proposed as particularly useful when exploring complex, multi-dimensional experiences such as emotions (Kara, 2015). The research data is thus both visual and textual, in the form of photographs taken of the participants' images and transcripts of the - semi structured interviews.

**Sample:** Using purposive sampling, 11 participants were recruited from 2 Children's Services departments in England during the summer of 2018. The study compares the experiences of 3 participants completing their ASYE and 8 experienced (3 years qualified) social workers in a variety of contexts with children and families.

**Data analysis and Findings:** The Data analysis is ongoing at time of submission. Initial findings from the study will be presented for discussion. The visual data has been analysed following guidelines by Rose (2016) in relation to participants' use of symbols as well as overarching thematic analysis of the images as a whole, while textual themes have been identified using the IPA method outlined by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). Findings cover four key areas.

1. Feeling 'with' the child - the nature of empathic responding to children, putting children's feelings into context; conveying understanding and perspective - taking.
2. Feelings within the worker - responses to removing children from birth families; impact of the child's story; responding to parents; emotional regulation strategies;
3. Emotions within the relationship –sustaining relationship over time; use of touch and sharing of authentic emotion; saying goodbye and keeping in touch; job satisfaction
4. Emotions at work– containing environments, sources of support, sources of anxiety; understanding emotion 'rules' in organisations; .

Implications for social work education and post-qualifying training will be considered.

References:

Kara, H. (2015) *Creative methods in the social sciences*. Bristol: Policy Press

Rose, G. (2016): *Visual Methodologies* 4th Edition. London: Sage.

Smith, J., Flowers, P. and Larkin, M. (2009) *Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*. London: Sage.

**“What do you do when this is still all about love?” Exploring health and social care practitioners' perspectives working with family carers affected by harmful behaviour by the older person for whom they care. Findings from a qualitative study (ID46)**

Dr Louise Isham, Dr Alistair Hewison, Dr Caroline Bradbury-Jones

University of Birmingham, Birmingham, United Kingdom

There is limited research or practice guidance about families caring for older members who act in an abusive, violent or harmful way towards them. This presentation reports a qualitative study that explored the views and experiences of health and social work practitioners who routinely work with older adults on their families about the 'hidden' issue of carer harm. Thirty-eight professionals took part in five focus groups; the group discussions were stimulated by vignettes developed from interviews with carers affected by harmful behaviour. Orientated to a social constructionist epistemological position, the data were analysed using a thematic analysis approach. Three principal findings were identified: 1. Carer harm is a serious and under-acknowledged problem about which practitioners have experiential knowledge. 2. Practitioners face considerable practical and ethical challenges working with affected families. 3. There are conceptual and social difficulties naming the problem and a reluctance to understand it as a form of abuse. To conclude, we question to what extent practitioners' framing of care harm an ethical and relational issue implicitly reinforces latent ideas about a 'hierarchy of harms', of which carer harm is consistently understood in relation to the illness or perceived vulnerability of their family member. We also discuss the challenges and opportunities of practitioners relying on experiential knowledge to identify and engage with carer harm in the absence of clear guidance or policy about this complex, but not uncommon, issue.

## The Help Through Crisis Research Programme: An Evaluation (ID48)

Dr Julie Lawrence

University of Salford, Salford, United Kingdom

**Background:** The Help through Crisis (HTC) project is a £33 million research programme supporting 69 partnerships across England which help people who are experiencing or at risk of hardship crisis to overcome the difficulties they are facing to plan for their futures.

The partnerships (including Salford Citizen Advice (SCA) received National Lottery funding through the Help through Crisis programme which brings together small voluntary groups and established charities (partner agencies) to work together. Through social integration and cohesion between the voluntary groups, they offer individuals advice, advocacy and support which match their personal circumstances.

**Aims:** This research aims to establish the issues people face and the underlying causes, from their basic needs, to their physical and mental health, to skills and employment. People are supported to draw on their personal experiences to build on their skills and strengths so they are ready to seize the opportunities and challenges ahead.

The research programme has four outcomes, all of which need to be met by the partnerships:

- v People who have experienced hardship are better able to improve their circumstances
- v People who are at high risk of experiencing hardship crisis are better able to plan for the future
- v Partner agencies are better able to support people to effectively tackle hardship due to sharing, learning and evidence
- v Those experiencing or are at high risk of experiencing hardship crisis have a stronger, more collective voice, to better shape responses to their issues.

**Methods:** The University of Salford is commissioned by (SCA) to undertake a longitudinal (2017-2021) evaluation based upon the four outcomes. A qualitative approach is utilised in terms of interviewing a variety of individuals. These included; individuals in crisis (service users) (n=26), a local focus group (n=3), (HTC) project workers (n=3) & community partners (n=3). Partner agencies included The Mustard Tree (CVS), Salford Food Bank and Loaves and Fishes (drop-in centre).

A thematic analysis was undertaken, using NVivo (10) to capture relevant themes related to the four outcomes of the research programme. The importance of the evaluation is to capture '*what works*' to tackle hardship crisis and evaluate how partner agencies respond to changing circumstances over time to enhance both economic and social wellbeing.

**Results:** At the end of the first two year period (2017-19) there is evidence from service users which indicates HTC is providing an excellent support service. This entails offering relevant advice and advocacy and encouraging individuals to plan for the future. The participants described intensive, multi-layered help, which exceeded their expectations and often represented a major improvement on past support. This also included engaging with relevant partner agencies that provided additional services.

**Conclusion/Discussion:** there are a range of challenges faced by partner agencies to provide a cohesive service to individuals in a crisis situation. Therefore, this presentation will outline the success of the North West research programme to date, and summarise '*what needs to be done*' in the future, in order to help reduce the experiences of personal hardship for individuals and families.

## **Improvements in parental emotional well-being during home visiting support: What works for whom? (ID7)**

Dr Nell Warner

CASCADE, Cardiff University, CARDIFF, United Kingdom

**Background:** Home visitors can build relationships with the parents of young children who have low levels of emotional well-being. They may provide them with both emotional and practical support, and evidence suggests that for some families the provision of home visitors can enable parents to cope better. However, while support may be effective for some families, the circumstances in which it is effective are less well understood.

**Method:** This presentation will report on research carried out using the administrative data from one third sector organisation, Home-Start, which provides home visiting support to families with children under 5 years old in the UK. This data set was analysed to identify how the nature of support, adverse family situations and the interrelationship between them were related to changes in parental emotional well-being. Sub-groups of families were identified according to the problems they were experiencing with different aspects of emotional well-being, namely self-esteem (n=2290), social isolation (n=2281) and mental health (n=1991). The effects of adverse situations were explored by looking at individual risk factors and multiple risks. Variables describing the average rate at which parental emotional well-being improved over the course of support were developed. Multiple linear regression models were then used to explore the relationships between the nature of support, the family's situation and the rate of improvement.

**Results:** Overall the family's situation was only very weakly associated with the rate at which emotional well-being improved. Though effects were small, domestic abuse was associated with slightly faster improvements, whereas large family sizes, disabled parents and parental mental health problems were associated with slower improvements. Several aspects of the way support was provided were related to faster improvements, including more frequent visits, and support being provided by paid workers (as opposed to volunteers). Longer individual visits were associated with families improving more slowly. These different aspects of support affected families in different adverse situations differently. Paid worker support was particularly related to faster improvements in families with domestic abuse, disabled parents and multiple risks. However, volunteer support seemed just as effective for families with disabled children and large families.

**Conclusions:** Findings are of relevance to those planning and delivering home visiting support programmes to support families with young children.

## **Adoption - Is Your House Your Home? (ID44)**

Ms Polly Cowan

University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Some children placed for adoption leave the adoptive home before they are 18 (Selwyn 2014). Emerging findings from a study of premature adoption endings across every local authority in Scotland show there are three types of endings. 1) - when a child is placed for adoption with a family and leaves the family home within days, weeks or months of moving in before an adoption order is granted; 2) – when a child has been legally adopted, leaves the family home before the age of 18 and all contact is broken off between them; and, 3) - when a child leaves the family home but is still considered to be a part of family, the adoptive parents provide parenting support though they do not live together.

This presentation uses findings from the 28 interviews of social workers and adopters to focus on the third group of adopted young people who are 'parented from a distance'. These young people no longer reside with their

adoptive family though they see them on a regular basis, still consider themselves to be a family and for many they ultimately consider the adoption to be a successful one. This is a phenomenon that is little discussed. Some of the reasons for the child leaving the family will be explored. As will the fundamental importance of the relationship between the social worker and adopters in supporting adopters to continue to parent.

Over the last 20 years, policy has focused on reducing the number of children in care through promoting adoption (Rushton 2003). The particular and complicated challenges of adoption from care are becoming more apparent (Selwyn 2014, BBC Adoption UK 2018, Neil 2018) and there has been increased focus on post adoption support for families (Hartinger-Saunders 2016, DFE 2013). Little is known about effective post adoption support interventions (Selwyn 2017) though the relationship between adopter and social worker has been found to be one of the most beneficial post adoption support interventions (Stock et al 2016).

Adoption support groups advocate for greater awareness of the unique challenges of adoption and describe feeling guilty and feeling blamed by social workers (SGAT), particularly when the child has to leave the family home. This paper pauses to consider the importance of empathic, relationship based social work practice when an adopted child leaves the adoptive home before the age of 18 as it could be the difference between the parent child relationship surviving or not.

### **The last resort? Initial findings of a PhD study exploring the circumstances, and motivations, of non- resident fathers taking on the full time care of their children through the involvement of social services (ID25)**

Mr Lee Sobo-Allen

Leeds Beckett University, Leeds, United Kingdom

Within the field of child protection social work, where concerns about the care a child have reached a point of possible removal into care. A clear mandate exists requiring social workers to contact and assess resident and non-resident fathers, as a potential alternative placement for the child. Previous studies have consistently found that a number of barriers exist between fathers and social workers throughout child protection procedures, and engagement has been positioned as either problematic or non-existent.

My PhD study, through narrative interviews and the use of time lines, explores the motivations and experiences of fathers who, as a result of the involvement of social services, now have their children living with them on a permanent basis. A number of these fathers care for children whom they have had no previous relationship with, or are not their biological father. If, as it is often argued, that men have no moral or social obligation to care for children on this basis, what motivates fathers to agree to, and undertake this role?

For the majority of the fathers in the study, they are acutely aware that they are the 'last resort' to their children going into the care system, and believe that this to be the worst possible outcome for themselves and their child/ren. In the presentation I will explore how this realisation acts as a motivator to act through anticipatory stigma, grief and loss, should they not have agreed to be assessed by Social Services. Exploring how practitioners involved in care proceedings are engaged in 'future work' and how this impacts upon fathers.

I will explain how the stigma that emanates from the negative perceptions of the care system in society is involuntary experienced, and anticipated, by fathers through their own moral identity, and involvement from social services, family and friends. I will then suggest that, as non-resident, the fathers in my study have already experienced feelings of grief and loss through a loss of role, identity and no longer living with their children/having contact. Anticipating further feelings of grief and loss, should their children be removed in care and possible adoption, a number of the fathers in study were compelled to engage with, and be assessed by social services

## **Well-being: from concept to practice? Perspectives from a collaborative research project between a local authority and the University of Brighton (ID50)**

Mrs Jackie Lelkes<sup>1</sup>, Dr Anna Bouch<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Brighton, Brighton, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Local Authority, Sussex, United Kingdom

Since its introduction as an integral part of the Care Act (2014), the concept of well-being has become a high-profile and contested issue in both adult social work policy and practice. In this presentation, I will discuss findings from a study conducted in 2017 between the University of Brighton School of Applied Social Sciences and a local authority adult social work team that explores how social workers conceptualise well-being in relation to service users who had capacity and those who lacked capacity to make informed decisions in relation to their care and treatment.

Under the Care Act (2014), social workers need to identify both activities and services that can enhance a person's well-being whatever their level of needs. To be able to do this they are required to understand the person they are working with and develop a good sense of what is important to that individual. This requires the social worker to think about the subjective nature of the individual's wishes and aspirations, how well equipped they are to achieve their goals, and identify the individual's strengths, assets and deficits.

Whilst the concept of a person-centred approach has been firmly established within the vocabulary of social work, and structures are in place to ensure social work education promotes this approach, it is not yet clear as to the degree of success in the translation of concept to practice.

The researchers found very limited previous research connected with the promotion of well-being: where this is present it seems to be limited to generalised work related to how well social work, liberated from a care management model, is realised in practice. The researchers could also find limited research looking at social worker's conceptualizations of well-being where the person lacked mental capacity.

Using thematic analysis of data arising from individual and group discussions, the researchers discovered interesting differences depending on the social worker's apparent 'cognitive style' of how they viewed wellbeing as it related to a person with capacity and without capacity. This presentation will discuss the findings of the research including implications for practice and further areas to research in this area.

## **Voice through the visual: Photovoice as a platform for LGBT+ asylum seekers and refugees in the UK (ID72)**

Mr Boris-Paschal Bagonza

De Montfort University, Leicester, United Kingdom. N/A, N/A, United Kingdom

Visual methods, such as the participatory approach of Photovoice - self-generated still photographs can be one of the ways of the marginalised to augment their voice. This presentation draws on the methodological approach of Photovoice when researching with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer (LGBT+) asylum seekers and refugees in the UK. Asylum applicants may encounter various imposed policy restrictions by the host country, for instance access to work and housing which negatively affects their welfare.

Photovoice can be a way to allow these research participants to have *power* (camera) in their hands and let the 'public' into their subjective lived and embodied experiences as LGBT+ asylum seekers and refugees. These self-produced photographs can be regarded as visual (re)production, (re)presentation and (re)expression of their own varied world of words 'embodied' in the images, including highlighting the plight of their welfare, as they articulate the navigation of the asylum process as sexual and gender minorities.

In this presentation of my on-going PhD project, I will show how some of these images from the 20 participants I interviewed, can be crucial in highlighting their diverse welfare challenges they countenance as LGBT+ asylum seekers and refugees, and how they variously (re)present themselves/experiences in this form of visual language. This project also seeks to contribute to methodology in working with research participants regarded as marginalised, and who also belong to a sensitive group.

### **Opening Out: Gender and Pleasure in the Night Time Economy (ID76)**

Ms Amanda McBride

Northumbria University, Newcastle, United Kingdom

This paper presents the results of a PhD focusing on the intersection of gender, pleasure and the night time economy (NTE). Specifically, it reports on the experience of female students, aged 16-24, who seek pleasure by going on nights out. In the northern city which acts as a case study for the research, those managing the NTE have successfully created a 'student scene' characterised by cheap, mid-week drinking. While there's a great deal of research on the risks of this leisure activity (and they are ample), there is a dearth of writing on the pleasures of nights out. I argue that the pleasures are best understood in terms of the 'opened out subjectivity', in which the self is experienced as deeply relational. The importance of relationships is central to my analysis which foregrounds female friendship against a backdrop of continuing gender inequality in this cultural context.

### **To do or not to do: The Ethics of 'Ethics in Action' (ID78)**

George Dake

University of Central Lancashire, Preston, United Kingdom. Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, United Kingdom

The intersection of Ethics and Knowledge in social research continues to be the subject of much debate and discussion. Love (2012) argues that this is primarily because social research is situated both at the intersection of knowledge and ethics but also at the centre of science and philosophy, thereby making it particularly relevant for confronting and addressing ethical questions at both the empirical and theoretical levels. I will argue that this is more heightened for the Lone PhD Researcher engaging in or with a narrative-pointed psychosocial research with vulnerable young men. This is because the lone researcher who is confronted their own emotional dilemmas during fieldwork about morality, social justice, power and risk, as well as negotiating the expectations of ethical review boards.

Reflecting on experiences from my fieldwork with male sex workers in Manchester, I explore my own experience of recognising and responding to these feelings, thoughts and the emotional dilemmas which related to my long term lived engagement with vulnerable young men. I also explore my own ethical decision making as I sought to negotiate the line between upset and harm in deciding – together with my participants – when to pause, when to carry on and when to stop.

I argue that current discourse on ethics in social research will benefit from an exploration of the intersection of the complex interpersonal emotional challenges of the lone researcher confronted with a distressed research participant in the face of making choices which have implication for knowledge generation.

## Poster Presentations

Tim Fisher <u>Seunghoon Oh</u> Natalia Farmer Sue Cleary		Flowers Theatre
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### **Social work with Children and Families in England, 'social work and social living' Bertha's call for thinking and feelings as emancipatory practices (ID51)**

Ms Beverley Barnett-Jones MBE<sup>1</sup>, Mr Tim Fisher<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Walsall MBC, Walsall, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Camden council, London, United Kingdom

We are social workers from different generations, class, gender and ethnicity who consciously chose the praxis of social work as our place. In our own parallel worlds navigating the complex channels as social work took one turn and then another as to what it is and what's its purpose. We met, in the fulcrum of the current What's Works Turn coming together as interested parties among actors that claim representative roles in this living entity called social work.

At the end our reflection was the comfort being offered in the land of the evidenced based movement in social work. The certainty of the offer framed as an opportunity to examine the uncertain, what works is seductive to social workers ourselves included who are somewhat tired of the latest fancy being wholesale adopted by organisations only to wonder five years later 'well that didn't really make a difference really did it?'

Yet this comfort is a soft cushion hiding a very sharp end point, giving us a moment of clarity. The relational turn we had begun to see emerge as critical challenge to the power and legitimacy of state sanctioned social work, through our work with parents as experts of lived experience and movements challenging the governing narratives, was being co-opted by the very entity we must critically engage with. We talked of our moments of being useful to others when we found that love had been at the centre of what we did as social workers

We began to dialogue about the heart of practice and made a significant discovery, we were both of us reading Bertha Capen Reynolds. Who she ?

**Bertha Capen Reynolds** (born 11.12. 1887 and died 29.10 1978), was an [American Social Worker](#) who was influential in the creation of [Strength Based Practice](#), [Radical social work](#) and [Critical social work](#).

Reynolds wrote in 1951:

"Do we not ourselves get our best counselling help when it comes in the course of contacts for other things. It is hard to admit to so much failure in directing our own lives as roads for formal appointment. Do we not rather find ourselves talking to someone just anywhere who seems to have a gift of understanding? How shall clients and skilled counsellors be sure of meeting if not at the crossroads of life where ordinary traffic passes by"

In this workshop we want to engage with colleagues in a conscious process of re-presenting her work through a series of quotes and ideas, because we believe her past has a rich context that helps us think about social work now. Dialoguing about her has been like a unifying activity across the experience of intersectionality. 'Black Woman and White guy, listening to each other', quenching a thirst to connect with others and with difference. It is emancipatory.

## **What are Moral and Epistemic Virtues in Anti-Opressive Surrogate Decision-Making with Children and Young People towards the End-of-Life? (ID57)**

PhD Seunghoon Oh

DurhamUn, Durham, United Kingdom

This paper aims that moral and epistemic virtues in anti-oppressive practice focus upon how those virtues can contribute to the eradication of oppression towards children and young people with life-limiting conditions (LLCs).

Employing critical ethnography, three main methods of data collection are observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. In total, 113 interviews took place. The research underwent full ethical review by the School of Applied Social Science's ethics committee at Durham University and the Institutional Review Boards in Korea gained full approval.

The researcher explored to surrogate decision-making towards children and young people with LLCs. It helps understand the immediate, medium and long-term effects of parents who have children or young people with life-limiting conditions and concern about moral and epistemic virtues in anti-oppressive practice that is how to address the immediate, medium and long-term effects of the loss of loved one regarding micro, mezzo and macro levels of oppression.

To investigate some connections both ethical and epistemic virtues for to eradicate oppression and to respect the best interests I draw from Michael Polanyi (1891-1976)'s analysis of class societies and the tacit dimension, and from Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002)'s symbolic power. Both are useful to investigate some features of oppression in general and its connection to surrogate decision-making for children and young people with LLCs. In this research, the tacit dimension of Polanyi and field, habitus and doxa of Bourdieu will be useful in order to understand moral and epistemic virtues in anti-oppressive surrogate decision-making and apply anti-oppressive surrogate decision-making.

Recognising tacit dimension in surrogate decision-making requires compassion, intellectual passion and commitment because medical decision makings are linked with planning under uncertainty and anti-oppressive decision-making is better to articulate the importance of patient-centred care than shared decision-making.

First, with compassion in anti-oppressive surrogate decision-making, the researcher emerges from these analyses endeavour to both elucidate how it works and explain how it is preserved given its injustice and irrationality regarding toxic humidifier disinfectants, existing oppression in South Korea. The preservation of oppressive structures constrains the perspectives of both those who suffer the oppression and those who have profited from it.

Second, through intellectual passion in anti-oppressive surrogate decision-making, we can understand the habitus that elucidates surrogate decision-making in the injustice and irrationality of oppression and reveals oppressive structures, constraining both those who suffer from the oppression and those who take benefits from it. By paying attention to the tacit dimension of oppressive surrogate decision-making, we can better understand of the ontological, semantical, phenomenal aspects of in oppressive surrogate decision-making.

Third, commitment to anti-oppressive surrogate decision making can lead to practical improvements and try to connect both to eradicate oppression and to respect the best interests. The virtue does not only feed the motivations behind our ways of thinking that are at ease with oppression but also trigger solidarity regarding power in social class, victims and survivors.

Thus, virtues in anti-oppressive surrogate decision-making have both an epistemological and ethical dimension.

## **Social Worker or Border Guard? Ethics and values in the 'hostile environment' of UK immigration policy (ID62)**

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This paper is concerned with contemporary global discourses that promote 'anti-immigration' rhetoric, underpinned by 'anti-illegal' policies and practice. In 2017, a record 68.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations (UN Refugee Agency, 2018). In the midst of this, the criminalisation of immigration has been accentuated, from the US 'War on Terror' to the borders of 'Fortress Europe'. This has resulted in increased immigration law enforcement in order to protect notions of national security (Golash-Boza, 2009). Within the UK, the 'hostile environment' has been the subject of much controversy and critics have argued that immigration policies have extended 'everyday borders' into daily life (Yuval-Davies et al, 2018). This paper seeks to contribute towards exploring this context and draws from PhD research to interrogate how social work ethics and values are challenged within the 'hostile environment' of UK immigration policy. Drawing from ethnographic research located in Glasgow, UK at The Women Asylum Seeker Housing Project (WASH), I delve into the detail of the 'hostile environment' to explore the tensions between immigration legislation and statutory social work. Humphries (2004) has argued that little attempt has been initiated by social work to fully comprehend the realities of how the profession maybe potentially complicit within the immigration system. The issue of 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF), a legal condition imposed upon those subject to immigration control, is testimony to this and NRPF emerges as a devastating form of state violence with this research. Therefore, this paper aims to provide a detailed examination of the damaging impact NRPF has for families and social work practice. Key findings will be discussed in order to tease out ethical concerns that arise as access to social services support is curtailed and families are affected by notions of 'illegality' and 'criminality' alongside a 'genuine' versus 'bogus' dichotomy. Subsequently, rights and entitlements to state support are severely restricted and margins of exclusion are enacted as social workers become co-opted into performing the role of an immigration 'border guard'. In this climate of suspicion, a sub issue to arise from this environment are 'gatekeeping' tactics implemented by social services that 'deliberately reduce the number of families to whom a local authority must provide support' (Threipland, 2015). The impact of such practices can be seen within the assessment process and lack of support provided to NRPF families. Consequently, there are significant tensions between UK immigration legislation and social services statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of destitute NRPF families with children. Ultimately, the ethical implications for social work are vast as the profession becomes drawn into assuming the role of an everyday 'border guard' and immigration concerns overshadow child welfare.

## **Inter-professional Education: Working together to dispel the myths about Teaching Care Home's in Health and Social Care Provision (ID73)**

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'The World Health Organization (WHO, 2010) recognises Interprofessional Education (IPE) as a central component in strengthening health systems, responding to the increasing complexity within the health and social care sector.' (Stephens and Ormandy, 2018)

Heathlands Village at the FED is a care home who are collaborating with the University of Salford, as part of a National Teaching Care Homes programme led by Care England and in partnership with the Foundation of Nursing Studies, and Burdett Trust.

We want to focus on strengthening our inter-professional relationships for the wellbeing and development of residents, staff and students. In this poster we will be demonstrating how both agencies are working together to develop new pathways of learning whilst building the FED's capacity to become a National Teaching Care Home in every sense.

Using 'conceptual frameworks', such as Stephens and Ormandy, (2018), we aim to dispel the myth that care homes are not a place for aspiring health and social care professionals to work and develop in or for creating new research opportunities for the wider interprofessional network to learn from.

In Stephens and Ormandy's (2018), study, their consideration of how IPL [interprofessional learning] operates and the benefits to students learning is of interest to us, they discuss ...'sustained change in values , attitudes and behaviours...'.The FED's vision to progress this, links seamlessly with the University of Salford's drive towards collaborative inter- professional education (IPE), who state, 'To improve efficiency and service provision, health and social care professions are increasingly encouraged to work in a more collaborative manner. This requires the emergence of a workforce which is able to share practice and knowledge to shape future care pathways.' (University of Salford, 2019).

Together, we aim to work with diverse groups of students; such as the physiotherapist, social work, nursing, sports science and occupational therapist professions to share the interconnectedness of practice and consider and reflect on how this can help strengthen the wellbeing of families, individuals and communities to help shape areas of practice.

#### References:

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