

## **Together in partnership: promoting positive professionalism and professional leadership: a holistic approach to reduce pressure and stimulate creative responses to changing circumstances**

The Social Work Reform Board has proposed nine core social work Professional Capabilities relevant to all social workers irrespective of their career stage, level of experience, or setting they work in. From this spectrum, presented in *The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) for Social Workers in England* (SWRB 2010, p. 9) we intend to focus on professionalism and professional leadership. In partnership with a vibrant and award-winning steering group of service users and carer representatives and local agencies, the School of Social Work of Kingston University/ St George's University of London, has developed an innovative range of integrated approaches to developing positive professional behaviours, attitudes and skills and promoting leadership in social work professionals at pre-qualifying, post qualifying and higher specialist/advanced levels. In this context of significant financial, professional and interprofessional pressure, the hallmark of the work presented here has been partnership with service users and carers, employers, and multiprofessional educators, investigating opportunities for efficiencies while sustaining quality.

In this paper we will present examples of our work together at pre-qualifying, post qualifying and higher specialist/ advanced levels including:

- Involving service users and carers in feedback to qualifying students to develop communication skills and professional attitudes and promoting students' leadership skills as student academic mentors
- A partnership approach to integrating NQSW with the achievement of Consolidation (funded by SfC)
- Developing a phased approach to practice education in line with emerging requirements and the PCF

Through the evaluation of these initiatives, we intend to demonstrate how HEIs could build on such examples in the implementation of the Professional Capabilities Framework, debate the PCF, and invite discussion and sharing of experiences from other participants. We hope to generate case examples of good practice in education that can be disseminated through the follow up to the Reform Board proposals.