



**13th UK Joint Social Work Education Conference  
with the 5th UK Social Work Research Conference**

# **Social work under pressure**

*solutions, sustainability and social justice*

**University of Manchester**

**14th July 2011**



Outline programme.....	4
Welcome.....	5
Supporting organisations .....	6
Sponsorship and bursaries.....	7
Conference information.....	8
Keynote session.....	9
Parallel sessions overview.....	10
Reception.....	14
Parallel session 1 abstracts .....	15
Parallel session 2 abstracts.....	29

### Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2011

09.00 – 10.00	Arrival, registration and refreshments	C15 Foyer
10.00 – 10.15	Welcome from the JSWEC Chair & housekeeping issues	C16 Theatre
10.15 – 11.15	<b>Keynote</b> - Reforming Social Work and Social Work Education in England: opportunities and challenges Chair: Tim Kelly	C16 Theatre
11.15 – 11.45	Refreshments	C15 Foyer
11.45 – 13.00	Parallel session 1	D, E & F Floors
13.00 – 14.00	Buffet lunch	C15 Foyer
14.00 – 15.30	Parallel session 2	D, E & F Floors
15.45 – 16.30	SWAP Innovation in Learning and Teaching Awards - Drinks reception	C15 Foyer

On behalf of the planning group I would like to welcome you to the 13th UK Joint Social Work Education Conference with the 5th UK Social Work Research Conference. This year's theme was chosen by the planning group in the autumn of 2010 after energetic discussions about the various pressures every part of the social work community was feeling at the time. The reform agenda in England and the implications from the changing financial climate across the UK were at the forefront of these discussions. Despite some real temptation to embrace an outlook of doom and gloom, the planning group felt some hope and collective resiliency. Yes, we were under pressure on many different fronts. But, we felt compelled to stay true to our social justice roots and work and learn together to find sustainability and solutions despite the increasing pressures. Hence, the theme of this year's conference emerged: **Social work under pressure: solutions, sustainability and social justice**. We felt that it was important to acknowledge the difficult times we face, but to also embrace the need to move forward together. The call for papers was developed with this spirit and the 29 papers and 8 workshops clearly reflect this theme. The papers and workshops should prove to be professionally, personally and intellectually stimulating. We hope they will provide attendees with sustenance for these pressurised times.

Those of you who are regular JSWEC attendees will undoubtedly notice that the conference is a little different this year, being a one day conference rather than the usual 3 day event. With the future of SWAP so uncertain, we took the difficult decision to downsize this year and to focus on finding a way to sustain JSWEC for the long-term. I would like to personally thank the entire SWAP team for their dedication and professionalism during what must be a difficult and uncertain time for them. They have been planning for the future and leaving a legacy while simultaneously planning their own end. SWAP staff members have worked under pressure and have found a way to ensure the sustainability of JSWEC. The conference will continue in the future and plans about these arrangements will shortly be announced.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all participants for your support for the Conferences and, of course, my thanks to the Planning Group and the SWAP team for the magnificent work you do to make the Conferences so successful.

I hope you have an enjoyable, thought-provoking and re-energising time at JSWEC 2011 and we look forward to seeing you again in 2012.



Tim Kelly, on behalf of the planning group.

### Planning and organisation

The conference is organised and co-ordinated by SWAP on behalf of the JSWEC Planning Group, which includes:

**Chair: Tim Kelly**

University of Dundee

**Sue White**

Association of Professors of Social Work (APSW)

**Jeanette Logan**

Manchester University

**Anne Quinney**

Joint University Council Social Work Education Committee (JUC SWEC)

**Dave Ward**

Joint University Council Social Work Education Research Sub Committee

**Stuart Hindson**

National Organisation for Practice Teaching (NOPT)

**Kieron Hatton**

UK Standing Conference of Stakeholders in Social Work Programmes

**Clare Watson**

UK Care Councils

**John Dow**

Scottish Voices

**Kay Jenkins**

Cardiff and Vale Coalition of Disabled People

**Janet Adams**

NQSW representative

**Gail Cary / Judith Currie**

Student representatives

### SWAP staff

**SWAP Director**

Jackie Rafferty

**SWAP Deputy Director**

Helen Carmichael

**SWAP Staff**

Sue Blundell

Jane Revell

Christine Segar

John Williams

**Conference IT**

Alex Hamilton

### Meeting Manchester staff

**Events Coordinator**

Lisa Linekar

### Sponsorship

The JSWEC planning group would like to thank our sponsors for their generous support of the JSWEC 2011 conference allowing us to offer bursaries to service users and carers involved in social work education and research, and social work students.

### The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)



The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) supports quality and effectiveness in social care. We identify emerging and innovative social care research and good practice. SCIE then supports the social care sector in delivering services that work through our range of resources across adults', children's and families' services.

SCIE works collaboratively with partners at national and local levels, ensuring that the experience and expertise of people who use services, their carers and care workers are reflected.

For further information:

[www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)

[info@scie.org.uk](mailto:info@scie.org.uk)

0207 089 6840

### Bursaries

The JSWEC planning group would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all students and service user and carer educators who gained bursaries funded by our sponsors, and welcome them to the conference.

### SWAP - Higher Education Academy Social Work and Social Policy Subject Centre



SWAP is one of the 24 Subject Centres of the Higher Education Academy. Since 2000 it has worked together with educators, practice communities and organisations to promote and enhance the student learning experience.

SWAP is a member of the conference planning group and has been responsible for co-ordinating this event for the last ten years. With its funding coming to an end in early 2012, this is the last conference to be co-ordinated by SWAP.

Everyone on the team wishes JSWEC every success for its future.

### Emergencies / First Aid

Please contact a member of the conference staff at the registration desk or Security Services by dialling 0161 306 6999 from an external phone.

### Evaluation form

This is at the back of the programme; please complete and return to registration. There is also an online evaluation at: <https://surveys.heacademy.ac.uk/jswec2011>

### Fire Alarms and Procedures

There are no planned fire drills or testing so if a continuous bell sounds, please evacuate the building immediately via the nearest fire exit. Fire procedures are available in all rooms so please familiarise yourself with them.

### Help

If you require assistance, please come to the registration desk which is located in the C15 Foyer. Conference helpers are also available throughout the Renold Building and are wearing JSWEC t-shirts.

### Identification and security

Please wear your conference badge at all times during the event to assist catering and security staff, and other delegates.

### Insurance

SWAP and Meeting.Manchester do not accept liability for delegates or their personal property and delegates are advised to arrange any necessary insurance cover.

### Internet access

Free WIFI is available throughout the Renold Building. Enquire at the registration desk for a temporary username and password.

### Luggage

Luggage can be stored in the attended cloakroom on B Floor. This is located one floor down from the registration desk and can be accessed via the stairs or the lifts.

### Meals / breaks

The refreshment breaks, lunch and SWAP Awards reception will all take place in the C15 Foyer where the registration desk is located.

### Parallel sessions

These will all take place in the Renold building on floors D, E and F. They are all accessible via the lifts or stairs located in C15 foyer.

### Photocopying and printing

Please note that there are no computer or photocopying facilities available within the Renold Building, so please ensure you have all necessary handouts prepared in advance.

### Smoking

All university premises are non smoking. Smokers are asked to stand at least five metres away from the entrance of buildings should they wish to smoke.

### Taxis

You can book a taxi by calling one of the companies listed below:  
Oxford Cars: 0161 275 9339  
Radio Cars: 0161 236 8033  
Manchester Cars: 0161 228 3355

### Telephones

The nearest public telephone is on Sackville Street, opposite the entrance to Charles Street.



### Reforming Social Work and Social Work Education in England: opportunities and challenges

#### C16 Theatre - Thursday 14th July

The session will provide an overview of recent developments in the work of the Social Work Reform Board for England, followed by an opportunity to put questions to the panel members:

**Hilary Tompsett** is a qualified and registered Social Worker with experience over a period of 16 years as a practitioner and manager. Hilary has been in Higher Education since 1991 and Head of Social Work at Kingston University since 1997. She is currently Chair of JUC and JUC SWEC (Joint University Council and its Social Work Education Committee), Vice Chair of GSCC (General Social Care Council) and Co-Chair of the Surrey and Sussex Social Work Education Group. She has contributed to national strategic government working parties and also presented evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on child and family professional social work training. She is currently Co-Chair of the Education Working group for the national Social Work Reform Board.

**Hilary Burgess** is a registered social worker, and Senior Academic Adviser at SWAP, the Higher Education Academy Subject Centre for Social Policy and Social Work, through which she works to support and enhance social work education. Prior to this she was a Senior Lecturer at the University of Bristol, where she was programme director for qualifying social work education for seven years. She has written extensively about social work education and research. Hilary is a member of several working groups of the Social Work Reform Board and has been instrumental in developing the Professional Capabilities Framework; she is currently working with SCIE to progress the framework.

**Patricia Kearney** is Head of Children & Families Services at SCIE and is a registered social worker. Prior to this she was Head of Practice Development at NISW. Patricia has held a number of practitioner and manager posts, with particular experience in child protection remits within adult mental health services. She worked for several years as lecturer at Goldsmiths College, University London, delivering the PG qualifying social work and advanced family work programmes and as an honorary family therapist at the Maudsley Hospital Children's Department. SCIE is currently leading development of the Professional Capabilities Framework on behalf of the Reform Board.

**Julia Hassall**, Co-chair of the Education Working Group for the Social Work Reform Board and representative of the Association of Directors Children's Services (ADCS)

The sessions for both conferences will be held in the Renold Building on the floors directly above the C15 Foyer area. The beginning letter of the room number indicates which floor it is on and they can all be accessed via the central lifts or staircase. Full abstracts for the sessions can be found in the next section, starting on page 15.

### Parallel session 1: 11.45 - 13.00

Room	Title	Type	Presenters
<b>Joint Social Work Education Conference Sessions</b>			
F1	Educating social work managers for design	Paper	Sue White, Dave Wastell
	Understanding uncertainty, dilemma and organisational flux: Developing a reflexive toolkit to enhance new practitioner's resilience.	Paper	Pete Shepherd
	The essence as purpose in social work relationships	Paper	Joy Gauci, Tracey Holley
F2	Hidden realities, service users and social work practice within personalisation and wellbeing policy: using the critical realist review method to interrogate issues and ways forward with social inequalities and health	Paper	Helen Barnes
	Supporting people to live and die well: The challenge for social work	Paper	Margaret Holloway
	Personalisation and people with learning disabilities. Developments so far and their impact on the role of social workers	Paper	Dave Sims, Sandy Gulyurtlu
	Knowledge and skills framework integrating theory and practice	Paper	Pamela Trevithick
D6	Here today, gone tomorrow? The ambivalent ethics of 'agency' social work	Paper	Malcolm Carey
	Critical Practice for Challenging Times: Social Workers' Engagement with Community Work.	Paper	Catherine Forde, Deborah Lynch

### Parallel session 1: 11.45 - 13.00

Room	Title	Type	Presenters
D1	Experiencing technologies for learning: social work educators and students	Workshop	Karin Crawford, Ian Mathews, Diane Simpson, Rachel Balen, Julie Kent
E2	Renewing and Enhancing the quality of Social Work Education – implementing the SWRB proposals	Workshop	Hilary Burgess, Hilary Tompsett, Mary Keating
E1	Standing on a Precipice? Practice educators and the future of practice learning in social work	Workshop	Clare Parkinson, Jo Finch
D2	The College of Social Work – Partnership in Action	Workshop	Maggie Challis, Corinne May-Chahal

Room	Title	Type	Presenters
<b>Social Work Research Conference Sessions</b>			
F6	'I know what I ought to do, but I am unable to do it': exploring moral distress in social work	Paper	Sarah Banks
	An analysis of the concerns of 200 social workers working in adult services in England	Paper	Joe Godden
	From the front line: alcohol, drugs and social work practice - a national study	Paper	Sarah Galvani, Cheryl Dance
D5	'A & E or Bomber Command? Understanding expertise in child protection teams	Paper	Andrew Whittaker
	Exploring queer care in social work – Meeting the needs and interests of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) carers.	Paper	Paul Willis, Julie Fish, Nicki Ward, Richard Ward, Stephen Pugh, Louis Bailey, Elizabeth Price
	Fathers and child protection: Evaluation of a training intervention for social workers.	Paper	Nina Maxwell, Jonathan Scourfield

**Parallel session 2: 14.00 - 15.30**

Room	Title	Type	Presenters
<b>Joint Social Work Education Conference Sessions</b>			
F1	The Assessed Year in Employment: The Importance of getting it right.	Paper	Frank Carter
	What could go wrong? Supervising Newly Qualified Social Workers	Paper	Jackie Martin, Jeanette Wood, John Griffin
	Enhancing recruitment and retention of social workers through effective selection & assessment strategies: A look at some lessons learned so far	Paper	Volker Patent, Rosalind Searle
F2	Continuing Professional Development – What difference does it make?	Paper	Mary Keating, Pat Higham
	Together in Partnership: Promoting positive professionalism and professional leadership: a holistic approach to reduce pressure and stimulate creative responses to changing circumstances	Paper	Hilary Tompsett, Jane Lindsay, Christine Skilton, Kathleen Henderson, Jenny Rowlands, Toni Mitchell, Jane Matthew-Byrne, Kerryn Holborn
	Opportunities and threats to service user and carer participation in pre and post qualifying social work education and training in relation to the Social Work proposed Reforms – Our Perspectives	Paper	June Sadd, Kay Malko
	Meeting the challenges of collaboration in post-qualifying social work education	Paper	Robin Sen, Joe Smeeton, Warren Carratt

**Parallel session 2: 14.00 - 15.30**

Room	Title	Type	Presenters
D6	Staying one step ahead? The Step Up to Social Work employment based route to social work: an HEI perspective.	Paper	Alison Domakin
	Return to the front line: a study on a project to prepare non practising social workers to re-enter children and families social work practice.	Paper	Martyn Higgins, Ruth Watson, Andrew Whittaker, Jill Yates, Iain Campbell-King
	Better than the “Best of a Bad Job”	Paper	Jayne Lewis
	Step Up to Social Work programme: trainees’ experiences so far. Are we seeing new wine in new bottles?	Paper	Mary Baginsky
E2	What should be the ‘new look’ of PQ following the SWRB proposals and GSCC closure?	Workshop	Jane McLenachan, Pat Higham
D1	Local practice and the Global Agenda for social work	Workshop	Linda de Chenu, Dave Sims, Janet Williams, Hellmuth Weich
E1	Health inequalities – at the heart of the social work curriculum?	Workshop	Kate Karban, Julie Fish
D2	Regulating social work: UK perspectives	Workshop	Graham Ixer, Abigail Gorringer, Paul Kearney, Ian Thomas, Karen McLaughlin

Room	Title	Type	Presenters
<b>Social Work Research Conference Sessions</b>			
D5	Experiences of small group teaching and learning – gateways to professional formation on the Master of Social Work	Paper	Deborah Lynch
	The experience of change in adult social care: a ripfa change project	Paper	George Julian, Geraldine Nosowska
	Professionalism and professional identity: what are they and how do social work students acquire them?	Paper	Fran Wiles



## SWAP Innovation in Learning and Teaching Awards

### Drinks reception and presentation

**C15 Foyer - 15.45 - 16.30**

Delegates are invited to a drinks reception to celebrate outstanding achievements within Learning and Teaching. These awards recognise the superb work being carried out across the field and awards will be presented to individuals or teams in the following categories:

- Innovation in the use of technology in learning and teaching
- Innovation in assessment in learning and teaching
- Innovation in practice learning opportunities
- Innovation in involving service user and carer educators in learning and teaching
- Innovation in engaging students in their own learning
- Innovation in curriculum development

Please come along and join us this afternoon.



### Parallel session I: 11.45 - 13.00

Paper: Educating social work managers for design

Sue White, Dave Wastell

Room: F1

In recent years, the idea of “managing as designing” has gained ground across all sectors: private, public and not-for-profit. In simple terms, design can be defined as the creation of form, the translation of the abstract into the material. Everything a social work manager deals with has form, from office layout to business processes, and the need for design is therefore ubiquitous. Although design is integral to effective management, few social work managers would see themselves as designers, and have scant training in the methods of design. The imposition of rigorous performance management regimes have also left little space for design and innovation in the “day job”.

The consequences of this abdication can be profound. In children’s social care, for example, the trials and tribulations of the Integrated Children’s System are a direct result. In the “age of austerity”, such disengagement is even less an option. Only by taking responsibility for design will managers be able to maintain and improve services with diminished resources. The loosening of central control will also call for better design at the local level, as will rising expectations from citizens and service users. Concepts and methods have a part to play in developing this capacity, but it requires a shift in orientation. We will argue that curricula at all levels of professional

education need to develop design skills in managers, and the capacity for design and innovation within the organisation as a whole. In this paper we share some ideas and experiences about educating for management by design.

Paper: Understanding uncertainty, dilemma and organisational flux: Developing a reflexive toolkit to enhance new practitioner’s resilience.

Pete Shepherd

Room: F1

The fast changing organisational landscape of social care practice can make being a newly qualified Social Worker a daunting experience. At the University of Portsmouth, final year Social Work students have just completed an ‘Imagining New Social Work Futures’ unit which has sought to prepare students for such challenges. This paper will provide an overview of the teaching content and delivery of this new unit alongside a critical evaluation of outcomes and lessons learnt.

Social work education needs to equip students with a grounded appreciation of the complexities of the role, alongside effective strategies to engage in ongoing critical reflection of contexts and self. The challenge remains how to realistically prepare students for the increasingly uncertain and turbulent practice environment they are about to enter into whilst enhancing their energy and optimism to make a difference.

Realising the relevance and value of

integrating practice into theory and theory into practice was a common theme of this unit with ongoing examples given of how to analyse everyday experience, policy and practice development and broader societal changes. By emphasising the two way connect between the personal and political, students were facilitated to deconstruct taken for-granted concepts such as 'fairness' and 'need' and gain a sharper appreciation of how such concepts are shifting and contested.

A range of teaching methods were utilised to provide diverse and competing narratives from service users, practitioners and social commentators so as to illustrate how notions of 'truth' and 'knowledge' are never settled. This provided powerful illustrations of how there are competing visions of the future not only between groups but also within.

The need to be develop resilience was an ongoing theme of the unit with an emphasis placed on using self reflection and supervision to make sense of and work with competing demands. With this in mind, the idea of developing a reflexive toolkit to enhance future practitioner's capacity to understand, analyse and work with dilemma and paradox in their everyday practice was explored.

Finally, the paper will take a critical overview of the outcomes of this unit, feedback received and lessons learnt for the future.

Paper: The essence as purpose in social work relationships

Joy Gauci, Tracey Holley

Room: F1

This paper attempts to capture the essence of social work by reproducing a seminar discourse held at Worcester University 2010 involving social work students from Russia and the UK, a social work practitioner/ lecturer and a mental health survivor/ consultant.

Taking the much cited claim by the IFSW that social work as a profession engages with people at points of need, change and crisis, the debate invites a consideration of the intrinsic essence of social work in such a claim. The narrative model is used to engage with stories and expressions of meaning: the connection in what social work represents in Russia and the UK, and the expectations service users have of the profession when experiencing mental vulnerability. The narrative of social work unfolds:

- Student social workers construct social work internationally as a profession which articulates social justice as the respectful engagement with individuals, groups and communities.
- Service users remember not the provision of services but the sense of dignity and respect that lingers after engagement.

The message is profound – social work UK will survive the current political destabilisation of welfare just as social work Russia has demonstrated its spirit of survival since economic crisis in 1991, because social work has an intrinsic quality in relationship based practice. Drawing roots from the psycho-social tradition of social work, a

narrative based practice has evolved on the basis of deeply respectful relationship based practice. The social worker potentially operates as transformative agent (Adams), engaging with the individual and respecting their voice of experience and reflective consciousness. The essence of social work is its ability to create this depth engagement in a way which hands the capacity for insight, healing and restoration back to the individual.

Organic social work, across time, political climates and cultures.

Paper: Hidden realities, service users and social work practice within personalisation and wellbeing policy: using the critical realist review method to interrogate issues and ways forward with social inequalities and health

Helen Barnes

Room: F2

The proposed professional capabilities framework (Social Work Reform Board 2010) upholds social work's commitment to empowerment, wellbeing and social justice. This resonates with the emergence, from the community care reforms of the 1990's to today's concern with health inequalities, of social, wellbeing and empowerment policy discourses in relation to people with long-term health conditions (Department of Health 2010). However, although these discourses form facilitators in some respects for social work values, they may also limit their realisation in practice through implications they carry for social work roles and resources, and for a reduced focus upon key dimensions of service users' concerns. Nevertheless, research and alternative

social theory has the potential to suggest approaches which could support workers in developing optimal practice in relation to these concerns.

The paper would initially discuss use of the critical realist review method to explore these themes. First it would examine today's health and social care policy discourses focussing upon 'active' approaches to empowerment including self-management, personalisation and 'universal' services and supports, while de-emphasising vulnerability. It would then trace implications of these discourses for social work and service users, drawing out their limitations particularly for people from disadvantaged backgrounds whose voices often go unheard (Strier & Binyamin 2010). A discussion of research on issues for these service users would follow, suggesting that although they seek citizenship, many also have major concerns with vulnerability involving the damaging impact of disadvantage. The paper would go on to consider how complexity approaches in social theory and research can offer understandings which do justice to vulnerability while also upholding citizenship. The paper would finally suggest ways which these understandings could support efforts in social work education and practice to maximise the potential within policy mandates and the capabilities framework, to make full responses to service users' concerns.

#### References

- Department of Health (2010) A Vision for Adult Social Care. London: Department of Health.
- Social Work Reform Board (2010) Building a Safe and Confident Future: One Year on.

Detailed Proposals from the Social Work Reform Board. London: Department of Education.

Strier R & Binyamin S (2010) Developing anti-oppressive services for the poor: A theoretical and organisational rationale. *British Journal of Social Work* 40 (6) 1908-1926.

Paper: Supporting people to live and die well: The challenge for social work

Margaret Holloway

Room: F2

Demographic change has ensured that end of life care occupies a centre stage position in government policy and presents a major challenge for health and social care services. We are seeing a prolonged period at the end of life in which levels of frailty and illness shade imperceptibly into the acute dying phase. Most people say that they would prefer to die at home and at the same time shifting and reciprocal caring arrangements are leading to learning disabled adults and older partners supporting family members receiving palliative care.

This paper will report on Phase I of the roll-out of the National End of Life Care Programme's (NEoLCP) social care framework, Supporting People to Live and Die Well. The Framework, developed by the NEoLCP's Social Care Advisory Group, comprised of senior social care professionals from policy, practice and education sectors and carer representatives, was published in July 2010 and has the active support of ADASS. Eight test-sites were commissioned, one of which explores the impact of an EOLC lead social worker and the training required to upskill mainstream social

workers.

It is crucial that current reforms in social work and social work education take account of the significance of end of life care for adult social care, yet we have seen little engagement so far from either mainstream social work or social work education, which together have represented a tiny minority of the 1600+ social care workers attending the roadshows, numbers from social work education being particularly low. Specialist palliative care social workers continue to be involved in the latter stages of the end of life care pathway for those people in hospice and palliative care services, but evidence that end of life care planning needs to take place much earlier if people's wishes are to be recorded and reflected in their care, requires social workers to incorporate this aspect into mainstream assessment and care planning processes. Evidence emerging from the social care test-sites indicates an alarming lack of knowledge and skills (or the confidence to exercise skills) amongst qualified social workers to equip them to engage with end of life care issues. The NEoLCP therefore plans to target social work in the second phase of implementation.

Paper: Personalisation and people with learning disabilities. Developments so far and their impact on the role of social workers

Dave Sims, Sandy Gulyurtlu

Room: F2

The current transformation agenda is bringing major change to services and this is intended to develop much greater choice and control for people who use services through mechanisms of personal budgets and self directed support. It is known that

access to personalisation by people with learning disabilities (in the form of direct payments) was initially low. Recently there have been substantial developments in the sector through projects such as InControl. What is less clear is the scope of the evidence about outcomes achieved and about the impact of personalisation on the role of social workers.

A literature review and scoping study has been carried out by the two presenters to explore these two aspects. The paper will report on what has been learned from this and will also explore some of the emerging tensions in the transformation agenda and their implications for social work education. Critiques of personalisation have suggested that it should not be accepted uncritically (Ferguson, 2007) but a congruence between personalisation and relationship based social work has also been observed (Parkinson, 2010).

Politically the social movement of disability has long sought to break down the social and structural barriers which disable people from being fully included in society and social life (Oliver, 1996). Personalisation promotes choice and control but can be interpreted in different ways across the political spectrum, involving threats too. Individual 'purchasing power' may endanger collective services at a time when these are especially vulnerable. And where is the role for social workers in personalisation? Could it liberate or deprofessionalise them?

References:

Ferguson, I. (2007), 'Increasing User Choice or Privatizing Risk? The Antinomies of Personalization,' *British Journal of Social Work*, 37: 387-403.

Oliver, M (1996) 'Understanding Disability: From Theory to Practice,' Palgrave: Basingstoke.

Parkinson, C. (2010) 'Editorial,' *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 24(3): 247 – 251.

Paper: Knowledge and skills framework integrating theory and practice

Pamela Trevithick

Room: D6

The first report of the Social Work Task Force (SWTF 2009a) cited a literature review, commissioned by the Scottish Executive, on the role of the social worker in the twenty-first century, which concluded:

Social work is a contested concept and subject to competing definitions. Its language is confusing and contributes to the lack of clarity about what it is that social workers do. This means that there is no universally accepted idea of valid knowledge, skills or expertise for social workers. (Scottish Executive 2005: 2)

I argue in this presentation that this 'lack of clarity' has contributed in part to the current 'watershed' or crisis in social work and examples from recent publications are cited to support this view (SWTF 2009a; SWTF 2009b; Munro 2010; Munro 2011). Two key issues are highlighted:

(1) the extent to which new theories have been introduced but with little attempt to order or to categorise these theories in ways that integrate theory and practice.

(2) the neglect that is evident on the

coverage of social work skills and interventions.

The Knowledge and Skills Framework presented marks an attempt to address these limitations. It shows the integration of knowledge and skills by illustrating 'a users' map of the knowledge-base of professional practice' in social work (Eraut 1994: 50) - a 'conceptual map' that can be creatively adapted to focus on the knowledge that service users, carers and social workers bring to the encounter. Critical thinking, analysis and critical reflection or reflexivity (Sheppard 1998) are central features of the diagram presented.

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- Munro, E. (2010) Munro Review of Child Protection. London: Department for Education.
- Munro, E. (2011) The Munro Review of Child Protection - Interim Report: The Child's Journey
- Sheppard, M. (1998) 'Practice validity, reflexivity and knowledge for social work', *British Journal of Social Work*, 28: 763-81
- Scottish Executive (2005) *The Role of the Social Worker in the 21st Century: A Literature Review*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive Education Department
- Social Work Task Force (SWTF) (2009a) *Facing up to the Task: The Interim Report of the Social Work Task Force*. July 2009.
- Social Work Task Force (SWTF) (2009b) *Building a Safe, Confident Future: The Final Report of the Social Work Task Force*.

**Paper: Here today, gone tomorrow? The ambivalent ethics of 'agency' social work**

Malcolm Carey

Room: D6

In the UK the number of state social workers supplied by independent employment agencies has increased significantly since the mid-1990s. Although state sectors of welfare such as education and health have always relied upon a steady supply of locum staff, there is no such tradition within social work.

This paper explores some of the ethical tensions that have become apparent with the expansion of contingency social work. Questions remain about the 'opportunity cost' of agency social work, as well as subsequent problems of recruitment, access to training and collegiate relations. However, perhaps the most significant concerns relate to the impact that locum employment may have upon practitioner's capacity to consistently provide for the needs of service users or informal carers. The paper unpacks and explores these concerns and also notes tensions that persist between a push for more flexible labour, the ethics of practitioners and the needs of service users.

**Paper: Critical Practice for Challenging Times: Social Workers' Engagement with Community Work.**

Catherine Forde, Deborah Lynch

Room: D6

The contribution that social workers make to communities is integral to the principles and values of the profession but is often 'hidden' and unacknowledged. The paper

will present the findings of primary research that was undertaken to specifically explore social workers' engagement with community work approaches in a range of settings. Community work involves collective action to meet social justice aims. It reflects a desire to work in accordance with social justice principles and to undertake practice that is proactive and preventative and that seeks sustainable solutions to the issues facing communities. We present the findings of 15 qualitative interviews with practitioners in statutory, voluntary and community contexts in the Republic of Ireland. The interviews were undertaken between December 2009 and May 2010. The primary purpose of the research was to gather examples of social workers' experiences of undertaking community work for use in our teaching of community work to students on the Master of Social Work (MSW) programme in University College Cork. Critical themes that emerged from the research include social workers' affiliations and engagement in networking, their perspectives on activism and campaigning, and the challenges of engaging in critical practice. The interviews were conducted at a time of crisis for social work in Ireland, when the problems confronting social workers are growing and resources declining. The paper will illustrate how the integration of research and teaching has impacted significantly and positively on our teaching practice and fostered an approach that is 'student-centred, negotiated, discursive and reflexive' (Brew, 1999, p.296). This approach is based on the treatment of students as active participants rather than passive learners, and the development of students' knowledge of the links, both theoretical and

practical, between community work and social work.

**Workshop: Experiencing technologies for learning: social work educators and students**

Karin Crawford, Ian Mathews, Diane Simpson, Rachel Balen, Julie Kent

Room: D1

Online communities have the potential to foster wider participation and facilitate improved community accessibility and inclusiveness thus contributing to sustainability and social justice agendas. The degree to which such communities can be seen as solutions is however one which continues to be fiercely debated. Levels of engagement and ethical considerations are two key areas for further discussion.

With the demise of SWAP it is perhaps a timely moment to focus on the usefulness of a new online open access resource SWAPBox and to view some of the materials hosted there as well as hearing about the experiences of social work educators developing online support for staff, students and practice educators within local virtual environments. The session will include a set of case studies from this year's funded projects as well as discussion of the wider benefits and challenges associated with e-learning environments and an invitation for those attending to use SWAPBox. The case studies will be drawn from this year's funded projects which began in September 2010 and are due to end June 2011. SWAPBox started in September 2010 and runs until August 2011.

SWAPBox – offers the framework for the

session. It is a place where outputs and results of projects can be hosted and also a source of resources in its own right. The session will include a short demo of how to use SWAPBox before showcasing the following project outputs:

- Students as Mentors – Colleagues at the University of Lincoln have been evaluating the benefits of extra curricular activities (in this case student mentoring roles with young people). Come and hear about the project and locate the vodcasts which have come from the student experiences of mentoring. .
- Digital stories – Colleagues at the University of Huddersfield have been working with MSc social work students producing digital stories based on their first practice placement. Come and hear about the project and see the results.
- Pitstop. Colleagues at De Montfort University have been evaluating the effectiveness of interactive social media in improving the learning environment of social work undergraduates during placement. Come and hear their experience and engage in a wider debate about the value of online communities for social work education.

The primary aim of the session is to give delegates a taster of SWAPBox and its contents - emphasising open access to examples of technologies for learning and instilling confidence to create and share their own examples.

**Workshop: Renewing and Enhancing the quality of Social Work Education – implementing the SWRB proposals**

Hilary Burgess, Hilary Tompsett, Mary Keating

Room: E2

The workshop will commence with a brief overview of developments from the Social Work Reform Board (SWRB) in relation to social work education in England at qualifying level, focussing particularly on work since March (the end of the consultation period).

The workshop will report on outcomes from HEI & employer testing of aspects of the SWRB proposals, including changes to admissions requirements, practice learning, (including the 30 days skills development) and partnership. The workshop will focus specifically on the developments for the curriculum based on the Professional Capabilities Framework. We will work in small groups to consider what this will mean for qualifying programmes and how the aim of the SWRB to produce more confident, competent social workers can be achieved. The output from the workshop will be made available to the community.

**Workshop: Standing on a Precipice? Practice educators and the future of practice learning in social work**

Clare Parkinson, Jo Finch

Room: E1

Recent initiatives aiming to strengthen and improve practice education have culminated in the conceptualisation of a new practice educator framework that is due to be in

place by 2013. This hopeful plan has been devised against a backdrop of unprecedented challenge, pressure and at a time of great uncertainty about the resources available to support social work practice.

As reported by Community Care magazine, we are seeing placement providers, particularly in the voluntary sector, shutting up shop due to lack of funding. Additionally, there is a general decline in the number of statutory placements available; probably because of an increase in workloads as staff numbers are cut. Yet, as Laming, Munro and the Reform Board agree, the future of social work education rests, in large part, on the availability of high quality and robust practice education.

Based on findings from:

- Recent empirical research into practice education and
- Involvement in a pilot project to trial the new practice educator framework

We invite you to participate in a lively workshop and actively engage with the following questions that have emerged from both projects:

- Preparing for successful implementation of the new framework by 2013 means finding space to ponder and commit to creative ways to engage practice educators and their sponsors. What can be learned and transferred from our experiences to date?
- Given the intrinsic value of the role, what are the most effective ways to retain practice educators?
- Where 'calling a halt' in a student's placement is indicated, which key considerations will assist practice educators to exercise their authority as gate-keepers for the profession?
- How do we best garner practical support

to enable candidates to take up the new M level practice educator courses?

- How do we "protect" and maintain quality standards in practice education during times of uncertainty and economic pressure?

**Workshop: The College of Social Work - Partnership in Action**

Maggie Challis, Corinne May-Chahal

Room: D2

The College of Social Work wants to work in partnership with higher education so that, together, we can deliver initial and continuing professional education and development, which will ensure access to high quality, relevant, flexible and consistent learning opportunities for all social workers.

The Social Work Task Force recommended the establishment of 'an independent College of Social Work which takes responsibility for high standards of practice, promotes a strong culture of professional development and establishes a powerful voice for the profession' (HM Government, Dec 2009). This was one of 15 recommendations made by the Task Force, accepted and consolidated by three government departments (DCFS, DH and BIS) in 'Building a Safe and Confident Future' (HM Government, March 2010) and later through the establishment of the Social Work Reform Board.

Steps have now been taken to constitute The College of Social Work, and the Social Work Reform Board has identified four areas of responsibility which will transfer to The College for further development and implementation. These are: the professional capabilities framework; principles for continuing professional development; initial

training; a framework for partnership working.

These are exciting developments for the social work profession, and offer an opportunity for a re-statement of the core values that underpin the professionalism of social workers and which are an integral part of initial and continuing education. Yet they also come at a time when there are other significant changes taking place across both the higher education sector, the registration and regulation of the profession and the environments in which social workers have traditionally been employed. We believe that, by working together, we can minimise the undoubted difficulties which lie ahead, and maximise the opportunities for building a strong and confident profession.

This interactive workshop will give you the opportunity to:

- Find out where The College is now in relation to the Reform Board's proposals and what this might mean for your practice
- Contribute to the discussion about how the College operates and the offers it makes to its members
- Show how your work contributes to the agenda of excellence in social work education

#### References

Department for Children, Schools and Families (December 2009) Building a Safe and Confident Future: the final report of the Social Work Task Force [www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/01114-2009DOM-EN.pdf](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/01114-2009DOM-EN.pdf)

HM Government (March 2010) Building a Safe and Confident Future: implementing the

recommendations of the Social Work Task Force

[www.dh.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dh/groups/dh\\_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh\\_114251.pdf](http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/documents/digitalasset/dh_114251.pdf)

Paper: 'I know what I ought to do, but I am unable to do it': exploring moral distress in social work

Sarah Banks

Room: F6

Ethics is an increasingly important theme in social work practice. Worldwide, social workers experience common ethical challenges - how to be fair, whether to break a rule - in very different contexts, from disaster relief in China to child protection work in Palestine.

This presentation will draw on a recent project that has involved collecting cases relating to ethical issues in social work from practitioners around the world. The cases will be published with accompanying commentaries in Summer 2011 in an edited book, Practising social work ethics around the world: cases and commentaries (Routledge). This paper outlines some of the key ethical challenges that emerge from the cases in the book, considering particularly some of the tough cases where social workers express powerlessness and inability to challenge unethical or poor practice, as well as those where they have worked out ways of handling quite complex and politically charged situations. We will look at how social workers express their ethical concerns, and consider whether the concept of 'moral distress' is useful in examining the accounts given by the social workers in the cases. Moral distress is a concept that

is more commonly utilised in nursing than social work. It has been described as arising 'when one knows the right thing to do, but institutional constraints make it nearly impossible to pursue the right course of action' (Jameton, 1984)

Jameton, A. (1984) Nursing practice: The ethical issues, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Paper: An analysis of the concerns of 200 social workers working in adult services in England

Joe Godden

Room: F6

A series of eight seminars have been held across England in the past year. The seminars have been aimed at front line social workers working in adult services. The purpose of the seminars has been to provide an opportunity for social workers to express their views about factors affecting them. An average of 30 social workers attended each seminar. The seminars followed the same format and information from participants was gathered in the same way. The seminars used a qualitative research methodology. The seminars were run by an experienced social worker, who has research experience. The professional experience of the facilitator enabled a degree of trust to be developed quickly, enabling the generation of valuable information. The results of the seminars demonstrate that a number of common issues being experienced by social workers across England. These are:

- Increased bureaucratisation of service. Particularly the impact of the introduction of Resource Allocation Computer systems

• Concern about inadequate support systems for service users opting for personal budgets and concern that some service users are being pushed into accepting personal budgets in a drive to meet external targets

• The operation of multi disciplinary teams, with some social workers being put into isolated situations, without adequate support systems

• The tensions that participants feel regarding their professional practice and agency policy

• The desire of social workers working with adults to be listened to in the same way that the Eileen Munro review is listening to the views of child care social workers

• Concerns about cuts in numbers of social work posts and terms and conditions of employment, against a backdrop of increasing demand.

The purpose of the application to present the findings is to be able to share the lessons from the research / consultation exercise.

Paper: From the front line: alcohol, drugs and social work practice - a national study

Sarah Galvani, Cherilyn Dance

Room: F6

This paper presents findings from the first national study of its kind. The study explores the experiences of front line social care practitioners responding to substance problems among their service users. It has built on findings from smaller scale studies in which social workers report being ill prepared for working with substance problems.

After three decades of calls for change, the Social Work Reform Board and the Munro review have, once again, identified substance use as an issue social workers face. This study is therefore timely in that it demonstrates how problematic substance use cuts across all specialist areas of practice and presents social workers' views of the pressures they face and their education needs in relation to substance use.

This year long research project included the completion of an online survey by 826 practitioners from 10 local authorities across England (including 7 Adult Services' directorates and 10 Children's Services' directorates), as well as 12 focus groups and 14 key informant interviews. The aims were to understand the extent and nature of substance use on social work caseloads, the level of joint working with substance specialists, the levels of previous education on substance use as well as current training needs.

This paper will present our key findings, including data on the caseload proportions of a range of service user groups including older people, people with learning disabilities, and children and families. Recommendations for social work education, grounded in the views of social workers, will be offered. These include calls to support front line staff by ensuring qualifying programmes include core training in how to speak to someone about their substance use, how to assess risks relating to substance use, the types of intervention available, how to use screening tools and how to work with someone who minimises their substance use.

Paper: 'A & E or Bomber Command? Understanding expertise in child protection teams

Andrew Whittaker

Room: D5

This paper is based upon a study of local authority social workers working in inner city, child protection teams. The study used an ethnographic design, combining observations and in-depth interviews over a sixteen-month period (Jan 2010 – April 2011) in four inner-city, child protection teams.

The paper will discuss the emotional aspects of child protection work, particularly the impact of organisational culture. The social defences used within organisations by practitioners and managers to cope in highly challenging circumstances will be explored (Menzies Lyth, 1989; Obholzer and Zagier Roberts, 1994). For example, avoiding or reducing the impact of responsibility by upward delegation, crosschecking or ritual task performance.

The paper will also explore the nature and development of practitioner expertise within a high pressure environment, examining how practitioners move from novices through to expert levels of performance (Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1986; Fook, 1997). A particular focus will be the interaction between organisational culture and practitioner expertise and, as noted in the Munro Review, whether the procedurally-dominated nature of current child protection settings presents challenges to the development and retention of experienced practitioners (Munro, 2011).

The implications for both social work

education and service settings will be discussed. A key focus will be the implications for planned reforms being introduced by the Social Work Reform Board and the Munro Review of Child Protection. More specifically, the organisational tensions and barriers to the introduction of the Consultant Social Worker role will be discussed.

#### References

Dreyfus, H. and Dreyfus, S (1986) *Mind over machine: The power of human intuition and expertise in the era of the computer*. New York: Free Press.

Fook, J., Ryan, M. and Hawkins, L. (1997) *Towards a theory of social work expertise*, *British Journal of Social Work*, 27, 399-417.

Menzies-Lyth, I.E.P. (1989). *The dynamics of the social: Selected essays*, volume 2. London: Free Association Books.

Munro, E. (2011) *The Munro Review of Child Protection. Interim Report: The Child's Journey*. London: Department for Education.

Obholzer, A. and Zagier Roberts, V. (1994) (eds) *The unconscious at work: Individual and organisational stress in the human services*. London: Routledge.

Paper: Exploring queer care in social work – Meeting the needs and interests of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) carers

Paul Willis, Julie Fish, Nicki Ward, Richard Ward, Stephen Pugh, Louis Bailey, Elizabeth Price

Room: D5

With the recent introduction of the Equality Act 2010, social workers are under

increasing legal pressure to meet the diverse needs of adult carers as a protected group. Furthermore, carers are now a priority for the Coalition Government (DH, 2010) alongside a formal commitment from the Government to deliver services that consider the needs of LGBT citizens (GEO, 2011). Although there is a clear legislative framework, there is a lack of research into the needs and wishes of LGBT carers. This paper focuses on the interests of LGBT adult carers in practice and research – the aim is to develop a firm research agenda in this relatively new field. The presenters are a recently formed collaboration of researchers seeking to develop the social care agenda for LGBT people.

In this presentation, we feedback on findings generated from two discreet projects recently conducted in England and Wales about identifying the needs of LGBT carers from the perspectives of carers and service providers. Both projects were completed by August 2010. Our wider aim is to identify knowledge gaps in providing inclusive and personalised services to LGBT carers. To this extent, we wish to address a number of critical questions about the unexplored topic of 'queer care' – How are concepts of care and caring defined and demonstrated in queer and LGBT communities? What are the differences in caring practices between different LGBT groups? What are the experiences of practitioners working with LGBT carers?

#### References:

Department of Health (DH) (2010). *Recognised, valued and supported: next steps for the Carers Strategy*. London: HM Government.

Government Equalities Office (GEO) (2011). Working for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality: Moving forward. London: HM Government.

Paper: Fathers and child protection: Evaluation of a training intervention for social workers

Nina Maxwell, Jonathan Scourfield

Room: D5

Several studies have shown that child protection workers tend to engage much more successfully with mothers than fathers (by which we mean any men with significant involvement in children's lives). There have been a number of different criticisms of this tendency, but relatively little evidence to indicate how father engagement can be improved and whether better engagement of fathers by services would improve child welfare. To begin to address this evidence gap, by first attempting to improve the engagement of fathers, an evidence-based training intervention was developed, based on findings from practitioner and service user interview data and a review of research evidence on barriers and facilitators in relation to father engagement.

The aim of the training intervention was to improve the quality and quantity of father engagement in the child protection process. A two-day course was designed, consisting of one day of awareness-raising about the issue and one day which was primarily focused on micro-level practice skills training, based on aspects of motivational interviewing. Experienced trainers delivered the course to fifty social workers from two Welsh local authorities between January and April 2011. The conference presentation

will include a brief overview of training intervention design before examining the results of a mixed method process evaluation. Quantitative evaluation data were collected via pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, focusing on social workers' self-efficacy in engaging fathers, the readiness of social work teams to work with fathers and self-reported engagement of fathers on current caseloads. Questionnaires were completed at the start of the training course and two months after the end of the course. Qualitative evaluation data included observation of training and follow-up semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of participants.

## Parallel session 2: 14.00 - 15.30

Paper: The Assessed Year in Employment: The importance of getting it right

Frank Carter

Room: F1

Social work education in the United Kingdom is producing highly qualified graduates entering an under resourced and highly pressurised working environment. Understanding how competent and confident these graduates feel can help the profession better prepare for and support the transition into the workplace. Understanding of this can help to raise the standards of the profession, public confidence and staff retention.

The aim of this paper is to share preliminary results from my research with newly qualified social workers in Northern Ireland. With the proposed introduction of an Assessed Year in Employment (AYE) in England and Wales as early as 2012, this research seeks to understand newly qualified social workers perceptions of their readiness to practice and the reasons for this. The management of the AYE is a critical issue, should it be managed by the awarding university/college or by the employer?

The proposed paper will share knowledge of, and facilitate discussion regarding the support needs and expectations of newly qualified social workers. The research is in relation to the impact of the assessed year in employment, and in recording and understanding the changes to their perceptions of their readiness to practice.

Initial findings (after Phase 1 of 2) have

identified a number of important issues such as the importance of having a mentoring figure during education and in particular at the start of their new jobs and the disparate approach to the induction and supervision of new employees and their assessed year.

The research can help to inform and raise issues surrounding the AYE and will help to provide lessons for the remainder of the UK.

Paper: What could go wrong? Supervising Newly Qualified Social Workers

Jackie Martin, Jeanette Wood, John Griffin

Room: F1

Lincolnshire County Council has worked with De Montfort University to develop a programme for Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWS) who work with adults. Resources and a programme of action learning sets linked in with supervision have been developed to provide a comprehensive package of support for NQSWS. In addition, we developed a resource for line managers to use to provide a more coherent experience for the NQSWS and to help the supervisors understand better the programme their NQSWS were undertaking and suggest ways they could link this in with supervision sessions.

The NQSW programme was designed to provide support structures and learning in the first year in practice to help the NQSW be better equipped to deal with pressures. The resource we developed for the supervisors was in recognition that they are under huge pressures and need

support to be able to supervise NQSWs effectively and in a way which builds on the NQSW programme they are undertaking. The evaluation for this took place in May 2011 and examined whether what we put in place was effective in providing support for supervisors in particular and what lessons can be learnt in order to better support both supervisors and NQSWs in the future as well as capturing what has worked well.

We will look at what we have learnt generally about providing a programme to support NQSWs from the point of view of the social worker but more particularly from the perspective of those supervising them.

**Paper: Enhancing recruitment and retention of social workers through effective selection & assessment strategies: A look at some lessons learned so far**

Volker Patent, Rosalind Searle

Room: F1

One of the recommendations by the Social Work Task Force (2009) is to strengthen the calibre of entrants into social work programmes. This mirrors changes in recruitment for other professions, such as GP training (Patterson et al., 2000, Searle and McHarg, 2003), in which systematic, evidence-based assessment is used to determine the allocation of training places. Social Work, as with medicine, has a complex array of stakeholders with interest in such processes, including colleges, local authorities and practitioners.

This paper presents early findings of the value of assessment centre approaches in social work training, reporting specifically on recruitment of Social Work students into

an enhanced training programme. Drawing on extant research and our data, we discuss how assessment centre technology can transform the selection, development and retention of new recruits, add value and enhance standards within a profession. We show how they can provide better return on training investment, by identifying those most likely to succeed, as well as helping to recruit those with the resilience to cope with the rigours of front line social work. It is essential that such processes are highly reliable and valid, and that their implementation is fair to all applicants. We argue for the necessity of an evidence-based approach to assessment design and follow-up evaluation.

Finally, we caution against the use of fallacious panaceas by highlighting three potential concerns: recruiting high fliers to a profession who may not be able to manage their career expectations; failure of employers to attend to a variety of organisational push factors (Healy et al., 2009) that threaten to undermine the retention of any recruits; and the creation of a two-tier training process. Our discussion will challenge thinking about how, during times of severe economic constraint, assessment centres can identify those most likely to succeed as social workers.

**Paper: Continuing Professional Development – What difference does it make?**

Mary Keating, Pat Higham

Room: F2

At a time when social work is under pressure because of diminishing resources, raised expectations and changing structures,

post qualifying study arguably should be valued as enabling social workers to address these pressures through updating knowledge and skills. Instead, employers and practitioners query whether PQ Awards make a positive difference. In this pressured climate, Skills for Care West Midlands explored the impact of PQ by providing funding during 2009-10 for 25 social workers in adult services to undertake modules at PQ Higher Specialist level in Leadership and Management and Practice Education at the University of Birmingham and Coventry University, and by funding informal Master Classes at the University of Worcester and Coventry University on topics that supported changes in social work roles.

A base line study, a focus group, learner evaluations, telephone interviews, and questionnaires evaluated PQ's impact on social workers' practice. The findings reported that the PQ modules helped social workers become more confident in engaging with and helping others deal with change, in challenging effectively within multi disciplinary teams, and in using critical reflection. The Master Classes provided interactive learning opportunities that social workers perceived as relevant.

The PQ modules and informal Master Classes previewed the new hybrid CPD model recommended by the Reform Board (2010). The findings will be of interest to educators considering how to re-develop their PQ awards. The findings argue that PQ and CPD represent good investments for helping social workers address pressures on practice; recommend that CPD should be linked to individual professional development plans and the Professional Capabilities

Framework; and support a strategy for meeting the workforce development gap identified by the Social Work Task Force and the Munro interim report (2011). Problems of limited resources are addressed by advocating shared responsibility for funding CPD.

**Paper: Together in Partnership: Promoting positive professionalism and professional leadership: a holistic approach to reduce pressure and stimulate creative responses to changing circumstances**

Hilary Tompsett, Jane Lindsay, Christine Skilton, Kathleen Henderson, Jenny Rowlands, Toni Mitchell, Jane Matthew-Byrne, Kerryn Holborn

Room: F2

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.

**Paper: Opportunities and threats to service user and carer participation in pre and post qualifying social work education and training in relation to the Social Work proposed Reforms – Our Perspectives**

June Sadd, Kay Malko

Room: F2

“The best of times and the worst of times”? Participation in the social work degree is a good news story for social work. No other profession has so systematically involved service users and carers. How can this high level of involvement be maintained at Degree level and how can the model be developed in post-qualifying training in the current context of the reform board agenda, development of The College of Social Work, spending restraints and new regulation processes? Social work is under pressure, morale is low, spending cuts loom during a period of great change and reform.

It is very possible that in these changing contexts service users and carers will be left behind. Yes, we are invited to be part of the consultation but will our participation be meaningful or tokenistic? Whose agenda and whose reforms are they anyway? Two Focus Groups with service users and carers on 28th January 2011 looked at the benefits of service user and carer participation in social work education within the context of the Social Work Reform Board proposals. Come along and listen to our views and participate – you will be heartened to hear of the support for Social Work.

The proposals for the Professional Capabilities Standards, the Curriculum Framework, including Practice Learning, and

for Continuing Professional Development all need the influence and involvement of service users and carers. Ongoing involvement in Partnerships between Employers and Higher Education Institutions, and in developing the Standards for Employers to support learning and practice is vital.

The profession has always been ahead of the game in terms of service user and carer involvement. During this period of change and upheaval it is vital that social work maintains its commitment to service user and carer involvement and co-production in education and learning, pre- and post-qualifying.

**Paper: Meeting the challenges of collaboration in post-qualifying social work education**

Robin Sen, Joe Smeeton, Warren Carratt

Room: F2

The Masters in Professional Practice (MAPP) course for child care practitioners was successfully developed as a post-qualifying award at the University of Sheffield as a response to identified needs within child and family social work for better professional development for frontline practitioners. It is one of only two such courses in the Yorkshire region which lead to the Advanced Award. Over the last year, in response to the needs of practice agencies in the region, there have been three linked developments of the course:

- The provision of a bespoke version of our mainstream post-qualifying education at PG Certificate level linked to the Specialist Award to all the frontline social workers in

one local authority as part of that authority's responsive action to Ofsted issuing a 'Notice to improve' – action which significantly contributed to the removal of Government intervention in an unprecedented timeframe.

- Undertaking 'Action Learning Sets' with first line managers in the same authority.
- Initiating a post-qualifying leadership and management strand of the MAPP.

At a time when the Social Work Reform Board is working hard to determine how employers and HEIs can work more closely together, this presentation will build on the knowledge base of PQ social work education by providing a case study of the experience of collaboration around development in the children and families workforce. It will examine the delivery and evaluation of the three developments above and reflect on the experience of close partnership working between an HEI and local authority in defining skills for practice through which synergies between HEI-based learning and a defined workforce development strategy were identified. Some discussion about how conflicts in expectations were managed and the linked but separate activities of training and education will emerge.

**Paper: Staying one step ahead? The Step Up to Social Work Employment based route to social work: an HEI perspective.**

Alison Domakin

Room: D6

'Step Up to Social Work' is a controversial CWDC initiative targeted at providing an intensive 18 months employment-based,

employer-delivered MA in social work. Following its announcement HEIs almost unanimously criticised this as an attack on HEIs and a potential dilution of academic influence. In 2010, CWDC commissioned MMU to design and quality assure this programme and was subsequently asked to deliver this.

This paper charts the challenges and opportunities of working with employer consortiums and CWDC to develop a practice focused programme. Learning from the first six months of delivering the programme with employers will be highlighted.

Initial consultations with employers focused on exploring perceptions of the skills and knowledge needed to practice social work. Feedback highlighted the need for interpersonal skills and confidence in the practice of assessment. The importance of 'process' was stressed as was the need for emotional intelligence and resilience in the face of resistance, complexity and uncertainty. The resulting programme emphasises these aspects, informed by knowledge and experience of both academics and practitioners.

Integrating practice and academic knowledge is a central challenge within social work education. However, this is difficult to achieve and knowledge can often be compartmentalised (Social Work Reform Board, 2010). The answer may lie in developing closer working partnerships between employers and HEIs (Social Work Taskforce, 2010).

Step up to Social Work challenges perceptions of how social work education

should be shaped and by whom. Several key questions remain:

- How can HEIs work collaboratively with critical partners to create new learning opportunities?
- How might these relationships improve social work education?
- Can an effective social work qualification at Master's level be delivered in 18 months? Learning from 'Step Up to Social Work' challenges us to engage in a debate about the future of social work and the role of social work education. This paper aims to contribute to that debate.

SWTF (2010) Building a Safe and Confident Future: implementing the proposals of the Task Force (London: DSCF)

SWRB (2010) Building a Safe and Confident Future: One Year on. Detailed proposals from the Social Work Reform Board. London: DFE

Paper: Return to the front line: a study on a project to prepare non practising social workers to re-enter children and families social work practice.

Martyn Higgins, Ruth Watson, Andrew Whittaker, Jill Yates, Iain Campbell-King  
Room: D6

The Social Work Reform Board and the Munro Review of child protection have highlighted the considerable pressures experienced by social workers in children's social work and identified key issues both in workforce planning and social work education. The purpose of the study is to identify the findings from the study and

link them to the Reform Board and Munro agendas.

This paper is a report on a commissioned project for the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC). In 2009 London South Bank University Social Work Group successfully bid to develop a programme to encourage and support previously qualified social workers to return to practice. The social work team at LSBU sought wide consultation from stakeholders, including employers and young people leaving care. Nine modules were developed in key areas and the programme was launched in spring 2011. There were three critical stages to this project:

1. Developing the materials
2. Delivering and revising the programme
3. Implications for future children and families practice

Some of the key findings from the study are:

- The difficulties in defining a core children and family curriculum in a time of flux.
- The tensions between training and educating social workers.
- The need for the Reform Board and Munro Review to reflect the lived experience of social workers and to make recommendations that are in alignment with that experience.
- The importance of equipping social workers with the tools to manage stress, professional boundaries and interagency working.

The implications of the findings for social work training and practice will be discussed, specifically in response to the proposed

reforms in social work training and practice.

Paper: Better Than The "Best of a Bad Job"

Jayne Lewis

Room: D6

The Social Work and Disability module is part of a three-year social work undergraduate degree programme. I co-educate with service users and carers, in accordance with DoH (2002) requirements, and Personalisation agenda guidance, DoH (2008). This paper considers the shared learning from the experience, in November 2010, of a sudden and unexpected reduction in funding for this involvement part way through the planned module. I evaluate the experience of one cohort of students and integrate this with their reflections, those of the service users and carers and my own.

I discuss the personal qualities required of me to challenge the implementation of the cuts, and later my acceptance. I explore practical and philosophical dimensions of decision-making and planning of alternatives: rationing or rationalising? The experience tested my commitment, integrity and honesty; it produced an opportunity to be transparent about difficult decision-making processes. The students learned from the way that this was carried out and their own response to it. The carer and service user were tested and grew from a change in expectation.

This presentation focuses upon the impact of budgetary restraint on student, lecturer, service users and carers as co-educators. This was a bereavement, a loss of plans, opportunities, hopefulness. Unexpectedly, the learning from the experience has

generated deep personal reflection and recourse to my own strong moral character. It promoted growth for service users, carers and students, fostering a new and positive collegiality amongst the student group. Returning to ethical principles when decision-making, together with re-visiting the learning from models of loss such as that of Kübler-Ross (1970), contributed to a possible successful strategy to promote resilience for all of us as we face very testing times.

Department of Health (2002) Requirements for Social Work Training. London: Stationery Office

Department of Health (2008) Introduction to Personalisation available at [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/SocialCare/Socialcarereform/Personalisation/DH\\_080573](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/SocialCare/Socialcarereform/Personalisation/DH_080573)

Kübler-Ross, E. (1970) On Death and Dying London: Tavistock

Step Up to Social Work Programme: trainees' experiences so far. Are we seeing new wine in new bottles?

Mary Baginsky

Room: D6

Feedback from employers and practitioners to the Social Work Task Force indicated that there were concerns about both the quality of some of those emerging from social work courses and about the relationships between local authorities and higher education institutions. The Step Up route into social work provides one opportunity to address these concerns by recruiting high achieving graduates with experience of working with children and young people, on to training which has provided the opportunity for

employers and HEIs to design a course for which both have equal responsibility.

The employment-based route into social work was developed in 2010 and in September of that year the first cohort of trainees started in eight regional partnerships around England. These students will be followed through the 18 month course as part of a wider evaluation.

The work reported was undertaken between September 2010 and March 2011. So far the trainees have provided feedback on the national recruitment, assessment and allocation process that they have experienced and on the first six months on the course. This feedback will inform an understanding of the current experience and the development of the offer made to any future cohorts.

The paper describes the methodology, reports the findings and explores the implications for the current and any future cohort, as well as for social work education more generally. The findings provide additional insight into, and possible solutions to, some of the concerns identified by employers and others.

Workshop: What should be the 'new look' of PQ following the SWRB proposals and GSCC closure?

Jane McLenachan, Pat Higham

Room: E2

The workshop will provide an overview of the Social Work Reform Board proposals in respect of post qualifying education in England, as outlined in the One Year On report, published December 2010. The

particular focus will be on work undertaken in the SWRB working groups since March 2011 (the end of the consultation period). The workshop will focus specifically on the proposed hybrid model of CPD, development of a post qualifying Masters in Social Work, and how this will link to the Professional Capabilities Framework. The workshop will therefore provide a brief overview of the Professional Capabilities Framework, although participants will find it helpful to have read the One Year On report and familiarised themselves with the key principles of the PCF.

The workshop will offer participants the opportunity to consider implications for the development, delivery and quality assurance of a CPD framework that will include a diverse range of provision. Implications arising from the closure of the GSCC PQ Framework in 2012 will be considered in the context of the transition to a new flexible CPD Framework.

Proposals for the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment will also be explored, with specific reference to assessment and links with registration. Plans to introduce the ASYE from September 2012 will be considered, with specific reference to the development of models to assess and support newly qualified social workers. The Munro Review of Child Protection has implications for the CPD needs of social workers and this will also be considered in relation to the SWRB proposals for a CPD framework.

The proposals for the ASYE and the CPD Framework will be implemented at a time of significant resource constraints for employers and HEIs. Participants will

therefore be encouraged to locate their discussions in the context of implications for partnership working.

Workshop: Local practice and the Global Agenda for social work

Linda de Chenu, Dave Sims, Janet Williams, Hellmuth Weich

Room: D1

In 2010, at a joint conference in Hong Kong, the three major international social work organisations, IASSW, IFSW and ICSW launched a consultation process for their draft Global Agenda for social work. The consultation is intended to promote discussion about the meaning, aims and scope of social work and the validity of social work as an international profession.

The outcome is to be a Global Agenda that can be agreed as the way forward for social work for the next ten years. It will be formally accepted at the next tripartite conference in June 2012 and will be presented to the United Nations.

The international consultation includes a focus on the connections between local and global problems and how social work practice is both shaped by international policy but also influences it. The consultation asks social workers to consider the adoption of strategies at the local level. The workshop will invite participants to contribute to this process and build on feedback from social work students from UK Universities.

Between December 2010 and March 2011 members of the JUCSWEC International Committee have been exploring the Global

Agenda with students and colleagues, using questions designed by committee members. The workshop leaders will invite feedback on the points raised and will lead a discussion on how it can be developed further.

The Global Agenda includes global and local themes of social and economic inequalities, human dignity, environmental and community sustainability and the importance of human relationships. The workshop will engage participants in a critical discussion of potential strategies, at local, national and international levels, which could be developed to assert a global praxis for social work and a critical pedagogy for the new social work curriculum.

Workshop: Health inequalities – at the heart of the social work curriculum?

Kate Karban, Julie Fish

Room: E1

Cuts in public sector services are disproportionately affecting the well-being and health of social work service users and increasing the pressure on social workers. Many service users are further affected by issues of discrimination, oppression and disadvantage. Such inequalities are recognised as having a profound impact on people's health and well being (Marmot, 2010), although the role of social work in reducing health inequalities has been largely overlooked.

A model for the social determinants of health (Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991) identifies the key role that social work can play in reducing health inequalities and provides a framework for practice based on

challenging unfairness and the promotion of social justice. In turn this requires a shift away from individual pathology to one that incorporates a social perspective, recognising the wider impact of inequalities and drawing attention to broader population issues.

The workshop will address ways in which some of the current challenges and tensions in practice can be addressed through an emphasis on health inequalities within the qualifying social work curriculum. This approach also offers opportunities to highlight the importance of interprofessional and multi-agency practice, including the potential for building alliances to challenge the reduction in services.

The workshop is based on the presenters' experiences of curriculum development and delivery that is also relevant in the light of the national review of social work and social work education in England with its inclusion of human rights perspectives. The workshop will begin by providing a brief overview of some of the evidence regarding social work's contribution to tackling health inequalities and move on to introduce examples of curriculum material from the presenters' practice and research. This will form the basis of an interactive forum for participants to share ideas and resources.

References:

Dahlgren G, Whitehead M. (1991) Policies and strategies to promote social equity in health. Stockholm: Institute of Futures Studies.

Marmot, M. (2010) Fair Society, Healthy Lives – the Marmot Review. Strategic review of Health Inequalities in England – post2010.

[www.ucl.ac.uk/marmotreview](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/marmotreview)

Paper: Regulating social work: UK perspectives

Room: D2

Graham Ixer, Abigail Gorringer, Paul Kearney, Ian Thomas, Karen McLaughlin

The workshop will commence with a short presentation from each of the regulatory bodies about current developments in the regulation of social work and social work education in each country, with an opportunity for questions.

This will be followed by an open debate about the complexities of devolved and differing regulation, and the ways in which experience and 'best practice' can be shared across the UK.

Paper: Experiences of small group teaching and learning – gateways to professional formation on the Master of Social Work

Deborah Lynch

Room: D5

The Master of Social Work team at University College Cork is currently researching the key processes of professional formation within small group teaching and learning. The paper will present early findings from phase one of the research which consisted of open-ended questionnaires completed by final year students and a review of relevant literature.

The core themes that have emerged from the findings include the value placed by students on small group interaction which facilitates self-awareness, self-evaluation

and perspective-widening in a supported learning environment. Student accounts indicated that the benefit of this approach to learning demanded time and commitment by staff and students to develop trusting relationships which enable students to become comfortable with the process. These experiences foster the formation of professional values, integration of theory and enhanced awareness of use of self.

In the presentation, we consider how we can sustain these key formative processes and preserve a qualitative approach to social work education in the current climate of austerity within Higher Education in Ireland and internationally. Our research identifies opportunities for innovation and considers whether there are ways in which actions could look different, but where the same processes are supported. The first step to programme adaptation is the identification of essential processes which need to be protected if we are to meet our responsibility as educators for professional formation. This research forms the basis on which to make informed decisions about programme adaptation and development.

Paper: The experience of change in adult social care: a ripfa Change Project

George Julian, Geraldine Nosowska

Room: D5

Social workers are currently experiencing unprecedented levels of change. In both children and adult services, practitioners are expected to adapt and respond to change whilst delivering high quality social care.

research in practice for adults undertook a change project to look at the experience

of change to self-directed support in adult social care in order to understand:

- what the impact of change is for people in the front-line
- why they experience change in these ways
- what helps them to work their way through change.

The findings from this project highlight the ways in which change is experienced - both positive and negative, and how practitioners can make sense of it and act to support themselves and their colleagues. Although the project focuses on the current change in adult social care, the learning is applicable to other areas of change.

As well as casting light on a key area of practice, this project uses a tested methodology to combine research with practice experience. It demonstrates how learning from research and practice can complement and enhance each other.

The project also demonstrates how learning can be presented in a way that is accessible, useful and relevant to busy social care practitioners in order to empower them. Practitioners were involved in deciding the form and design of the final resource.

This project therefore supports social work educators in a number of ways:

- by increasing their understanding of how they can support practitioners through change
- as a resource for them to share with practitioners to make sense of change and to identify the support that they need
- as a model for how evidence can be used to support current practice

- as an example of an innovative and engaging way of presenting learning.

For further information, visit [www.changecards.org](http://www.changecards.org)

Paper: Professionalism and professional identity: what are they and how do social work students acquire them?

Fran Wiles

Room: D5

Developing professional identity is an objective of social work education, and universities' key role is recognised in documents such as the Social Work Taskforce report (2009). In England, professionalism – 'to identify and behave as a professional social worker' (Social Work Reform Board, 2010:10) – is an element in the proposed Professional Capabilities Framework. In Scotland, the Key Capabilities in Child Care and Protection (Scottish Executive, 2006:28) require social work educators to deliver teaching 'which explores the notion of a professional'.

The nature of social work identity has long been debated in academic and professional journals: there is, however, no single understanding of what professional identity is. Is it related to particular 'traits', for example? Or perhaps it is more to do with what makes social work distinctive? What can we learn from social workers' and students' subjective experiences of coming to identify themselves as professionals?

This paper, based on recently completed doctoral work and ongoing research into the notion of professionalism, shares ideas about the varied meanings, contingent on historical,

cultural and workplace associations, of being a social worker. My research findings suggest that in developing their professional identities, social work students draw on a wide range of influences including the curriculum, workplace learning, service users' perspectives and public expectations. The Reform Board's proposals for developments, in both social work education and the workplace, are being implemented under the pressure of competing financial, organisational and ideological demands: how might these also impact on students' developing professional identities? The paper is intended to stimulate discussion about the practical implications, for social work students and educators, of the research on professional identity.

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