



RESEARCH NEWS 6

Autumn
2010

Recent publications, reports and on-going research in the Making Research Count Universities

Making Research Count is a collaborative national research dissemination network based regionally in the social work departments of the Universities of Bedfordshire, Brighton, Central Lancashire (UCLAN), East Anglia (UEA), Keele, King's College London, Northumbria in association with Teesside, Salford, York and The Open University.

All eleven social work departments are actively engaged in research activity, generating research publications, reports and journal articles, as well as in the education of social work professionals, both at qualifying and post-qualifying level. This *RESEARCH NEWS* highlights some recent or current research undertaken in the departments in our network. There are electronic links to the published reports or departmental resources.

CALL-ME: Community Action in Later Life – Manchester Engagement (Keele University)

CALL-ME is a research project that aims to help older people to become or stay involved in their Manchester communities. The project aims to discover the types of issues that older people think are important in their communities, and seeks to understand better how older people can become more independent and involved in community life in Manchester. CALL-ME is collecting a wide range of information, including interviews and discussions with older people, surveys of residents and diaries. Older people are involved in the collection, analysis and presentation of information.

The project also seeks to promote the development and sustainability of community initiatives in health, welfare and the arts with diverse groups of older people. Regular newsletters are produced detailing initiatives already being undertaken.

The research, which is funded by the UK Research Councils' New Dynamics of Ageing (NDA) programme is being undertaken by a team of researchers from **Keele University**, working in partnership with Manchester City Council. The multi-disciplinary team from across health, psychology, nursing and social gerontology is led by Michael Murray, Professor of Applied Health and Social Psychology at **Keele**. Project details are available at:

www.keele.ac.uk/research/lcs/csg/callme/index.htm

Good practice in social care for asylum seekers and refugees

Karen Newbigging and Nigel Thomas (with Jacqueline Coupe, Zemikael Habte-Mariam, Nadia Ahmed, Ajit Shah and Joanna Hicks)
University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)

Refugees and asylum seekers face adversity before, during and after arrival in the UK, with complex needs arising from their experiences. Although they often have impressive personal and social resources, many asylum seekers and refugees are likely to require social care services. They include some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people, and the evidence indicates that they have a substantially increased risk of developing mental health problems, for example.

Commissioned by SCIE (the Social Care Institute for Excellence) this report looked at evidence of good practice in services for asylum seekers and refugees in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The research involved a literature review, a survey of agencies, project visits and focus groups with service users (including adults and children). The research identified important lessons and some key principles for practice, arguing for a rights-based approach to service provision. It also identified significant gaps in the research literature.

www.scie.org.uk/publications/reports/report31.asp The research report is accompanied by a Resource Guide.

BASW Pocket Guide to Alcohol and Other Drugs: Essential Information for Social Workers (University of Bedfordshire)

Social workers are in the front line of health and social care services. Alcohol and other drug use can play a significant role in the lives of people who use services. Service users have the right to professional social care, delivered by well-trained, well-supervised workers. Social workers should be able to intervene confidently and effectively where they encounter alcohol and drug problems.

In the past alcohol and drug problems have not been high enough on the social work agenda. However now it is recognised that core social work skills are ideally suited for work with people's alcohol and drug use.

A BASW pocket guide has been developed by Dr Sarah Galvani, **University of Bedfordshire**, and Trevor McCarthy, National Treatment Agency. The guide seeks to support social workers to take professional responsibility for ensuring that their knowledge and skills meet the needs of service users with alcohol and drug problems. The guide is available at: www.beds.ac.uk/goldbergcentre/resources/Pocket_Guide_final_with_date.pdf.

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Joseph Rowntree Foundation – programme of research on older people: King’s College London

As part of Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s programme of work on older people with high support needs, two new overviews of research have been published from **King’s College London**. The first looks at communication needs in ‘extra care’ or ‘housing with support settings’. In this popular form of housing provision, tenants or owner occupiers may live until their death since both housing and care services are available. But people with high support needs may not be easily understood or be able to communicate their wishes. In housing sectors this can alter the basis of relationships. Kritika Samsi and Jill Manthorpe have brought together relevant research on the subject of communication. www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c6/06/75/94/SamsiManthorpe2010Decision-making.pdf

The second review covers workforce issues in ‘extra care’ or ‘housing with care’ services. Are housing staff meant to be part of the social care workforce? How do separate staff groups work together? Who regulates whom and why? These issues are addressed in this review, undertaken by Jill Manthorpe and Jo Moriarty. www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c6/06/75/94/ManthorpeMoriarty2010Workforceissues.pdf

Northumbria University: Social Work Research Detecting and Preventing Financial Abuse of Older Adults, Northumbria University

Northumbria University and North Tyneside Council’s adult safeguarding service are part of a New Dynamics of Ageing programme of health, social work and banking professionals’ decision-making led by Brunel University. One impact of this ongoing study was an RDF funded event in July 2010 organised by **Northumbria** which worked with regional adult safeguarding leads to explore ways of using learning from the study to develop safeguarding practices in the North East.

Full project details and newsletters are available at: www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk/preventing-financial-abuse.html

Social Work: the implications of personalisation

This research reported on the views of social workers employed by a North East local authority on the impact of personalisation on working with adult service users and carers. Findings suggested that social workers were clear about their knowledge, skills and values but expressed widespread concerns about the implementation of the transformation agenda, increased workloads, pressures and stress they were under and as well as insufficient support.

Ages and Stages: The Place of Theatre in Representations and Recollections of Ageing

Miriam Bernard, Professor of Social Gerontology, Keele University with colleagues in the School of Humanities, Psychology and at the New Vic Theatre

‘Ages and Stages’ is a collaboration between **Keele University** and the New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-Under-Lyme. It explores the role that the Victoria Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, has played in the lives of people living and working in the Potteries during the last forty years.

The project looks at how the theatre’s ground-breaking social documentaries constructed and represented older people and their place in the history, culture and ongoing life of this industrial community. Older people are being interviewed about their involvement with the theatre: as volunteers, as actors and employees, as audience members, and as people who were interviewed for the social documentaries. The practical and policy implications for involving the theatre, and the arts in general, in promoting active ageing, social engagement in later life and intergenerational understanding are explored.

www.keele.ac.uk/research/lcs/csg/agesandstages/index.htm

The longer-term impacts of home care re-ablement services – University of York

Home care re-ablement is a short-term intervention to help users regain confidence and self-care skills, and to reduce needs for longer-term support. This evaluation investigated the cost-effectiveness of re-ablement compared to conventional home care; the content and organisation of services; and service users’ and carers’ views. Interim reports give findings associated with the short-term impacts of re-ablement, and the content and organisation of services. Interviews with managers and front-line staff suggest that good staff training and supervision, clear goals negotiated with users, quick access to equipment and prompt transfer if needed to conventional home care were essential to the success of the service. The final report will be available to download in December 2010.

The evaluation team was based at SPRU, University of York and PSSRU, University of Kent. For further information and reports see: <http://php.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/research/summs/reablement2.php>

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Researching Adoption Support – University of East Anglia (Elsbeth Neil, Clive Sellick, Jeanette Cossar, Julie Young (UEA) & Paula Lorgelly (Monash University) and Chris Jones (Durham University))

The research (one of seven in the Adoption Research Initiative funded by the Department for Education, see www.adoptionresearchinitiative.org.uk) aimed to map, cost and evaluate birth relative and contact support services in England and Wales. This project included three linked studies. The first study mapped support services for birth parents and families of adopted children, and questionnaire, interview, and focus group data were collected from 135 statutory and independent agencies. The second part of the research, 'The helping birth families' study, evaluated independent birth relative support services, and 73 adult birth relatives were interviewed. The third part of the research, the 'Supporting direct contact' study, examined services to support direct post-adoption contact arrangements; 55 adoptive parents and 39 adult birth relatives took part.

Three executive summaries have been published: one for each of the studies. All three are available from the adoption research initiative website <http://www.adoptionresearchinitiative.org.uk/study5.html>. The 'Helping Birth Families' study and the 'Supporting Direct Contact' study are both being published by BAAF as part of their adoption research initiative series.

Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained (Jill Manthorpe and Jo Moriarty, King's College London)

There is new emphasis on risk enablement in dementia care in order to make the most of 'Living Well with Dementia', the new National Dementia Strategy. Researchers at **King's College London** have produced a risk guidance document 'Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained' to help practitioners in meeting the Strategy's goals. Objective 6 of the Dementia Strategy focuses on improving community personal support services and this guidance comes under this strand of the Strategy's implementation programme.

The guidance has been developed from a review of literature and other practice documents as well as a broad consultation with practitioners, people with dementia, carers and campaigners. It is available on the DH website and on <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/sspp/interdisciplinary/scwru/>.

The authors, Jill Manthorpe and Jo Moriarty, have built on discussions at MRC events in thinking about this work. The views of practitioners have shaped its messages, particularly practitioners' dilemmas about over and under protection and the uncertainties of 'duty of care'. MRC London held a conference on dementia in Spring 2010 and will be running further events throughout the 3 years of the Dementia Strategy to assist practitioners and managers in implementing its objectives.

Adoption Research Initiative (ARI) DfE / MRC Dissemination events

Making Research Count is hosting a series of dissemination events on the Department for Education's Adoption Research Initiative. Mary Beek (**UEA / Norfolk County Council**) is currently seconded to the DfE as the Professional Adviser to the Adoption Policy Team, and she will be presenting the findings at a number of venues throughout the country, up until Easter 2011.

The first seminar is scheduled for December 13th at UEA - Norwich. Further seminars are being planned for the New Year, in Brighton, London, York and the North West. At each event Mary will present an overview of the seven projects which between them focus on permanence planning, matching, support and contact, the well-being of very young children, ethnicity and costs. Lead investigators in the individual projects will also contribute to some of the seminars. Making Research Count members are entitled to free places, with some additional places likely to be on sale to non-members. For details contact s.e.bailey@uea.ac.uk or check www.adoptionresearchinitiative.org.uk

Increasing the number of care leavers in 'settled, safe accommodation'* University of York

This knowledge review for C4EO by **Mike Stein** tells us what works in increasing the number of care leavers in 'settled, safe accommodation'. It is based on a review of the research literature involving systematic searching, analysis of key data, validated local practice examples and views from service users and providers.

The review shows that young people who fare well in respect of their housing have usually experienced good quality of care, been well prepared, had gradual transitions from care and been supported by leaving care services after they leave. They are also likely to be in education, employment, or training. For young people, being in 'safe settled accommodation' is the outcome of a process: choosing when to leave care; being prepared; having a range of accommodation matched to their needs; feeling safe; being supported by leaving care services, family, friends and mentors; having an income or receiving financial assistance; and being fully involved in all these stages.

*Stein, M (with data annexe by Morris M) (2010) C4EO Knowledge Review 3: *Increasing the number of care leavers in 'settled, safe accommodation'*

www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/vulnerablechildren/careleavers/files/increasing_care_leavers_in_safe_accommodation_full_knowledge_review.pdf