ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2019

THURSDAY 11 APRIL 2019

The Royal Society
6–9 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AG

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Welcome to the tenth annual conference for the NIHR School for Social Care Research.

It has been an incredibly busy and productive year. We are currently reviewing progress of our ongoing studies to ensure successful completion by the end of this month, and pulling together findings from a number of other studies – some of which will be presenting today – to add further to the evidence base for adult social care in England. Over the coming months we will be publishing findings on, for example, delayed discharge of care, dementia, end-of-life care, hearing dogs, home care, integration, learning disabilities, outcomes of care homes, prevention, quality of social care, residential schools, self-funders, Shared Lives, supervision, Tourette's syndrome, vision rehabilitation services, volunteers and young adult carers. Details of our projects and outputs can be found on our website.

We have continued to discuss and encourage the commissioning of social care research across all parts of NIHR. It has been very gratifying to see more funding opportunities becoming available (such as the Research for Patient Benefit Social Care call last year) and more emphasis on social care within, for example, the NIHR's Clinical Research Networks (CRN) and the Academic Research Centres. Colleagues from the CRN, INVOLVE and Research Design Service are available throughout the conference, and I would encourage you to discuss research opportunities with them.

This year we celebrate 10 years of the School. We are very pleased with what has been achieved so far, and look forward to further impact from our work; I would need many more pages to thank everyone who has contributed to the School over this time! I have personally been delighted at the number of early career researchers and new colleagues that we have been supported, as well as the many familiar faces and the progress they have made in their careers. It has been great to meet and hear about the many experts by experience, service users, carers and practitioners involved in the School – their inputs are very important to our work and we will continue to learn, develop from, and build co-productively on their experiences. The impact we are seeing from our research is also very encouraging.

On 1 May 2019 we will enter Phase III of the School. We welcome King's College London and the University of Birmingham, and the continuation of LSE and the Universities of Bristol, Kent, Manchester and York. We will be commissioning new studies, launching an external call for proposals and introducing new capacity-building activities. So … lots of fun ahead!

Professor Martin Knapp
Director
NIHR School for Social Care Research

2009–2019

£30 million

129 research studies

25 scoping reviews

24 methods reviews

400 Fellows

28 Senior Fellows

540 users, cares, practitioners involved in studies

GENERAL INFORMATION

Registration desk	Registration will take place between 09.00 and 09.30 in the Royal Society Ground Floor foyer, and refreshments will be available during this time in the City of London Rooms One and Two.
	Delegates can pick up their conference handbooks at the registration desk.
	Please wear your conference badge at all times.
	Please address any queries throughout the conference to colleagues at the registration desk.
Wi-Fi	Complimentary Wi-fi is available. Please see signage in the conference rooms.
Twitter	Please share your conference comments using Twitter hashtag: #sscr2019.
	Follow us at @NIHRSSCR.
Audio-visual capture	All sessions will be video recorded and posted (barring any technical difficulties) on the NIHR SSCR website (www.sscr.nihr.ac.uk) along with all presentation slides.
Photography	Photographs will be taken during the conference by NIHR SSCR. If you do not want to be pictured in published photographs, please speak to colleagues at the registration desk.
Lunch and refreshments	Lunch and refreshments will be served in the City of London Rooms One and Two (Ground Floor). Any additional dietary requirements should be mentioned to one of the colleagues at the registration desk at the earliest opportunity. Requirements noted at the time of online registration have been accommodated.
Cloakroom	A cloakroom is available for your use. This will be signposted. Please address any queries to colleagues at the registration desk.
Non-smoking policy	Smoking is not permitted in the building. Please use designated smoking areas outside of the building.
Safety procedures	First aid is available at the registration desk. In case of a fire alarm, stewards will guide you to exits.
General queries	Stewards are available in each room to assist delegates with queries or issues arising during the conference, as well as being available at the registration desk. For specific issues, you can also speak to Anji Mehta.

09.15	**Registration and refreshments**

09.30
Wellcome Trust
Lecture Hall,
Ground Floor

Welcome
Martin Knapp, NIHR School for Social Care Research

09.35

Opening plenary: "I am because we are" – the social care researcher in a social world
Chris Hatton, University of Lancaster
Chair: Martin Knapp

10.10

Plenary: Social care in England – the key trends
Simon Bottery, King's Fund
Chair: Martin Knapp

10.45

NIHR and social care
Louise Wood, National Institute for Health Research
Chair: Martin Knapp

11.05	**Refreshment break**

11.20

Morning parallel sessions

Session 1
Older people

Wellcome Trust
Lecture Hall,
Ground Floor

Chair: John Wilkinson, Department of Health and Social Care

The influence of social care on delayed transfers of care (DTOC) among older people
Karen Jones, University of Kent

Commissioning home care for older adults: processes and partnerships
Karen Davies and Sue Davies, University of Manchester

Volunteers in social care for older people: challenges and opportunities
Ailsa Cameron, University of Bristol

Session 2
Social work

Wolfson Room 1,
First Floor

Chair: Tricia Pereira, Adults Principal Social Worker National Network England

Exploring the social work contribution in CMHTs for working age adults: findings from two strands of a mixed methods study
Michele Abendstern and Andelija Arandelovic, University of Manchester

Connecting People: Implementing a social intervention in community mental health teams in England
Martin Webber, University of York

Investigating the quality of social worker decision-making
Angela Jenkinson, Kingston University

Session 3
Learning disabilities

Wolfson Room 2,
First Floor

Chair: Rachel Fyson, University of Nottingham

'I want what you have'. Life in the community following discharge from an Assessment and Treatment Unit, a narrative study
Sandie Dowling, University of Bristol

"Love is a wonderful feeling": exploring support for adults with learning disabilities to find loving relationships
Michelle McCarthy, University of Kent

Experiences of life skills courses for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities
Ciara Padden, University of Kent

PROGRAMME

12.50	**Lunch and networking**
13.40 Wellcome Trust Lecture Hall, Ground Floor	**Afternoon plenary: Increasing engagement of social work practitioners with NIHR and other research – the role of the Professional Association in developing evidence-informed practice** Ruth Allen, British Association of Social Workers Chair: Yvonne Birks, NIHR School for Social Care Research
14.15	**Involvement panel** (see following page)
14.55	**Reflections: 10 years of NIHR SSCR** Martin Knapp, NIHR School for Social Care Research
15.15	**Refreshment break**
15.30	**Afternoon parallel sessions**
Session 4 **Loneliness and isolation** Wolfson Room 1, First Floor	Chair: Kalpa Kharicha, Campaign to End Loneliness **Older men at the margins: single older men's experiences of loneliness, isolation and exclusion** Alex Vickery, University of Bristol **Isolation and loneliness for people with sight loss in care homes** Parvaneh Rabiee, University of York **Feasibility trial of an intervention to increase community connections and reduce loneliness for people with complex anxiety of depression (Community Navigators Study)** Bryn Lloyd-Evans, University College London
Session 5 **Providing support to specific groups** Wolfson Room 2, First Floor	Chair: Lisa Trigg, Social Care Wales **How can adult social care services best support young adult carers?** Nicola Brimblecombe, London School of Economics and Political Science **LGBTQI disabled people & social care support in England** David Abbott, University of Bristol **Is there an optimal time for people with dementia to move into a care home: residents' and carers' views** Kritika Samsi, Laura Cole, Jill Manthorpe, King's College London
Session 6 **Effectiveness and resources** Wellcome Trust Lecture Hall, Ground Floor	Chair: Mark Wilberforce, University of York **Shared Lives: Evidence of effectiveness: a multi-method study of a community service for people with intellectual disabilities** Grace Collins, University of Kent **Making the economic case for adult social care: the economics of social care compendium (ESSENCE) project** Michela Tinelli, London School of Economics and Political Science **Opportunities and challenges for using administrative social care records for evaluation** Jose-Luis Fernandez, London School of Economics and Political Science
17.00	**Close**

The NIHR School for Social Care Research places great importance on the involvement of experts by experience, service users, carers, practitioners and the public in our research.

Over the last ten years, a significant number of people have been involved in School-funded research in some way, for example as study leads or co-investigators, peer-researchers, peer-interviewers, and members of steering and advisory groups.

The Panel will be facilitated by Professor David Abbott, NIHR SSCR Associate Director and includes individuals who will share their experiences of being involved in the School and their suggestions for our next 5-year Phase:

Nick Barber

Expert by experience who contributed to the Community Navigator Study - a feasibility randomised controlled trial of an intervention to increase community connections and reduce loneliness for people with complex anxiety or depression

Dr Alison Faulkner

Survivor researcher and trainer who was a co-investigator on a co-produced study exploring mental health service user perspectives on targeted violence and hostility in the context of adult safeguarding

Cassandra Lovelock

Carer who contributed to research on young adult carers to find out what difference adult social care services for the person they care for makes to their own lives

Paul Coleing

Quality Assurance Manager at Surrey County Council who is a member of the School's User, Carer, Practitioner Reference Group through which he has been involved in commissioning research within the School.

NIHR | School for Social Care Research

External Call for Research Proposals

LAUNCHING MAY 2019

The NIHR School for Social Care Research will begin its next phase on 1 May 2019, and will be launching an open call for proposals in 2019.

The School will be seeking innovative research proposals that address a key evidence need for adult social care in England. Projects will need to start by April 2020, and finish by December 2023.

Further details will be available on the NIHR SSCR and NIHR websites in May.

KEY DATES

Late May
Launch of call for Stage 1 proposals

June
Deadline for Stage 1 proposals

September
Deadline for Stage 2 proposals

December
Notification of decisions

Dr Ruth Allen, British Association of Social Workers

Ruth is Chief Executive Officer of the UK British Association of Social Workers (BASW) since 2016. She has a practice, management, organisational development, leadership, education and research background in social work, particularly in mental health and interprofessional contexts. Her last role in services was as Director of Social Work in SW London and St George's Mental Health Trust. Her Doctorate is in Professional Education and she has researched and written on diverse social work and interdisciplinary topics. In her varied role at BASW, she is particularly interested in developing the Associations research and professional developments activities and establishing BASW as an increasingly effective professional body for all of social work in the UK.

www.basw.co.uk
@ruthallenonline

Simon Bottery, King's Fund

Simon is Senior Fellow, Social Care at the King's Funds. Before joining The King's Fund in September 2017, He spent almost 10 years as Director of Policy at the older people's charity Independent Age, researching and campaigning on issues including care home quality, unmet needs for care, social care funding and the social care workforce. He was vice-chair of the Care and Support Alliance in 2017. Simon has wide experience in policy, communications and journalism, including as Director of Communications at Citizens Advice. He has also worked for ActionAid, in the commercial sector for Guinness and in BBC local radio.

www.kingsfund.org.uk/about-us/whos-who/simon-bottery
@blimeysimon

Professor Chris Hatton, University of Lancaster

Chris is Professor of Public Health and Disability at Lancaster University, where he has been since 2000. Before that he mainly worked at the Hester Adrian Research Centre at the University of Manchester. Most of Chris's work concerns people with learning disabilities, focusing on trying to identify and understand the inequalities that people with learning disabilities and their families experience, evaluating ways of supporting people and families, and trying to support the wide range of people in a position to tackle these inequalities. He can sometimes be found on twitter @chrishattoncedr and he writes a blog mainly about the circumstances of people with learning disabilities at chris.hatton@blogspot.com .

www.lancaster.ac.uk/health-and-medicine/about-us/people/chris-hatton
@chrishattoncedr

Dr Louise Wood, National Institute for Health Research

Louise is Director of Science, Research & Evidence at the Department of Health and Social Care. Alongside the Department's Chief Scientific Advisor, she leads the National Institute for Health Research and has responsibility for policy research and science policy. She has held several roles in the Department's R&D Directorate and prior to that worked in drug safety regulation, was founding Director of the General Practice Research Database (now CPRD) and a member of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's Executive Board for four years. She has also worked on secondment at the Association of Medical Research Charities as its Director of Policy and Public Affairs.

www.nihr.ac.uk/about-us/how-we-are-managed/nihr-leadership/dr-louise-wood.htm
@klouisewood

Professor Martin Knapp, NIHR School for Social Care Research

Martin has been Director of the NIHR School for Social Care Research since 2009. He is also Professor of Social Policy and Director of the Personal Social Services Research Unit at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His current research emphases are primarily dementia, child and adult mental health, autism and long-term social care; much of his work has an economic focus, and in all of it he seeks to tease out the policy implications. He has published almost 600 peer-review journal papers and 15 books. His work has had numerous impacts on policy and practice in these areas.

www.lse.ac.uk/pssru/people/staff/Knapp
@Knappem

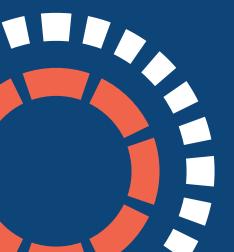# NIHR | National Institute for Health Research

RESEARCH DESIGN SERVICE

NIHR Research Design Service (RDS) offers free advice and support to people preparing funding applications for health and social care research

study design qualitative and quantitative research methods identifying funding public involvement identifying collaborators refining research questions statistics health economics application writing

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CHAIRS

Professor Yvonne Birks
Associate Director, NIHR SSCR; Professor of Health and Social Care and Co-Director of the Social Policy Research Unit, University of York

www.york.ac.uk/spru/staff/yvonne-birks

Dr Rachel Fyson
Professor of Social Work and Director of the Centre for Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Nottingham

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Kalpa Kharicha
Head of Innovation, Policy and Research, Campaign to End Loneliness

www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/

Professor Martin Knapp
Director, NIHR SSCR; Professor of Social Policy and Director, Personal Social Services Research Unit, LSE

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Tricia Pereira
Practitioner Development Lead, London ADASS Improvement Programme; Co-Chair, Adults Principal Social Worker National Network England

https://londonadass.org.uk/networks/psw/

Dr Lisa Trigg
Assistant Director, Research, Data and Intelligence, Social Care Wales

https://socialcare.wales/

Dr Mark Wilberforce
Senior Research Fellow, Social Policy Research Unit, University of York; Fellow, NIHR SSCR

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John Wilkinson
Head of Research Liaison – Health and Care, Science, Research and Evidence, Department of Health and Social Care

The Social Care Elf

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www.thesocialcareelf.net

- A member of THE NATIONAL ELF SERVICE: a set of health websites that started in 2011 with the Mental Elf and the Learning Disabilities Elf and now contains elves on ten topics.

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LSE PSSRU Personal Social Services Research Unit   NIHR | School for Social Care Research

■ David Abbott

Professor of Social Policy, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol; Associate Director, NIHR SSCR
www.bristol.ac.uk/sps/people/david-w-abbott/index.html

LGBTQI Disabled People and social care support in England

LGBTQI Disabled people who use self-directed social care support require that support to be personalised and organised and delivered in ways which maximise well-being (as per all users of social care). However, revealing, discussing and organising needs which might be said to relate to 'being and doing' LGBTQI, may prove challenging if staff and services are not open to discussing or responding to such needs.

Our research was carried out in England in 2016-18 in collaboration with Disability and LGBTQI user-led organisations. We surveyed and spoke to LGBTQI Disabled people about their experiences of organising their own social care. Findings suggest that interactions with support workers were often complicated; that sexuality was not routinely disclosed for fear of a discriminatory response or the withdrawal of support; and that the assessment and review of support needs rarely touched upon the question of sexuality. In some instances study participants reported creative and engaged relationships with support workers. The study concluded that sharing the positive experiences of disabled people and also examples of overcoming barriers would be beneficial to the wider community of LGBTQI Disabled people as well as to the support worker workforce and those charged with assessing and reviewing support needs.

■ Michele Abendstern

Research Associate, School of Social Sciences, University of Manchester; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/michele.abendstern.html

Andelija Arandelovic

Research Fellow, Division of Population Health, Health Services Research & Primary Care, University of Manchester; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
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Exploring the social work contribution in CMHTs for working age adults: Findings from two strands of a mixed methods study

Social work is often described as difficult to define. Role blurring within multidisciplinary teams and the erosion of traditional professional practices have added to the challenge of articulating its contribution to community mental health. One response to this is to remove social workers from these teams, due to concern that they are not being utilised appropriately. Research evidence to support or challenge such decisions is lacking.

This presentation describes the quantitative results of an audit of caseload characteristics and qualitative findings from focus groups with Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) staff members. The former sought to identify whether differences were apparent between people supported by a nurse and those supported by a social worker. The latter explored the views of social workers and non-social work CMHT staff regarding the social work role. Results of the audit data analysis are reported followed by the focus group findings, grouped around three themes: Articulating the salient features of the social work contribution to user and carer support; social work contribution to the practice of colleagues; and assessing the impact of the loss of social workers to CMHTs for service users. Finally, we consider the implications of the findings alongside strengths and weaknesses of the study.

■ Nicola Brimblecombe

Assistant Professorial Research Fellow, Personal Social Services Research Unit, LSE; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
www.lse.ac.uk/pssru/people/staff/brimblecombe
Co-authors: Derek King, Martin Knapp, Madeleine Stevens

How can adult social care services best support young adult carers?

Worldwide a large and increasing proportion of care for older, long-term ill or disabled people is provided by unpaid carers. This includes children and young people. Supporting young adult carers is an important part of social care policy and practice. In England this can be through services for the person with support needs.

Our research looks at whether and how such services can support young people aged 16 to 25, living in England, who provide care to adults. To answer this, we used information already collected from carers and

non-carers nationally, our own survey of young people, who provide care, and in-depth interviews with some of those young people.

In this presentation we will talk about:
- How we did our research
- How caring affects young people's education, employment, health, and social life
- Whether and how services for the person with support needs can help young adult carers
- What young adult carers find helpful and not so helpful about these services

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■ Ailsa Cameron
Senior Lecturer, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
www.bristol.ac.uk/sps/people/ailsa-m-cameron/index.html

Volunteers in social care for older people: challenges and opportunities

Encouraging people to volunteer with older people has been a key part of practice in the social care sector for many years. In light of recent funding cuts, however, the significance of volunteering in the sector has grown.

This presentation reports on a study that explored the role of volunteers in the provision of social care and revealed that volunteers do much to enhance older people's care and support. Our research found that volunteers can bring a new energy to care settings and give older people an opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with people other than paid workers. However, reliance on volunteers to deliver care and support brings new challenges. Volunteers are not a 'free service'. To be effective, they require training and on-going support. This is particularly important given the potential vulnerability of service recipients. Volunteers have much to offer, but they must be clear of the boundaries and limits of their role and know how to raise concerns. Finally, some social care organisations are struggling to recruit and retain volunteers, which contradicts perceptions that there is an 'army of volunteers' waiting to work in social care.

■ Grace Collins
Research Assistant, Personal Social Services Research Unit, University of Kent; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
www.pssru.ac.uk/our-people/4060/

Shared Lives: Evidence of effectiveness – a multi-method study of a community service for people with intellectual disabilities

In Shared Lives an adult who needs support moves in with or regularly visits a Shared Lives carer after they have been matched for compatibility. In 2016 over 8,000 people with intellectual disabilities were being supported to live in the community in this way. Shared Lives is under-researched and there is a need to develop the evidence base further.

Our study aimed to describe who was being supported by Shared Lives, explore whether Shared Lives is meeting people's needs, and examine the experiences of Shared Lives carers. Information was collected about a small number of individuals including measures of quality of life, capability, and mental well-being. Peer interviewers conducted interviews with people supported by Shared Lives, and researchers interviewed Shared Lives carers.

Overall, the findings suggested that social care related outcomes, capability and mental well-being were good amongst participants, and examples were given of how SL had made a positive difference to their lives. Shared Lives carers described their experiences of caring for someone in a SL arrangement, the skills and support required, and the unique dynamic of formal care in a family setting.

■ Karen Davies
Research Associate, Division of Population Health, Health Services Research & Primary Care, University of Manchester; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
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Sue Davies
Research Associate, Personal Social Services Research Unit, University of Manchester; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/susan.l.davies.html

Commissioning home care for older adults: processes and partnerships

Home care is commissioned through local authorities working largely with independent providers. Little formal research has investigated the differences in approaches adopted by commissioners. Our study explored commissioning arrangements for home care and how these have changed over the last ten years. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect data from local authorities. Responses were received from 114 (75%) authorities, with interviews with commissioners (n=10) and home care providers (n=20).

The survey investigated procedural commissioning arrangements with interviews illustrating the varied partnership arrangements between commissioners and providers. Engagement between commissioners and providers was high and had increased over a ten year period suggesting processes to support partnership practice are in place. However, this may not reflect the complexity of the relationship between commissioners and providers. The interviews showed that approaches ranged from partnerships that were largely transactional through to collaborative models. Collaboration was considered to facilitate flexible services supporting commissioning for outcomes. The relational approach is pivotal to effective commissioning and providing of home care, but requires investment to adopt a truly collaborative model. This may require a better understanding of the hallmarks of a trusting partnership, evident beyond the procedural elements of contracting and commissioning.

■ Sandie Dowling

Lecturer in Disability Studies, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
https://research-information.bristol.ac.uk/en/persons/sandra-dowling(9c276ae2-6c43-4759-85f8-e724015e5974).html

Co-authors: Dr Joe Webb, Dr Vicky Mason-Angelow, Beth Richards and Professor Val Williams
Norah Fry Centre for Disability Studies

'I just want what you have'. Life in the community following discharge from an Assessment at Treatment Unit

It is the stories we tell of ourselves that make us who we are. Our narratives capture the meaning we make of our lives and the explanations and rationales we have constructed to make sense of events. This presentation will present a narrative collage, drawn together from the data gathered in the recently completed project, Narratives of Home.

Our research aimed to understand the experience of resettlement to the community following life in an assessment and treatment unit. During the project we gathered narrative accounts of experience from eighteen people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people and three parents. The presentation will draw on the narratives collected and will tell a story of resettlement by way of narrative collage. The story will be presented in the first person, but will not relate to any one participant, rather it will be drawn together from the multiple narratives collected, to give voice to key themes drawn from participants' accounts. The story told in this presentation will be contextualised within the methodological approach adopted in the study.

■ Jose-Luis Fernandez

Associate Professorial Research Fellow, Deputy Director, Personal Social Services Research Unit, LSE; Senior Fellow, NIHR SSCR
www.lse.ac.uk/pssru/people/staff/fernandez

Developing a local prevention evaluation framework

Evaluating equity and efficiency in the social care system requires evidence about the needs, services and outcomes (and about the interrelationship between them) of people supported by social care services. Although not designed for the purpose of research, local authority administrative records provide a rich potential source of data for analysing the way in which services are targeted across different clients, and about the consequences of such services on care outcomes.

This presentation will explore the results of our evaluation of social care services based on evidence from linked administrative records from three local authorities in England. The presentation illustrates the potential of such data, and will discuss some of the methodological challenges involved in the use of this type of data for research.

■ Angela Jenkinson

Principal Investigator, Kingston University; Fellow, NIHR SSCR

Experimental investigation into optimising the quality of social work decisions in professional supervision

Social workers typically make decisions with a supervisor. Two experimental studies investigated whether the experience of supervision affected decision-making. The profession was very involved in the design of the study. Participants were asked to identify problems and make decisions about vignettes which were based on rules taken from the Care Act 2014 and associated legislation. Half did this after discussing the cases in a supervision session.

The first of three studies was to establish the effect that supervision had on decision-making and the second and third were intended to identify the psychological causes of the effect. The first study found no effect of the supervision experience but found that the quality of decision-making was low. The profession asked that the same study be repeated and, as the narrow range of scores might have prevented the effect from emerging, it was repeated with a different supervisor, different vignettes and enhanced instructions. The decision quality improved slightly but significantly but still no supervision effect emerged. It was decided to replace the third study with a qualitative study to help understand participants' decision-making.

■ Karen Jones

Assistant Director, Personal Social Services Research Unit, University of Kent; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
www.pssru.ac.uk/our-people/14/

The influence of social care on delayed transfers of care (DTOC) among older people

The National Audit Office (2016) has estimated that keeping older people in hospital for longer than necessary is costing the NHS up to £820m every year. Evidence has documented that longer hospital stays for older patients can lead to an increase in their social care needs following discharge. Delayed transfers of care (DTOC) are therefore a significant problem for adult social care practice and the NHS at a time of financial constraints.

As part of a current project with the main aim to explore the relationship between social care and DTOC, we looked into a few more aspects related to DTOC rates. Firstly, we identified LAs whose DTOC rates are unexpected given their underlying characteristics that provides evidence for further investigation to explore effective discharge models. Qualitative case studies have highlighted in detail local discharge arrangements.

We have explored the impact of local discharge models on DTOC rates but cannot conclude if they help alleviate the problem. However, there seems to be evidence suggesting a link between Urgent and Emergency Care Vanguards and DTOC rates. Finally, we have found that the supply of care home beds and home care can help reduce DTOCs. The findings are being finalised and should be publicly available soon.

■ Bryn Lloyd-Evans

Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Brain Sciences, University College London; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
https://iris.ucl.ac.uk/iris/browse/profile?upi=BLLOY83

Feasibility trial of an intervention to increase community connections and reduce loneliness for people with complex anxiety or depression (Community Navigators Study)

Loneliness is common among people with mental health problems and predicts poorer recovery from depression. The Community Navigators programme was a co-produced, socially focused intervention to reduce loneliness. It involves up to ten sessions of support from a Navigator, who helps people map their social world and offers practical support and encouragement with setting and achieving goals to develop social relationships.

This presentation discusses the findings from the a feasibility randomised controlled trial with accompanying qualitative evaluation which tested the Community Navigators programme. Forty service users were recruited from secondary mental health services for depression and anxiety in two London sites and randomised to standard care (n=10) or standard care plus the Community Navigators programme. Social and clinical outcomes were assessed at baseline and at six months follow-up. Qualitative interviews were conducted with participants (n=19) and other stakeholders (n=13).

Rates of trial recruitment and retention and intervention take-up, engagement and fidelity will be presented, along with descriptive outcomes data. Stakeholders' views and experience of the programme will be reported.

The acceptability and potential usefulness of the programme, and the feasibility of evaluating its effectiveness in a future definitive trial, will be considered. Implications for current and future practice will be discussed.

■ Michelle McCarthy

Reader in Learning Disabilities, Tizard Centre, University of Kent; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
https://www.kent.ac.uk/tizard/staff/acadstaff/michelle_mccarthy.html

"Love is a wonderful feeling": exploring support for adults with learning disabilities to find loving relationships

Our research project aimed to explore with adults with learning disabilities the kinds of support they want, need and in fact, receive, when they wish to find a partner. We interviewed 40 adults with learning disabilities and conducted focus groups with staff and family carers to gain their views. We also visited and collected data from all of the specialist dating agencies for people with learning disabilities in England.

This presentation discusses our findings. We found that adults with learning disabilities are well able to articulate what it means to them to have a loving relationship and how this enhances the quality of their lives. They could describe what the barriers were in finding a partner and maintaining a relationship. Staff were very aware of the vulnerability of people with learning disabilities to exploitation and abuse, as were family carers. The biggest barrier to the successful operation of the specialist dating agencies was the significant gender imbalance of their membership. Despite the many changes in society and social care services in recent decades, it is still an uphill struggle for many people with learning disabilities to do what most other adults take for granted i.e. meet a special person, fall in love and stay together.

■ Ciara Padden

Lecturer in Learning Disability, The Tizard Centre, University of Kent; Fellow, NIHR SSCR
www.kent.ac.uk/tizard/staff/acadstaff/ciara_padden.html

Experiences of life skills courses for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Little is known about the overall objectives, experiences, or outcomes of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) attending life skills training courses. While such courses could potentially lead to employment, they could also serve other important purposes, such as increasing independence.

Our research explored experiences of skills training courses for adults with IDD, and explored the benefits and barriers to accessing and participating in these courses. One-to-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with 9 adults with IDD, 7 parents, and 10 service providers. A small focus group (n = 4) was also conducted to pilot the interview questions. Interviews were transcribed and thematically analysed.

We found that experiences were primarily positive, including a sense of enjoyment, belonging, and pride. In most cases, providers emphasised the need for person-centred approaches and practical, hands-on experiences. The main benefits centred on growing as a person and what was referred to as 'soft skills' (e.g., increased independence and confidence). A number of barriers were identified, including challenging behaviour and pressure to meet learner needs in the face of other constraints or conflicts (e.g., funding challenges; or conflicts between adult and family perspectives). Implications and future research suggestions will be discussed.

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Isolation and loneliness for people with sight loss in care homes

Admission to residential care can result in isolation and loneliness for some older people, resulting in reduced quality of life. For those with sensory impairments these effects can be even more pronounced. While over half of residents in care homes are estimated to have some degree of sight loss the evidence to support delivery of good practice in addressing the potential for isolation and loneliness for this group is limited.

This presentation sets out findings from our study, which explored the relationships between sight loss, social isolation and loneliness in care home residents. It involved a short survey of care homes in four local CRN regions in England, qualitative interviews with residents with sight loss, family members, practitioners and managers across eleven care homes.

The presentation will focus on the opportunities and challenges for social interaction for residents with sight loss and their perceived feelings of isolation and loneliness. Over all, the study found a lack of shared connectedness

among people with sight loss living in care homes, however the relationship between this and feelings of loneliness was not straightforward. Loneliness for this group appeared to reflect a more complex process than just the lack of social contact. The presentation will highlight some important steps that care homes can take to prevent and address isolation and loneliness in residents with sight loss.

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Is there an Optimal Time for people with dementia to move into a care home: residents' and carers' views

Deciding when might be the best or optimal time for a person with dementia to move to a care home can be difficult, and was identified as a research priority by the James Lind Alliance and Alzheimer's Society.

Our research interviewed 20 carers and 5 people with dementia about their experiences and views of the timing of their move to a care home. This presentation will discuss our findings.

All carers reported feeling stressed, frustrated, and guilty about the decision-making process and the ultimate move of their relative to a care home. Many described weighing up various risks when reaching 'tipping point', which is how many portrayed reaching the 'right' time. Some made 'trade offs' between available options or uncertain future choices. In hindsight, some felt they had unnecessarily delayed the decision while others thought that it was a little premature. Participants with dementia recognised that they had not been able to cope at home and needed more support; despite this, many found the move difficult as they relocated nearer to family, away from their friends and home, and resigned themselves to less freedom. Most people with dementia reported that their carer initiated discussions about timing of move, and that family discussions about the decision were common.

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Making the economic case for adult social care: The EconomicS of Social carE CompEndium (ESSENCE) project

The EconomicS-of-Social-carE-CompEndium (ESSENCE) project has collated economic evidence from the UK and is making it available to decision-makers in England's adult social care system to inform their decisions about which interventions to commission or deliver.

Data searches were undertaken looking at various databases selected by experts (e.g. NIHR SSCR projects, NICE guidelines, and others). The ESSENCE toolkit covers a collection of relevant previous research (or in progress) on adult care services and summarises it (when there is good evidence) according to individual case summaries. There is also a searchable database of evidence and it covers the larger body of economic evidence extracted from the difference sources.

Economic evidence is grouped according to a range of adult care services. NAO provided a conceptual framework to summarise a range of social care interventions delivered in England. The majority of the evidence covered home care, day services, and carers' services. Some areas (e.g. direct payments) have very little economic evidence.

This presentation will describe the project and the information now available.

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Connecting People: Implementing a social intervention in community mental health teams in England

Connecting People is an evidence-informed practice model which aims to increase the resourcefulness of the social networks of people with mental health problems (Webber et al 2016). People gain new social contacts by being supported by practitioners to identify and access new social opportunities in their local communities.

Our study aimed to evaluate the implementation of Connecting People in community mental health teams (CMHTs) in England, where it has previously been difficult to achieve high fidelity to the model.

A controlled quasi-experimental study with 151 participants was undertaken in CMHTs in five NHS Trusts in England. Implementation packs comprising practice guidance, a training manual, an implementation manual and service user leaflets were given to one team in each Trust. 127 participants (84%) were followed up over a 6-month period. Focus groups with practitioners explored their experience of implementation in an embedded qualitative process evaluation.

We will present the findings of this study, which will include outcome data on access to social capital; mental well-being; the experience of recovery; goal attainment; costs and health-related quality of life. Qualitative data from practitioners and service users will be presented to explore how Connecting People was (or was not) implemented in each site.

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Older men at the margins: men's experiences of combatting loneliness, isolation and exclusion

The 'Older Men at the Margins' project is a two-year qualitative study of older men's experiences of combatting loneliness and social isolation in later life. Between 2017 and 2018, we conducted 111 semi-structured interviews with men (65-95 years) from marginalised or seldom-heard groups across South-West and West England. These were: men who were single and living alone in rural and urban areas; gay men who were single or living alone; men with hearing loss; and, men who were caring for significant others (family members, partners). A greater percentage of men 50+ years report moderate to high levels of isolation in comparison to older women, and in relation to help-seeking older men are less likely to report loneliness than older women.

In this presentation we report key findings on how men seek to alleviate loneliness and isolation and their participation in local groups run by services, clubs and societies. In particular we focus on the aspect's men value about group participation and the barriers identified, and how these vary across differences in locality, ability and sexuality. Implications for informing provision of group interventions for older men will be discussed.

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The Journal of long-Term Care is an international, multi- and inter-disciplinary, peer-reviewed, open-access online journal, hosted by ILPN at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

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