

Institution: University of Salford

Unit of assessment: A3 Allied Health

A: Context: Research impact in Allied Health at the University of Salford is concerned with developing applied, interdisciplinary research, focused on improving structures and processes in clinical and professional practice, addressing complex health challenges and facilitating better outcomes in health and social care through:

- Increased agency in the self-management of health and self-directed access to healthcare, improving capacity for improving health outcomes;
- Increased availability of, rigour and capability in, health promotion and rehabilitation products and technologies, and the deployment of clinical evidence and support;
- Development of national and international standards to support clinical practice, and;
- Increased public and patient participation in health research design and delivery.

The Unit's research makes a significant felt contribution to the quality of life of people and communities, whilst supporting the efficiency and effectiveness of health policy and practice.

The non-academic user groups, beneficiaries or audiences and types of impact specifically relevant to the Unit's research include:

- Young people, their families and support networks, and social service providers, where impact is developed in the area of enhanced multi-agency working to effect early intervention in health and social care for troubled families, reducing dependence on services and associated costs.
- Lesbians and bisexual women, young people, local and national government and voluntary and community sector organisations, where impact is focused on identifying patients' information needs, developing services to meet patients' information needs, and equipping health professionals with the skills to engage patients in their own health care management, improving uptake of health interventions.
- People with arthritis and related health challenges, health providers and health policy makers, where impact is focused on supporting people with arthritis in managing their pain and fatigue, and supporting occupational therapists to support effective self-management by people with arthritis, improving quality of life.
- The footwear and orthotics industries and people who use foot orthotic products, where impact is developed in the area of foot biomechanics and foot tissue research in health and disease to better understand the benefit to be derived from foot health devices, demonstrating economic, social and health benefits.
- People who have experienced strokes, where impact is developed in the area of improving function after stroke through the use of functional electrical stimulation to modulate the functioning of the motor control system, improving quality of life and recovery times.
- Health librarians and clinicians, Health and Wellbeing Boards, local authorities, where impact is focused on the provision of better information to support clinical practitioners' capacity to utilise evidence to improve patient care.
- Businesses, Chambers of Commerce; employees, Job Centres, small and medium enterprises, voluntary and community sector bodies, where impact is focused on improving health and wellbeing at work, including the built, policy and organisational environment, reducing barriers to work.
- Hospitals and clinical staff, hospital patients, internationally and people living in or visiting non-domicile countries, health employment and economies internationally, where impact is focused on the development of a formal foundation for standardised terminologies for nursing languages, providing an international standard to support nursing practice.
- People with dementia, hospital patients, older people, people at risk of isolation, lay researchers, social care staff, people managing their medication at home, communities with differing health needs including travellers, young people and people living in deprived areas, where impact is focused on increasing public and patient participation in research.

The research that gives rise to these impacts is conducted across two research centres:

The Centre for Health, Sport and Rehabilitation Sciences Research is a highly multidisciplinary environment with members drawn from the health professions, including physiotherapy, podiatry, sports rehabilitation, prosthetics and orthotics and occupational therapy, as well as engineering, sport science, and computing science.

The Centre for Nursing, Midwifery & Social Work Research advances nursing, midwifery and social work education and practice, informing social policy. The Centre's research benefits health and social care service users and carers, educators, practitioners and policy-makers with a commitment to public involvement in research.

B. Approach to impact: The Unit's approach to engaging with or developing relationships with users, beneficiaries or audiences to develop impact from the research includes:

- Enhanced multi-agency working to effect early intervention in health and social care for troubled families by evaluation of family intervention projects, identifying and guiding the sustained improvement in health and wellbeing for troubled families, in partnership with local strategic partnerships. *Impact Case Study*
- Equipping health professionals with the skills and knowledge to engage patients in their own health care management by implementing a patient-led approach to information provision, empowering patients to identify information needs, increasing the engagement skills of professionals to embrace a shared-decision making agenda between the patient and health professionals. *Impact Case Study*
- Supporting people with arthritis in managing their pain and fatigue, and supporting occupational therapists to support effective self-management by people with arthritis by developing randomised controlled trials in joint protection education and occupational therapy support. *Impact Case Study*
- Enhancing the benefit to be derived from health devices, by quantifying foot tissue and foot function in relation to footwear and orthotic design, in partnership with clinicians and patients, ensuring a scientific approach to product design in partnership with multi-national footwear manufacturers and retailers. *Impact Case Study*
- Improving function after stroke through the use of functional electrical stimulation to modulate the functioning of the motor control system by the development and evaluation of the world's first multi-channel implantable stimulator for foot drop, which is now marketed by Finetech Medical and being offered to NHS patients through Salisbury District Hospital. Evidence: [Finetech Medical](#)
- The provision of better information to support clinical practitioners' ability to utilise evidence to improve patient care by systematic review of information skills training, providing a benchmark for the field and demonstrating that health librarians improve practitioners' knowledge and ability to find evidence which impacts on patient care, clinical teaching and local guidelines, improving the standards of patient care and contributing to the NHS Quality and Improvement agenda. Evidence: [Practitioner Researcher Excellence Award](#)
- Improving health and wellbeing at work and reducing barriers to work by reviewing evidence regarding the effectiveness of workplace physical activity and developing interventions in changing employee behaviour, informing national guidelines in public health and developing theoretical/practical models relating to workplace health issues. Evidence: [Link to North West Commissioning Toolkit](#)
- Developing a formal foundation for standardised terminologies for nursing languages, emerging as an international standard for nursing, by the application of theoretical informatics research to develop standardised terminologies for nursing, supporting nursing practice at a global level and facilitating improved patient outcomes. *Impact Case Study*
- Maximising public and patient participation in research, design, undertaking and evaluation, increasing patient and public involvement in research by the development of multi-methods studies conducted by lay-researchers alongside NHS and social care staff in a range of healthcare settings resulting in implemented recommendations and leading to the development of good practice guidance for researchers in public involvement in co-design for researchers. Evidence: [Improving hospital environments for people with dementia](#)

Research staff at all levels within the Unit are specifically supported and enabled to achieve impact from their research through the following initiatives:

- Sustained partnerships with the NHS, voluntary, public and private sectors, jointly funded research projects and professional doctorate programme;
- Working with industry to exploit intellectual property commercially;
- Developing Knowledge Transfer Partnerships;
- Fee waivers in key areas of research;
- Workload allocation and sabbatical scheme with a focus on impact, allowing dedicated time to pursue impactful research.

The unit makes use of institutional facilities, expertise or resources in undertaking these activities through:

- Promotion and development of impact through the [Salford Impact](#) initiative:
 - Salford Impact Advisory Group with cross-university and external representation to build momentum and develop excellence in evidencing impact;
 - Celebrating impact in the Vice Chancellor's Research Excellence Awards;
- Embedding impact in all research and innovation funding bids;
- Early Career Researcher training in impact.

C. Strategy and plans: With a record of generating research in partnership, the University of Salford is well-placed to articulate its impacts. It has developed an institutional approach, [Salford Impact](#), with the aim of evidencing, developing and celebrating the transformational impact of University of Salford research. Allied Health research at the University of Salford plans to continue to exemplify the Salford Impact approach in future research practice through increasing focus on the successful realisation of impact through all research activity, increasing agency in the self-management of health and self-directed access to healthcare, supporting improvements in structures and processes in clinical and professional practice, facilitating better outcomes in health and social care - with a particular emphasis on policy and partner, patient and community defined impact, as implicit elements of its research practice:

- Increasing innovation in and depth of partnerships with public, health, voluntary and community and commercial sector organisations, with enhanced focus on understanding and addressing their pressures and supporting their priorities;
- Taking an increasingly structured approach to deriving and applying learning from our impact; and,
- Increasing the involvement of partners, patients and communities in understanding and strengthening the impact of our research.

D. Relationship to case studies

Case Study 1: [Foot health devices](#) exemplifies and has informed the development of the Unit's approach to impact through its focus on better understanding of how feet and specific foot tissues contribute to foot, lower limb and overall health and wellbeing with successful transfer of knowledge into industry and products.

Case Study 2: [International standardisation in nursing terminology](#) exemplifies and has informed the development of the Unit's approach to impact through its focus on supporting nursing practice at a global level to facilitate improved patient outcomes.

Case Study 3: [Meeting the information needs of patients to improve health outcomes](#) exemplifies and has informed the development of the Unit's approach to impact through its focus on increasing patient involvement in their health care, enhancing the use of digital media by healthcare providers and supporting the use of evidence to inform policy and strategy.

Case Study 4: [Occupational Therapy and Self-management for people with arthritis](#) exemplifies and has informed the development of the Unit's approach to impact through its focus on improving the tools available to Occupational Therapists to deliver more effective self-management education to people with arthritis and improve patients' quality of life.

Case Study 5: [Improving outcomes for children, young people and families](#) exemplifies and has informed the development of the Unit's approach to impact through supporting the development of health and social care initiatives to promote social inclusion and improve quality of life, family cohesion, and health outcomes for at risk, and disadvantaged families.