

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: University of Nottingham
Unit of Assessment: 22 (Social Work and Social Policy)
Title of case study: Influencing and shaping professional guidelines for working with vulnerable children and adults
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>A body of work from researchers in the Health, Social Care and Well-being Centre (HSCWBC) in the School, on the safety and well-being of vulnerable children and adults, has directly shaped three sets of policy and practice guidelines - from the Department of Education, the Department of Health and the Home Office. The research has been used as an evidence base to underpin the guidance required by health and social care practitioners. Such guidance contributes to frameworks for practice and as such are key to the role and function of these practitioners.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The key researchers for this case study are Dr Kate Morris (September 2009 to present), Rachael Clawson (January 2012 to present), and Dr Rachel Fyson (April 2001 to present) all from the HSCWBC in the School of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Nottingham. All three researchers have worked closely with Government bodies and national charities in developing research relating to the safety and well-being of vulnerable children and adults.</p> <p>In 2010, Morris was commissioned by the British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (BASCPAN) (7) to undertake an innovative study of family participation in case reviews (1,2). The study explored the experiences of families and professionals in case reviews where a child had died or suffered serious injury as a result of abuse or neglect. For the first time, the experiences of families participating in case reviews were being researched. The study identified an uneven picture of family involvement. This reflected professional uncertainty about the purpose, value and role of family involvement in this aspect of child protection processes. Three key recommendations were made for improving practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • given the complexity and individuality of each situation, guiding principles rather than prescriptive practice is best suited to the policies and practices of family participation; • families <i>and</i> 'significant others' should be invited to participate in case reviews involving anyone who was important to that particular family system; • the type and nature of family participation hinges on the scoping stage of the review process. Therefore the guidance for setting the terms of reference at the start of each review should include early opportunities for the family to contribute. The nature and type of family participation should be mapped out at the start of the review process. <p>In 2010, Clawson worked with the Ann Craft Trust, a national charity based within the School which works to prevent the abuse of people with learning disabilities, to undertake the first UK study on forced marriage of people with learning disabilities (8). Discussions with the Home Office/Foreign and Commonwealth Office Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) revealed that they had little information on the prevalence, motivations or consequences of forced marriage for this group and how this linked to current safeguarding practices. Key findings showed that the predominant reason for forcing someone to marry is to obtain a carer (3,4). Many families would not view this as 'wrong' even where the person with the learning disability did not have capacity to consent and as a result many frontline professionals believed that they needed additional training and support to manage these cases effectively.</p> <p>In 2007, Fyson was commissioned by Mencap (9) to conduct research into the role and effectiveness of Learning Disability Partnership Boards (LDPBs) (5). Mencap had commissioned the research on behalf of the Department of Health and the Government's Learning Disability Taskforce as part of a review of the <i>Valuing People</i> White Paper. There was a concern that many Partnership Boards were not succeeding in fulfilling their strategic function of shaping local services for people with learning disabilities. The research identified clear tensions between the requirements for LDPBs to operate in fully inclusive ways and their ability to affect strategic change within local services (6). Fyson made five key recommendations to the Department of</p>

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Health to improve the effectiveness of LDPBs:

- clearer guidance from central Government about the roles and responsibilities of LDPBs;
- LDPBs to be given statutory recognition;
- LDBPs to strengthen their democratic mandate by having elected councillors as Board members;
- firmer Government guidance to be issued requiring statutory agencies to participate in LDPB processes; and
- LDPBs to set clear targets against which their achievements could be measured.

3. References to the research

The quality of underpinning research is evidenced by the fact that the following outputs have been published in peer-reviewed journals or are the result of a commissioned funding process.

Research outputs

1. **Morris, K.**, Brandon, M. & Tudor, P. (2012) *A Study of Family Involvement in Case Reviews: Messages for Policy and Practice*, York: BASPCAN.
<http://www.baspcan.org.uk/files/Executive%20Summary.pdf>
2. **Morris, K.**, Brandon, M. & Tudor, P. (Published online: 29 May 2013) 'Rights, responsibilities and pragmatic practice: Family participation in Case Review', *Child Abuse Review*. DOI: 10.1002/car.2272.
3. Rauf, B., Saleem, N., **Clawson, R.**, Sanghera, M. & Marston, G. (2013) 'Forced Marriage: Implications for mental health and intellectual disability services', *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 19(2) 135-143. <http://apt.rcpsych.org/content/19/2/135.full.pdf+html> and available on request.
4. **Clawson, R.** (2013) 'Safeguarding people with learning disabilities at risk of forced marriage: Issues for inter-agency practice', *Social Work and Social Services Review*. DOI: 10.1921/3503160302 and available on request.
5. **Fyson, R.** & Fox, L. (2008) *The Role and Effectiveness of Learning Disability Partnership Boards*, London/Nottingham: Mencap/International Centre for Public and Social Policy. ISBN 978 0 85358 250 2; pp.38.
6. **Fyson, R.** & Fox, L. (Published online: 02 May 2013) 'Inclusion or outcomes? Tensions in the involvement of people with learning disabilities in strategic planning', *Disability & Society*. DOI: 10.1080/09687599.2013.776491.

Research grants

7. PI: **Dr Kate Morris**. Family Participation in Case Reviews, British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. 2010-2012, £12,000.
8. PI: **Rachael Clawson**. Forced Marriage of People with Learning Disabilities, Home Office/Foreign and Commonwealth Office Forced Marriage Unit Domestic Programme Fund. 2009-10, £20,000 and 2011, £5,500.
9. PI: **Dr Rachel Fyson**. The Role and Effectiveness of Learning Disability Partnership Boards. Mencap, 2007-2008, £12,000.

4. Details of the impact

Morris' recommendations on family participation in case reviews have been included in the latest version of the UK Government's *Working Together to Safeguard Children* guidance (A). This is the core child protection document for all professionals (social care, health, police, etc.) in England whose work brings them into contact with children. It includes a new section (pp. 66-67) on the management of case reviews which directly reflect Morris's research-based recommendations. Morris's research report was published by the British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (BASPCAN) and distributed to its 1000+ members and all local authority and central government policy leads (1, above). In its forward the Chair of BASPCAN noted that the research had "*challenged the status quo and the final recommendations*

are a powerful force for change and improvement".

Since the production of early findings and the publication of her report, Morris has been invited to share her findings with senior policy makers and expert practitioners at a House of Lords consultative seminar hosted by the Earl of Listowel (6-12-12); a Department of Health seminar (15-5-13) and a Capita Conference (23-9-13) (B); and at similar events in Edinburgh, Scotland (29-11-12) and Belfast, Northern Ireland (19-12-12). **Both the Scottish and Irish Governments are now following England's lead and incorporating Morris's recommendations into their national policy guidelines on child protection** and there is evidence of Morris's report being used in these countries (C).

As well as influencing policy, the guidelines are permeating practice; a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Manager's review of the guidance states:

"One of the greatest challenges for LSCBs is how we engage families both effectively and sensitively in the Serious Case Review process. This thought provoking research provides for the first time an insight to what the process is like from the perspective of the family and from this develops practice guidance that will be a become an invaluable resource." (D)

Drawing on her research, Clawson wrote the multi-agency guidelines on forced marriage of people with learning disabilities for the Government's Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) (E), which are claimed to be *"extremely useful in tackling...cases"* by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and the FMU (F). The guidelines are being used to inform policy and practice and have been circulated by the FMU to statutory and voluntary sector social care organisations, schools, colleges and criminal justice professionals – including the police and health services. They are available on Safeguarding Board websites, e.g. (G).

The guidelines are influencing the courts. In a Court of Protection case, Justice Parker drew on the guidelines and, in her summing up, recommended that *"these guidelines should be widely disseminated"* (H). The research continues to influence legislation as evidenced by the recent invitation by Rt. Hon., Elizabeth Butler-Sloss for Clawson and the Ann Craft Trust speak at the National Commission on Forced Marriage in the House of Lords on 31 October 2013.

A training pack was developed and piloted by Clawson and the Ann Craft Trust in 2011: fifty frontline safeguarding practitioners from across the UK were trained and these resources are now used for training by Adult and Child Safeguarding Boards (I). Clawson also identified the need for, and now Chairs, a National Steering Group on Forced Marriage and Learning Disability whose members include representatives from FMU and statutory and voluntary agencies and visiting attendees such as The Canadian High Commission. This Steering Group ensures the ongoing recognition of this issue. As Chair, Clawson reports directly to the FMU National Partnership Board, which is fundamental to the development of policy and legislation.

Clawson is frequently approached as an expert in this field to raise awareness of key issues. Media appearances include: national newspapers (The Times, 16-7-12; The Guardian 1-8-12); reports on local radio (BBC Nottingham; BBC Derby; BBC Northampton; BBC Leicester), national radio (BBC radio 4 'Face the Facts' 1-8-12; BBC Asian Network 3-8-12) and international radio (BBC World Service 15-8-11); UK television (ITV London, 7-6-13).

In 2012, the FMU awarded Clawson and the Ann Craft Trust £5,500 for a follow-on study to explore how the national guidelines have impacted upon frontline practice. This work is ongoing.

Recommendations from Fyson's work on Learning Disability Partnership Boards directly informed the 2009 Valuing People Now White Paper (Cm 5086) (J). Her work was part of the Department of Health learning disability policy review and is referenced in the White Paper (pp.116-7). Moreover, in line with a key recommendation, the Government issued guidance on Partnership Boards to the 152 local authorities and health trusts in October 2009 (K). The content of the guidance closely reflected four of the five recommendations made by Fyson.

Reaching out directly to local policy makers, Fyson's research findings have been made publicly available via various websites including Mencap's website (L) and the NHS library. Hard copies of the research report – in both standard/full and accessible/'easy words and pictures' format – were

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distributed to all 150 Learning Disability Partnership Boards in England.

The guidelines are influencing practice within local authorities - numerous local authorities have reproduced either Fyson's original report (2008) or the Government's (2009) White Paper and the guidelines on their websites (e.g. M). There is also publicly available evidence (N) that Partnership Boards have responded positively to this guidance and are now producing robust information about their achievements and strategic goals.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- A. HM Government (2013) *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide To Inter-Agency Working To Safeguard And Promote The Welfare Of Children*, London: Department for Education. <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00213160/working-together-to-safeguard-children>
- B. Capita national conference on Serious Case Reviews (26 September 2013). <http://capita-conferences.msgfocus.com/q/1H8PaZ5XkPqFSpTyiTTtEy/wv>
- C. With Scotland (formerly MARS and SCCPN/Multi-Agency Resource Service and Scottish Child Care and Protection Network). <http://withscotland.org/resources/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- D. <http://www.baspcan.org.uk/report.php>
- E. HM Government (2010) *Forced Marriage and Learning Disabilities: Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines*, London: Home Office. www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/35533/fm-disability-guidelines.pdf
- F. Advice note from Directors of Adult Social Services and the Forced Marriage Unit. (http://www.adass.org.uk/images/stories/Policy%20Networks/Safeguarding_Adults/ForcedMarriageMar12.pdf)
- G. Link to Staffordshire Local Safeguarding Children's Board website. <http://www.staffsscb.org.uk/Professionals/Key-Safeguarding/Forced-Marriage/Forced-Marriage.aspx>
- H. Court of Protection: Mrs Justice Parker, 12th July 2012, [2012] EWHC 2183 (COP). <http://www.familylawhub.co.uk/default.aspx?i=ce2383>
- I. Chief Executive Officer, Ann Craft Trust. Corroborate the use of the training pack.
- J. HM Government (2009) *Valuing People Now: A New Three-year Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities*, Cm 5086, London: Department of Health. (<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110601212422/http://www.valuingpeoplenow.dh.gov.uk/valuing-people-now>)
- K. Department of Health (2009) *Good Learning Disability Partnership Boards: Making It Happen for Everyone*, London: Department of Health. (http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130107105354/http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_107384.pdf)
- L. Direct link to the research report via Mencap's web site. http://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2008-07/partnership_boards.pdf
- M. Link to evidence of guidance on Surrey LDPB website. http://www.surreypb.org.uk/index.php?page=/Our_workplan
- N. Public Health England. <http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/projects/partnershipboardreports>