

**Institution: Leeds Metropolitan University**

**Unit of Assessment: 2A Public Health, Health Services & Primary Care**

**a. Context**

Building on our submission in the Allied Health Professions and studies unit 12 in RAE 2008 we have continued to build on the significant trajectory of research excellence we profiled at that time. Our investment and focus on public health up to and since that time has realised significant impact benefit, demonstrating the long term effect of investment in research staff and students. Since RAE 2008 structural changes have enabled the creation of a new Faculty of Health and Social Sciences which has facilitated the development of an enlarged research active culture and grouping which now contributes to this submission. Our research produces impact by providing an evidence base that informs policy and practice thereby leading to improved outcomes for patients and other user groups.

**b. Approach to impact**

The Faculty of Health & Social Sciences has reconfigured areas of research expertise with the launch of The Institute for Health & Wellbeing (2011) <http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/research/institute-for-health-and-wellbeing.htm> which provides greater critical mass for our external profile, unites complementary academic areas and resonates with the current external health & social care environment. Presenting a cohesive portal to the external environment, makes it easier for the research funding community, partners and clients to engage with our experienced researchers. Creating the Institute for Health and Wellbeing has built on the existing high profile research work which the University delivers. For example, academics in the Centre for Men's Health at Leeds Metropolitan University led by Alan White have completed the first ever report which put the spotlight on the health of men right across Europe. This major ground-breaking report was commissioned by the European Commission to inform policy makers, health professionals, academics and the wider population about the very real and growing health challenges facing men, communities and Governments across Europe. The work of Jane South is at the vanguard of leading and influencing public and patient involvement in communities. Pinki Sahota has influenced the entire School population in Leeds and beyond with her work around School meals.

Presenting a cohesive portal to the external environment, making it easier for the research funding community, partners and clients to engage with our experienced researchers. Our community campus partnerships initiative *CommUNITY* is part of the Institute for Health & Wellbeing, and reflects the Institute's ambition to be a centre of excellence for applied research that makes a difference to people's lives <http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/community/>

**c. Strategy and plans**

Driven by the University's five year plan, [http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/strategicplan/Leeds-Metropolitan\\_Strategic-Plan\\_2010-2015.pdf](http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/strategicplan/Leeds-Metropolitan_Strategic-Plan_2010-2015.pdf) the Institute for Health and Wellbeing was established in 2011 and endorsed by a Director from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence and the Government National Director for health and work <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibjvj6L2Hxl> . The Institute for Health and Wellbeing funded internally with 250K start-up monies is central to the stated commitment of being a catalyst for social and economic progress in and for our region, nationally and internationally, through research and enterprise. The Institute for Health and Wellbeing drives partnerships and deliver applied research towards that commitment.

Current research expertise in the Institute for Health and Wellbeing is organised around research themes aligned to this Research Excellence Framework submission. The research themes all have professorial leadership:

- |    |                        |                             |
|----|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. | Professor Jane South   | Healthy communities         |
| b. | Professor Rachel Dixey | Health promotion            |
| c. | Professor Mark Johnson | Pain science and management |
| d. | Professor Alan White   | Men's health                |

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|----|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| e. | Professor Steve Robertson | Men, gender and wellbeing     |
| f. | Professor Pinki Sahota    | Nutrition & childhood obesity |

The creation of the Institute has also added benefit as follows:

- A greater focus on research and enterprise, reflecting the University's strategic plan "Quality, Relevance and Sustainability"
- The broad definition of "Health and Wellbeing" means the Institute will bring together a wide range of relevant research without being constrained by traditional boundaries
- The creation of a critical mass across a related range of disciplines through which innovation and collaboration can thrive
- Reflecting the latest directions and priorities in funding, including key Government policy priorities (including workplace health and wellbeing)

We also work to make our research accessible to the general public and how it can be applied. At *Health Together*, we know how to commission for and deliver effective engagement to improve health and wellbeing. We combine practical experience of policy making and programme delivery with academic rigour and in-depth knowledge of the evidence base. Health Together offer a bespoke service which helps to identify what organisations want to do and how to make it happen. From research and needs assessment, through to commissioning, programme planning, delivery and evaluation we support organisations to engage with people, patients and communities. We provide facilitation, policy development, evidence briefings, report writing, programme design, research and evaluation <http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/healthtogether/>.

### d. Relationship to case studies

The selected case studies highlight three different approaches we have used to achieve impact from three of our research themes. Child health and obesity remain key areas of public health policy in the UK as referred to in the recent Public Health White Paper and Marmot Review. The research undertaken includes interventions targeting the early years through to primary and secondary-age children and therefore compliments the life course approach currently recommended for public health and policy. The research on factors influencing uptake of free school meals in Dec 2010 has resulted in a new policy for all Leeds secondary schools which improves access to healthy food and makes free school dinners more widely available. The research suggested many children who are eligible for free school meals fail to take up their entitlement and instead snack on unhealthy food during morning break time. The new policy allows pupils to pre-order 'grab bags' - consisting of a sandwich, dessert and drink which can be eaten at break-time when they are hungry and thereby taking advantage of their entitlement. In January 2012 research undertaken by the team resulted in wide media coverage on the role of family mealtimes in encouraging fruit and vegetable consumption. As an acknowledgement of Professor Sahota's expertise in the field of Childhood Obesity she was invited to join the International Scientific Committee for the European Congress on Obesity (May 2013); join the DH Expert Working Group (Nov 2012) to develop commissioning guidance for Child Weight Management Programmes which are now available; in Feb 2013 to present an Expert Testimony to the Programme Development Board on child weight management programmes (10); the House of Commons to the launch of the All Part Parliamentary Group on Obesity (April 2013).

The work of A White has led to a re-appraisal of men's risk of premature death, both in the UK and abroad. His analysis of morbidity and mortality data has helped stimulate a worldwide debate on the health of men and the risks they face with their health. In the UK, analysis of cancer data has led to the leading cancer charities having a rethink on men's risk of cancer. His early scoping work has led to a seminal European study funded by the European Commission; The EC State of Men's Health in Europe report has helped create a new insight into the equality needs of men and stimulated the production of similar reports globally. A White's work has received wide coverage by the popular press including BBC and ITV News; BBC News 24; BBC World Service; Sky News; a

**Impact template (REF3a)**

studio interview for BBC Breakfast; Radio 4 PM programme; and the main newspapers, both here and abroad (over 100 citations) along with a profile of his work in the New Scientist. He has also had a column in the Men's Health Magazine and profiles of him and his work in national and international magazines. White has presented his research at over 65 conferences since 2008, with over 30 of these international, with key note addresses at the World Congress on Men's Health and papers and an invited lecture tour to Australia in October 2013. White has been invited to key policy meetings and workshops both in the UK and abroad including the National Cancer Equalities Initiative Men and Cancer Gender Visioning Event and a European Commission Health Information Workshop held at the European Health Forum Gastein in 2010.

J South's work on Lay engagement in public health and the wider issue of volunteering in health now feature prominently in UK policy. The CHPR has taken a leading role in promoting knowledge exchange between academia, policy makers and practice. Following the first Department of Health national think tank on 'Engaging with communities: where does patient and community engagement fit into the new policy scenario?' held in February 2011, the University took on the role of hosting a new network which is working to disseminate evidence and learning on community engagement. A national Expert Symposium held at the University in May 2012, as part of the NIHR funded 'Peers in Prisons Settings' study, attracted civil servants, prison service staff, academics and user groups from across the criminal justice system. In 2013, J.South was invited by the ESRC Knowledge Navigator to lead an evidence review on public health and local government to inform the ESRC, Local Government Association and Society of Local Authority Chief Executives. There is increasing recognition of the research on lay health workers in an international context. J.South gave a key note speech on community involvement at Roskilde University Denmark (2011) and at 7th Nordic Health Promotion Conference, Vestfold University College, Norway (2013). Findings have also been presented at the Health Enhancing Physical Activity Europe Conference [10]. In 2013, J.South became a co-investigator on the Canadian Chronic Disease Awareness and Management Program with the University of Montreal and University of Ottawa.