

<p>Institution: University of Central Lancashire</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 22 Social Work and Social Policy</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The focus of research in the Unit has always been on producing knowledge that leads to innovations in policy, improvements in practice and benefits for users of services. Target groups include legislators and policy-makers, managers and providers of services, practitioners, carers and users or potential users of services. Most of our research is planned in conjunction with one or more of these groups, much of it is carried out with the participation of members of these groups, and we have developed strategies for communicating the outcomes of research to these groups. Our research is located in social work, social care, health and welfare, the socially engaged cultural sector and, related to this, civic action. The main focus is on our research clusters: (a) <i>Children, Young People and Families</i>; (b) <i>Psychosocial Wellbeing and Mental Health</i> (c) <i>Inclusion, Diversity and Social Justice</i>. Within these broad areas we aspire to influence legislation, policy and professional practice, service delivery and management, leading to improved health and welfare outcomes. We aim to inform practitioner debate and challenge conventional wisdom, improve public understanding of social issues and enhance democratic participation.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>Children, young people and families: Research builds on our relationships with children and young people and those working with them, using children and young people's advisory groups and producing child-friendly research outputs (such as the Social Work Practices report). Key strategic components are: The Centre (for Children and Young People's Participation), the Connect Centre for international research on preventing violence and harm, and our Making Research Count partnership. The Centre (Thomas, Bilson, Larkins, Westwood) was established in partnership with children and young people, who have been engaged in designing and carrying out research that reflects children's agendas, e.g. 'How's My Worker Doing?'. The Centre's seminar series (20 to date) has engaged academics, professionals and young people, as audience and as presenters. In 2012 it hosted the 2nd international conference of the International Childhood and Youth Research Network, which brought together researchers, policy-makers and practitioners, and Different Voices in Global Conversations, an international gathering of children and young people linked directly with the conference and facilitated by our partners North West Regional Youth Work Unit, Lancashire Young People's Service, The Children's Society and ChildHope. The Connect Centre will focus on international research and collaborative relationships (University of Melbourne, Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies, National Centre for Social Research, Denmark, Sigmund Freud Mental Health Hospital, Austria, UNICEF Research Centre), which will give the work greater reach. Our Making Research Count partnership has links with local agencies including County Councils. We aim to contribute to research-informed and evidence-based practice: we have held successful conferences for practitioners on Looked After Children, Parenting Capacity and Domestic Violence. Staff have strong links with local authorities, government departments, NGOs and professional bodies, and international organisations such as UNICEF, OAK Foundation, Everychild and Save the Children, responding to knowledge needs in the field. The impact of Bilson and Stanley's work is evidenced in Case Studies 1 and 2. Ideas and materials from Thomas's work on participation have been adopted by child care and protection services in Norway, the Netherlands, Australia and elsewhere. His research into Children in Care Councils in London was taken up by agencies in England and Northern Ireland. His <i>Handbook of Children and Young People's Participation</i> has been used by practitioners globally to share thinking about best practice. Thomas and Larkins are members of Eurochild's expert group on participation of marginalised children in Europe, which is moving policy forward across European child welfare agencies on the basis of research by the Unit and others. Larkins and Thomas's research for the Children's Commissioner for England on disabled children's rights and poverty was widely reported in the media, and will be used by the Commissioner as part of their submission to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Larkins's 'Wheel of participation' (presented at the 3rd European Conference for Social Work Research) has been taken up by youth workers in Finland as a means of evaluating conditions that enable participation. Newbigging and Thomas's work for SCIE on good practice in social care for asylum seekers and refugees has been awarded the NICE accredited 'lozenge'. Ridley and Wainwright's study of Black adoption services has been used by Action for Children to help shape its future direction. Thomas is a member of the British Association for Adoption and Fostering Research Group Advisory</p>

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Committee, and **Stanley** has taken a leading role in the British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, chairing the Scientific Committee for the 2012 Congress. Members of the unit are actively involved in JUCSWEC (**Cox**) and The College of Social Work.

Psychosocial wellbeing and mental health: The **Psychosocial Research Unit** was set up in response to practitioner and user demands for holistic approaches to health and social care as 'practice-near research', subject of an ESRC seminar series concluded at UCLan in 2009. PRU has completed some 25 projects with a range of funders, working in partnership to produce research designs sensitive to practitioners' concerns. Outcomes have informed training and development for managers and practitioners, for example a regional conference for Managers of Youth Offending Teams in 2009. A key focus is the contribution of socially engaged arts to well-being; for example, a study of health-related activities of regional museums won a 2011 award from the Royal Society of Public Health. The approach has been translated into practitioner training and adapted for use in Canada and Norway. **Froggett's** work on transformative effects of the arts, delivered at a major conference for arts professionals in 2011, has been taken up in the sector leading to numerous speaking invitations and further work for the Arts Councils of England and Ireland. She is active in the national Arts and Health network which aims to promote and disseminate arts and health research, and on the steering group of the Association for Psychosocial Studies which aims to extend the international reach of psychosocial research. She sits on the steering group of a major AHRC programme on the Value of Culture. The **Healthy Settings Unit (Dooris, Doherty)** has contributed to promoting health and wellbeing in cities, prisons and higher education institutions nationally and internationally. **Dooris** was part of the WHO evaluation team for European Healthy Cities and his team currently co-ordinates the WHO-accredited UK Healthy Cities Network. The Unit has impacted through the recognition of universities as a setting for health promotion by WHO, inclusion of higher education as a focus in English public health strategy, and establishment of infrastructures such as English National Network of Healthy Universities to translate research into practice. **Dooris** is the national focal point for development of a European Health Promoting Universities Network, and participating in a WHO-led initiative exploring synergy between international health promotion networks. **Ridley's** Mental Health Act study was conducted for Scottish Government as part of the development of mental health law, and fed directly into the Scottish law review group. Ridley also produced guidelines for commissioning supported employment on behalf of WorkforcePlus in Scotland, and was invited to give oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament in relation to the Self-directed Support Bill. **Newbigging** and **Ridley's** NIHR review of Independent Mental Health Advocate (IMHA) Services in England was launched in the House of Commons in June 2012 by the Chair of the All Parliamentary Mental Health Group; **Newbigging** has been invited on to a DH national steering group for the Review of the Code of Practice for the Mental Health Act. **Spandler** aims for impact on how mental health services are designed, publishing in magazines for users and professionals, speaking at public forums and working with the national Soteria Network to build a case for therapeutic community houses. She is on the editorial collective of *Asylum: the magazine for democratic psychiatry* and has presented at public forums such as Tent City University, leading to a collaboration between *Asylum* and activists from the Occupy movement.

Inclusion, Diversity and Social Justice: Research in this area is wide-ranging, with an emphasis on understanding the experiences of service users and citizens and engaging directly with them as research partners. **Roy's** research for commissioners or deliverers of services aims to develop understandings of how policies and practices are experienced and understood by different stakeholders. **Hacking's** work with the national development team for social inclusion (NDTi) produced a validation of the 'inclusion web' tool, which resulted in a large number of Trusts using it to help evidence progress for service users. She has also validated CAIRO, a mental health environmental measure presented at World Psychiatric Association conference in Prague 2012. The **Healthy Settings Unit (Dooris, Baybutt)** hosts the delivery of the WHO European Collaborating Centre for Health and Prisons and is scoping collaborative international research on offender health and wellbeing. **McManus'** research led to KIRAT: Kent Internet Risk Assessment Tool for individuals accessing indecent images of children, recently reported within CEOP's thematic assessment as 'the most rigorously tested assessment tool currently available', accredited by ACPO to be used by all UK Police Forces, and funded to be extended to Europe. **O'Brien** has discussed his work on the 'crisis of waste' on national and local radio, written for the *Guardian* and the *Ecologist* and was invited to the All-Ireland Environment Conference in 2008.

The new **Centre for Citizenship and Community (Froggett, Roy)** will build on the National Social Inclusion Programme, of which Morris (not submitted) was founding Director, as an programme of research with national partners linked to practice development. This activity continues to shape national policy on inclusion and equalities through Morris' participation in the Government's 'Inclusion Health' programme and by way of new strategic partnerships with, among others, RSA and the Royal Society of Public Health.

c. Strategy and plans

Our research strategy 2013-2016 (see REF5) has impact and influence as core objectives. We will develop and consolidate working relationships with communities, user groups, professionals and policy makers in our research, from early planning to implementation and dissemination. We are giving our research reach and presence through a dedicated post to develop web and social media. We have updated our media skills through customised training, and are planning the same to maximise wider impact. We see our five research centres, located strategically in each research area, as key to building for the future, providing a strong focus for collaborative work with service providers and other partners, and will raise their profile through strategic bidding, targeted dissemination and network building. The University has a strategic emphasis on knowledge transfer; the School of Social Work is committed to developing this and has engaged with Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs). **Froggett** had a major role in KTPs on crime and regeneration; **Roy** leads a three-year KTP on recovery processes for substance misusers; we have partnerships with the Lesbian and Gay Foundation, the Care Quality Commission and Central Lancashire NHS to embed participatory evaluation. The School was on NICE Programme Development Groups for guidance on (i) community engagement to improve health (ii) responses to domestic violence, and is active in the North West People in Research Forum, funded by NHS North West and NIHR to promote patient and public involvement. **The Centre** is part of a favoured bid to establish a North West Coast Academic Health Science Network with a focus on children and young people's participation, and a favoured bid to Cabinet Office for a major initiative on Youth Social Action. **Radford, Chantler, Berry** and **McCarry** are developing impact based on their research before and since joining the Unit. **Radford** has contributed to UNICEF guidance on ethical issues in surveying children's experiences of violence and on responses to child sexual abuse and exploitation, particularly in low income nations and situations of humanitarian crisis.

d. Relationship to case studies

Four case studies are included with this submission. 1) Developing Service Responses to Domestic Violence: This research was commissioned in partnership with the NSPCC and the NHS, and effectively disseminated using links with Government and with Research into Practice. As well as producing significant innovation in services provided by welfare and criminal justice agencies, it has led to the development of a major programme of international research and the establishment of the Connect Centre, which will increase further the impact of the Unit's research. 2) Services for Children in Out-of-Home Care: This programme is underpinned by relationships with international agencies (UNICEF, Save the Children and EveryChild) as well as UK Government, which has helped in producing widely-read reports and direct links with policy-makers and legislators. In addition to the benefits for public policy in the UK, there has been real impact on children's lives in a number of countries, in that fewer children are in institutions and more families are being effectively supported. 3) Healthy Settings – Improving Health and Wellbeing in Higher Education and Criminal Justice Settings: This work has engaged directly with national and international agencies (Universities UK and the Prison Service; WHO and IUHPE), and as a result is having a strong national and wider global impacts, as well as transformative impacts on people's lives. The influence of this programme continues to grow, and it is being used in the institution and beyond as an example of how to achieve real impact. 4) Potential and Limitations of Policies Promoting Choice, Flexibility and Control: These studies are largely Government-funded, and have fed directly into legislation and guidance. Every project has engaged with user groups throughout the process of research and dissemination. The programme is an ongoing one, taking a strategic approach to research and policy development driven in large measure by the experiences of users. All four case studies provide evidence of an effective strategic approach that: prioritises research grounded in (i) questions being asked by policy-makers and service providers, (ii) experiences and concerns of professionals and service users; and that builds and sustains dialogic relationships with policy, practice and user communities, in the process stimulating further funding.