

<p>Institution: University of Lincoln</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 22 – Social Work and Social Policy</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p>Research users, beneficiaries and audiences</p> <p>This UoA sits within the School of Social and Political Sciences and the Policy Studies Research Centre (PSRC), which also house the University’s submission for Politics and International Studies (UoA21). Research within the UoA falls within three research groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>governance and regulation</i>, including international medical regulation, health and social care regulation, community governance, urban governance, NHS reform, local political leadership, and the politics of welfare; • <i>social inclusion/exclusion</i>, covering a wide variety of groups, such as lone parents, disadvantaged families and young people, older people, people with learning difficulties, people with multiple and complex needs, South Asian women, victims of state violence, and bondage and discipline, dominance and submission practitioners; • <i>pedagogy</i>, including, for example, critical pedagogies and employability in higher education. <p>The main non-academic user groups (as funders and/or beneficiaries) of the unit’s research have been and continue to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government departments, such as the Department of Health (medical regulation [Allsop]); Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF, now Department for Education [Hicks]) (adolescent neglect [Hicks]); Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) and Home Office (both community governance [Somerville]); Parliament, devolved assemblies and local government (petitions, elected bodies, representation and scrutiny) [C Bochel and H Bochel]; and other public bodies, e.g. the Electoral Commission (elected bodies [H Bochel]); National Centre for Excellence in Residential Child Care (children’s homes management [Hicks]); • local authorities and local partnerships including: Lincolnshire County Council (racism in schools [Somerville], ‘troubled families’ [Bond-Taylor and Somerville], care homes [Rogers] and community transport [Somerville]); Lincolnshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team (substance misuse [Somerville, Jameson, Strudwick]); Stoke City Council (homelessness [Somerville]); City of Lincoln Council (neighbourhood governance [H Bochel, Somerville, Wallace, C Bochel]); • voluntary sector organisations, including: Homeless Link, YMCA, Salvation Army and Brighter Futures (all homelessness [Somerville]); Lincoln Business Improvement Group (the night-time economy [Somerville]); the Young Foundation (community governance [Somerville]); • professional groups, such as: the General Medical Council (medical regulation [Allsop]); General Social Care Council (the regulation of social work education [Saks]); social workers (training on forced marriage [Anitha]); therapists (understanding BDSM – bondage and discipline, dominance and submission, sado-masochism [Beckmann]); schools (forced marriage [Anitha]); international organisations, such as the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities [Allsop]; • service user and community groups, e.g. Southall Black Sisters (forced marriage [Anitha]); Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities [Walker]. <p>The main types of impact have involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shaping policy development:</i> e.g. following research on community governance, CLG recognised the capacities of: 1) parish and town councils to act as accountable bodies for neighbourhood governance, and 2) certain neighbourhood bodies to plan, own and build for local communities [Somerville] (governance and regulation research group); • <i>Improving professional practice:</i> e.g. following research on medical regulation, the Chief Medical Officer acknowledged the significant contribution that this research made to his own report concerning how to identify and take appropriate action on poorly performing doctors, and consequently to subsequent legislation [Allsop] (governance and regulation research group). • <i>Enhancing quality of life for service users:</i> e.g. following research on adolescent neglect, DCSF published a multi-agency guide, which was distributed to all local authorities and influenced the Department for Education in its proposed reforms to children’s services [Hicks]; research on

Impact template (REF3a)

the management of children's homes formed a major part of the evidence base for the Scottish Government's *National Guidance for the External Management of Residential Child Care Establishments*, published in June 2013 [Hicks]; research on the management of care homes led to improved practitioner understanding of deprivation of liberty safeguards [Rogers] (social inclusion/exclusion research group);

- *Developing community-based skills and experience*, e.g. as part of Arts and Humanities Research Council funded work, supporting local community groups in investigating aspects of their local heritage by providing research skills training for local volunteers and for schoolchildren [Hicks and Dagg].

b. Approach to impact

Our focus is explicitly on designing impact into each project from the start, with a view to making a difference to policy and practice that is clearly evidenced, and, where possible, making and enhancing impact by involving potential users throughout the research process. Impact-related activities are normally built into each study at the point when a bid for research funding or support is made (whether internally or externally), and then foregrounded during the research process: potential impacts are identified early, then communicated, discussed, developed and co-produced with the relevant stakeholders. For example:

- in Somerville's research on homelessness, key research users were identified and contributed to the bid for funding, and served on the project advisory group during the study, resulting in a number of significant non-academic outputs, including a website, a graphic novel (also accessible to children) and an exhibition of photographs;
- following Anitha's research, an exhibition, *Striking Women*, open to the public at venues across the UK, charted women's involvement in industrial disputes from the Grunwick strike of the late 1970s to the Gate Gourmet walk-out in 2005, and illustrated the experiences of two of these women in a graphic novel;
- Hicks has provided numerous workshops, training sessions and consultations with groups of practitioners and policy makers on adolescent neglect and leadership and management of children's homes, by invitation from local authorities, the third sector and private providers of children's services, and has presented her work via *Making Research Count*, a national social care and health research dissemination federation;
- Walker's research on older families of people with learning disabilities (*Uncertain Futures*) has been acknowledged as the benchmark for subsequent work in this area, e.g. by the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities, leading to the development of several projects, contributing to the development of the British Institute for Learning Disabilities' Ageing Well programme, and influencing the Department of Health's White Paper on learning disabilities (*Valuing People*, 2011).

This approach has been supported by, for example:

- explicit links – the University has established a Knowledge Exchange Scheme, of which a current example in this UoA is a partnership with Lincolnshire County Council to improve the provision of community transport within the county. This has resulted in a range of recommendations, many of which the Council is currently adopting;
- the appointment of a former senior civil servant (Sue Duncan) as a Visiting Professor, including to advise on how best to influence policy and evidence impact;
- the establishment of research groups that share experience and best practice on user engagement and impact generation, not only through informal everyday contact, but also through biannual research away days, staff colloquia, public lectures and individual mentoring (e.g. through partnership working) and targeted support and guidance for early career staff;
- peer review of all bids for external funding, including impact aspects;
- research seminars where research users have provided advice on effective engagement; notification of relevant consultations, parliamentary enquiries, etc; and media training, including advice and training on the use of new media such as podcasts and Twitter.

c. Strategy and plans

Our overall aim continues to be to ensure that all research conducted within this UoA is relevant, useful and used for policy and practice/service delivery. We seek to focus our expertise on major

social challenges where our research can make a difference. To this end we:

- are strengthening and deepening a culture of impact, e.g. by: recruiting staff who have track records in achieving significant impact and strong links with non-academic user groups and organisations; supporting staff in developing skills in user engagement and impact generation; and increasing the number and value of research bids aimed at building significant impact;
- ensure user priorities inform our research agenda, e.g. by: maintaining and extending our existing networks, and developing new networks, with potential users and funding bodies; and recruiting research students sponsored by funders or working with agencies with a clear interest in maximising impact;
- work in partnership with existing and potential users to ensure that our research continues to impact on practice after initial research projects have been completed, e.g. through use of ESRC Knowledge Exchange Funding;
- maximise opportunities to contribute to policy debate and development, e.g. by focusing on engaging particular groups, such as select committees, policy makers, local government, the business and charitable sectors, and the media; and providing staff with updates, at least monthly, of opportunities for impact by, for example, circulating details of calls for evidence and consultations;
- ensure research findings reach potential users, e.g. through user-friendly research summaries distributed to potential users at the end of all research projects, dedicated websites, and new forms of dissemination; and working closely with relevant service departments in the University, such as the Press Office and the Institutional Repository, to ensure that research is both intellectually and physically accessible, e.g. by improving publicity for our research findings, making our web pages more impact-sensitive, and assisting us to gather more robust evidence of our impact and to understand better how to measure that impact.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies selected for this UoA reflect the strengths of its research groups on 1) governance and participation and 2) social inclusion. In each case, the research addressed a particular issue or set of issues that directly involved practitioners, service users and/or the general public and resulted in outputs and dissemination that impacted significantly on policy and practice.

- 1) *International medical regulation* (Allsop, 2005-6): this research looked at how doctors in seven different countries were regulated. It found a trend towards partnership regulation between the profession and other stakeholders; periodic revalidation through appraisal; corporate governance through appointment not election; and the separation of the functions of investigation and adjudication. The final report had a direct impact on the report of the Chief Medical Officer, whose recommendations, which drew on Allsop's findings, led to a White Paper and subsequent legislation, and to impact on health regulation in other countries. This case study illustrates how the strong links between the researchers and user groups (medical professionals) led to an impact on policy and practice not only in the UK, but also in other countries – demonstrating reach as well as significance.
- 2) *Adolescent neglect* (Hicks, 2007-9): this research aimed to improve our understanding of adolescent neglect in the UK, and thereby lead to better safeguarding of children and young people. Its core finding was that current definitions and understandings of neglect needed to be re-examined. Consequently, two guides were produced to help practitioners and young people raise their understanding and improve their practice. This impacted on the government-commissioned Munro Review of Child Protection (2010), with the guide for practitioners, *Neglect Matters*, being cited in that review as evidence to support the importance of young people's participation and inclusion in child protection work. Hicks continues to work with local authorities in supporting the application of findings to practice and policy development and was an invited member of the Department for Education Steering Group for oversight of the policy changes for children's homes under the Challenge and Improvement programme. This case study illustrates how research highlighting an important but neglected area of policy, that nevertheless fits well with user priorities, has had a major impact on policy and practice at national and local levels – demonstrating reach as well as significance.