

Impact template (REF3a)

Institution: University of Stirling

Unit of Assessment: C22 Social Work and Social Policy

a. Context

Research users, beneficiaries and audiences

We are committed to producing evidence that benefits society, focusing in particular on the needs and rights of the most disadvantaged. Our research has a **direct** impact on the following:

Policy makers, who use our research to directly shape policy. At a *transnational* level e.g. over several years, work led by *Birchall* [Output 1] has (through six reports for UN agencies and two ESRC projects) demonstrated the potential of co-operative businesses in poverty reduction; partly as a result of this, several UN agencies, the World Bank and DfID developed programmes in low-income countries and, after a report by *Birchall* in 2009, the UN declared 2012 the International Year of Co-operatives; research undertaken by *Webster* [2] has led to the integration of social policy perspectives into European security research programmes and practice. Across *international contexts* e.g. in 2012 *McIvor* [2] was funded by the Carnegie Trust to study innovative services for female offenders in Australia where she had an opportunity to meet with policy makers and practitioners in four states and to give presentations on equivalent developments in Scotland. Subsequently New South Wales Department of Corrections have begun to explore the feasibility of establishing community resources for women informed by the experience of the 218 Centre in Glasgow. At a UK level e.g. *Rummery's* work on cash-for-care [1] has informed the development of direct payments and related policies through her engagement with policy makers at the Department of Health and the Scottish Government, extending the reach of the impact of her findings to all disabled people in receipt of such services in the UK (as far as such an impact could go within policy and practice contexts). At a *regional (Scottish)* level, e.g. *Daniel's* [3] work on risk and resilience has informed the development of the Getting It Right for Every Child and related policies. At a *local* level e.g. findings from *Malloch's* work on young runaways [1] were used to implement changes to data-collection and service-planning by statutory services in Scotland, leading to better informed public policy-making in the area of child-protection through the facilitation of improvement in public services practice and provision, as well as supportive data gathering and monitoring practices.

Statutory and third sector service providers, practitioners and service users: who have used our research directly in the development of evidence-based provision and improved services benefiting significant numbers of service users. For example, *Anderson's* work with Ytrehus and Dyb in Norway [4] has contributed to developments in the education of housing practitioners as reflected in the commission from the Norwegian Housing Bank to investigate how health and social workers in Norway understand housing issues when working with vulnerable and homeless clients; *Hamilton-Smith's* [1] work on the organised crime research projects involved action research with Scottish police forces and Scottish Government, and led to the creation and adoption of new systems for mapping organised crime threats and for monitoring police enforcement performance in this area. The Scottish organised crime mapping project went on to inform the development of similar tools in England and Wales, making the reach of this impact as wide as it is possible to go within statutory frameworks. *Satsangi's* work on rural housing [2] has been used by the Scottish Rural Housing Enquiry and led to his being appointed as an advisor to the Scottish Parliament Land Reform Group. *Bowes' work* on telecare [1, 2] has been used to help service providers develop improved services for older people and people with dementia through the development and rolling out of a Model for the Assessment of Telemedicine. *Emond, Punch and McIntosh's* work on food practices in residential care [McIntosh 3] led to practice-based outputs being developed for all children's homes in Scotland, England and Wales as well as training workshops for practitioners at both local and national level. These informed policy and practice in six local authorities in Scotland, and follow-on funding has been secured from the ESRC to enable the training package to be delivered by local authorities across Scotland and embedded in the national residential training programmes of CELCIS (Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children In Scotland).

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We have achieved **indirect** impact on the wellbeing of the following groups:

Practitioners: through the provision of research evidence leading to improved training in the care and support of people with dementia and other long term conditions (*Reynish, Bowes, McCabe*), for example in telehealthcare we have improved the ability of practitioners to provide effective care. We have contributed to the dissemination of research evidence leading to improvements in awareness of the most effective practice in child protection through the WithScotland research hub (*Daniel*) – for example in fostering resilience in children at risk, and in the use of treatment programmes.

Service users and carers: through the development of evidence-based services we have indirectly improved the wellbeing of people who use self-directed support and cash-for-care services (*Rummery*), looked-after children (*Wilson*), homeless people (*Anderson*), people with dementia and their carers (*Bowes, Reynish, McCabe*), children at risk (*Daniel*) unemployed people using activation services (*Wright*), offenders, particularly women offenders (*Mclvor, Malloch*).

b. Approach to impact

The School strategically supports a focus on impact throughout the research process, from the initial design of research, through funding applications, the undertaking of research, and dissemination. We take an adaptable, multi-level approach to extending the reach and significance of the impact of our research.

- **Infrastructure**

- a. **Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC)**

Members of the Dementia and Social Gerontology Research group work with the DSDC, which provides regular briefings for elected representatives, and is recognised as an authoritative source of evidence based policy advice by policy makers internationally (see environment statement).

- b. **WithScotland**

WithScotland is hosted by the School, with academic leadership by *Daniel*, connecting research with practice, exchange knowledge and ideas and coordinating activities across Child Protection Committees (see environment statement).

- c. **Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research (SCCJR)**

Since its inception in 2006, the School has co-hosted the SCCJR, whose researchers undertake research and provide policy advice in response to requests or 'tickets' issued through a collaboration agreement with Scottish Government Justice Analytical Services (see environment statement). Members of SCCJR have also engaged in meetings and seminars with policy colleagues regarding the Scottish Government Reducing Reoffending Programme and Mclvor provided evidence to the Commission on Women Offenders.

- **Design and execution of individual research projects**

The School supports the involvement of research users as stakeholders in the design and execution of research projects, which enables our research to be responsive to the real-life concerns of communities of interest, and builds in strategies for the engagement of research users to translate the findings into practice. For example *Sherwood-Johnson* worked with service users to develop a Big Lottery funded project assessing practitioner perceptions of risk from service users' points of view, using forum theatre; *Hamilton-Smith's* work evaluating Football Banning Orders (Scottish Government funded) involves policy makers on the steering group who are charged with implementing the findings into policy; and *McCabe's* work on tele-psychiatry was funded by two hospital trusts which were committed to implementing the findings into practice. Almost all our research has advisory groups with service user, practitioner and policy members whose remit includes dissemination of research findings to non-academic audiences: for example *Rummery* and *Bowes* project on Enabling Health and Wellbeing among Older People (Chief Scientist Office funded) included members from the Joint Improvement Team of the Scottish Government on its steering group.

c. Strategy and plans

We intend to increase the reach and significance of the impact of our current and future research by using the following strategies:

Attracting strategic investment

- **Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (Technology Strategy Board)**

We intend to build on our current knowledge exchange strategy to support researchers to apply to funds specifically targeted at translating research findings into practice. For example, *McCabe* was awarded a KTP with Fife Council to develop their strategy for dementia services; *Bowes* held a KTP with QCTR Ltd (Quality Clinical Trials and Research), which is developing a new rating scale for dementia to be used in clinical trials.

- **Investment in Scottish Universities Insight Institute (SUII)**

The University invests in the SUII, which enables the School to bid for funds to run knowledge exchange programmes. Recent examples include *Rummery's* series of events on Constitutional Futures which had over 150 attendees from policy and practice audiences looking at how gender issues can shape the referendum on Scottish Independence and beyond; *Malloch's* Knowledge Exchange Programme on 'Human Trafficking'; *Mclvor* and *Malloch's* series on 'Women, Punishment and Social Justice' that resulted in an edited collection published in 2012 by Routledge, a presentation to the Scottish Parliament Scottish Futures Forum and a web based resource recorded and hosted by IRISS; *Ward* will be running a series on dementia-friendly design in neighbourhoods in 2014.

- **ESRC Follow-on funds**

We intend to support researchers who have been funded by the ESRC to apply for follow-on funding, building on the success of *Punch et al's* 'Food for Thought' project, and *Daniel's* Action on Neglect project. Current projects with the potential for this include *Rummery's* ESRC project on 'Fairer Caring Nations', *Lambert's* ESRC funded project on 'Is Britain Pulling Apart?' and *Cairney's* ESRC funded project as part of the Scottish Centre for Constitutional Change

University and School investment

- **Impact fellows (Cayli)**

The University has (from 2012) invested in an Impact Fellowship scheme, designed to attract high quality new researchers, whose work will translate into impact. *Cayli* was awarded one of these in 2012, bringing his work on organised crime to complement and enhance our work in progress.

- **Linking impact and training: Collaborative, CASE and impact PhD students**

The School regularly attracts funding for collaborative, CASE and university-funded impact PhD scholarships. These projects are part-funded by a third party who helps design the project and ensures its findings have significant impact in the non-academic community. We are currently supervising 8 PhD students funded in this way (see environment template)

d. Relationship to case studies

Our case studies exemplify our strategic approach to ensuring that our research has a significant and wide-reaching impact. All rest on team working and are selected to represent a sample of our commitment to benefitting society. *Cooperatives* engaged directly with policy makers in the UN to ensure that findings were translated into policies that reached across the globe, adapting the strategy to respond to new opportunities; *Neglect* used the facilities of WithScotland to ensure that the impact of the research reached practitioners as widely as possible and obtained follow-on funding to increase the reach and significance of the impact; *Telehealthcare* engaged directly with key influencers in Europe in rolling out the learning from research embedded in the decision-making support tool; *Free personal care* research was designed to engage directly with policy makers as part of the process and thus embed findings directly into UK and Scottish policy on free personal care and self-directed support, as well as adapting the approach to respond to opportunities to extend reach to the USA.