

1

Social Care Council venue awaits in anticipation 😊



Gerry Skelton

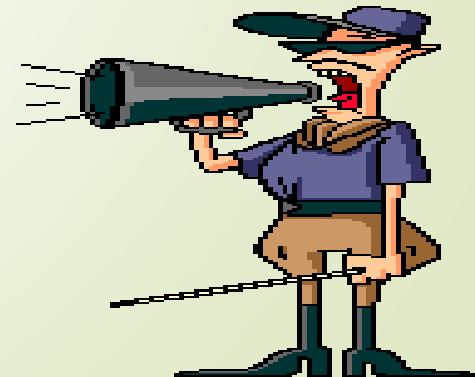
Gerry Skelton's Event VISION and overarching theme:

*Where 'Homelessness' and Social
Work Coalesce.*

*20:20 vision: embracing 'Home-less-ness' as a
compelling concern in Social Work Education,
Training and Practice.*



Gerry Skelton



The SINGING slot

3

According to Skelton (2000), your 2 most important breaths are your FIRST and your LAST!

Everything in between is the journey of life!
I wish to introduce my friend and co-campaigner addressing homelessness, Gerard Forrestal and his song 'BREATHING OUT'.

Gerry Skelton



Speaker 01:

Patricia Higgins

(CEO of the Social Care Council):

A key social work Regulator Leadership voice addressing 'Social Work and homelessness'.



PresenterMedia



PresenterMedia



Speaker 02:



Gerry Skelton, MBE
(Belfast Met SW
Lecturer, Social
Justice
Campaigner, and
Event organiser /
compere):

A key social
work leadership
voice
addressing
'Legitimising
Homelessness
as a Social
Work Concern'.



Gerry opening comments



6

- Following Patricia, I want to extend the warmest of welcomes to **ONE** and **ALL**...
- To those who have been reared in good (Family, Foster, Residential) homes... and not;
- To those who are living in good homes OR not!
- It is my assumption that many of us have or will experience home-less-ness...and we **MUST**...
- Remove from children, adolescents, Adults & Elders the **STIGMA**, **TABOO** etc of homelessness!
- All of this is my mission and I'm delighted **YOU** are here to share in it 😊

Gerry Skelton

**THANK
YOU!!**

WHAT TO DO / WHERE TO GO / WHO CARES?

7

☐ Keys and identity Exercise:

☐ So Imagine:

■ Being **homeless**!

1) Where would you turn?

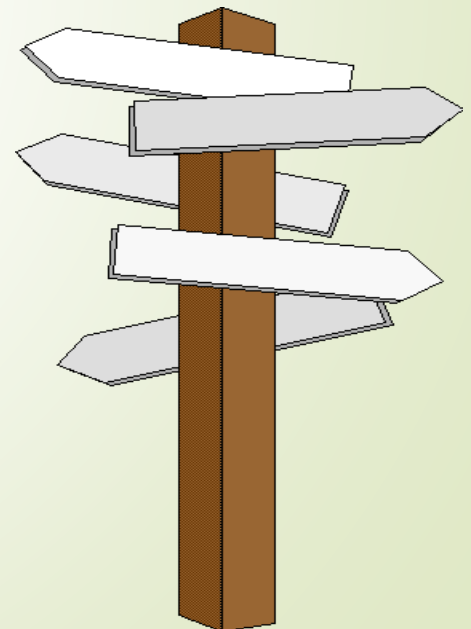
2) Who would you turn too?

3) Who would turn towards you?

4) Who would turn away!

☐ Reading: **Behold I
stand at your door and
knock!**

Gerry Skelton



Addressing homelessness can be a daunting experience!



"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil" Psalm 23

But worse for those experiencing homelessness
thus...and need YOU and ME to **CARE!**



"The Scream" by Edvard Munch

Establishing a broad context

10

***“The myriad issues confronting the Social Work, Social Care, Health and related professions generally, and practitioners specifically, can be readily viewed through the **PRISM OF HOMELESSNESS**.*”**

Indeed, arguably homelessness is not simply a practical reality but goes to the very core of one’s physical, social, psychological, emotional and spiritual identity; and resultant self esteem.”

(Gerry Skelton, 2011)

Gerry Skelton



11 Contextualisation



- Social work and Homelessness have always intersected...
- And there were a plethora of good practice SW initiatives (as Patricia referenced in her early working experience and other speakers will return to this later 😊)
- But, in the latter part of the 20th century this 'relationship' became distant and, in the current 21st century, appears almost non-existent!
- And, once again, there have been exceptions (and exceptional SW and related practitioners) demonstrating how they have taken homelessness seriously as social workers...albeit often in isolation!
- Today is yet another Skelton attempt, supported by loving, powerful voices in this room, to get this relationship restored!

Gerry Skelton



Home-Less-Ness comes in many guises...

12

HIDDEN and VISIBLE!



Good Morning!



The purpose of today and previous SKELTON Events

13

to champion the theme of: Giving homelessness a HOME in social work (and related fields) education, training and practice...at ALL levels (Hence the caliber of our speakers and other supporting leadership voices...and this venue);

- 2) To inculcate and implicate homelessness as a fundamental concern for and of SW, SC, HC, housing services, Media etc in NI and beyond!
- 3) To touch the heads, hearts and spirits of directors, managers, practitioners, students, etc (of today and tomorrow) regarding homelessness;
- 4) Provide a platform to highlight, promote, endorse and celebrate innovative practice and practitioners ☺
- 5) To provide an equal platform for those who have been or remain homeless (and / or their carers) – and have their **VOICE** meaningfully heard and validated!
- 6) To challenge service users to assume their responsibility in helping themselves (and peers), towards a better way;
- 7) To be an encouragement to one and all that we are not alone!
- 8) To remind us all that caring matters and that we must **NEVER lose the Care in the Caring services!**

Gerry Skelton

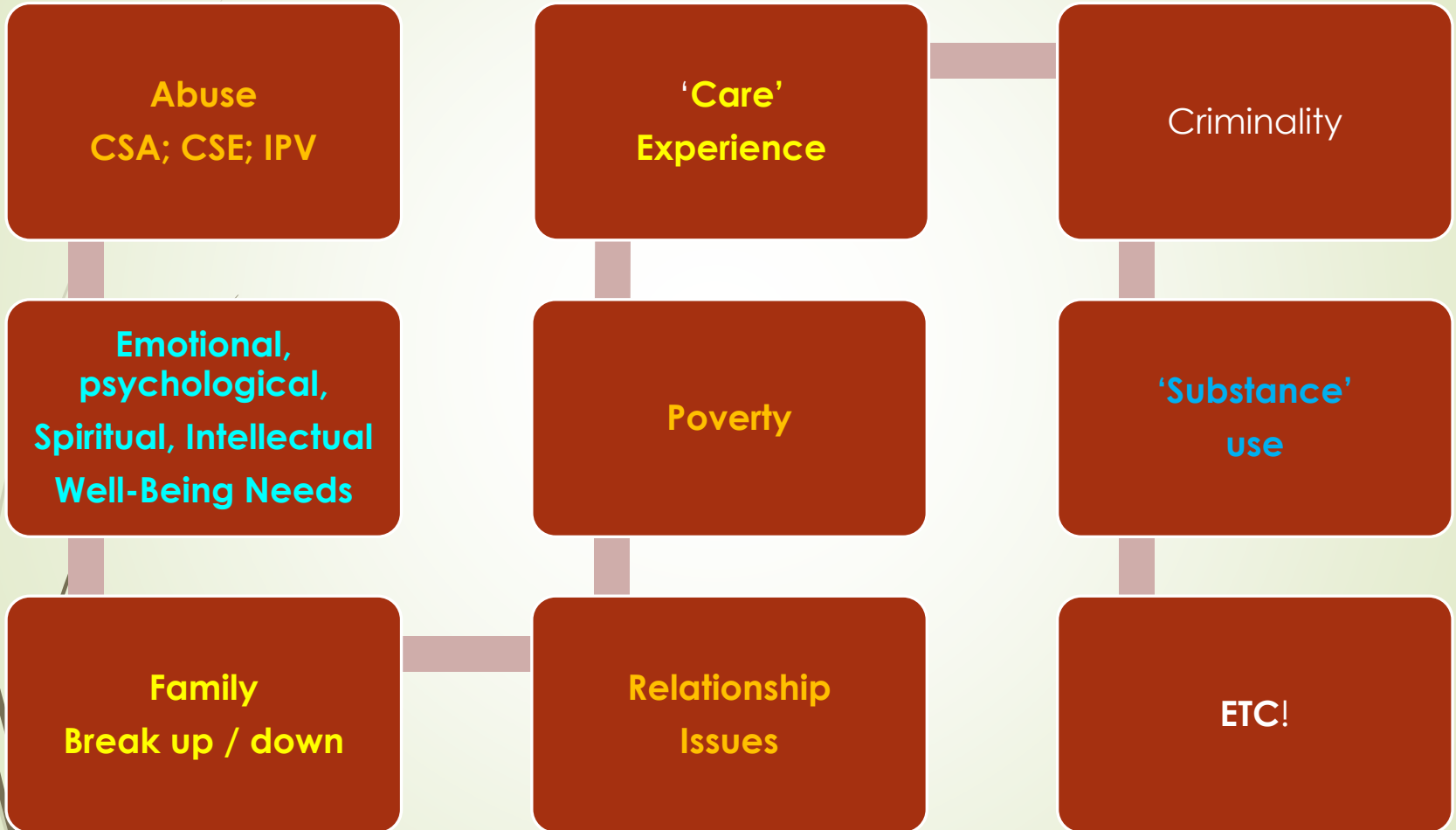
The arrogance of ignorance!

14

✗ **Homelessness** is often a taboo subject!

- ✗ It is important to establish that this event is partly driven by a profound and deeply held desire to:
- ✗ Challenge such taboos and make these issues central to the caring, reporting and related professions;
- ✗ Challenge Social Work, SC, Media, Journalism, housing services / associations, (etc) to take homelessness seriously in the first instance!
- ✗ Challenge the academic community to take homelessness seriously and reflect this by ensuring it's explicit in the teaching and learning curriculum...at the earliest curriculum point;
- ✗ Challenge the respective Housing and Homelessness sector and providers (AND the Caring professions) to cooperate rather than compete!
- The competitive working environment is not conducive to advancing the resolution of many homelessness-related issues.
- ✗ Ensure Carer and Service User experience is heard as they have an important part to play in shaping education, training, practice, research;
- ✗ Homelessness is not inevitable and can be eradicated, especially for certain groups that might be vulnerable!

Indicators of vulnerability INC:



Homelessness can lead to...

16



Effects of Homelessness can include...

17



MEANINGFUL **SW** (AND RELATED) INTERVENTION WILL INSIST ON AN **ECOLOGICAL** APPROACH

18



CORE SYSTEMS THAT CAN **HELP** / **HINDER**

19



Reflecting on Skelton's contribution to advancing this cause and inculcating best practice.

20

**Do you think
you've made
any IMPACT
Gerry?**



- TODAY's EVENT and Key SW support ☺
- Previously...2011...

“Gerry Skelton helps NISCC celebrate its 10th anniversary”.

Northern Ireland
**Social
Care
Council**

Morning Seminar

20:20 vision: embracing 'Home-less-ness' as a compelling concern in Social Work Education Training and Practice

When: Monday, 2 December | 9.30am - 1pm

Where: Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Presented by Gerry Skelton, MBE, Social Work Lecturer

Book your place: www.niscc.info/events





Gerry Skelton's work gains notable support

22

"Having somewhere to call home is a fundamental right and need, and the holding of this event and the championing on this issue by Gerry Skelton serves well to remind us of what **we need to do.**" [Tony Rodgers, HSCB Director of Social Work, at Gerry Skelton's inaugural HAP Event @ **QUB, 2014**];

The NISCC has decreed that the newly revalidated SW Degree Specification will include Homelessness in the SW curriculum...albeit only in year 3!

Sean Holland's interview with Gerry Skelton (2016) www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z14d3NdrX9Q

Gerry Skelton



'Gerry Skelton's 2017 article gifted to SCNI;

23



'Giving homelessness a home in social work education, training and practice' (December 2017);

"This is an extract from Gerry Skelton's research piece – 'A Decade of Homelessness Awareness Panel' which is available in full in the Simon Community NI Knowledge Hub".

Hostel Play extract, specially included for the 2017 production of Hostel (GOH) by Fionnuala Kennedy 😊

An extract from Playwright **Fionnuala Kennedy's** play, **Hostel**, performed at the Grand Opera House (June, 2017)

CIARAN: I know, it can be tough at the beginning.

MARIA: It's not too bad. I just never thought in my life I'd end up a homeless person.

CIARAN: *Listen, a good friend of mine, Gerry Skelton, said there's no such thing as a homeless person. It's a person who is homeless.*

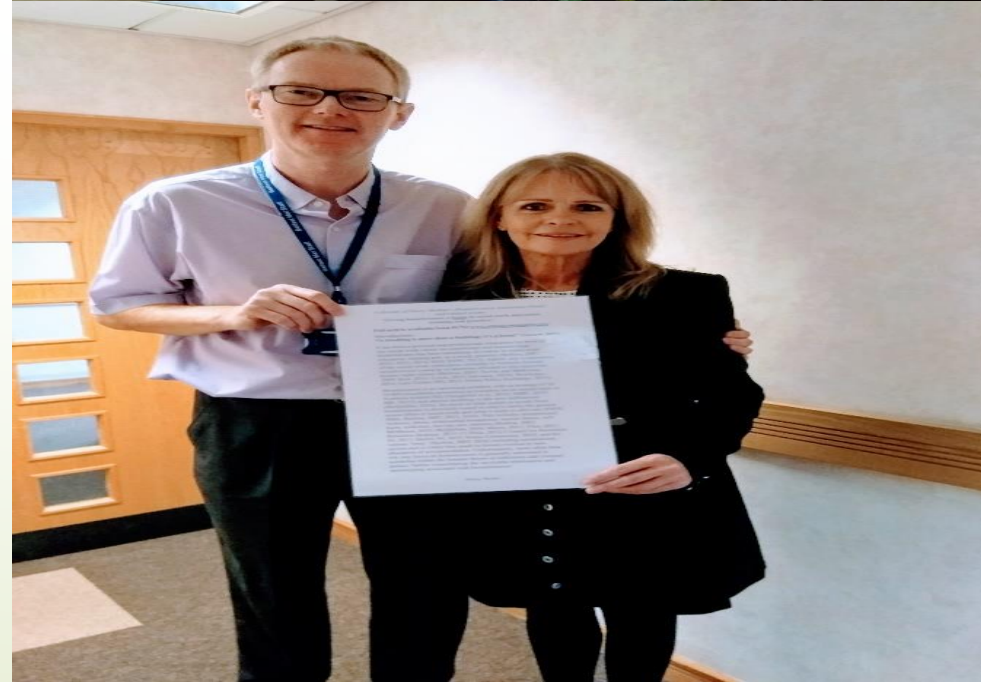
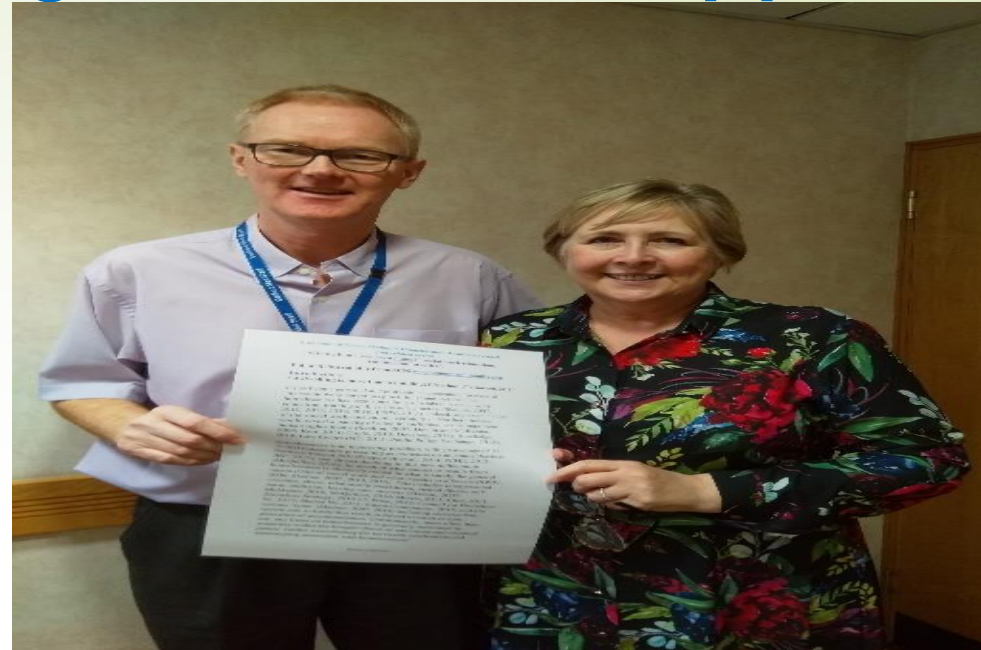
MARIA: *What's the difference?*

CIARAN: *Homelessness should never and will never define you Maria. You're many other things.*

Gerry Skelton

Gerry Skelton's article gains notable support

25



Twitter and Gerry Skelton's work on HOMELESSNESS

26

sean holland
([@seanhollandOSS](https://twitter.com/seanhollandOSS))



[03/07/2018, 07:35](#)

Homelessness is a major threat to many people who use social work services but as Gerry Skelton has been saying for years its virtually absent from SW undergraduate training - great topic for reflections series [@BrendanWhittle](#)
twitter.com/JackieMcIlroy2

...

Jackie McIlroy, Deputy Chief Social Worker.



Marie Roulston, SW Director, HSCB.



Brendan Whittle SW D/Director, HSCB.

Through the **prism of homelessness**, so much of what SW does is evident and implicated in a plethora of ways, including...

- Babies, toddlers, children, adolescents in foster care;
- Young people in and coming out of residential care!
- Field SW and families (placing children / adolescents into care [residential, fostering, respite, etc.];
- Advocating on families behalf with NIHE, Hostels, HA's, etc.);
- Mental health & SW;
- Disabilities & SW;
- Elders.
- Etc.



- And the **SW role and process** is clearly applicable to addressing homelessness and related issues!

SW role for those who are / might be homeless includes:

28

SW value, principle and ethical base;

- The SW key roles and processes (Inc: Assessment, intervening, managing 'risk', etc., etc);
- The SW key tasks, skills, etc (Relationship forming / building, service provision, service brokerage, protection, advocacy, mediation, community development, counselling, MDW, budgeting, benefits, advice, etc., etc., etc);
- The SW key services (CARING! as well as support, protection; etc);
- **Duty of care!** AND **Duty TO care!**

Some key concluding Gerry messages 1/2

29

INTRO a **DUTY TO** care as well as Duty of care, please!

- Let's remove the taboos surrounding and often concealing homelessness...and reducing implied criminalisation!
- **"The rhetoric of metric"** (Skelton, 2010): Please don't fall into the managerialism trap of referring to people as numbers, statistics, units, letters!, etc!
- **NEVER** place a label before a human being & challenge **ANY**one (regardless of status, power, etc) using wording / phrases like: 'The Homeless'; 'Homeless people'!
- Sometimes we are the key; other times we're the lock or the door to homelessness...we can choose!
- Always remember you choose a caring profession,,,so offer to help not hinder, serve rather than be served!
- I care! And CARING is one of the heavy prices we pay for loving! But caring is a litmus test of meaningful, positive leadership!



Some key concluding Gerry messages 2/2

30

I'M fundamentally interested in making noise about issues of justice [not **JUST-US!**] and challenging silence!

- I care passionately about this theme...and the people caught up in its spectre!
- I want every service user (and carer) to know that **SW cares** about their plight and will respond accordingly;
- Every practitioner needs to be supported/ challenged to address homelessness;
- I want **your help** in getting even more active, strategic, resourceful, etc in championing this cause. So DO something that matters ☺
- Homelessness is often a personal and professional blind spot!
 - It can suffer from **ADD** (Attention Deficient Disorder)!
 - Or **HAS** (Homelessness Avoidance Syndrome)!
- I never want anyone to repeat the question once asked of me: '**What's homelessness got to do with social work?**' ☹
- So I am relentless in ensuring the issue of Home-Less-Ness is heard, seen, felt!
- And that's why I create these platforms...AND delighted you came.



Gerry Cauton



'It is only when I am tested that my real assumptions, beliefs, morals, values, principles, ethics, attitudes and behaviours are revealed!'

When I am under pressure, it is not what I wish for, hope for, aspire to, or intend.

It is what I do (or did) that matters!'

{Gerry Skelton}

Some core resources to follow up:

32

- I will make ALL of today's material available to every attendee and place these onto the Social Care Council's website;
- ❑ National Audit Office (2017) Homelessness report.
- ❑ NEW **Northern Ireland Homelessness Bulletin** April-September 2018 (PUB March 2019!):
 - A biannual statistics report which provides information on a range of topics surrounding homelessness in Northern Ireland.
 - Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and Department for Communities (Northern Ireland)
 - The Northern Ireland Homelessness Bulletin is the first edition in a new series of experimental statistics that has been prepared by Analytical Services Unit of the Department for Communities (DfC). The report is currently divided into three sections which are: Homeless Presenters; Homeless Acceptances; and Temporary Accommodation.
 - Published 5 March 2019 and accessed at:
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/northern-ireland-homelessness-bulletin-april-september-2018

Some core resources to follow up:

33

- ❑ www.nihe.gov.uk
- ❑ www.nihe.gov.uk/index/advice/supporting_people
- ❑ www.smartmove-housing.com
- ❑ www.chni.org.uk
- ❑ www.homelessni.org
- ❑ www.simoncommunity.org
- ❑ www.housingadviceni.org
- ❑ www.swap.ac.uk
- ❑ www.homelessinternational.org/Home_1.aspx?id=0:907
- ❑ HRC (2009) Report: '**No home from home**' (focussing on non-UK nationals living in NI) available from...
 - ❑ www.nihrc.org/index.php?page=subresources&category_id=25from=1&resources_id=115&search_content=&Itemid=61

Resources to follow-up'

- ➡ Previous Videos (these will be made available);
- ➡ Belfast Telegraph's 'Viewpoint' (19-9-17);
- ➡ Latest Homelessness Monitor)?
- ➡ SW Strategy, 2012-22;
- ➡ Homelessness Strategy, 2017-22!



All encouraging
applause gratefully
received!





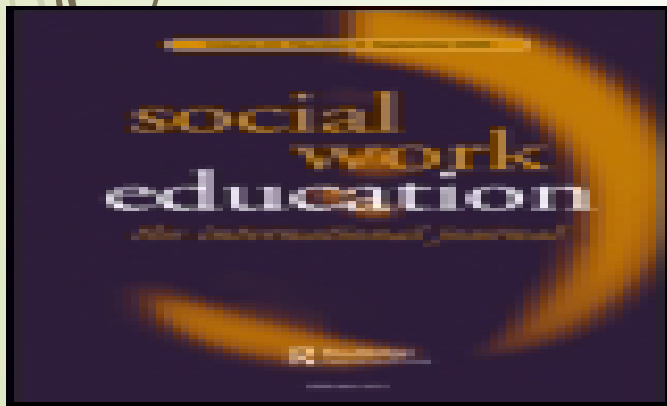
BLANK

Turning my pain to gain!

37

**Social Work Education:
The International
Journal: 'The Resilient
Survivor—A Student
Social (Jane Smith)
Worker's Journey'
(NOV, 2012)**

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cswe20>



“**Skelton** (2011) argues that personal pain can be turned into a unique form of strength and resilience and this energy can be used to help ourselves move forward or be used to help others, hence the concept of the ‘wounded healer’... resilience means the realisation that I can live my life mostly free from the negative impact of my childhood experiences, I am a ‘resilient survivor—one who has suffered and one who prevails’”.

Gerry's chosen Event contributors: 1/2

38

Reason these are NOT advertised publically beforehand is?

My gratitude to each for **DARING** to publically stand with me and support my social justice campaigns;

- The running order has several facets:
 - Gerry Skelton MBE who, in the 20th and 21st century, has often been the driving force to get HOME-LESS-NESS onto the SW agenda and prioritised accordingly;
 - SW Leadership voices (in addition to Patricia, you'll soon hear / see);
 - Practitioner voices (speakers and audience);
 - Homelessness services voices (2 speakers and audience);
 - Service user voices (3 speakers);
- I have LOADS to say, after all these years...so I choose my panel to speak with and for me – so we cover LOADS!
- YOU, the lovely self-selecting audience will have an opportunity to comment, question, CLAP, SING-A-Long and become part of my and our campaign to give homelessness its rightful place in SW education, training AND Practice!

Gerry Skelton

Gerry's chosen Event contributors: 2/2

39 ART-FELT gratitude to Patricia for her opening and Social Care Council's support of me 😊

- BIG 'Shout-Out' to Declan McAllister for his support of me and work behind the scenes;
- And gratitude to Claire and the Team working with me behind the scenes.
- So now its over to me as post-Speaker and now Event Compere (double wages 😊).
- As I said earlier, I invited each speaker to address what I and they considered important for today's event here in the HOME of the SW regulator.
- The SW voices will address us initially and then 2 colleagues from the Homelessness sector...
- Then we will have a comfort break and more SW and service user voices after that...and then lunch 😊
- Please think through and jot down questions (and own notes) for the Panellists as their inputs are delivered (**NO** questions during presentations!).
- So let's turn to our respective speakers now 😊

Event Greetings & leadership support 03

40

Sean Holland

(Chief Social Worker):

A key social work leadership voice addressing Social Work and homelessness.

Office of Social Services
'SOCIAL WORK AND HOMELESSNESS' Reflections Framework (Nov, 2019).

➤ **"GIVING HOMELESSNESS A HOME IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PRACTICE" (Skelton,)**

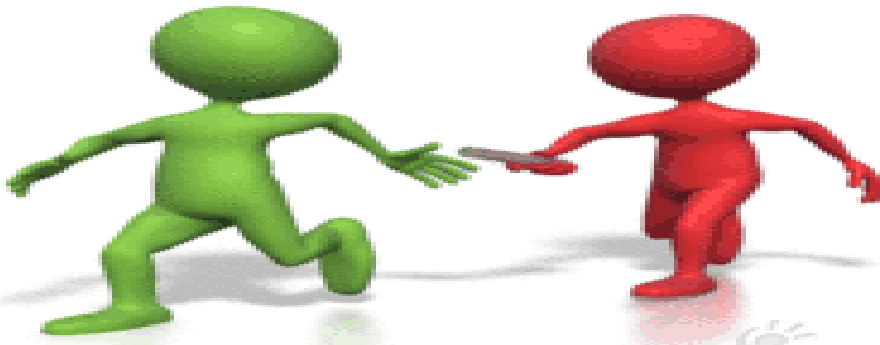
Available via: www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/reflections-homelessness.pdf



Speaker 04:

**Marie Roulson,
OBE (HSCB
Director of
Social Care
and Children);**

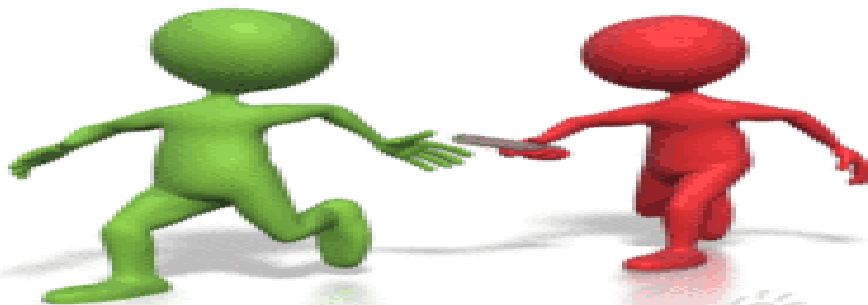
**A key social
work leadership
voice
addressing
Social Work
and
homelessness.**



Speaker 05:

Brendan Whittle
(HSCB, Deputy
**Director of Social
Care and
Children**):

A key social
work leadership
voice
addressing
**Social Work and
homelessness.**

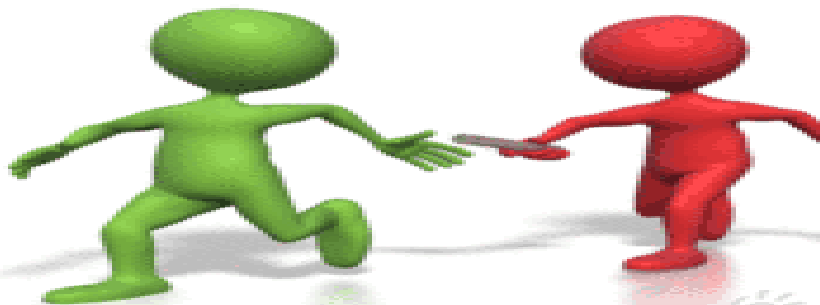


Speaker 06:

Mary O'Brien

(Belfast Trust
Divisional SW for
Mental Health &
CAMHS):

A key social
work leadership
voice
addressing
**Social Work and
homelessness.**

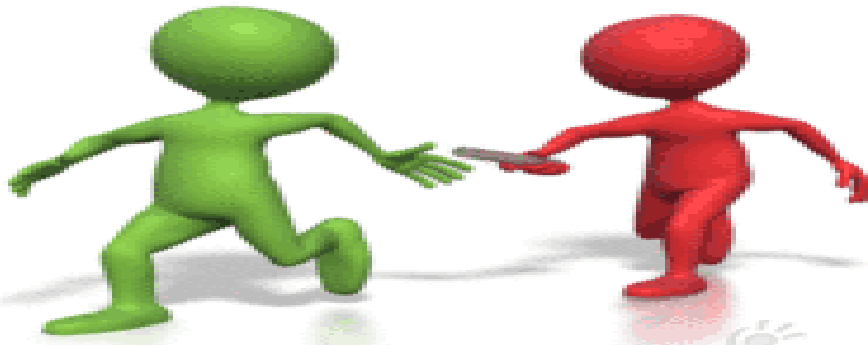


Speakers 07:

44

**Sinead
Tolan and
Dylan Sloan
(Social
Workers):**

**Current
practitioner's
voices
addressing
Homelessness
in schools.**



Speaker 08:

**Robin
Arbuthnot**

**(DD of the
Simon
Community NI:**

**A key Provider
leadership voice
addressing
Where
Homelessness
meets Social
Work.**



Speaker 09:

46

**Declan
Morris**

**(Project
Manager of
Extern Homes):**

**A key Provider
leadership voice
addressing
Where
Homelessness
meets Social
Work.**



PresenterMedia



PresenterMedia

COMFORT BREAK



Gerry Skelton

Gerry Exercise:

48

***Trading
Places!***

Gerry Skelton



Speaker 10:

Gerard Forrestal (Care worker, Song-writer, Singer, Dad, and formally homeless):

A co-campaigner, leadership voice addressing **Where Social Work, homelessness and Service Users meet.**



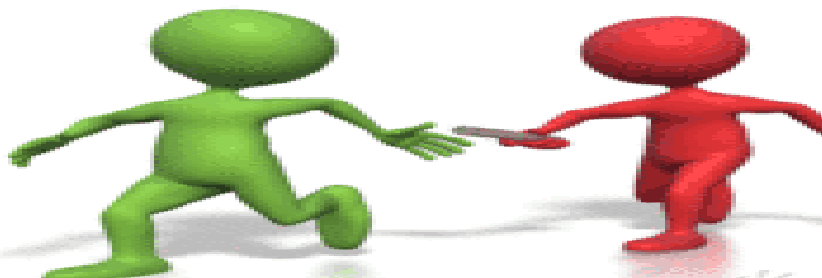
Speaker 11:

50

Grace Price

(Volunteer with Zest; SCC Participation Group):

A co-campaigner, leadership voice addressing **Where Social Work, homelessness and Service Users meet.**



Speaker 12:

51

David Gillen
(The SW
experience
inside and
out!

An evolving
social work
leadership voice
addressing Where
Social Work,
homelessness
and Service Users
meet.



INTRODUCTION TO STAGE 3

52

- Please take a moment to share your observations with your neighbour and prepare your questions, observations, etc., and the Panellists and I will do our best to respond.
- Some of you may simply want to express your individual gratitude for what you have heard...and that is more than welcome 😊

Gerry Skelton



STAGE 3



Gerry Skelton



Speaker 13:

**Declan
McAllister**

**(Director of
Registration
the Social
Care
Council):**

**A key
Leadership
voice CLOSING
our EVENT...**



LET'S EAT



**Thank
You!!!**

www.emojiart.com/emojiart.com

FOLLOW THE LEADER!

