

**Post Qualifying Social Work
Research Methods Programme provided by
Ulster University and employer organisations**

**Undertaken 2022- 2023 as part of the
“Evidence Informed Professional and
Organisation” Module SWK 751**

And

**“Using Evidence to Inform Professional and
Organisation” Module SWK 753**

**Abstracts
2023**

Preface

Social Work Research Methods Programme

The Research Methods Programme provides two postgraduates, post qualifying modules for social workers approved by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council as part of the Professional in Practice Framework:

- The Evidence–Informed Professional and Organisation (SWK 751)
- Research and Evaluation Methods in Social Work (SWK 752)

The programme provides three modules for users of social care services and their families:

- Using Evidence to Inform Professionals and Organisations (SWK 753)
- Research and Evaluation Methods to Inform Social Work (SWK 754)
- Innovation and Co-Production in Social Care Research (SWK755)

The modules for social workers are accredited by the professional regulatory body, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, and enable candidates to gain Requirements of the Professional in Practice Framework as detailed below. They require employer support and post-qualifying practice experience for entry. They are designed particularly for Senior Practitioners, training officers and other experienced Social Workers to gain knowledge and skills in using evidence to inform their practice and service development in their organisation. These modules achieve credit towards the Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in *Professional Development in Social Work*.

The modules for service users and carers equip them to carry out roles in developing social care research, such as membership of research committees and grant awarding panels. These modules achieve credit towards the Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in *Development and Co-Production of Social Care Research*.

All modules are 60-credit Level 7 (postgraduate) modules and are designed to develop knowledge and skills relevant to social work research-related activity and culture in Northern Ireland in support of the *Social Work Research and Continuous Improvement Strategy 2020-2025* (Health & Social Care Board, 2021). The previous 2015- 2021 Strategy was revised in 2020.

The Evidence Informed Professional and Organisation (SWK 751) Using Evidence to Inform Professionals and Organisations (SWK 753)

These two modules are taught in the same class together. Candidates undertake a review of empirical research on a topic agreed with employer representatives as well as their tutor. Candidates learn to use web-based sources of evidence; shape an answerable question; identify research and appraise its quality; synthesize research into clear recommendations for practice; and present this evidence to an audience of professionals and service users.

They are designed to contribute to improving our Social Work Services to individuals and families by improving knowledge and skills, service quality and the effectiveness of organisations delivering social care services. The modules run for one academic year from September to June each year.

This report provides full abstracts and contact details for those who undertook systematic narrative reviews of evidence as part of the post qualifying course between 2022-2023. To obtain copies of the full evidence review please contact the reviewer. Contact details are included on each abstract. Electronic versions of the abstracts are also available on the University website <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/dare>.

[Abstracts from the academic year 2016 onwards are also available on this website. See page 32-42 of this document for a list of names, titles of reviews and contact details.](#)

This report will also be placed on the Northern Ireland Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) page under Evidence, Innovation and Quality Improvement. And also at Northern Ireland's Social Care Council (NISCC) website.

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate competence in negotiating, collaborating with a range of stakeholders and fostering reciprocal relationships in undertaking a systematic narrative review.
- Applying advanced systematic approaches to retrieving research literature from electronic academic and professional databases and web resources in relation to a social work and social care topic relevant to their role
- Analyse and evaluate a body of research exercising judgement to determine its quality and relevance to complex practice issues

- Create an innovative synthesis of empirical research by writing a postgraduate dissertation which makes worthwhile recommendations for service improvement in line with organisational and social work principles
- Influence change through delivering an oral presentation to managers, professionals and service users which critically appraises and applies knowledge from research to inform practice

The Research and Evaluation Methods in Social Work module (SWK 752)

Research Evaluation Methods to Inform Social Work module (SWK 754)

These two modules are also part of the Research Model Programme. These require the Evidence-Informed Professional and Organisation Module (or equivalent) as a pre-requisite for entry. Candidates build on the literature review undertaken during that module (or equivalent) to undertake a work-based research, service evaluation or professional audit project agreed with line management. Candidates develop knowledge and skills in designing and managing a project that will support robust, evidence-based development of professional practice and services. An additional booklet on the outcomes from these modules are produced and placed on <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/dare>.

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**Evidence Informed Practitioner and Organisation Social Work Module
(SWK 751)**

Systematic Narrative Review

Eye or Spy – An exploration of the effectiveness of the use of CCTV cameras in the adult safeguarding process in care homes

Abstract

Context:

Since the breaking of the scandal in 2017, of allegations of historical abuse in a Northern Ireland hospital, and the part CCTV played in clearly and definitively uncovering instances of abuse, there has been an interest in the effectiveness of CCTV in relation to the adult safeguarding process.

This review attempts to understand and explore the benefits of using CCTV in care homes for the purposes of adult safeguarding.

The need for additional research into the use of CCTV is also discussed.

A critique of the review itself is presented, and the application to the findings of the review to practice are discussed within the Northern Ireland context.

Methods employed in the review:

The systematic narrative review consulted three internet databases for the final search:

- ‘Medline (Ovid),
- ‘Social Care Online’,
- ‘Applied Social Sciences Index **and**
- Abstracts’.

Four concept groups were utilized:

- ‘CCTV’ and associated terms,
- ‘Safeguarding’ **and** associated terms,

- ‘Hospital’ **and** associated terms,
- ‘Abuse’ **and** associated terms.

Five articles were included in the final synthesis.

Findings:

Several themes were identified and discussed, including ‘adult safeguarding’, ‘privacy’, ‘capacity and consent’, ‘staff safety’ **and** ‘staff scrutiny’.

The review found that there remains limited evidence on the use of CCTV in care homes for the specific purposes of adult safeguarding, to produce any firm hypothesis on its benefits. There is a developing narrative on the benefits of CCTV use more generally.

There also remains a need for more focused and purposeful research as well as the need for continued debate around the ethical implications of the practice, the impact on service users as well as on health care staff.

Discussion and relevance:

On the completion of the narrative synthesis, there was some evidence that the themes and issues emerging from the literature, and that were discussed in the paper, were consistent with the wider debate. While there may not have been enough evidence to provide a definitive, binary result, the papers that were included provided an insight into the current thinking of both academics and healthcare professionals on the topic. Research into the use of CCTV in care homes appears to be limited, despite being a feature of social care since the 1980’s.

One theme that did not feature in the dataset literature, and that may be beneficial in a clinical context was ‘CCTV as a learning tool’. However, this was discussed outside of the synthesis. In addition, the voice of the service user appears largely absent from any research.

Conclusions and suggestion for practice:

The study concludes that, utilised affectively and appropriately, there may be benefits to the use of CCTV in the adult safeguarding process. There is a need for continued, focused research in the area as, while concerns, particularly in the area of ethics exist, there appears to be a trend among academics supporting the advantages of the use of CCTV as a general practice. Paradox is presented, as wide spread, in-depth research on any potential benefits cannot be conducted without first introducing CCTV to care homes.

Name of Reviewer	Ryan Adair
Organisation or service user /trainer/carers	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
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Abstract**Context:**

McLafferty et al (2017) state mental health issues emerge around age 18, meaning 18–25-year-old university students may be more likely to experience challenges. Based in a university mental health and wellbeing service, this review has identified the increase in students accessing help for mental health services. I underpinned the importance of understanding help-seeking intentions, and the barriers to help-seeking for students in higher education settings.

Methods employed in the review:

A systematic review of three databases was completed in January 2023 to identify peer-reviewed articles. The databases used were;

- PsychInfo,
- Medline and
- CINAHL.

In order to systematically search these to meet the research objectives, the search strategy and concept groups used were.

- University student **OR** undergraduate student **OR** post graduate student **OR** college student **OR** higher education student
AND
- Mental Health **OR** wellbeing **OR** well-being
AND
- Help-seeking **OR** Student support **OR** treatment **OR** counselling **OR** counselling
AND
- Barriers to help-seeking

After completing the search criteria across the three databases, a total of 31 articles were found. Each of the studies were then screened by reviewing the abstract to

determine if the journal material met the objectives of the study. Upon completion of this abstract screening process, and removal of duplicates, 11 studies were found to be relevant. The reviewer also included two further recent studies cited in the findings of two of the studies and contact made with the author, these were also included, as they met the objectives of the study.

Findings:

The findings across the 13 studies identified five main themes for synthesis; stigma, masculinity, informal help-seeking, increased reporting of mental health and suicidal ideation, and difficulties in knowing where to access help. Two studies also identified varying levels of mental health presentations reported and differing levels of help-seeking across different academic disciplines.

This paper also reflects on the implication for the work setting, including how to respond to the increase in reporting of mental health issues by having a whole university approach to mental health promotion and awareness, increasing mental health literacy, reducing stigma campaigns and marketing, promoting and supporting informal help-seeking, and supporting peers in how to respond to those disclosing issues with their mental health.

Discussion and relevance:

The review explored the help-seeking intentions of university students, and the potential barriers to accessing help for mental health concerns. Relevance for consideration in the university mental health work setting include the importance of understanding the general increase in mental health presentations, applications around how services can reduce stigma and increase access to services, promotion of informal help-seeking, and policy and practice implications.

Conclusions:

This review provides the reader with key areas of challenge as regards delivery of mental health and wellbeing services in a university setting, as well as recommendations and implications for the work setting.

There is recommendation for further research, in particular understanding and measuring what works in challenging stigma around mental health and understanding the particularly unique needs of students on professional practice courses, including social work training.

Name of Reviewer	Drew Neill
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Abstract

Context:

According to Alzheimer’s Society there are currently 900,000 individuals living with a dementia diagnosis in the UK, this is predicted to increase to 1.4 million by 2040. In Northern Ireland it is predicted that 20,000 individuals live with dementia with this figure expected to double by 2040, (Alzheimer’s Society, 2022) this figure is an estimate of those with a formal diagnosis and those awaiting a formal dementia diagnosis. One of the main challenges faced by social workers and other key professionals in promoting shared decision-making is the diversity of dementia with each person’s experience being unique in terms of progression of the condition; level of cognition; and ability to communicate and the research review will aim to further explore these challenges. The United Nations convention of the rights of persons with disabilities (2006), recognised that those with a disability, including those with dementia, have a fundamental right to have freedom of choice and some of these individuals will require supported decision-making to exercise this right. In Northern Ireland, The Regional Dementia Care Pathway is one of the outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing 2026, Delivering Together, Department of Health (2017) which places a strong emphasis on ensuring the service user’s voice is heard.

Methods employed in the review:

An extensive search was completed to identify empirical peer reviewed research using 4 databases:

- CINHAL;
- Scopus;
- Medline; **and**
- Social care online

and the following search terms were used:

- dementia;
- shared decision-making;
- challenges; **and**
- community.

10 research articles were identified based on relevance. They were predominantly qualitative research with one using a mixed method approach of surveys and interviews. The research was completed between 2013-2021 and included studies from the Netherlands, Finland, Norway, Republic of Ireland and Australia. Two quality appraisal tools were used to test the robustness of each article using QAT-S and QAT-Q.

Findings:

Three main themes emerged: attitudes to dementia and capacity; the degenerative nature of dementia; and limitations in service provision. Each of these themes was explored using a narrative synthesis. The discussion section identifies limitations in the research; relevance to practice; and how these challenges have started to be addressed in the context of legislation and practice. It explores the worldwide strategies and recommendations in terms of supporting people with dementia in society, and focuses on the regional developments currently ongoing to improve dementia care within Northern Ireland.

Discussion and relevance:

There is evidence that the challenges identified are being addressed. At an international level, the World Health Organisation (2017) published a Global Action Plan on the public health response to dementia from 2017-2025. Cahill (2020) discusses some of the recommendations in the action plan including the establishment of dementia awareness programmes; a move towards dementia friendly societies; enhanced access for people with dementia to services through the development of user-friendly literature; and promotion for people with dementia to be central in decisions regarding their health, care and treatment.

In Northern Ireland, “Improving dementia services in Northern Ireland” (Regional Dementia Strategy, 2011) was published recommending a regional action plan that focused on areas including: raising dementia awareness; promotion of early assessment and diagnosis; support for people with dementia and their carers; and development of legislation.

Conclusions and suggestion for practice:

The Regional Dementia Care Pathway (2018) is currently being driven by the Alzheimer’s Society for full implementation in Northern Ireland and addresses a number of the challenges identified in the synthesis. More research in this area would be beneficial, particularly regarding the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act and impact of this on the person with dementia, family and professionals. When the Regional Dementia Care Pathway is implemented it will address the challenges identified in this research review, supporting the individual and family from the point of assessment and diagnosis of dementia through to end of life care.

Name of Reviewer	Sarah Galvani
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Abstract

Context:Evidence suggests the family have the greatest influence over and can either exacerbate or alleviate the mental health difficulties of a child or young person (C&YP). In comparison with the UK, C&YP in Northern Ireland (NI) exhibit 25% more mental health difficulties. From a practice perspective there has been a significant referral increase pertaining to C&YP mental health. Therefore, the aim of this review was to identify the characteristics and contributing factors of family focused support that impact on C&YP mental health.

Methods employed in the review:

This systematic review employed a methodical robust search of the follow databases:

- PsychInfo (Ovid platform),
- Social Care Online (SCIE) (Web of Knowledge),
- Scopus
- Applied Social Services Index **and**
- Abstracts (ASSIA) (ProQuest Platform).

Three concept groups were developed: systemic approaches, mental health and C&YP. These groups were expanded upon or refined using the databases search functionality and Boolean operators. Seventeen articles with a mixture of both quantitative and qualitative research were identified as meeting criteria following critical quality appraisal.

Findings:

Collectively the seventeen studies reviewed within this narrative synthesis have identified several key themes. This review has identified key familial

characteristics and discusses the strengths, limitations, and complexities of the family environment, citing the negative and/or positive impact it may have on C&YP's mental health.

Discussion and relevance:

Family wellbeing and its effect on C&YP's mental health has been the overarching theme. This was characterised into 4 prominent themes with some containing subthemes:

1. Family Cohesion/mutuality, Accommodation & Conflict.
2. Family Functioning & Resilience – Family Communication, Parental Symptomology.
3. Adversities, Socio-Economic & Cultural Factors – Poverty, Negative Life Events, Culture.
4. Recommended Identified Outcomes & Approach – Collaborative working, Whole Family Approach.

Conclusions and suggestion for practice:

Collectively the research reviewed heightens awareness to the strengths, limitations, and complexities of the family environment and the positive or negative effect it may have on C&YP's mental health. This work is especially relevant as NI has one of the highest prevalence of mental health difficulties throughout the UK (OSR, 2021, DoH, 2021, Bunting et al, 2022, Irvine, 2022). This review has been methodically completed with limitations noted and has highlighted the need for further research. The findings from this review add value, provide insight and perspective on several key areas including communication, culture, and other adversities. The findings should be used to influence practice approaches that encompass the whole family unit when addressing the mental health needs of C&YP with cognisance to the elements, characteristics and concepts referenced throughout.

Name of Reviewer	Maria Flanagan
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Abstract

Context:

The aim of the literature review was to explore the contribution of life story work in social work practice with older people, in particular those living in the community. Much has been researched and discussed regarding the contribution of life story with people with dementia living in nursing homes. However, there has been relatively little research conducted with people who do not have dementia and who live in the community.

Methods employed in the review:

Three databases were chosen and a systematic search was conducted using the concepts of life story work, older people and social work practice, with derivatives of each key concept applied during the search.

- PsycInfo,
- Social Care Online **and**
- Social Services Abstracts yielded more results than any other database.

The databases returned a total of eight relevant articles – each of which linked life story work with another theme such as resilience, depression, addictions and learning disability. One further study was obtained by citation searching.

Findings:

The main findings suggest life story work produces some rich information regarding the older person's ability to face the challenges of ageing. The studies highlight social engagement, resilience, self- identity and education/

occupation have all enabled older people to attach purpose and meaning to their lives.

Discussion and relevance:

The overwhelming sentiment in previous research is that older people are perceived as frail, infirm and vulnerable, a drain on resources and impact negatively on the economic prosperity of society. Furthermore, within social work practice with older people the language used creates the impression of service users as vulnerable and needy. Therefore, often assessments, interventions, and responses are geared towards managing resources, demand, delayed discharges and caseload throughput.

However, in this literature review the overall sentiment of included studies were that the use of the life story approach with older people can change this perception. Themes emerging from the studies such as social engagement, sense of identity, resilience and importance of occupation and education have all highlighted the strengths and resilience of older people as they respond to the challenges of ageing. Telling their life story enables events of the past to be better understood in the context of the present, while equally the present can be experienced in light of the future.

According to research exploring lived experiences through a life story approach can identify ways of coping through the life course. Adapting and developing skills to respond to adversity such as loss, reduced physical health, trauma of war, abuse etc can be reused to deal with new challenges such as that associated with ageing.

Conclusions and suggestion for practice:

The life story approach enables practitioners and researchers to understand people more holistically because the stories told provide meaning and context to a person's life. This approach can lead to greater inter professional working as each professional seeks to understand the older persons story. Whilst different professionals may have a different perspective on how to interpret meaning from the life story account they must communicate to create a single unified story of the service user and their needs thus leading to enhanced health care for aging adults. Social workers, when using the life story approach places the service user as the expert and it is their constructed narrative that directs intervention and can result in growth and coping capacities for the older person. The approach can enhance culturally sensitive social work practice as it can lead to an understanding of the important role culture plays in the life of an older person. Social work has adopted a strengths-based approach valuing accomplishments and achievements of individuals rather than their deficits. Using a life story approach, social workers can help older people see themselves as experts in their own narrative. Social workers should empower individuals to explore themselves and the meaning they attach to the world, enabling them to enhance the meaningfulness of their life experience and build resilience to cope with the challenges of ageing. The use of a life story approach in social work with older people can enhance the relationship between practitioner and individual, as it assists in the development of a therapeutic relationship. A deeper understanding of how older people can maintain quality of life amidst the challenges of ageing can enable the development of more effective intervention models promoting healthy ageing and providing individuals with a sense of resilience.

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Abstract

Context:

Research highlights that adolescent years are a primary period for future life trajectories. Adolescents are faced with a myriad of challenges during this complex stage of development which means they are more vulnerable to developing mental health issues. The use of outdoor based therapeutic programmes with adolescents has grown in popularity as this can lead to positive outcomes on their physical and mental health, in the short and long term. Research evidence the therapeutic benefits of adventure therapy as experiential learning empowers the participants to address their psychosocial issues.

Adventure Therapy (AT hereafter) is the umbrella term for Wilderness Therapy and Outdoor Behaviour Health which research uses interchangeably. This systematic narrative review appraised relevant research exploring the outcomes of AT. The focus group was adolescents aged 10 years – 18 years who present with mental health issues.

Methods employed in the review:

Keyword searches within the

- PsychInfo,
- Social Care online, **and**
- Scopus databases

were completed to include peer reviewed articles which with the final search being completed on 8th March 2023. A detailed search strategy was used for this review, which looked at adolescents, mental health and AT. The final result provided 14 articles that were assessed using QAT-S: Quality Appraisal Tool: Survey Search (Taylor et al., 2015).

Findings:

A range of outcome themes were identified from these articles and grouped into 5 categories; nature immersion and the impact on emotional wellbeing, coping strategies and building resilience, group demographics, group synergy, and longitudinal outcomes.

The finding of the research is that AT is effective in promoting emotional wellbeing and positive outcomes for adolescents. Whilst AT is mostly accessed by males, it is noted that females have statistically better outcomes than their male peers. The findings also highlight that the changes which occur from the AT can be sustained on a long-term basis.

Application to practice:

Research and strategic drivers continue to highlight the importance of early intervention and prevention when working with adolescents with mental health issues. Early intervention prevents the development of low-level mental health issues escalating in prevalence and severity in adolescence and lasting into adulthood. The use of AT by the social workers within Multi-Disciplinary Teams will promote the aid the promotion of mental wellbeing, resilience and good mental health across society which is important in mental health policies, (DoH, 2021). Whilst AT is not a panacea for all mental health issues it does enable an alternative treatment modality for adolescents and is successful within this age range. MDT practitioners have the opportunity to adopt this method of working with adolescents who attend the GP practice, live in the local community and go to the local schools which means that it is meeting the needs of the community. It is also hoped that social workers within other areas of social work, such as residential social workers would also utilize this method of intervention as a holistic and potentially synergistic approach to treatment, (Ferneer et al., 2019).

AT is also a cost effective and accessible way to promote and enhance mental and physical health as it is group-based work and facilitates a large number of

young people for treatment. Furthermore, this method of intervention will aim to break down barriers of stigmatisation around accessing mental health services as the adolescent's needs will be met a primary care level within their community.

Conclusions:

The importance of nature for improving mental health is captured eloquently by Birch et al.,(2020) who outlined that given persistent social and health inequalities the shift of intervention should mirror 'a medical model that compares nature contact to a medication that can be used to treat conditions',(p.3).The findings in this review supports the research that AT is effective in treating a range of mental health issues as it positively impacts mental health and emotional wellbeing for adolescents. Furthermore, the benefits achieved from participating in AT can be long lasting and promote positive life trajectories. AT also promotes pro-social behaviours due to involvement in group interventions.

The role of MDT is community based and the findings of this review can direct future practice approach when working with adolescents who initially seek GP support. Going forward AT can be implemented by the wider MDT which makes it a more accessible and cost-effective way to address the needs of the adolescent population who attend with mental health issues. AT also breaks down the barriers of accessing mental health services as this can be provided within the young person's own community, which encourages participation. This is in line with current strategies with mental health being an integral part of the primary care role.

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Abstract

Context:

The Anti-Poverty Practice Framework was published as guidance for social workers (DoH 2018). We know children living in poverty are disproportionately the focus of child welfare interventions (Featherstone et al., 2017). Recently the Joseph Rowntree Foundation published UK Poverty (2023) underlining concerns about deep and persistent poverty. Anti-oppressive practice empowers social work to challenge socio-economic discrimination. To support this endeavour, it is essential to understand social workers' perceptions of poverty.

Methods employed in the review:

The review used a systematic narrative approach. A search strategy of three databases produced the following results:

- PsychINFO 25;
- Social Services Abstracts 471;
- SCOPUS 41.

Using QAT-Q and QAT-S extraction tools the search results were collapsed into 11 studies collated by author and year, country, design, sample/participants, data collection methods and main findings. The international sample included research from Israel, Finland, Hungary, US, UK and Denmark. Narrative synthesis aims to create a coherent narrative about overall meaning of the studies for the purposes of a review built on explicit and robust studies. This produced a number of themes **Framing Poverty: Poverty Knowledge: Political Context: Perceptions of Poverty.**

Review Findings:

Framing poverty: A broader understanding of poverty was discussed incorporating a rights approach and an ethical commitment to human dignity. Studies considered relationships of power, responsibility and accountability to reduce shame and stigma. Social workers exposure to poverty in turn shaped their attitudes and understandings of the causes of poverty.

Poverty knowledge: Studies recognised that social workers require vast, mutable knowledge in order to do their work. Some studies considered poverty knowledge as acquired through learning tools. For example, some recognised the contextual nature of poverty knowledge based on interactions, the environment, ongoing interpretation and one's own tacit knowledge. Studies which had rich service user content reflected this perspective.

Political context: Most of the countries are considered neo-liberal in approach to the economy and social policy. Each study gives context to the social work system with wide ranging levels of welfare support, public sector services and social work roles. All studies recognised poverty should be alleviated by the state.

Perceptions of poverty: Commentary by the authors discussed how families involved with Social Work are 'seen'. Poverty is left *unseen* and considered relatively 'normal'. Vulnerability is seen in a myriad of other problems but not poverty. Studies recognised that every 'perception is context-dependent, and interpretable' on the basis of the participants own experience of social structures. 'Workers see poor parenthood not poor parents' Nordup & Jacobson 2021

Discussion and relevance:

Poverty is internationally recognised as an intergenerational and lifespan issue. People and communities experiencing poverty are over represented among those in contact with social work. Social workers engage with populations hugely over represented in every measure of deprivation in many countries. In order to

measure the perceptions and attitudes of social workers toward poverty and people living in poverty consideration was given to what the interpretations of the causal factors are. It was necessary to consider how poverty was framed and explained in the studies. It was useful to consider how the construct of poverty varied across the sample and the factors that may have influenced this. It was reflective to consider social workers perceptions of a phenomenon which is a lived experience. The review was able to synthesise real world phenomena and the reality of lived experience with the evidence in the literature of attributions for poverty in the context of different countries, different welfare systems and different social work roles.

Social workers at undergraduate and post graduate level should be exposed to everyday lived experience.

Conclusions and suggestion for practice:

Based on the review findings, there are a number of areas of development that would support practitioner's recognition of the experience of people living in poverty:

Social work policy decisions: Determining a baseline understanding of poverty impact at the point of social work assessment, understanding this impact on the person and community and how this understanding could be applied to the social work intervention would benefit the service user and practitioner.

Social work training: Both undergraduate and post qualifying study should ensure consistent and coherent content which embeds anti-poverty and capability perspectives. This would incorporate an analysis of poverty that challenges a reductive low-income narrative, encourages reflection on capability deprivation, deprivation of opportunity and access to community life.

Social work research: Commitment is needed at leadership level to progress focussed research on aspect of poverty and social work practice. Research aims and design could be co-produced with people with lived experience.

Advocacy and social justice: a timely debate is needed in Northern Ireland to consider the advocacy role of social work for individuals living in poverty and what role social work has in highlighting the impact of the structural causes of poverty (Mc Cartan et al., (2019).

Community social work: Community development values and practice could be incorporated into all Professional in Practice (PiP) programmes.

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Evidence to Inform Professionals and Organisations (SWK 753)

Systematic Narrative Review

The impact of Menopause in the Workplace

Abstract

Context:

The recent publication of the Women's Health Strategy for England (D.O.H. 2021) called for the ageing women to help solve the decline in the workforce. It called for action and declared more work must be done to tap into this neglected and often ignored part of the workforce. Within this publication it acknowledges that menopause in the workplace is an important theme with women reporting lack of support and it being seen as a 'taboo' or forbidden subject Hardy et al., (2018).

A narrative synthesis was conducted to look at the impact of the menopause for women in the workplace.

Employed as a frontline health care worker since 1984 and a cancer survivor since 2006, I have been a service provider and service user for a good part of my adult working life. Mid covid my work life came to an abrupt halt due to ill health. On reflection the menopause, accompanied by a stressful, demanding job may have contributed to my deterioration in my health and the end of my career which I dearly loved and worked hard to accomplish.

In 2022, I became a member of the Northern Ireland Cancer Research Consumer Forum (NICRF) and was afforded the opportunity to study the research methods programme. The skills and knowledge gained while undertaking this module, will assist me in becoming an effective member of the NICRCF and contribute to the wider research community.

Methods employed in the review:

Three databases were used. Including;

- PsylInfo
- Social Care Online
- Medline

Detailed appraisal was limited to two out of 20 studies.

All eligible studies examined the impact of menopause for women in the workplace.

The initial search strategy matched 640 articles; removal of duplicates achieved 610. The author screened the remaining 610 for relevance resulting in 18 eligible articles selected and a further 2 articles were included through citation search.

From these 20 articles, three key themes emerged, perception of menopause, women's experience of menopause and information and support networks of menopause in the workplace.

To facilitate a structured and organised summary of the key data from the 20 identified studies a data extraction table was used.

Findings:

A narrative synthesis found that the impact of menopause in the workplace is acknowledged as a concern. While much work has been done, more support and training are required. This is to ensure women, who are experiencing menopausal transition within the workforce, are assisted. Thereby, awareness will be enhanced and potential for a negative occupational experience reduced.

Discussion and relevance:

In exploring the impact of menopause for women in the workplace a clear message was on the poor understanding for women, co-workers and employers on menopause. Many studies called for increased, awareness, training, and general information to be made available for employees not just the transitioning women. Some studies demonstrated a benefit in support networks including online support groups.

The concept of menopause as a taboo subject remains and should be challenged. Employee's and managers should feel able to talk openly about the impact of menopause as a failure to acknowledge a difficulty can led to a negative experience. Bias in terms of gender and age were identified in the synthesis. By opening up communication, raising awareness and implementing supports this bias might be challenged and provide a more satisfactory transitioning experience in the workplace.

While there is local, national and international guidance on menopause there is more work to be done on evaluating the impact of this at the front line. The review and additional reading revealed that menopause is not a protected characteristic. Opportunities were missed at governmental level to enable employers to adapt and implement a menopause supportive work culture.

Conclusions:

In conclusion the work environment and culture can influence how women experience the menopausal transition in the workplace, much work has been done but much more is required. Further research is needed on the impact and to include non-professional women and diverse communities. Additionally, in a local context there is scope for research into the awareness of local menopause policy and its impact for staff.

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Abstract

Context:

The purpose of this systematic narrative literature review was to explore factors that potentially support or challenge the wellbeing of Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs). AMHPs are non-medical professionals, predominantly social workers, who have the authority to assess people for detention under the Mental Health Act.

Methods employed in the review:

Four databases were searched for peer-reviewed articles that reference the experiences and impact of the assessment process on AMHPs.

- Social Care Online;
- Scopus;
- Applied Social Sciences Index **and** Abstracts; **and**,
- PsycInfo.

A total of 11 peer reviewed articles were identified. Despite the international search, all were UK based. Using a narrative approach, key themes were identified and implications for practice discussed in the context of Northern Ireland.

Findings:

The findings are discussed under five themes. The first explored tensions between the biomedical and social model causing ethical and moral conflicts for the AMHP. Theme 2 outlined the impact of lack of therapeutic, community-based alternatives inpatient beds, time pressures and staff shortages. Theme 3 looked at multidisciplinary working and highlights power differentials between GP's and the AMHP. Communication and co-ordination with police and ambulance services pose further challenges. AMHPs experience of emotions was explored in theme 4. Stigma

and a fear of talking about difficult emotions is problematic. The burden of responsibility felt by the AMHP during the process of assessment, is very challenging. Theme 5 discussed professional identity and role and found AMHPs' personal and professional values aligned. Good team working, peer support and supervision, where available, were rated as highly beneficial.

Discussion and relevance:

At practice, organisational and regional levels tensions between the medical and social models' impact AMHPs in a variety of ways. Parallels between people being assessed for detention and AMHPs are highlighted. Bureaucracy, blame cultures, stigma, and fear of talking about emotions need addressed. Findings show that AMHPs are highly skilled at managing competing demands and tolerating a range of emotions, yet this aspect of the role gets little attention. More research about the experiences of AMHPs is recommended. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on workforce well-being and coping has been researched in six phases and the Northern Ireland Mental Health Services Workforce Review 2022 – 2023 means recruitment and retention is very topical.

Conclusions and suggestions for practice:

A lack of therapeutic, community-based alternatives to hospital admission creates significant barriers as do workforce stressors. Interagency collaboration needs to be looked at and the emotional impact of the work recognised and appropriately responded to. Tentative suggestions with regards to training and supervision are made and applicability to other areas of social work and beyond, discussed.

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Systematic Narrative Reviews 2022

Title	Reviewer	Organisation	Email address
Alternatives to Acute Admission for Patients with a Primary Diagnosis of Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder	Carrie Cruikshank	Belfast Heath & Social Care Trust	<u>Carrie.cruikshank@belfasttrust.hscni.net</u>
Supporting Individuals with Dementia in Decision-Making	Holley Larmour	Belfast Heath & Social Care Trust	<u>holley.larmour@belfasttrust.hscni.net</u>
Carer's Assessment Processes within Adult Service: Informal Carers' Perspectives	Laura Thomson	Southern Health & Social Care Trust	<u>Laura.Thomson@southerntrust.hscni.net</u>
Who cares? Overcoming barriers to identification of informal carers in primary care services	Kate Havern	South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	<u>kate.havern@setrust.hscni.net</u>
The Strengths and Limitations of Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes	Mary Ryan	Southern Health & Social Care Trust	<u>mary.ryaniat@southerntrust.hscni.net</u>
Burnout in Child Protection Social Work – Key considerations that may limit impact on our staff	Laura King	South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	<u>Laura.king@setrust.hscni.net</u>
Does co-production impact upon adult co-researchers and service users' experiences who suffer from mental illness?	Katherine Greer	Service User	<u>katherinegreer789@gmail.com</u>
Motivations associated with Young People's use of Social Media	Noel Wilson	Service User	<u>E28533@btinternet.com</u>

Systematic Narrative Reviews 2021

Title	Reviewer	Organisation	Email address
<p><i>“Same time next week?”</i> An exploration of the relationship between probation supervision and desistance.</p>	Peter Beck	Probation Board of Northern Ireland (PBNI)	Peter.beck@probation-ni.hscni.net
<p>What are the barriers for Social Workers implementing trauma-informed practice with adolescents?</p>	Lauren McBride	South Easter Health & Social Care Trust	lauren.mcbride@setrust.hscni.net
<p><i>‘Should I refer this to safeguarding?’</i> Recognising and Responding to Adult Safeguarding within Long Term Care Homes. Does Education and training make a difference?</p>	Scott Fleming	Northern Health & Social Care Trust	Scott.flemming@northerntrust.hscni.net
<p>The psychological impact of handling crisis.</p>	Nigel Morris	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	Nigel.morris@belfasttrust.hscni.net
<p>A narrative review of social work interventions,</p>	Fred Davidson	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	Fred.davidson@belfasttrust.hscni.net
<p>An exploration of the factors that contribute to social workers and other professional’s decision making in the adult safeguarding process affecting adults with disabilities.</p>	Noeleen Higgins	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	Noeleen.higgins@belfasttrust.hscni.net
<p>What is the Qualitative Evidence Regarding Service User Experience and Satisfaction with Hospital Social Work Interventions in Acute Care Hospital Settings?</p>	Jake Lange	Northern Health & Social Care Trust	Jake.lange@northerntrust.hscni.net

Leadership in Child Protection Social Work	Andrea Hegarty	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	<u>Andrea.hegarty@belfasttrust.hscni.net</u>
Young onset Dementia and Family Support	Emily Wilson	Service User	<u>Emilywilson1955@icoud.com</u>
Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing of Health and Social Care Workers	Liam Bradley	Service User	<u>Bradley989@btinternet.com</u>
Can routine data be used to improve the quality of health and social care regulation?	James Laverty	The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority	<u>James.laverty@rqia.org.uk</u>

Systematic Narrative Reviews 2020

Title	Reviewer	Organisation	Email address
Trauma-informed Practice in Criminal Justice.	Annie McAnallen	Probation Board of Northern Ireland (PBNI)	annie.mcanallen@probation-ni.gov.uk
Factors associated with staff retention in child welfare.	Bronagh Hamill	Northern Health & Social Care Trust	Bronagh.hamill@northerntrust.hscni.net
Palliative Care and Advanced Care Planning among Nursing Home Residents with Dementia.	Keith Johnston	Northern Health & Social Care Trust	Keith.johnston2@northerntrust.hscni.net
Longer-term Outcomes Of Adopted Adults' Reunions with Birth Relatives.	Donna Shields	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	Donna.shields@belfasttrust.hscni.net
Collective Styles of Leadership in Continually Changing Health and Social Care Organisations.	Jillian Morris	South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	Jillian.morris@setrust.hscni.net
The voiced experiences of families after children return home from care.	Martin Robinson	Western Health & Social Care Trust	Martin.robinson@westerntrust.hscni.net
The Factors Contributing to a Trauma-Informed Organisation.	Gillian McAuley	Extern	Gillian.mcauley@extern.org
Lessons that can be learnt from a systematic narrative review of modern slavery and human trafficking, which informs probation practice with offenders.	Emma Richmond	Probation Board of Northern Ireland (PBNI)	Emma.richmond@probation-ni.gov.uk

Systematic Narrative Reviews 2019

Title	Reviewer	Organisation	Email address
Vicarious Trauma: Associated impacts on practitioners working with young victims of trauma.	Bill Vail	Western Health & Social Care Trust	Bill.vail@westerntrust.hscni.net
The outcomes of older people ready to leave hospital and discharged with unresolved delirium.	Brian Crossan	Western Health & Social Care Trust	Brian.Crossan@westerntrust.hscni.net
The social work contribution to providing psychosocial palliative and end of life care in adult services.	Gillian Thomas	Western Health & Social Care Trust	Gillian.thomas@westerntrust.hscni.net
Beyond UNOCINI - The use of decision-making models in children's services intake teams.	James Draper	South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	James.draper@setrust.hscni.net
Home from Home - Interventions for anxiety driven behaviours in service users with a diagnosis of dementia living in long term care.	Julie Doherty	Western Health & Social Care Trust	Julie.doherty@westerntrust.hscni.net
The impact of social factors for older people in the discharge process from hospital	Pamela Fillis	South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	Pamela.fillis@setrust.hscni.net
The Apex of Involvement? Emergent themes in research into Co-production in Adult Recovery Colleges	Karen Bester	Service User	karen.l.bester@gmail.com

Systematic Narrative Reviews 2018

Title	Reviewer	Organisation	Email address
Service user involvement and co-production In social work practice development and education.	Patricia Burns	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	patriciam.burns@belfasttrust.hscni.net
Decision making influences in identifying an alternative to hospital admission in mental health assessments.	Ian Burnside	Nothern Health & Social Care Trust	ian.burnside@northerntrust.hscni.net
The influence of personal support systems on the capacity of foster carers to sustain the role long term.	Laura Butler	Nothern Health & Social Care Trust	laura.butler@northerntrust.hscni.net
What is the evidence for improved outcomes for patients who have had social work intervention in the emergency department?	Kerry Cullen	Nothern Health & Social Care Trust	kerry.cullen@northerntrust.hscni.net
Supporting families of children with a disability.	Janet Johnstone	Southern Health & Social Care Trust	janet.johnstone@southerntrust.hscni.net
Family/Carer experience of advance care planning.	Deirdre McKenna	Southern Health & Social Care Trust	deirdre.mckenna@southerntrust.hscni.net
Factors influencing the reporting of financial abuse of older people.	Eamonn Neeson	South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	eamonn.neeson@setrust.hscni.net
What does the literature tell us about if and how informal networks work for young people transitioning from care.	Philip Teer	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	philip.teer@belfasttrust.hscni.net

What does the literature tell us about if and how informal networks work for young people transitioning from care.

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Adoptive families experiences of disruption.

Elizabeth Lyttle

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The experience of adopted children in school.

Fiona Templeton

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Parental alienation in children of divorce and separation.

Mairead Steward

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Systematic Narrative Reviews 2017

Title	Reviewer	Organisation	Email address
Community forensic provision for adults with a learning disability who offend	Denis Maguire	Southern HSCT	denis.maguire@southerntrust.hscni.net
Risk factors for self-harm in adolescence	Elaine Pollock	South Eastern HSCT	elaine.pollock@setrust.hscni.net
What is effective at reducing ante natal maternal stress associated with foetal developmental risk?	Jane Hindes	South Eastern HSCT	jane.hindes@setrust.hscni.net
Contribution of professional regulation on the Health and Social Care workforce	Caroline McGonigle	Northern HSCT	caroline.mcgonigle@northerntrust.hscni.net
Does a person-centred approach enhance the self-reported quality of life for people living in residential or nursing home care?	Kathryn Carmichael	Northern HSCT	kathryn.carmichael@northerntrust.hscni.net
The effectiveness of structured learning in the development of emotional intelligence in social work education	Robby Nelson	South Eastern HSCT	robby.nelson@setrust.hscni.net
Service user involvement in 'best interest' decisions during discharge from hospital	Robyn Lennox	Northern HSCT	robyn.lennox@northerntrust.hscni.net
Interventions to improve communication between children and their birth parents about the reasons they are in care	Lynda McGill	Northern HSCT	lynda.mcgill@northerntrust.hscni.net

<p>The regulation of adult Health and Social Care establishments in the community</p>	<p>Suzanne Cunningham</p>	<p>RQIA</p>	<p><u>suzanne.cunningham@rqia.org.uk</u></p>
<p>Community based interventions with disengaged adolescents and their families</p>	<p>Gerard Gorman</p>	<p>Barnardo's</p>	<p><u>gerry.gorman@barnardos.org.uk</u></p>
<p>Delivering together - service users and social workers in partnership as co-producers in research and continuous improvement</p>	<p>Sonia Patton</p>	<p>Service User and Carer</p>	<p><u>sjpatton924@gmail.com</u></p>

Systematic Narrative Reviews 2016

Title	Reviewer	Organisation	Email address
Family preservation: What is effective in preventing older adolescents coming into state care?	Laura Doyle	Action for Children	Laura.doyle@actionforchildren.org.uk
Ageing out from Foster Care, the support and experience of young people.	Francis Kavanagh	South Eastern HSCT	francis.kavanagh@setrust.hscni.net
The Emotionally Intelligent Parent - should we consider this in our assessment process?	Ruth Kingston	Belfast HSCT	ruth.kingston@belfasttrust.hscni.net
Implementing Evidence Based Parenting Programmes. Barriers and enablers to recruitment and retention.	Martina McCooley	Southern HSCT	martina.mccooley@southerntrust.hscni.net
The impact of relationship factors between Looked After Children and Young People and the people who look after them.	Jennifer Rice	South Eastern HSCT	jennifer.rice@setrust.hscni.net
Physical activity and teenager and young adult cancer survivors.	Simon Darby	Belfast HSCT and CLIC Sergeant	simon.darby@belfasttrust.hscni.net
Can effective interaction be enhanced when working with individuals who are deaf blind?	Liz Tanner	Southern HSCT	Liz.Tanner@southerntrust.hscni.net
Working with families where older people have experienced abuse.	Carole Kirk	Northern HSCT	Carole.Kirk@northerntrust.hscni.net

Developing team resilience as a strategy to prevent burnout and compassion in a statutory residential child setting implementing therapeutic practices.

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Evidence Informed Professional and Organisation Social Work

Module SWK 751 and SWK 753

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Improving and Safeguarding Social Wellbeing: A Strategy for Social Work 2012-2022 Strategic **Priority 3** adding value, delivering outcomes places a focus on continuous improvement and a focus on demonstrating outcomes and learning from practice.

The Social Work Research and Continuous Improvement Strategy 2015-2020 revised in 2020 and reproduced as The Social Work Research and Continuous Improvement Strategy 2020-2025 places emphasis on the importance of building capacity of social workers and service users and carers

Our vision is that people in Northern Ireland who use our services will have confidence that social work and social care policy, practice and service outcomes are underpinned by a strong research evidence base committed to continual improvement? People will have the confidence that the social work and social care workforce will be sufficiently resourced, motivated, skilled and freed up to engage in research activity.

The Strategy is available at <http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/swresearch/>

The SWK modules support the vision of the: Improving and Safeguarding Social Wellbeing: A Strategy for Social Work in NI 2010 - 2022) available at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/improving-and-safeguarding-social-wellbeing-strategy-social-work-northern-ireland>