

Terms of Reference

Core Group

Building a Research Community

The joint aims of the Core Group are:

- To develop a sustainable research community and associated infrastructure in Northern Ireland that connects the needs of the wider social work profession at policy, practice and managerial levels, academia, service users and carers.
- To develop and launch a revised Social Work Research and Continuous Improvement Strategy for 2020 and onwards

**Includes social work practice within statutory, not for profit and private organizations*

The overall the purpose is: (The list below is not in any order of priority all are equally important).

- To embed and implement a culture of research, evidence and continuous improvement that supports and improves decision making and outcomes in social work and social care services and outcomes for service users and carers.

Specifically, group members will

Maintain a forum for engagement, collaboration, collation and exchange of ideas and good practice.

Support accessible communications in relation to the emerging research agenda and its implications for organizations, service users and carers.

Play a lead role connecting the work of the regional strategic agenda and the local research agenda including offering advice in relation to infrastructure and capacity.

Link with employer organisations (practice and academia) and the wider community groups to ensure two-way flow of ideas.

Set social work and social care research priorities through a process of collaboration and co-production between academia, policy, practice and service users.

Work collaboratively to identify and secure funding for social work and social carer research from local, national and international funders

Create synergy between research and evidence and other drivers for example continuous service improvement, workforce planning, learning and development (professional in practice (PiP) framework), governance, ethics and equality.

Strengthen linkages with existing networks at local, national and international levels and build new networks supportive of driving forward research and evidence as part of core business.

In order to realize the aim and purpose of Building a Research Community and Developing the Revised Strategy we will:

Agree a longer-term detailed action plan with clear measurable goals, targets and timelines and evidence of progress.

Put in place an immediate workplan identifying specific roles and responsibilities of individual members and accountability issues.

The principles and values under which we will work are based on:

Equality, inclusion, equality of participation, openness and transparency.

Governance and accountability.

Throughout our activities we will adopt co-production as our method of working.

Membership to be refined and agreed

Name	Organisation	Email address
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Members to nominate a deputy who will attend in the event of non-availability

Chairing

Lisa Bunting, Queens University Belfast

Co-Chair

Head of Fitness to Practice, NI Social Care Council

Helen McVicker

Accountability/ Reporting mechanisms

Reporting at Strategic Research and Evidence Partnership

Frequency of meetings

Quarterly

Secretarial support

To be provided by the NI Social Care Council

Terms of reference to be reviewed

Regular review to be undertaken

Agreed: August 2021

Updated names November 2024