

Confirmed minutes - Research and Evidence Partnership
2 April 2025, 2pm – 4.30pm
Riddell Hall, Lecture room 1

Attendees

Prof. David Hayes	NI Social Care Council Board - Chair (DH)
Susan Ritchie	Department of Health (SR)
Frances Lyons	National Children's Bureau (FL)
Sonia Patton	Person with lived experience (SP)
Paul Webb	Praxis Care (PW)
Dr Janet Diffin	Public Health Agency, Research & Development Division (JD)
Prof. Paula McFadden	Research Methods Programme, Ulster University (PMcF)
Joanne Sansome	Person with lived experience (JS)
Lisa Morrison	Person with lived experience (LM)
Marita Magennis	Southern Health and Social Care Trust (MM)
Anne McGlade	NI Social Care Council (AMcG)
Helen McVicker	NI Social Care Council (HMcV)
Claire Taylor	Probation Board NI (CT)
Prof. Ann-Marie Gray	Ulster University (AMG)
Prof. Karen Winter	Queens University (KW)
Dr Jennifer Hamilton	Ulster University (JH)
Dr Amanda Shields	Open University (AS)
Prof. Bernie Kelly	Queen's University (BK)
Kerry Cuskelly (KC)	All Ireland Social Work Research Consortium
Emily Wilson	Person with lived experience and Carer (EW)
Andriana Alkiviadou	Secretariat – NI Social Care Council (AA)

Apologies

Catherine Cassidy	Strategic Planning and Performance Group
Carolyn Ewart	British Association of Social Work NI (CE)
Prof. Brian Taylor	Research Advocate (BT)
Louise Dunlop	UK Committee on Research Integrity (LD)
Catherine Maguire	NI Social Care Council (CM)
Prof. Lisa Bunting	NI Social Work & Social Care Research
Community (LB)	
Prof. Jonathan Jackson	NI Clinical Research Network (JJ)
Prof. Mike Clarke	NI Clinical Trials Unit & NI Methodology Hub
(MC)	
Kelvin Doherty	Youth Justice Agency (KD)
Prof. Louise McCabe	IMPACT (LMcC)
Dr Aideen Maguire	Administrative Data Research Centre UK
(AM)	
Tracy Reid	Association of Executive Directors of Social
Work (TR)	
Majella McCloskey	Centre of Effective Services (MMcC)
Tom Cassidy	Executive Directors of Social Work
Elaine Armstrong	Cedar Foundation (EA)

Not in attendance

Pauline Shepherd	Independent Health and Care Providers (PS)
Prof. Mark Tully	NI Public Health Research Network (MT)

No	Agenda Item	Action	Actioned by
1.	Welcome and apologies The Chair welcomed the members in attendance and noted apologies as above.		
1.1	Brief reminder of our Purpose The Chair reminded members of the purpose of this partnership, as included in the Terms of Reference.		


1.2	<p>What have we done since our last meeting?</p> <p>The Chair provided a brief update on what has been happening as part of the research agenda since the last meeting of the Partnership and noted as below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Research Conference March 2025</u> Members who attended the conference reported that it was an excellent conference with great range of presentations and that they specifically enjoyed the 5-minute lightning presentations. The event demonstrates a growing culture for research offering excellent networking and engagement opportunities. • <u>R and D Consultation meeting</u> HMcV shared a brief update of the meeting attended by a few of the members of the Partnership with colleagues in the R and D office as part of the consultation for their new Strategy. Key points noted as below; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Available budget to support this strategy - Main focus of the Strategy will be on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and PPI. - Links with IMPACT Ni Mike Clarke who, with Gavin Davison at QUB is part of the NIHR Evidence Synthesis, offered to meet to help support applications going through this route. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasis on the economic value in social work and social care in Northern Ireland as funding has been reduced. - Strategy will be launched by autumn 2026 and is important to maintain the synergy with our revised Research Strategy. - Ian Young has offered opportunity to reconnect with the partnership. <p>In relation to our new strategy to be developed members commented on the importance of including the practitioner perspective and co-production as this was also evidenced at the</p> 		
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	<p>Research Conference and therefore reflects what is going on in the research world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Research Community group</u> <p>AMcG shared an overview of the group as this group will be a subgroup of the Partnership as previously agreed. Next meeting of the Research Community is scheduled for the 9 April 2025 and she encouraged members to join the group, or colleagues, if they have capacity as it is inclusive and vibrant community.</p>		
2.	<p>Previous minutes for approval</p> <p>Minutes from the 28 November 2025 were agreed as true record of the meeting.</p>	To be signed by the Chair and upload on website.	AA
3.	Matters Arising		
3.1	<p>Terms of Reference</p> <p>Changes were amended and a draft was shared with the members prior to this meeting. Agreed as final and the Chair will present at the Board meeting on the 30/04 and published on the website.</p> <p>AMcG added that following the suggestions to include Social Work and Social Care practitioners as members of the partnership, she has now agreed new members as below;</p> <p>Peter Beck, Social Work Practitioner (Probation)</p> <p>Marc Harvey, Social Work Practitioner (Trust)</p> <p>One additional practitioner to confirm (Trust)</p> <p>They will attend next meeting.</p> <p>Any other matters arising are included as agenda items for discussion at this meeting.</p>	Approved by members and will be presented at Board meeting.	Chair
4.	Introductions		

4.1	<p>JD informed the members that a new Assistant Director will be recruited by June and will represent R and D Office to this Partnership.</p> <p>KC also took the opportunity to inform members of the second All Ireland Social Work Research conference in Dublin in the 23 May 2025.</p>		
4.2	<p>Brief reiteration of our agreement - Our way of working</p> <p>AMcG shared a power point slide to remind members of the partnership agreement of the way on how we will operate these meetings.</p>		AMcG
5.	Current Research Strategy		
5.1	<p>AMcG shared a power point presentation of the research journey so far since the first research strategy was launched in 2015.</p> <p>The presentation is available to all members on request.</p>		
5.2	<p>Roundtable group discussions</p> <p>Members were asked to share their views on the vision and strategic priorities for new research strategy. These will be used as ideas in preparation of the facilitated workshop on the 27 May 2025.</p> <p>There were three groups discussion based on a questionnaire with five questions. Members were asked to share one key message with their group which noted as below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to increase the involvement of social work and social care practitioners in the understanding of research and evidence as part of their profession and ensure that is a critical part of their day to day practice. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To revisit the title of the Strategy. • Professional conversations and learn from one another, to create ways to easily access research evidence, as the Strategy through research and evidence should contribute to ways of addressing these challenges. <p><i>Questionnaires were collected and responses will be collated and shared to all members for information.</i></p>	Responses to be shared to all members	AA
6.	Key tasks to support development of the strategy		
6.1	<p>Planned facilitated workshop</p> <p>A workshop is scheduled on the 27 May 2025 facilitated by Robbie Gilligan at Pavilion, Stormont Grounds.</p> <p>Invitations have been issued to members and also to members of the research community group.</p> <p>The purpose of this workshop is to support and develop the new Research Strategy for 2025-2030.</p>		
6.2	<p>Establishment of a subgroup</p> <p>HMcV advised that we will need to establish a subgroup that will take on any outcome of the workshop on the 27 May and will support the task moving forward. She asked members to volunteer and also informed that this group will include members from both the partnership and the research community.</p> <p>Members to send an email of their agreement to be part of this subgroup to AA who will arrange a date of first meeting.</p>	Collect names of volunteers	AA

<p>6.3</p>	<p>Proposed time line</p> <p>AMcG shared on a slide and briefly discussed a proposed timeline of the development of the research strategy including minimum of twelve weeks of consultation. It is anticipated that the strategy launch will be mid-2026.</p> <p>Members commented that this will line up with the R and D strategy and it would be useful to make connections with R and D around June as we move strategies on.</p>		
<p>6.4</p>	<p>James Lind Alliance</p> <p>A conversation took place around the involvement of James Lind Alliance as a possibility to complete a scoping exercise on research priorities in social work and social care.</p> <p>The Chair noted that this is work for a later stage as the current funding will not be sufficient to support this service.</p> <p>JD shared the R and D Office experience of using James Lind Alliance on their scope. She explained that costs could be altered if we narrow the focus and identify what we want. The biggest costing will be the scoping exercise. She added that this would be helpful to have as part of the subgroup and help to identify research priorities. She also recommended that it is driven by people who used the services, carers and service users. Work in the ROI on mental health priority setting was also identified.</p> <p>KC shared the link for further information Research Strategy for Mental Health HRB Health Research Board</p> <p>The chair agreed that this discussion will be continued at the next meeting and be expanded on what options we have and when we identify</p>		

	<p>what is the ask of the James Lind Alliance before we agree any further actions.</p> <p>A discussion around the ways we could look into other funding streams took place and suggestions noted as below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPI research grant scheme • R and D office other research funding available 		
7.	<p>How well did we do?</p> <p>HMcV closed the meeting asking members to shared their views of their experience of this meeting.</p> <p>Few members commented that they felt inclusive and heard. Others also commented on the accessibility of the venue and space.</p> <p>Members also suggested few other venues that could provide meeting rooms to HSC organisations in no cost including community centres and rooms through Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.</p>		
8.	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>12 June 2025 at 2pm Conference room 4, James House.</p> <p>New dates for 25/26 to be send out. These will have to align with the Board meetings.</p>	<p>Invite has been issued</p> <p>Schedule for 25/26 to be send out once agreed.</p>	AA
	Signed by Chair		
			

Actions from 2 April 2025			
Agenda item	Action	By whom	Open/Close
2.	To sign approved minutes from previous meeting and upload on website.	Chair/ AA	Closed
3.1	To present ToR to the Board on the 30 April and upload on website.	Chair/AA	Closed
5.2	To collate responses from roundtable discussion and shared to all members.	AA	Closed
6.2	Members to inform if they would like to volunteer to form a sub group.	All members	Closed
8.	New dates for 25/26 to be confirmed and send invites out to members	AA	Closed