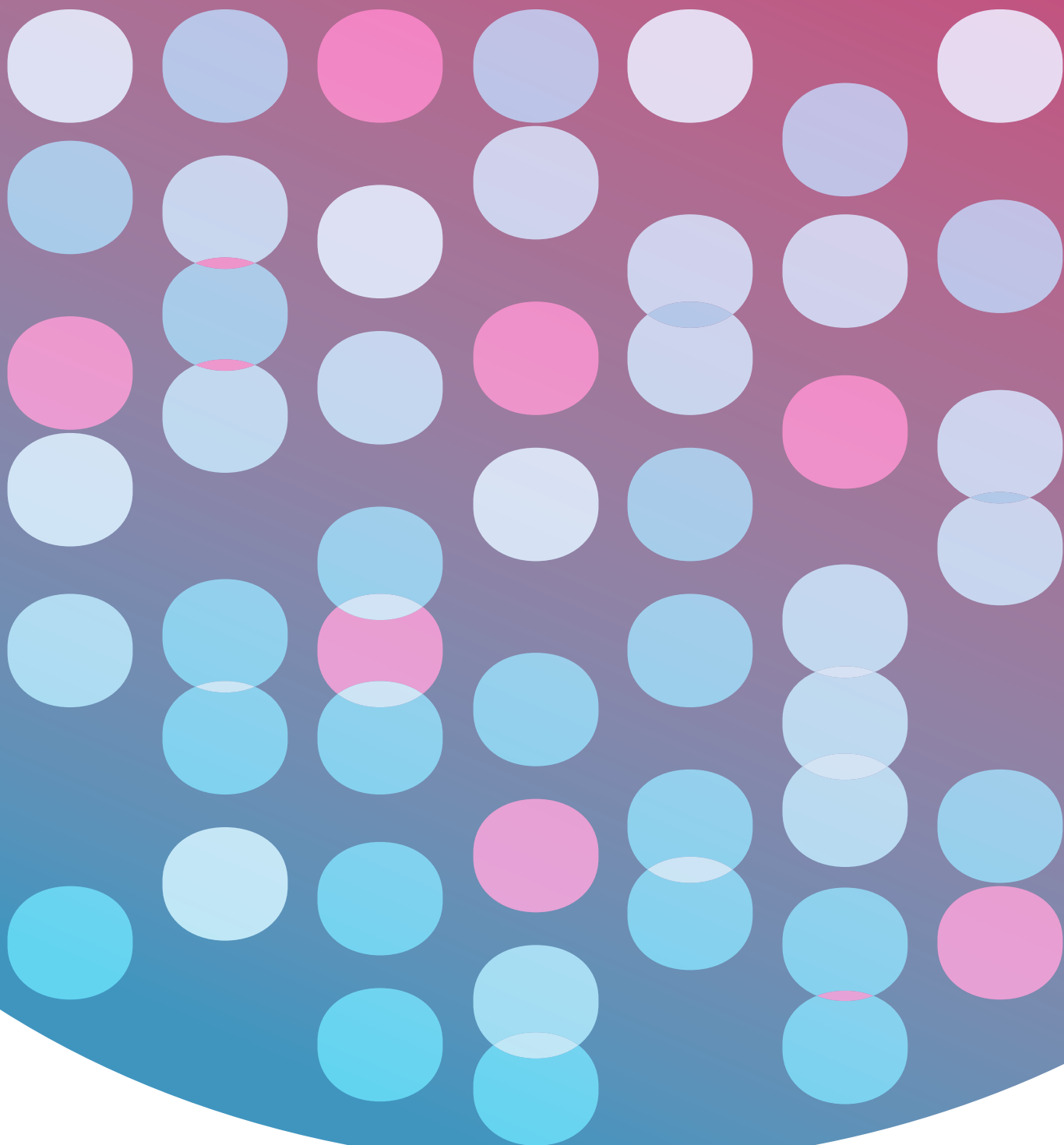


Activity Review

2015-16



WHO WE ARE

Iriss is a charitable company that promotes positive outcomes for the people who use Scotland's social services, by enhancing the capacity and capability of the workforce, to access and make use of knowledge and research for service innovation and improvement.

OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

We aim to:

- Embed a culture of collaboration, open to new ideas
- Ensure people have the knowledge, tools and skills to effectively use evidence and to innovate
- Place people at the centre of the design of services and support.

OUR THEMES

Our work correlates to four themes as identified in our strategic plan 2015-18.

- Engagement
- Partnership
- Prevention
- Effectiveness



improving lives through
knowledge, evidence and innovation



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Contents

Statement from the chairperson	4
Where we worked	6
Our reach	7
Iriss website	7
How we've made a difference	8
Our work	9
The Big Idea – a new way of working	10
Change the Frame – journeys out of homelessness	11
Exploring innovation and risk	12
Hospital to Home	13
Imagining the Future – leadership for change	14
Personal Learning Networks	15
Pilotlight	16
Plan P	17
PROP 2: Practitioner research – outcomes and partnership	18
Relationships Matter	19
Understanding change networks	20
The View from Here	21
Going forward	22
Our people	23

Statement from the chairperson

This review provides an overview of Iriss's work and achievements over the past year. The breadth of work is impressive and the learning from it has been significant.



Peter Macleod
CHAIRPERSON

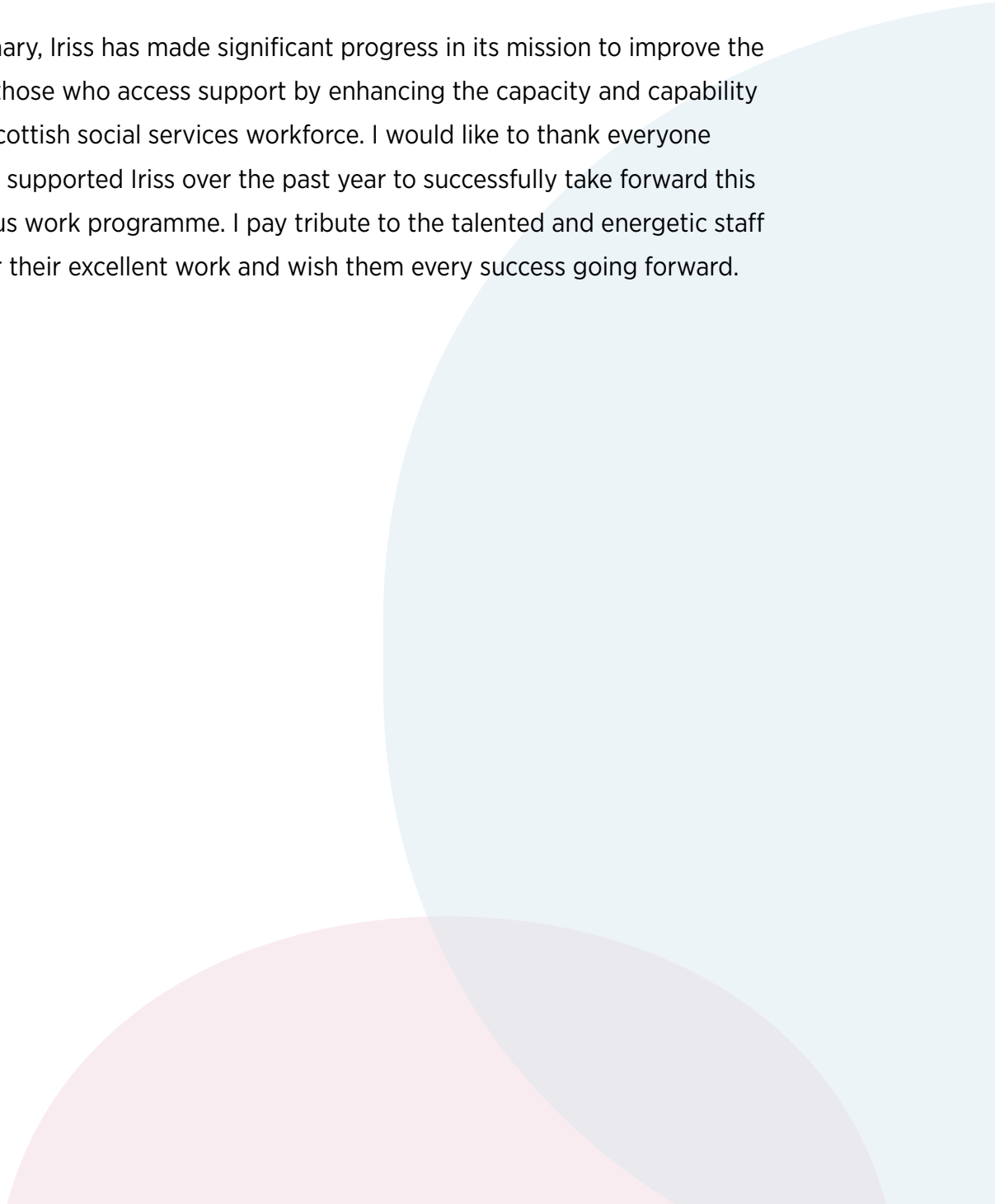
In recent years there have been changes in the way that services are organised and delivered. Personalisation and self-directed support have resulted in positive changes to the power, choice and control that people have over their own care and support. The integration of adult health and care, perhaps, represents the largest reorganisation of services in the sector in the past 40 years. With these changes come challenges and opportunities, and Iriss has been responsive to the changes, always collaborative in its approach to implement practice change that improves outcomes for those in receipt of care and support. The team works hard to ensure that people have the relevant knowledge, skills and tools to find and make use of evidence and to innovate.

Partnership working has been at the heart of all Iriss's work whether it's exploring approaches to risk and innovation; leading on thinking around co-designing pathways to self-directed support; making a contribution to the national priority to reduce delayed discharge from hospital; exploring

journeys out of homelessness; undertaking place-based working to identify local need and make improvements; exploring the meaning of positive relationships for young people that are looked after; or imagining the future of social services.

A key, high-profile piece of work was *The View from Here*, which highlighted the experiences of the social services workforce across Scotland. Plans are being hatched to take this work forward in the form of a multimedia touring exhibition. This year Iriss also ventured into the area of peer research and mental health, which from the quotes from those involved, speaks volumes about the value of the work to them and the learning that has resulted.

In summary, Iriss has made significant progress in its mission to improve the lives of those who access support by enhancing the capacity and capability of the Scottish social services workforce. I would like to thank everyone who has supported Iriss over the past year to successfully take forward this ambitious work programme. I pay tribute to the talented and energetic staff team for their excellent work and wish them every success going forward.



2015-16

WHERE WE WORKED

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

15

THIRD SECTOR

21

INDEPENDENT SECTOR

FIVE

INTERMEDIARIES

12

UNIVERSITIES

TWO

ORGANISATIONS

55

The total we've worked with in the past year, which comprised of...



2015-16

OUR REACH

PEOPLE

700+

We worked with more than 700 people across our projects

EVENTS

11

We ran 11 Iriss events reaching 272 people

PARTNER
EVENTS

15

We ran 15 events with partners reaching 454 people

SECTOR
EVENTS

43

We attended 43 sector events and presented at 35

SOCIAL
MEDIA

4,960

Followers on Twitter

MAILING
LIST

2,524

Subscribers to our mailing list, up 640 from previous year

IRISS.FM

143

This year we reached a total of 143 episodes since inception

23 IN 2015-16

41 IN 2014-15

45 IN 2013-14

34 IN 2012-13

2015-16

IRISS WEBSITE

USERS

200,726



PAGE
VIEWS

487,405

IRISS
INSIGHTS

THREE

We published three new Insights. Our most popular to date is on the topic of strength-based approaches

ONLINE
RESOURCES

THREE

Including one developed in partnership with CYCJ (Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice)

PLN

ONE

We hosted our first online PLN (Personal Learning Networks) course this year

How we've made a difference

We developed a Theory of Change¹, which sets out our ways of working:

- We inform – create conditions for effective information sharing
- We translate and facilitate – support individuals and groups to make use of evidence
- We co-create – work with communities to test out ideas and create conditions for embedding change

Our activities reflect at least one of these ways of working.

1 www.iriss.org.uk/resources/exploring-downstream



OUR WORK

2015—16

The Big Idea – a new way of working

Theme: Prevention

[The Big Idea](#) project supports more effective collaboration between those living and working in communities. It is being collaboratively designed by Iriss and project partners – Glasgow (North West) and Falkirk (catchment area surrounding Meadowbank Health Centre).

It's a new way of working for Iriss. Genuinely building the work from the bottom up – no predetermined theme or topic – and responding to local needs and issues. We want to work across different agents within the system, taking a 'deep dive' approach, to see what change can be made together over a longer period of time.

This project is underway but it takes time to collaborate!

LESSONS LEARNED

- Relationships and personal assets are crucial in building and sustaining effective place-based work. Tensions between individuals and agencies can impact on the effectiveness of these approaches.
- Collaboration across people and agencies takes time.
- Hosting open events for the 'curious' can lead to unexpected outcomes.

'Helpful to be part of a collaborative process and feel the discomfort.'

'Iriss staff have showed professionalism in responding to a change of direction in process, managing difficult conversations through innovative and creative approaches, but with consistency, responsibility, and awareness of the impact on individuals, their organisation and others.'

Change the Frame – journeys out of homelessness

Theme: Effectiveness

[Change the frame](#) was a two-year, Iriss-led project in collaboration with partners to explore homelessness in Scotland. The second phase focused on peer approaches where people with lived experience of homelessness undertook roles to help others affected by it.

People we worked with reported feeling valued and empowered. An individual with lived experience was employed on the project team and he reported feeling like a valued member of the team. There has been in excess of 2000 visits to the project website.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Lived experience added a unique value and insight to the processes and outcomes of the project
- People value their stories being captured as evidence, including people with lived experience and practitioners
- Working in an inclusive way with a cross-section of people who access, as well as provide support takes longer, but adds credibility and validates the evidence

'The Iriss team were a great help and encouraged me at every turn ... it has been a good learning experience and introduction into the practicalities of peer-led research. I have grown in confidence and can now work independently as well as with others. I am no longer afraid to make mistakes and work to improve on any I do make.'

—Member of project team with lived experience

Exploring innovation and risk

Themes: Engagement, Partnership

In early 2015, we launched a joint project with the Care Inspectorate to [explore innovation and risk](#) in the context of the Care Inspectorate's mandate of inspection and improvement.

The project has been undertaken in a spirit of genuine inquiry and has, to date, involved the analysis of an internal survey and two workshops with key Care Inspectorate staff. Participants recognised their ability to experiment and develop a culture of innovation, but also openly sought wider, systemic leadership on the issues they identified. Optimism and energy has been high and there is keen interest to progress it.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The Care Inspectorate, like many social services providers, is experiencing changes in funding, policy and its need to respond to services that are adapting a more flexible approach to care
- The power of buy-in from strategic management and how organisational culture can heavily influence staff buy-in
- Risk and risk management are key emerging themes across the sector

'Iriss has done something which probably wouldn't have been possible to carry out internally by removing barriers and obstacles which we may normally encounter within our organisation. This type of approach is what is needed for change.'

'I think any organisation could really benefit from the approach by Iriss and I hope together we can support change within the organisation, our culture and values.'

Hospital to Home

Theme: Partnership

[Hospital to Home](#) used co-production methodology to enable health and social care practitioners, older people and their informal carers to work together to co-design an integrated care pathway from hospital to home.

The project developed a two-pronged intervention to help ensure a more person-centred pathway, supported by integrated working. In 2015 we worked to embed and evaluate these interventions.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The project recommendations align with existing changes already underway in Tayside, which provided reassurance for staff regarding the direction of travel.
- It is crucial to recognise the importance of person-centred care and the involvement of the people who use services in decision making concerning the integration of health and social care services.
- IT systems pose barriers which affect the experience of staff and patients, particularly in relation to cross-team communications and integrated working.

‘The experience has been so valuable. Actually meeting people face-to-face, listening and processing information which can be then used to develop, validate or change what has been learned.’

—Working Group Practitioner Participant

‘So the way that you got people together and the way you worked with them, to get to the point of getting meaningful information about what people really want and what people really understand, I think that was the strongest point of all ... It made a lot of sense.’

—NHS Tayside Senior Manager

Imagining the Future – leadership for change

Theme: Engagement

The Leadership for Change programme was a three-day residential learning programme delivered to a cohort of 50 people. It was intended to immerse participants in ITF scenarios, systems leadership, and enable them to take action in their own contexts. This group continues to work on their own local experiments, making interesting and powerful change and will meet as a community of practice twice a year.

The programme was independently evaluated and revealed that:

- Transformational learning can be evidenced. Respondents to the evaluation expressed that the programme had an impact on their skills, thinking and perceptions.
- The majority of respondents had developed as leaders and were more confident and equipped to address challenges and opportunities.
- Respondents felt that the programme has resulted, or will result in a positive change in terms of the delivery of service and / or the experience of service users.

LESSONS LEARNED

- There was evidence to suggest that more time could be spent on reflective learning, experiential methodologies, group discussion and exercises, and less on facilitator input.
- Programme leaders suggested that should the programme be rolled out, the ITF scenarios may require updating.
- There is a great need for leadership development provision in the sector that focuses more on experiential, applied, peer learning.

‘We are excited by the potential of our group in supporting each other in a time of great change and uncertainty, but also to act as a group to push systems leadership within health and social services.’

Personal Learning Networks

Theme: Effectiveness

This project promoted and supported practitioners in the use of the web and social media for learning and development. Participants gained new awareness of tools that support personal learning, gained new confidence in using social media, and some have started to build their own Personal Learning Network.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Time, staffing issues and work/life commitments were the main barriers to participating in the workshop; 140 people signed up but less than half participated.
- The value of self-directed learning needs to be recognised and supported. One person commented that if it's face-to-face you can't prioritise other things like you can when it's online.

'For me the value of investing time in building up a PLN is that you start to make connections and use knowledge as a powerful tool to support your work. I would feel confident in discussing PLNs with others because I would be able to stress the advantages of engaging in this model.'

'This is a good model for learning as you're constantly getting new up-to-date pieces of information. Others can add on to the discussion and give you more information and links for you to have a look at. You can build up your network of contacts who are relevant to your organisation.'

Pilotlight

Themes: Engagement, Partnership

Using co-design, [Pilotlight](#) is exploring the opportunities that self-directed support offers to plan creatively for transitions with older people and people with younger onset dementia.

In East Renfrewshire we have:

- Developed tools to help move towards a provision of support to individuals that maximises community based assets and local social networks
- Commitment from East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership to take forward the work of the Pilotlight co-design team, including the piloting of individual service funds for older people through the East Renfrewshire SDS Forum
- Developed prototypes of a 'community connector' values and skills framework, a self-directed support quality information checklist, and a transport design brief which will be tested in 2016/17

LESSONS LEARNED

- Older people are assets to their communities but may need support to connect in
- All health and social care workers need to be skilled community connectors – employers should make these skills integral to job descriptions and training plans
- Commissioners, practitioners and supported people are still struggling to move from outputs (hours of service) to outcomes

'The materials we've produced have been very well co-produced ... helpful tools for future of East Renfrewshire residents.'

'To be part of Pilotlight has been really beneficial to me ... it was really good to get new ideas, to network and to gain more knowledge about self-directed support.'

Plan P

Theme: Prevention

[Plan P](#) focused on developing new ways of providing support to people who are, or who are at risk of becoming, lonely or isolated. We produced an [evidence review \(Insight 25\)](#), a set of prompt cards for those who work with older people, and four Iriss.fm episodes.

We also worked directly with a small group of people in St Monans, which has culminated in the development of ‘St Monans Abercrombie Community Group’ – a group of active people who have worked together to provide and attend regular social activities and created spaces where people can get together.

LESSONS LEARNED

- We know that the most effective approaches are those that involve older people in planning and delivering activities.
- A fundamental principle is: ‘do with’ rather than ‘do for’. Older people are assets that bring experience, time, care, personality, local knowledge and networks to the table.
- Building a stronger sense of connection helps build resilience and a strong network of supportive connections prevents loneliness and isolation at any age.

‘I found the Iriss cards on preventing loneliness and I think they are just brilliant. I can’t tell you how delighted I am that there is an organisation that aims to bring together good practice across the wider third sector – evidenced based practice – great news!! It’s like a breath of fresh air.’

‘It’s like we used to be just “the pensioners at Abercrombie Court” but now we’re really part of the community.’

PROP 2: Practitioner research – outcomes and partnership

Theme: Effectiveness

Developed in partnership with the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships (CRFR) and University of Edinburgh, [this project](#) aimed to develop research capacity and knowledge exchange among practitioners, and to generate evidence about issues relevant to practice. One of the organisations that we worked with was Alzheimer Scotland. We had three Dementia Advisors take part, working on three separate projects around the use of yoga in dementia care, the impact of using life story work with an individual with dementia, and one exploring how societal attitudes affects those with dementia in their day-to-day lives.

They have used their research to inform changes to their own practice and to develop how they use wider evidence to inform their work. More importantly, it has also helped them to appreciate just how powerful their own learning can be and the value of sharing this with others.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Organisations need to be open and engaged with how they develop and use evidence
- Practitioners often underestimate the importance of their own work
- Learning is lost if practitioners don't have the skills or the confidence to communicate their work

'I think I articulate quite well when I am talking to carers and people with dementia because I was so involved in it and had to think really clearly about it when I was writing up my project.'

'I've kind of pushed my neck out to get more funding for the yoga class which I'm really delighted about. I've put in a paper to go to the Alzheimer's International Conference.'

Relationships Matter

Theme: Prevention

The two-year [Relationships Matter](#) project was facilitated by Iriss and led by the Relationships Matter Collective. The five teams in the Collective prototyped an idea that responded to a barrier in their workplace which prevented continued relationships with young people as they leave care. Four teams embedded their ideas in practice.

Each of the organisations has improved how they support better outcomes for young people, as well as support the development of cultures where practitioners feel safe and able to continue their relationship with young people as they leave care.

LESSONS LEARNED

- We brought people together annually but more frequent gatherings would have been beneficial.
- People said they really benefited from being part of a collective which offered reassurance throughout and validated the work.
- We looked for opportunities to make tools from evidence (eg the conversation tool came from a research study). A practical application of research can be valuable.

'The support from Iriss has been phenomenal and as a first time blogger, the guidance and support to share my research, staff and young people's views has been invaluable.'

—Participant

'The whole experience has been enlightening and reassuring that there are many organisations and practitioners who also realise the importance and benefit to continuing relationships.'

—Who Cares? Scotland

Understanding change networks

Themes: Engagement, Partnership

See Me and Iriss [worked together](#) to understand what changes stigma and discrimination against people with lived experience of mental health issues in communities in Scotland. A group of peer researchers and storytellers with lived experience were brought together to undertake the research and workshops.

It resulted in the creation of a toolkit that covers: co-production; power and partnership; a human rights based approach; change; and building sustainable networks. It represents a blend of evidence that comes from story, personal experience, robust research and practice wisdom. Two members from the group have received funding to start their own Change Networks. The group has also established itself under the umbrella of the Mental Health Foundation as the Peer Research Collective and will continue their journey together.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Bringing together individuals with different backgrounds can be equally challenging and rewarding
- People feeling valued can mean that they take on more personal responsibility and start to embed the learning of their own project
- Relationships with Change Networks were complex and tense at times, which led to reduced buy-in and a rocky start to the project

'I have found the experience of being included in this group empowering, inspiring, educating and a catalyst for change in my own work locally and more widely. I am proud that we had overcome out considerable challenges at inception.'

'The humility and honesty shown by Iriss staff and colleagues in quickly responding to the needs of the group was excellent. They had much to overcome in their roles too, but they were so valuable in guiding and organising us. They modelled the change we want to inspire in Scotland.'

The View from Here

Theme: Engagement

[The View from Here](#) project was designed to understand the experiences, attitudes and outlook of the social services workforce in Scotland. It involved a workforce survey created in partnership with The Guardian Social Care Network and completed by 2167 people; and in-depth, creative qualitative research with 74 staff, supported by Scottish Care, CCPS and Strathclyde University.

The importance of listening to, gathering feedback and providing a collective voice from the workforce has been invaluable. The focus on relationships/emotions and the personal stories from frontline workers have been particularly powerful. Practitioners felt that it had been a valuable exercise to support them to reflect on their work.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Much more has to be done to raise the profile of the workforce
- The power of stories – the combination of the written word with visual methods brought the experiences of the workforce to life
- It was a project for all – it encompassed the broad range of social services practitioners

'You forget about yourself in this job, this project provided me with time to reflect about myself.'

'Feedback about your work stops after your probationary period, you don't get a chance to reflect on your work anymore. This project gave me the chance to do this again.'

Going forward

We are excited about continuing our work to support and develop the knowledge, skills and capacity of the social services workforce in Scotland.

In line with our theory of change, we will continue to create conditions for effective information sharing; support individuals and groups to make use of evidence; and co-create with communities to test out ideas and create conditions for embedding change. We strive to be a successful learning organisation – to try out new ways of working, reflect on them, and share the learning.

Our work supports the implementation of the shared vision and strategy for Scotland's social services and is aligned with health and social care integration and self-directed support policy agendas.

Highlights for 2016–17 include a touring multimedia exhibition of *The View from Here*, with a focus on promoting public understanding of the impact of care and support, and celebrating the contribution of people who work in the field. We'll also take forward our work with the Care Inspectorate around risk and innovation, and continue to produce our acclaimed *Insights* – evidence summaries to inform and support social services policy and practice.

Greater emphasis will be placed on developing relationships with educators and the emerging workforce in Higher Education; learning from the Personal Learning Networks project will be adapted and applied to help achieve this.

Our strategic plan (2015–18)² is available on our website.

² www.iriss.org.uk/resources/partnerships-future-iriss-strategy-2015-2018

Our people

IRISS TEAM

- **Robert Parry** – Interim Director
- **Maddy Ross** – Operations Manager
- **Doreen Wood** – Administrator
- **Lisa Pattoni** – Head of Innovation and Improvement
- **Rikke Iversholt** – Project Manager, Innovation and Improvement
- **Gayle Rice** – Project Manager, Innovation and Improvement
- **Rhiann McLean** – Project Manager, Innovation and Improvement
- **Michelle Drumm** – Communications and Content Manager
- **Ian Phillip** – Designer
- **Paul Hart** – Interactive Developer
- **Lesley Duff** – Integration Developer
- **Andy Archer** – Creative Advisor
- **Ellen Daly** – Project Manager, Evidence-informed Practice
- **Kerry Musselbrook** – Project Manager, Evidence-informed Practice
- **Stuart Muirhead** – Project Manager, Evidence-informed Practice
- **Judith Midgley** – Iriss Associate, Pilotlight
- **Kate Dowling** – Associate Service Designer, Pilotlight

IRISS STRATEGIC BOARD

- **Peter Macleod**
Director of Children's Services, Renfrewshire Council – Independent Chairperson
- **Amanda Britain**
Associate Director at Craigforth
- **Claire Carpenter**
Director at the Melting Pot
- **Martin Cawley**
Chief Executive at Turning Point Scotland
- **James Elder-Woodward**
Vice-Convenor of the Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living
- **Sarah Gledhill** (Observer)
Scottish Government
- **Anna Fowle**
Chief Executive, Scottish Social Services Council
- **Donald Macaskill**
People as Partners Project Lead at Scottish Care
- **Suzanne Munday**
Director at MECOPP
- **Neil Quinn**
Co-Director, Centre for Health Policy; Reader in Social Work and Social Policy at the University of Strathclyde
- **David Rennie**
Former Workforce Consultant, Scottish Care
- **David Wiseman**
Retired Director of Strategy, Care Commission
- **Andrea Wood**
Head of Personalisation Policy & Practice, KEY



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improving lives through
knowledge, evidence and innovation