



Insights – Guide for authors

What are Insights?

Insights are evidence summaries aimed at social services practitioners and policy makers. They should be short (4,000 words max, inclusive of references) and written in a clear, accessible and engaging style.

Insights are not 'how to guides' but should draw out implications for practice or the workforce more generally. They are intended to promote debate, discussion and reflection amongst readers based on the evidence.

Each *Insight* will include:

- Key points – bulleted list of main findings, ideally 4-5
- Brief introduction, stating what the Insight aims to cover/achieve
- Reference to the relevant policy-context
- Summary of relevant evidence
- Identified implications for the social services workforce – 3-5 bulleted points
- List of key references

Topics

- These should meet a need/gap – either to summarise relevant evidence that hasn't been brought together before, including emergent areas, or to reframe or re-present evidence in a new way that's helpful to the workforce.
- Topics can be subject-focused (eg Peer support in mental health) or process-focused (eg Understanding appreciative inquiry).

For a list of previous *Insights* published, go to:

www.iriss.org.uk/insights

Evidence base

- There must be sufficient evidence to warrant an *Insight*. As a guide, *Insights* average 40 references with a minimum of 30 and maximum of 70.

- Evidence should draw on published qualitative or quantitative studies, practice guidelines and policy documents. They may also include accepted PhDs and conference papers, publicly available. *Insights* should focus on the Scottish context, but be inclusive of evidence from outside Scotland where this is transferrable and relevant.

Review process

Each *Insight* is sent for review to a core set of reviewers including Scottish Government, NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and Iriss Board member. We also identify a minimum of two subject specialists and one practitioner to support the review process. We may ask authors to help identify subject specialists.

We normally ask reviewers to comment on the following sorts of areas, as relevant to them:

- Does the Insight offer a robust summary of the evidence? - is there missing evidence?
- Does the Insight effectively set out the background context for this topic, making reference to relevant workforce initiatives or policies where appropriate?
- Does the Insight clearly explain the potential implications of the evidence for the social services workforce?
- Is the Insight easy to read and understand?
- Do you think the Insight will be of use to practitioners/other readers?

Reviewers comments are collated by Iriss and sent back anonymously to the author to inform a second and final draft. Iriss may also provide a steer.

Iriss retains editorial rights over the final copy of the Insight.

Promotion and dissemination

Iriss will promote each *Insight* to raise awareness of it through its own networks. We would also look for opportunities to promote the work at sector events, and in some instances support additional efforts to bring together interested parties to share and discuss implications for the social services workforce (policy and practice). All or parts of any promotional activity may be recorded and shared, and will be regarded as another Iriss output, with the purpose of bringing the evidence to a wider audience.

Iriss expects the authors of an *Insight* to be available to support this to help achieve wider readership and reach.

Fees and contract

The fee for an Insight is £2,000 (inclusive of VAT), with £1,000 paid on receipt of an acceptable first draft, the remainder following receipt of the final accepted draft that meets its brief. Iriss reserves the right not to publish an Insight that does not meet its brief.

Further contractual details should be discussed and agreed with an Iriss staff member prior to signing a contract and undertaking the work. The contract will include key dates for the first and final draft to be delivered to Iriss.

General guidance and style notes

The *Insight* should be written and delivered to Iriss in Word with minimal formatting.

The font for published documents is Corbel.

Other conventions:

- UK rather than US spelling – eg organisation not organization
- Capitalisation of only the initial word in headings
- Capitalisation of the initial word in all bulleted lists
- No line-end punctuation on list items, except where a list item consists of multiple sentences, in which case ALL items in that list should terminate with full stops
- Use of indentation without quote marks or italics for all direct quotations of over 50 words
- Use of single quote marks for single words or shorter phrases in the body of text
- If you are omitting words from a direct quote this should be indicated by an ellipsis (three dots) and a space

Diagrams, graphs, images and tables

Diagrams, charts, graphs and images can often explain an idea better and more concisely than words. *Iriss Insights* can include images, but due to space constraints they should be kept to the minimum that is absolutely required. Since images and tables impact on the available space in printed publications, word counts may need to be reduced to compensate – as a working rule you should reduce your word-count by ~200 words for every image included.

When submitting images and diagrams for inclusion in an *Insight*, please ensure there are no copyright issues around this material. *Iriss* reserves the right to redraw or replace diagrams and charts to better suit our house style.

Headings

Documents should adopt a consistent and straightforward hierarchy of headings. Details of Word's built-in heading styles can be found at www.shanakelly.com/word/numbering/UseBuiltInHeadingStyles.html

Footnotes

Footnotes should only be used if absolutely necessary and should be kept to the minimum required. They should be numbered consecutively. Footnotes should not be used to provide bibliographical references, which are to be kept to the 'references' section at the end of the text).

Style details in text

Refer to 'and colleagues' not 'et al' when discussing authors in body of text, et al is acceptable if used as part of a reference.

Maximum number of authors to be quoted in text is three. If four or more refer to X et al (if in reference in brackets) or X and colleagues if used in text.

References should be listed chronologically – oldest first, in alpha order if more than one from the same year.

If you have more than one reference from the same author, in the same year add a, b, c etc to the year

eg (DH, 2006a) and later (DH, 2006b).

Years should usually appear in brackets in text references.

Report titles should be italicised, without quotation marks.

Page should be referred to as p – no full stop and no space before number eg p10; page numbers are only used when it is a direct quote.

To keep an uncluttered style, unnecessary punctuation should be avoided, eg no full stops in eg or ie or after etc.

Numbers from one to nine should be in words; 10 to 999,999 as full numerals, and anything higher in million/billion (abbreviated to m/bn only for units – money etc) ie

Two companies with a total of 3000 employees merge to form a new entity selling two million products per annum. The new company has a market value of £120m.

Capitalisation – capitals should only be used for names eg Individual Budgets or Scottish Government. They should not be used for example for ‘local authorities’ or ‘health boards’ or ‘mental health services’.

If introducing bullets/a numbered list start with a colon at the end of the introductory sentence egsuggested three reasons for low take up amongst mental health service users:

- 1) The relationship between community care which is provided by social services and that which is provided by health streams
- 2) The stigma attached to the service
- 3) The lack of publicity

Referencing

Iriss uses the Harvard system of referencing; further details can be found at www.iriss.org.uk/referencing. The following highlights a number of key features.

Reference are listed chronologically, oldest first. If you have more than one reference from the same author, in the same year (referred in text as 2006a, 2006b etc) then list in date order in the references.

Where possible (and appropriate) hyperlinks are included to enable quick access to the document referenced.

Lower case is always used for journal article titles or chapters in edited books.

Italics are used for book titles and journal names.

Use ‘and’ rather than an ampersand (&).

Where appropriate, dates of accessing websites should be given.

As a general rule, minimum punctuation should be used.

Book is referenced by author(s) (date) *title*, place of publication: publisher

eg Newbigging K and Lowe J (2005) *Direct Payments and mental health: new direction*. Brighton: Pavilion Publishing

Journal article is referenced by author(s) (date) title, *Journal name*, volume number without Vol, pages without pp

eg Ridley J and Jones L (2003) Direct what? The untapped potential of Direct Payments to mental health service users. *Disability and Society*, 18, 643-658

Chapter in an edited book is referenced by chapter author(s) (date) chapter title, pp, in editor(s) name (eds) *book title*. Place of publication: publisher

eg Glasby J and Littlechild, R (2006) An overview of the implementation and development of direct payments, pp234-238. In J Leece and J Bornat (eds) *Developments in Direct Payments*. Bristol: The Policy Press

Legislation is referenced by name and year

eg Community Care (Direct Payments) Act (1996)
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1996/1996030.htm>

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