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Apex Away Day: Using evidence to flourish

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Evidence-informed practice

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-
1. How other organisations use evidence
 2. Evidence use @ Apex
 3. Improving use of evidence
 4. Tools which can help us improve

1. What should the role of evidence be?
2. What is the role of evidence?
3. How can we improve our use of evidence?

Thinking about what should be and
what is...

Feb – March 2011

Social Work focus

- Children and Families
- Older people and physical disabilities

Literature review

Decision making and social work in Scotland: The role of evidence and practice wisdom

Emma Collins and Ellen Daly (IRISS)

September 2011

Evidence (for our participants)...

Information, gathered from multiple sources, relating to a specific case

(police reports, previous social work reports, background info etc)

Research small part of this mix

Importance of evidence...

“ Evidence? It is critical. I think that more you have, the more knowledge you have about a situation, whether that is theoretical, practical, the better prepared you are as a practitioner ”

Making judgements...

“ I mean is there ever any judgement made without evidence? Never! Never! ”

To justify decisions...

“ I like to use the evidence and research in my reports 'cause I feel that it helps justify why you are making a certain recommendation ”

Importance of analysis

“ I think sometimes I just know workers ‘do’ because they don’t analyse. And if you don’t analyse, all you’re doing is reacting, you’re not necessarily making any, you’re not doing anything”

The role of gut feeling/intuition...

“ intuitively I know I’ m right here...knowing you’ re right is just not enough. So you have to build it (the evidence) up and you have to be a bit of a detective ”

Combining analysis & intuition

“ Using intuition is not the problem. Indeed it can help us generate flashes of inspiration and pick out ideas that our rational analysis could not. The problem is that we may not then take these intuitive thoughts back to the workshop of analytical thinking and therefore not test our hypotheses with sufficient rigour” (Helm, 2011)

Analysis & intuition...

“ analytical decision-making is seen to be appropriate in situations where judgment is complex and data is vast, whereas intuition is considered more appropriate when time is limited and information is scarce or conflicting ” (Helm, 2011)

Group decision making...

“ Formal meetings are really the place where major decisions are made ... Case conferences, inter agency meetings, case reviews, looked after reviews, they're where major decisions are made”

Recording and explaining the analysis

“ it is just about the facts, the case, what's happening, what are we going to do next. It is not so much about how I arrived at that decision”

Does experience make a difference?

“ I think probably experienced workers, the gut feeling is probably quite valuable because they've dealt with so many (people)... I am so inexperienced that my gut feeling could be wrong ”

But the more experienced...

“ I think it becomes easier as you gain more experience and the more experienced you become then I think the more you do realise you do need to think a lot more.”

Uncertainty...

“ A lot of the issues where social workers have to make assessments are quite complex and there are often grey areas. It's not often clear cut...the fact that it's not clear cut doesn't mean that people are unwilling or unable to make decisions but actually the reality is that it isn't clear cut ”

What is the role of evidence?

What should be the role of
evidence?

15 mins discuss

Vote for quotes



iNCLUDEM



Use of evidence

Evidence-informed rationale

Inception: “What Works?”
research

Underlying theories & research:
Includem’s framework for
intervention

Embedding Evidence

“Speaking to people who know”

Academics on the board to feed in new evidence

Outcomes Focus

- LA specify outcomes
- Young person asked what they want to change & what they want from Includem
- Includem connect these

Outcome Focus

- 8 weekly outcomes & progress discussion
- Worker completes outcomes star
- Data logged in central database

Performance & evaluation

- Reported to Includem's Service and Quality Committee
- Evaluation built in, originally commissioned now in-house

Next steps...

Surveying parents, carers,
referring organisation to
gain insight into the
outcomes achieved

Satisfaction with services

Uses online feedback tool –
Viewpoint

Data shared with staff, young
people, annual report, Service
and Quality Committee

Next steps...

Working to improve visual
representation

Add to information packs

Barriers and Challenges

- paperwork and administration
- technical and organisational teething problems

Enablers

- All staff evidence-based toolkit - A Better Life. Approaches and activities
- Monitoring & evaluation team (two people) and an Improvement Manager

Benefits of being evidence informed

1. Strengthening confidence - 'you know what you are doing is right'
 2. Increase in staff confidence
 3. Increase in staff confidence
 4. Increase in staff confidence
 5. Increase in staff confidence
- the performance and outcomes of the organisation they make

lesson 1

Build evidence in at a very early stage, making it part of what you do and not an add-on.

lesson 2

Don't drown in data! Be wary of gathering too much.

lesson 3

If you are **generating evidence** you need to **use all of it**, particularly using it to **improve**.

lesson 4

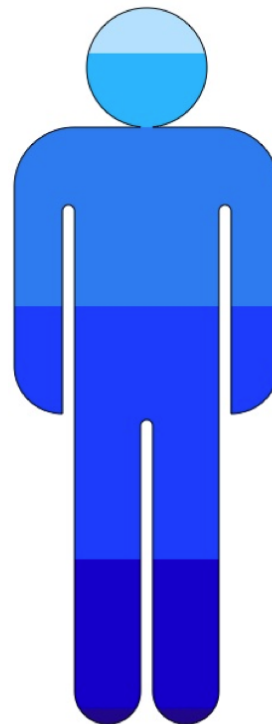
Get all your staff on board, they need to see the evidence being generated and how it is being used.

10 min discussion with neighbour...

Questions or Comments

Use of evidence at Apex

Chart 1: To what extent is work across Apex informed by research evidence



- Always (6%)
- Almost Always (10%)
- Often (25%)
- Sometimes (35%)
- Seldom (21%)
- Never (2%)

44% of respondents consult
research at least once a week

To access research people most commonly used:

internet searching (81%)
websites (73%)
consulting reports (56%)
seminars/events (48%)

Why access research?

Improving services (84%)

Preparing presentations (84%)

Designing programmes or services
(73%)

Average of 60% of staff
perceived that their
research skills were
excellent or good

Over a quarter of staff (26%)
didn't believe that Apex
always /almost always
collected & analysed
information about the
outcomes achieved by the
people they support

Less than half of respondents
(44%) believed that Apex
always /almost always
consulted research when
developing policies and
guidelines

91% believed that research should always / almost always be used in applications for funding, to help evaluate our work and as a source of motivation and ideas

Disconnect

91% of respondents believed that research should always/almost always be used in applications for funding but 60% of respondents believed it always/almost always was

A high proportion of staff
believed there were no
barriers to accessing (29%)
or applying research (38%)

When asked if there were any issues or topics they would like to know more about to help them do their job over half of respondents (52%) said no

10 min discussion with neighbour...

Questions or Comments

Recommendations and Ideas...

1.

Using RSS as a mechanism
for improving information
access and awareness

2.

Develop a list of useful resources
and websites

3.

Organise evaluation training
focused on demonstrating
impact

4.

Support further
improvements to outcome
recording, analysis and
sharing

5.

Develop a bank of standard questions and questionnaires about services and key issues

6.

Support mini-evaluation,
developing or signposting staff to
self-evaluation templates,
guidance and checklists

7.

Explore using the Apex intranet to better share knowledge

8.

Hold 6 monthly knowledge
sharing events

9.

Develop 2 example local area profiles about characteristics of the local area and current service provision

10.

Develop an Apex report,
articulating the evidence
base underpinning the
organisation

11.

Develop standard business case and project planning documentation with evidence expectations

12.

Arrange 2-3 training and knowledge sharing meetings about research for the 8 Apex research champions

13.

Ad hoc research support and advice

IDEAS GENERATION

What could you do tomorrow to improve your use of evidence?

What could Apex as an organisation do to help you achieve this?

Tools



Welcome

- Single source for social services workforce
- Promotion of Information Literacy
- Knowledge Management Strategy
- Based on NHS Education Scotland technical infrastructure
- Shared resources with The Knowledge Network

...health of information and
...materials to support practitioners
...work and in his...

Knowledge into Action
Managing Knowledge as an Asset in Challenging
Times. Click to BOOK YOUR PLACE for the next
Social Innovation event. Seats are filling up fast!

Quicklinks

- ▶ Confidence through Evidence Toolkit
- ▶ Evidence Informed Practice Portal
- ▶ Evidence summaries

Learning & development



- ▶ Continuous Learning Framework
- ▶ Leadership (GoodPractice.net)
- ▶ Leadership blog



Finding & using information



- ▶ Information literacy: seven stage cycle
- ▶ Information literacy intera...
- ▶ IT skills...

Information Landscape

Research Recordings



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Crime and justice research collection

Audio and video recordings concerning recent research on crime and justice related topics



The crime and justice research collection contains a mixture of podcasts and videos about recent research on crime and justice related topics. The collection contains two types of recordings. Research soundbites are short clips that highlight key findings from recent crime and justice research. The Research Discussion recordings are longer pieces involving a mixture of academics, policy makers and practitioners discussing research findings and their implications for policy, practice and academia.

This series has been designed to improve access to, and awareness of, research findings and debate. It includes a combination of videos and audio, and the series has been supported by the Higher Education Academy: C-SAP Network, Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research (SCCJR) and the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS).

Videos

[Sectarianism, racism and hate crime](#)

[Football related violence in Scotland](#)

[Culture, change and community justice](#)

[Making the transition: Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

[Criminal justice and utopias](#)

[Diversion from prosecution to social work](#)

[Criminal justice in Scotland](#)

[Counterfeiting as corporate externality](#)

[Desistance research and probation practice](#)

[Influencing trust and confidence in the London Metropolitan Police](#)

[Women's imprisonment - is there a better way?](#)

[Supporting desistance from crime: reconfiguring penal practice](#)

crime+justice

Want to know more about crime and justice research? You'll find videos and podcasts about research findings and the implications for policy and practice in the **crime and justice research collection**.

www.iriss.org.uk/crime-and-justice-research-collection



insights

www.iriss.org.uk

attachment-informed practice with looked after children and young people

written by Judy Furnivall, SIRCC, on behalf of Scottish Attachment in Action

10

insights

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supporting unpaid carers: the benefits of telecare

08

Key points

- Unpaid carers are the largest group of care providers in Scotland.
- Although carers often feel positive about their role, the demands of caring can have an adverse impact on carers' health and well-being.
- Telecare offers an effective means of supporting carers in their caring role, freeing them from unnecessary stress and providing them with greater personal freedom.
- For telecare to benefit more carers, new ways of identifying carers whose situation could benefit from telecare need to be developed.
- More needs to be done to raise awareness of telecare and its benefits among professionals and carers, as well as the general population.
- Telecare needs to be embedded within standard approaches to assessment, care management and review.
- Carers' input into telecare service design and delivery is necessary to ensure that outcomes for carers (and those cared for) are maximised and sustained.
- Staff and carers should be aware of the need for joint working where community based services (telecare) overlap with acute services (telehealth).

insights

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improving support for black and minority ethnic (BME) carers

07

Key points

- BME carers face particular difficulties in accessing and using support services, over and above those experienced by white carers.
- Low uptake of services by BME carers cannot be attributed to their lack of interest in receiving support.
- Many BME carers are unaware of the services that exist to support them.
- A lack of language-matched information is perceived by BME carers to be among the greatest barriers to accessing services.
- There is a need for culturally competent services, based on culturally appropriate and language-matched assessment processes.
- Planners and providers of health and social care services have a legal duty to offer services that are accessible and appropriate to all sectors of the community, irrespective of ethnic origin.



Research Advice Service

SEARCH



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In the space below, please describe your research as fully as you can, and indicate where we can help: *

please give as much information as possible

Name: *

Designation: *

Organisation: *

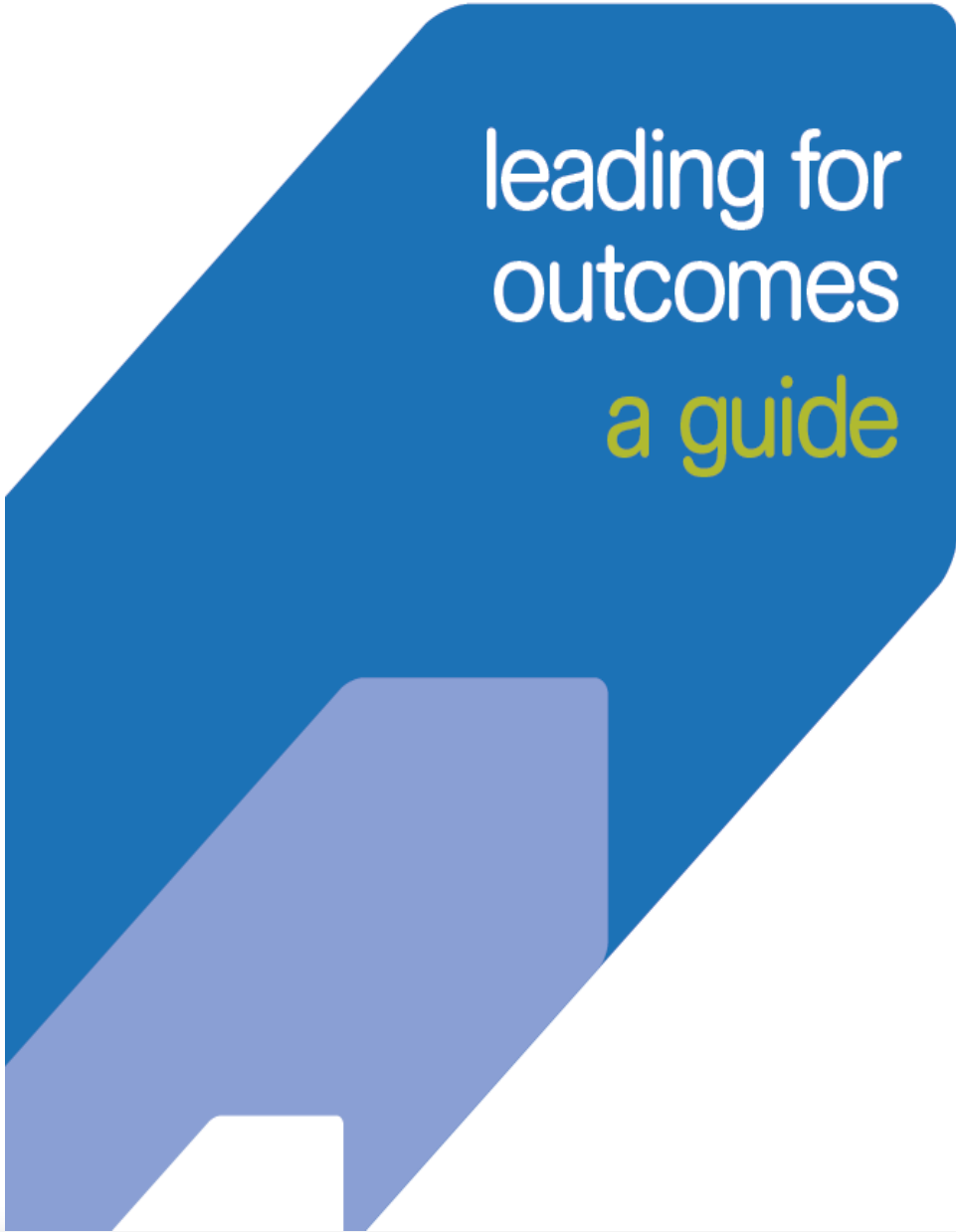
Describe your organisation: *

- voluntary sector
- public sector
- private sector
- independent/consultant
- umbrella/support
- nhs or health organisation
- registered charity
- social enterprise
- Other...

(you can tick more than one)

How many staff does your organisation employ?: *

- <10
- <50



leading for
outcomes
a guide

The guide includes:

- knowledge of effective team leadership
- evidence relating to the achievement of outcomes for people who use services and their unpaid carers
- training materials: exercises, scenarios, case studies
- audit tool – adapt the manual to team needs