

## WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS – Themes & paired sessions V2

### MORNING

#### i) Making an impact

<p><b>What Works: Improving the use of evidence across public services</b></p>	<p><b>Researchers v Think Tanks v Consultants v Tsars v Inquiries: who has the most impact?</b></p>
<p><i>Ross Neilson, Cabinet Office &amp; Robbie Coleman, Sutton Trust / Education Endowment Foundation</i></p>	<p><i>William Solesbury, King’s College London</i></p>
<p>Announced in March 2013, the What Works Network consists of six independent centres which summarise and share evidence in areas covering health, education, crime, local growth, early intervention and crime. The goal is to improve the access and application of high quality evidence in policy and decision making process. This joint presentation from the Cabinet Office and the Sutton Trust / Education Endowment Foundation will illustrate how the What Works Network is supporting the use of evidence to improve decision making, and will address issues about accessing, summarising and sharing evidence with diverse groups of policy and decision makers.</p>	<p>Researchers are not the sole external source of evidence to inform policy or practice. There are also consultants, think tanks, lobbyists, policy tsars, journalists and others. How do they achieve impact? And what might researchers learn from them?</p> <p>The presentation draws on studies of successful impact to understand how research measures up to its competitors in the key areas of commissioning, conduct, and communication. What must researchers do to improve their presence and gain mastery in these areas? And if methodological rigour is the unique selling point of social research, is this alone sufficient to ensure impact?</p>

#### ii) Innovation in a time of austerity

<p><b>How do you evaluate local practice in times of Austerity? Lessons learned from two case studies</b></p>	<p><b>Engaging approaches to purposeful evidence: Research in programme management of public service transformation</b></p>
<p><i>Andrea Kirkpatrick &amp; Maria Strudwick, Department for Work and Pensions</i></p>	<p><i>Eileen McKibbin &amp; Diane Trollope, Kent County Council</i></p>
<p>This presentation will provide lessons and recommendations on how to engage local practitioners in undertaking research and evaluation where there is limited staffing and financial resource. It will explain the potential benefits of locally conducted research: how it can be more relevant to the end user and have a more direct impact on practice. Two examples drawn from work conducted by DWP over the last year are used to illustrate and reflect on key issues, such as getting local practitioners interested and engaged, having realistic assumptions about practitioners undertaking monitoring and research, and how to maintain their interest and commitment.</p>	<p>How can the local public sector address significant budget reductions in times of austerity and ensure it uses evidence from research? The presentation will explore this question from the perspective of local government and proposes that managing major public service transformation requires sound evidence, particularly at key stages. Among many practical issues raised we consider: the difference between data and ‘intelligence’; using research to assess the viability of programmes and projects; ensuring research is both timely for and accessible to policy and programme managers; listening to and understanding the needs of local populations, and establishing an evaluation framework.</p>

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### iii) Methodological challenges (mixed methods, involving stakeholders)

<p><b>Helping private tenants to achieve financial inclusion</b></p>	<p><b>Responding effectively to interpersonal abuse and violence (REVA): A case study</b></p>
<p><i>Andrea Finney, University of Bristol's Personal Finance Research Centre</i></p>	<p><i>Sally McManus &amp; Carol McNaughton Nicholls, NatCen Social Research</i></p>
<p>A recent major collaborative project was designed to address three important policy and practice questions about the financial needs of private tenants and where they fit within the financial inclusion agenda. This presentation will briefly consider the context, headline findings and recommendations from the research, but its main focus will be on the process of engagement with policy-makers and practitioners. It will highlight the challenges and successes, particularly in relation to difficulties engaging practitioners in early phases of the project – and overcoming these – and the importance of reflecting (and capitalising) on local practice and wider policy contexts in doing so.</p>	<p>A mixed-method programme of research funded by DH's Policy Research Programme examined how mental health services respond to the long-term effects of violence and abuse. We used latent class analysis with Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey data to segment the general population in terms of people's history of abuse and violence. Qualitative case study research was conducted with staff from statutory and voluntary sector services, and survivors of interpersonal abuse. A third stage involves development and piloting of an outcome measurement framework to assess service interventions. Finally, targeted outputs have been developed, aiming to be relevant and accessible for 'end users' of the research.</p>

### iv) Evidence-based policy?

<p><b>Policy experiments: Is there a trade-off between rigour and relevance? Three case studies in health and social care</b></p>	<p><b>Systematic reviews, impact assessments and cost-benefit analyses: Examining the evidence-base for the 'tools' of evidence-informed policymaking</b></p>
<p><i>Stefanie Ettelt, Department of Health Services Research and Policy and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine</i></p>	<p><i>Dr Katherine Smith, Global Health Unit, University of Edinburgh</i></p>
<p>Policy experiments have become fashionable in a number of policy fields in recent years, including in health and social care. They are commended for balancing the rigour of experimental research designs with the needs of policy-makers for relevant evidence of 'what works', and the Cabinet Office Behavioural Insight Team argues that randomised controlled trials should be used routinely to test the effectiveness of public policy.</p> <p>This presentation describes a study of three high-profile policy pilots which suggests that their direct impact on policy decision-making was only modest, and explores the reasons for this unexpected finding.</p>	<p>Impact assessments, systematic reviews and cost-benefit analyses are among the popular tools promoted as a way to channel evidence appropriately for policymaking. However research conducted by the presenters finds little evidence that these tools, when used to mediate health research and expertise for policymakers, yield the anticipated benefits. They argue that the uncertainty and complexity of the underlying evidence, coupled with the inevitably ethical and political business of policymaking, leave such tools providing a mainly symbolic value. Nevertheless some insights are provided as to how researchers (in academic, policy and third sector contexts) might seek to improve the use of these tools.</p>

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### v) Methodological challenges (workshops and citizens' forums)

<p><b>Using deliberative workshops to formulate recommendations to improve adult social care provision for black and minority ethnic groups</b></p>	<p><b>Food Standards Agency Citizens' Forums – A model for embedding consumer engagement into policy formation in relation to food hygiene regulation</b></p>
<p><i>Valdeep Gill and Dr Margaret Blake, NatCen Social Research</i></p>	<p><i>Lizzie Jordan, TNS BMRB and Ely Mirzahosseinkhan, Food Standards Agency</i></p>
<p>People from BME groups consistently report lower levels of satisfaction with social care than white British people. Our research explores the reasons, using a range of methods: qualitative interviews with people in receipt of social care and their relatives; key informant depth interviews and focus groups with staff from LAs and care providers; cognitive interviews to explore how people respond to care satisfaction surveys; and finally deliberative workshops to develop recommendations for change. The presentation describes some of the challenges involved in developing and delivering deliberative workshops. We present independent research commissioned by the NIHR SSCr, but the views expressed are those of the authors.</p>	<p>'Citizens' Forums' are a deliberative research method to engage with consumers – and are a key component of the Food Standards Agency's consumer engagement strategy around food safety. TNS BMRB and the FSA have developed an approach which embeds consumer engagement in policy design and the formation of regulation. The presentation will consider the challenges faced by regulators, such as the FSA, in engaging with the public and in translating feedback into usable insight. Issues include the complexity of regulation and required technical knowledge, a lack of interest and unwillingness to engage, consumers' embedded beliefs about industry and the role of regulators and inconsistent, contradictory and nuanced responses.</p>

AFTERNOON

### i) Making an impact

<p><b>Communicating longitudinal and multidisciplinary research: Overcoming three common challenges</b></p>	<p><b>Achieving impact by joining up research, policy and practice</b></p>
<p><i>Meghan Rainsberry, Centre for Longitudinal Studies &amp; CLOSER, Institute of Education</i></p>	<p><i>Keith Clements &amp; Jen Gibb, National Children's Bureau</i></p>
<p>The take-up of research by policymakers relies heavily on the timeliness and clarity of researchers' communications and messages. This can be challenging when working on longitudinal and multidisciplinary research projects, with long production periods and complex findings. Using examples from the three British birth cohort studies managed by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS), this presentation explores common challenges in three main areas of research communications: press, Publications for policymakers, and online communications. The presentation will share insights into what CLS has learned about the policymaker audience – who they are, what they need, how they work – and provide recommendations.</p>	<p>This paper draws on recent NCB research projects that have resulted in policy or practice development. Three case studies will explain the processes and highlight the areas of learning for securing policy and practice impact from research:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) A rapid evidence review of children's views of health services, that delivered fast turn-around research to help take advantage of a policy opportunity;</li> <li>(2) A briefing paper using findings from LA research to influence national policy;</li> <li>(3) A consultation and literature review delivering research to directly support new practice development to improve the experiences of young people living with HIV.</li> </ol>

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### ii) Innovation in a time of austerity

<p><b>The Predictors of Wellbeing study: a case study of research and policy working together</b></p>	<p><b>Generations</b></p>
<p><i>Jenny Chanfreau, NatCen Social Research &amp; Danielle De Feo, Department of Health</i></p>	<p><i>Bobby Duffy, Ipsos MORI</i></p>
<p>Secondary analysis is a cost-effective methodology in times of limited research budgets, but raises the challenge of using data not designed with the policy focus of the project in mind. This joint presentation by a member of the research team and the analyst in DH who commissioned the project will cover how the policy and research worlds worked closely together, candidly, to ensure the results were true to the data but also responding to policy need. It will discuss the challenges of using secondary analysis to address policy questions as well as the handling and interpretation of findings that didn't quite fit with policy expectations.</p>	<p>This presentation describes a survey analysis technique that is simple and cost-effective, reusing existing data with minimal analysis time. Its aim is to identify the generational basis of opinion and values – which is often missed in policy discussions, partly because there is a surprising absence of true generational analysis. Ideally we need longitudinal studies over decades to identify real generational shifts. However, simulating cohorts using repeated cross-sectional studies is straightforward, using sources of good survey data that go back far enough. Most importantly, the technique can provide graphical outputs that politicians, policy-makers, commentators and the public can immediately grasp.</p>

### iii) Evaluation: Issues and challenges

<p><b>Sharing our research: challenges and new approaches at the Big Lottery Fund</b></p>	<p><b>An evaluation of the Commonwealth Games legacy for Scotland</b></p>
<p><i>Sally Taylor, Big Lottery Fund</i></p>	<p><i>Dr Niamh O'Connor, Commonwealth Games, Culture &amp; Sport Analytical Unit, Scottish Government</i></p>
<p>The newly-formed Evidence Unit at the Big Lottery Fund is currently exploring ways to make the Fund's considerable knowledge base more accessible and more useful to the Fund itself as well as to other funders and policy makers, our grant holders and other practitioners. We will outline some of the evaluation methodologies and commissioning approaches we are using to measure impact and inform policy and practice. This includes methodologies that are new to us: we will outline some of the challenges in developing experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations, including the links between methodologies and aspirations for influencing policy and practice.</p>	<p>In summer 2014 Glasgow will host the Commonwealth Games, and the Scottish Government are leading an evaluation of the legacy of this event. A major programme of research and analysis between now and 2019 will consider six key questions, including whether there has been a change in sport participation and physical activity, what the impact of the Games has been on businesses, employment and volunteering, and how it has affected the lives of people in the local community. This workshop presentation will discuss the challenges of designing the evaluation, key early decisions on methodological approach ('contribution not attribution') and research plans over the next 12 months.</p>

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### iv) Evidence-based policy?

<p><b>Researching female offenders: Lessons learned</b></p>	<p><b>Beyond evidence-based policy vs. policy-based evidence arguments: reflections from the messy world of drug policy</b></p>
<p><i>Alison Pollard, Ministry of Justice</i></p>	<p><i>Nicola Singleton, Independent researcher</i></p>
<p>The Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) survey is a large scale longitudinal cohort study of adult offenders. The presentation will show how one SPCR report, ‘Gender differences in substance misuse and mental health amongst prisoners’, has supported the development of policy on female offenders. The presentation will describe relevant examples of policies and publications about female offenders that have been informed by the SPCR, consider the main lessons learned, and give examples of how analysts work with government policy makers. It will include an overview of the civil service framework for evidence-based policy making and the Magenta Book on evaluation.</p>	<p>Drug policy is highly politicized and polarized, and evidence is often contested. Based on recent research in this area, the presentation will draw general lessons for those seeking to improve the relationship between evidence and the research community on one side and policy and policy-makers on the other. It will argue for a more nuanced understanding of the evidence-policy link that recognizes the wide range of evidence types and uses in the policy process and the limitations. It will reflect on the challenges and opportunities in researcher/policy-maker interactions and pose for discussion some more fundamental questions about the evidence-policy relationship.</p>

### v) Methodological challenges

<p><b>Cooperative innovation</b></p>	<p><b>Learning Days: a method of exchange between research and NHS practice</b></p>
<p><i>Mark Picksley, Lambeth Council &amp; Robin Pharoah, ESRO Ltd</i></p>	<p><i>Gemma Spiers, Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU), York University</i></p>
<p>This presentation describes Lambeth Council’s innovative approach to conducting research among some of the hardest-to-reach populations in the borough, by asking a research agency to train a team of council officers in ethnographic techniques. Researchers and officers worked side-by-side to answer demanding research briefs, addressing a different community in turn. Initially ESRO’s researchers were responsible for fieldwork, analysis and reporting, with Lambeth’s team focusing on recruitment and stakeholder engagement. Meanwhile, a training programme introduced council officers to ethnography: firstly practical skills and planning, then small pieces of fieldwork, and eventually they undertook full days of ethnography.</p>	<p>This paper describes the use of ‘learning days’; scheduled events between researchers and practice partners to exchange knowledge as part of an on-going research study taking place within the NHS. We discuss the objectives of the learning days, our experience so far, and the implications of these days for getting research into practice. The learning days so far have enabled us to build relationships with our NHS partners, which in turn could facilitate dissemination of findings. If the learning days are successful for knowledge exchange between the researchers and NHS partners, it will mean that findings can be integrated into practice as soon as they become available, via the individuals in the NHS best placed to use them.</p>