

Welcome to the second edition of volume 29 of the journal. This edition's papers offer, as usual, an eclectic, and we hope valuable, selection of studies on themes and issues that will interest subscribers.

The first of these is a paper by Beech *et al.*, which reports on a local evaluation of Wigan Council's Partnership for Older People (POPP) project. Wigan was one of 29 local sites for POPP, which was launched by the Department of Health in 2005 to develop and evaluate services and approaches for older people aimed at promoting health, well-being and independence and preventing or delaying the need for higher intensity or institutional care. The national evaluation was published in March 2010. Nationally, the overall findings were positive in respect of improved quality of life for participants, better local working relationships and cost savings. The local study published here was commissioned by Wigan Council to guide the development of local initiatives, and led to a decision by the Council to continue to fund all local POPP initiatives after Department of Health Funding ended. The authors provide an interesting and stimulating account of this local evaluation.

Social work and social workers in the UK do not enjoy high levels of public support. Arguably, an important cause of this lack of support is the volume of negative press and media coverage. In the second paper, Jones offers a thoughtful assessment of causes and remedies based on his personal experience as someone who has spent many years working in senior, high profile positions in the social work and social care world: positions that have brought him into frequent contact with journalists. A key message from his paper is for social workers and those who employ them to become more 'media savvy' – and to start to challenge public attitudes to social work practice by influencing the way social work and social care stories are reported.

The third paper, by Abendstern *et al.*, is a meticulous account of the development of a tool to measure satisfaction within adult social care assessment: the 'User Satisfaction Assessment Tool' or USAT. Although the current policy preoccupations within adult social care are about 'outcomes' rather than levels of satisfaction, as the authors state 'satisfaction with care and with the assessment process remain relevant' to this as 'satisfaction with the process of care delivery can positively impact on outcomes' (p.104). The paper would also be of interest to anyone wanting to know more about how good quality assessment scales are developed.

The fourth and final paper by Rehill *et al.* reports on the findings of an online survey commissioned by the School for Social Care Research, on the 'state of adult social care research'. This is a topic about which surprisingly little is known, though arguably, its fragility has been acknowledged by the Department of Health over the last decade or so with the creation of the Social Care Institute for Excellence and, more recently, the School for Social Care Research. Although respondents to the survey reported that improvements over the last few years have included greater interdisciplinarity and a more strategic approach to research, concerns were also expressed about future funding arrangements and the lack of opportunities for career progression outside of university contexts.

In addition to these four peer reviewed papers, the Reviews section offers commentary on six publications that may be of interest to readers. Four of the books reviewed focus on practice issues ranging from family work, attachment, general social work practice and individual outcomes. The fifth reviews Carr's updated *Personalisation: a Rough Guide*, and the final review focuses on a recent publication by Jon Glasby that looks at *Commissioning for health and well-being*.

Our Reviews section has said goodbye to Peter Scourfield of Anglia Ruskin University, with thanks from the RPP editors for his re-establishing, firmly maintaining and contributing directly to book review activity since 2007. Our incoming Reviews Editor, Paul Dolan, expresses his personal gratitude for Peter's cohort of commissioned reviews and his readiness to advise on the practices of publishers and to provide well-grounded support. Forthcoming reviews in this section will include consideration of a new series of Research Methods Reviews published by the School for Social Care Research, so if RPP readers gain experience of using any of these over the next few months in guiding their own research please contact Paul with feedback.

Finally, Andy Pithouse, one of the co-editors of RPP since 2007, has decided to step down following his appointment as a Ministerial Advisor to the Welsh Assembly, though he has agreed to remain on the Editorial Board. Andy's skill and experience has served the journal extremely well and we wish him every success in his new role.

We hope you find this edition interesting and useful. The editorial team remain keen to receive contributions for the journal and are always happy to discuss ideas for submissions from prospective authors.

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