

SSRG is *the* network
for research,
information planning
& evaluation in social
care & health services

SSRG aims to:

- provide a network of mutual support and a forum for the exchange of ideas and information on social care and health services;
- promote high standards in social care and health services research, information, planning and evaluation;
- encourage collaboration in social care and health services activities;
- develop an informed body of opinion on social care and health services activities;
- provide a channel of communication for the collective views of the Group to central and local government, other professional bodies and the public;
- sponsor relevant research and identify neglected areas of research;
- encourage and, where appropriate, sponsor high quality training in research techniques.

Members receive a copy of the SSRG Journal 'Research, Policy and Planning' which is published three times a year, the Newsletter which appears six times per year, an electronic Members' Handbook of work interests which is updated annually and a discount on conferences, seminars, workshops and training events that are held nationally and regionally.

The cost for membership is £59 for first corporate member and £44 for subsequent member; £54 for personal membership; and £35 for student/unwaged.

A copy of the membership application form is available in pdf format to print out on the SSRG website.

Message from the Chair

A very happy new year to all members new old and potential, should potential members be reading a copy of the newsletter, lucky souls...



Martin Stevens

Taking a deep breath, for the beginning of 2007, we can announce the results of the great name change ballot, which, after due ceremony, are ... SSRG is to continue as SSRG: over two thirds of members (who expressed a preference) wanted to continue with the name social services research group (SSRG) so this is what we will be.

On balance, after much exhaustive and exhausting debate and discussion at executive committee meetings during much of 2006, we feel that this is the right choice. Also, the way is now clearer for us to focus on developing better and more focused marketing approaches: while there was uncertainty

over the name, it was difficult to progress this. Thankfully, this topic will no longer haunt executive committee agendas (and my dreams).

Having decided to keep the venerable and popular SSRG name (with a slightly amended 'strapline') it will be very important to invest time and resources into marketing the organisation intelligently.

Marketing SSRG requires a strategy that will make it clear what kind of organisation we are and what members, prospective members and delegates to events are going to be associated with. We are going to be focusing on marketing in the first part of 2007, and have decided to commit financial resources to this vital area of development, in an increasingly competitive field in terms of the scarcity of resources to devote to research and development issues outside the immediate needs for collecting information.

While this longer term thinking is going on, the usual round of events are being planned, or are on

Message from the Chair cont.

the horizon. As mentioned several times in previous messages, this month (on the 29th Jan) the third SSRG/race equality foundation event is to be held. This has been an extremely positive set of events, taking forward issues research on racism and equalities issues so do come along if you can. On the 22nd Feb we are running a one-day conference about children's planning. John freeman, the joint president of the new Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) will set out the work programme of ADCS, a key organisation in the new world of children's services.

Finally of course there is the annual workshop, held this year in Leicester, on the 16-18 April. It will address issues emerging from recent government legislation and initiatives, and how policy is being translated into practice. Key themes include:

- User/carer participation
- Working in partnership (across social care; health; education; the voluntary and community sector and academia)
- Ways that services are being evaluated
- Evidence informed practice

We are having initial discussions with the Joint University Council Social Work Education Committee (JUCSWEC) about a possible event concerning the social work research agenda. As usual, details of all events are on the SSRG website: www.SSRG.org.uk/events/index.asp

As well as running them, SSRG have been invited to several events, including the SCIE seminar on the green paper on looked after children and the palliative care social work research events, both of which are reported in this edition of the newsletter. Being invited specifically as SSRG to such events is an indication that we have a profile across a number of public and independent sector agencies. Such profile supports the main aim of the organisation in promoting the place of research.

However to maintain this profile, a sound approach to marketing both in terms of membership and events is needed, as well as encouraging a flow of members who are interested in taking part in the or in other aspects of the running of the organisation. We do need a small but constant stream of members to take part in

running SSRG as part of the Executive Committee, or in other ways: if you are interested in becoming part of the Executive Committee, please send in a nomination form included in this edition of the newsletter, for the election at the AGM, which is to be held as usual at the annual workshop. We also welcome ideas and offers of help in other ways, at any time...

Martin Stevens - Chair