

**Collaborative research between local government, third sector, NHS and academic partners:
lessons learned from evaluation of the County Durham Wellbeing for Life Service**

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The County Durham Wellbeing for Life (WfL) service, which launched on 1st April 2015, aims to build people's capacity to live healthier lives by addressing the factors that influence health and wellbeing. It uses an outreach approach targeted at the 30% most deprived areas in County Durham, as well as working with non-geographical communities at risk of poor health and health inequalities. A strengths-based delivery model is being employed, drawing on the growing body of literature in support of asset-based community development. This aligns closely with the concept of co-production, which has 'emerged in recent years as an innovative and valuable approach to the provision and development of public services.'¹ The WfL service involves identifying and building on existing assets within communities, developing community capacity, and fostering social networks in order to enhance physical, mental and social wellbeing. It is being delivered by a consortium of five providers from the public and third sectors, with local authority commissioners acting as strategic partners and an academic evaluation to assess the impact of the innovative WfL approach. The evaluation design was decided through discussion between the researchers and commissioners, and is informed by the principles of participatory action research, which emphasises the importance of working in collaboration for the purposes of understanding issues. All collaborators meet on a regular basis to share learning and play a role in the ongoing development of the WfL service. This paper will provide early findings from the evaluation of the first year of operation of WfL, as well as lessons learned from the experience of undertaking collaborative research. The emphasis will be on the processes of working in partnership and knowledge exchange between sectors.

¹ SCDC (2011). *Community Development and Coproduction. Issues for Policy and Practice. SCDC Discussion Paper 2011/02*. Scottish Community Development Centre: Glasgow.

Co-production evaluation of real time suspected suicide pilot strategy

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In England 4,727 people took their own lives in 2013. Suicide has a devastating impact on society and economic costs are also high, estimated at £1.7 million for each life lost for those of working age. The impact of suicide is far reaching, impacting on the close friends and family members of the deceased, who are left vulnerable to long term psychological morbidity and increased risk of suicide. Preventative interventions are key in supporting those bereaved by suicide, who may be at increased risk of taking their own lives and to taking action to prevent possible suicide clusters.

At present, the publication of official suicide statistics often lags behind the event due to delays in coroners' verdicts. More timely information at local level would prompt local action to support bereaved relatives, provide better intelligence on local clusters where early and targeted action might be directed and at national level would provide intelligence on trends over time, new methods and clusters.

This abstract outlines the results of an on-going co-production evaluation of a pilot strategy of a real time suspected suicide intervention using police officers as first responders to initiate bereavement support for those affected by suicide. Data on suspected suicides recorded by the pilot strategy was compared to data on suspected suicides recorded by the coroner to see if there were any differences in the number of cases and the length of time it takes for a suspected suicide to be recorded. Furthermore we looked at the uptake of support services by bereaved individuals to see if there was an increase in uptake to this service. Finally we conducted focus groups with police officers who delivered the pilot strategy, with bereavement support workers, and with the clinical commissioning groups to get feedback on the pilot strategy.

Analysis of the data is ongoing, and results are expected to be published by December 2015.

Linking community-know how with academic knowledge through a UK community-campus partnership for health

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In designing and evaluating interventions to improve health and reduce inequalities, we need to recognise that socio-economic conditions affect knowledge generation, dissemination and utilisation in profound ways. While public health professionals have easy access to world class research, disadvantaged communities rarely have access to research-based knowledge, their lived experience is often discounted and there are obstacles to participation in higher education. There is a long tradition of participatory methods in academic public health that attempt to overcome some of those barriers, however there remains scope for developing long-term sustainable mechanisms to support knowledge exchange between researchers and communities. The aim of this presentation is to discuss the highs and the lows of establishing the first Community-Campus Partnership for Health initiative in the UK. Based at Leeds Beckett University, CommUNity was borne out of a desire to forge stronger relationships between the university and local communities with the purpose of identifying co-created solutions to improving health and reducing inequalities. Community Campus Partnerships for Health is a North American movement which aims to reorientate academic practice to encompass community goals and address inequities in health. The presentation will cover the UK policy context and the rationale for applying the community-campus partnership model within the university, early development of CommUNity, the aims and key features. The current portfolio of activities will be described including:

- student placements and volunteering
- community-based projects
- participatory dissemination events
- shared teaching and staff development
- longer term strategic partnerships with community anchor organisations.

In the presentation, we will discuss some of the key learning to emerge about what works, what doesn't and what the barriers and enablers are. The presentation will conclude with some recommendations for building a collaborative framework for academic-community activities.

Extra Life: working together to produce meaningful change in workplace health

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A settings approach involves a holistic attempt to integrate action across risk factors. The goal is to maximise disease prevention via a "whole system" approach (WHO, 2014). Middlesbrough Borough Council Public Health department is pursuing a Healthy Settings approach - 'Extra Life' - with large local employer organisations. The approach is innovative: few evaluated examples of settings-based work exist in the literature, and Extra Life seeks to build momentum by connecting major workplace settings across the town.

Drawing on the early implementation and set up of Extra Life, this presentation will describe an approach centred on co-production between the public health team, the organisations which provide the 'settings', and the research team. This approach aims to ensure that Extra Life is 'owned by everyone', and ultimately produces meaningful and valuable change. It recognises that sustainable cultural change within large organisations must involve buy in at all levels. Wherever possible it acknowledges existing needs and assets, and involves staff themselves in producing change.

Research activity includes the collaborative design and undertaking of a health needs assessment in each setting and qualitative studies of implementation experiences amongst the innovator groups. Findings have influenced the implementation of Extra Life, including the setting up of project groups, development of action plans and strategies, and provide key learning to aid future roll out of the programme.

Although it is too early to assess the effectiveness of Extra Life, some early benefits of the programme are evident and will be considered. The approach represents something of a collaborative journey, with multiple actions and changes planned or underway, including both activities and events on the ground, as well as more fundamental changes. The importance of continued co-produced evaluation, as well as questions of how best to capture the impact of the settings-based approach, will be discussed.

Knowledge mobilisation for impact: the role of stakeholder engagement

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In recent years it has become common practice to engage different types of stakeholders in the research process. There are a number of different rationales for such engagement, including improving the quality of research and building relationships and ownership of the research findings with a view to promoting impact. With an award from the UK Medical Research Council this study has been tracking prospectively an EU funded research project (EQUIPT) designed to roll out a research based smoking cessation return on investment (ROI) tool in four European countries. EQUIPT explicitly aims to increase use of the tool through a process of stakeholder engagement throughout the project. These engagement activities include planned workshops and structured interviews with stakeholders in each country at different stages of the project. The current study (SEE-Impact) has tracked stakeholder engagement activities from the start of EQUIPT through observations, surveys, document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The presentation will share learning from the first two years of the study, drawing in particular on country case study visits conducted with different types of stakeholders. The analysis draws on recent developments in Actor Network Theory in the Science and Technology Studies literature. In particular it will compare findings from semi-structured interviews in two of the EQUIPT countries (the Netherlands and Hungary). Stakeholders in these countries were asked to put forward future scenarios in terms of potential use of the ROI tool. These different actor-scenarios gave valuable insights into the potential translation of the ROI tool into action; in particular by elucidating the active role of stakeholders and the contextual dynamics in which they are embedded.