Social work teaching partnerships: An evaluation

Interim research report – early findings

June 2019

Interface Associates UK

Contents

Executive Summary

The Social Work Teaching Partnership (SWTP) programme was developed by central government (Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care) to transform the quality of education and experience received by social work students and practitioners, following reviews such as Narey and Croisdale-Appleby[1]. These reviews highlighted an urgent need for better social work education and professional development.

The programme aims to formalise collaborative working to raise the quality of social work, by attracting high quality students into the profession and ensuring students and existing social workers have the necessary knowledge, skills and values to practice effectively – and to improve workforce planning and development to address retention and recruitment issues.

The programme was effectively piloted in 2015 in four areas (phase one). Eleven additional areas made successful applications for two year funding in phase two (2016) and ten more in phase three (2018). As a result of an amalgamation[2], the programme now involves 23 partnerships in total. Four of these partnerships are self-funded (the three remaining phase one partnerships and one phase two partnership), with 19 partnerships from phase two and three in the funded phase of the programme. These partnerships represent 113 local authorities (LAs), 54 higher education institutes (HEIs) and 32 Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) partners. This represents just under 70% (54/79) of all HEIs offering social work[3].

This report is based on twenty two of these partnerships, representing 109 Local Authorities (LAs), 52 Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) and 29 Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) partners.

Partnerships were subject to four funding criteria, and were encouraged to develop local responses to a set of stretch criteria focused on governance, admissions, practice placements and support, curriculum, academic delivery workforce development and workforce planning (see Annex One for full details).

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[1] Martin Narey (2014). Making the education of social workers consistently effective. Report of Sir Martin Narey's independent review of the education of children's social workers. David Croisdale-Appleby (2014). Re-visioning social work education. An independent review.

[2] Two partnerships (one from phase one and one from phase two) merged with other local authorities to form one of the phase three partnerships

[3] Source: www.whatuni.com

Evaluation purpose and method

The purpose of the evaluation is to explore what has been delivered and how different delivery models and initiatives have met the objectives of the programme. It will look at the early outcomes of the activity in order to provide reflections about what activity has supported improvements against the aims of the programme and seek to capture additional, wider or 'other' effects of partnership working. In exploring sustainability, the research will look to find out if funding has created enough momentum to maintain beneficial activities in the medium to long-term future.

Partnerships have been encouraged to develop customised programmes and performance management processes in order to best reflect local contexts, and this may limit the ability of the evaluation to identify 'typical' approaches – and may restrict identifying 'what works'. It should also be noted that the programme is at an early stage of delivery, in terms of achieving impacts on quality of social work, with undergraduates from only two HEIs having graduated to date.

The initial phase of the evaluation (and the basis of this interim report) was conducted between January and March 2019. This comprises of an initial document review (phase three partnerships), an in depth document and management information (MI) review (phase one and two partnerships) and stakeholder research in two case study areas (phase one partnerships). It should be noted that the method of extracting MI data from the document review was not successful. This resulted in a pragmatic approach, requiring partnership project managers to collate data from individual partners to provide a partnership level dataset. Nine out of twelve partnerships achieved collation of some data, but the data quality has affected our ability to conduct a greater level of quantitative analysis.

Additional in-depth case studies and a data refresh will be undertaken in phase two of the evaluation.

Key findings

Phase one and two[4] of the teaching partnership programme has stimulated a new level of collaboration between LAs and HEIs, and this is evident throughout the way activity has been delivered across the specified workstreams: governance, admissions, placements and curriculum, academic delivery and academic experience of practice; workforce development and planning. Collaborative working has led to better relationships at organisational and individual levels, which partnerships consider a key

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[4] It is too early to evidence this in phase three partnerships through the method used (initial document review)

benefit in itself. Improved relationships have led to new discussions and provided different opportunities to tackle local issues.

Governance and management

Governance structures are in place across all phases of the programme, with most partnerships developing boards at a strategic and management level. Partnerships have co-developed credible strategic and operational plans. Delivery of workstreams appears to be effectively monitored by operational boards. Project management and support roles, funded by TPs (through the TP grant funding), have been critical in facilitating the effectiveness of these structures. Partnership level quantitative performance frameworks are less well developed.

Partnerships from phase one and two have adapted their structures over time to improve the engagement of stakeholders and minimise duplication at leadership, management and delivery levels. Building whole organisation commitment and equalising the engagement of children's and adult services are ongoing challenges in most partnerships. However, there are partnerships where these have been tackled effectively, for example by treating adult and children's stakeholders as separate partners. Service user engagement in governance structures is developing.

Entry standards

Entry levels for undergraduate and post graduate social work courses have been maintained at, or increased to, the expected levels in most HEIs[5]. In around half of phase one and two partnerships, there is at least one HEI with an exception policy, however the use of these in recruitment appears low[6]. Rigorous assessment and selection processes are now in place at undergraduate and post graduate levels in all partnerships, including increased involvement by Service Users and Carers (SUC) and practitioners, whose role is valued and embedded.

Practice placements

Improved organisation, consistency and quality assurance of placements is commonly reported by phase one and two partnerships, achieved through better planning, guidance and new processes. Improvements in matching to preferences and earlier agreement of placements appears more limited.

There has been an increase in the number of practice placement days and statutory placements. All phase one and two partnerships expect to provide two placements

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[5] 120 points for undergraduates and 2.1 degree for masters courses
[6] From the data returns at both UG and PG levels, only one HEI reported high levels of recruitment through their exception policy for entry to their masters course.

(totalling minimum 170 days), with at least one of these placements being in a statutory setting. Two partnerships exceed this by providing 200 placement days, having added 30 additional skills days to the first placement.

It has taken considerable effort, including the deployment of specific TP funded posts, to achieve significant increases[7] to the number of placements that meet the statutory definition. Around three quarters[8] of phase one and two partnerships report that they now offer 2 statutory placements at undergraduate level, with 6/10[9] partnerships reporting they offer 2 statutory placements at masters level. This has been achieved through activities such as Practice Educator (PE) training and closer working with partners inside and external to the TP to identify and develop placements. This has increased the exposure of students to statutory frameworks, which is reported to be valued by students, LAs and HEIs. There is debate in most partnerships as to how/whether two statutory placements can be maintained, and whether two statutory placements offers the best learning experience. Many are exploring mixed models that offer a combination of LA and PVI settings.

Placement support has been a key focus of activity in phase one and two, including developing the capacity and support for practice educators, and developing new learning structures and reflective models to maximise placement learning for students. TP funded (often jointly or short term employed) roles have been critical to the pace and level of work achieved in this area, examples include practice consultants (PCs), teaching consultants and principal practice educator leads (PPELS) – who often work across placement and curriculum objectives. Partnerships perceive that new approaches are leading to improvements in placement quality, although local evaluations show this requires continued focus, with inconsistencies in levels of support commonly arising from work pressures and information gaps.

Curriculum

The vast majority of phase one and two partnerships report increased levels of activity in developing a practice based curriculum. All partnerships report that the Children and Family Social Work and Adult Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) are embedded in relevant curriculum and that practitioners (and sometimes users) have also reviewed, updated and modified the curriculum content.

The data returned indicates that students in TPs continue to be taught by very high proportions of qualified, registered social workers (employed by HEIs). HEI core staff are

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[7] Data suggest this is an increase for 6/9 and 7/12 partnerships at undergraduate/postgraduate level.
[8] Three partnerships do not have undergraduates in their remit (of these, one has recently expanded the remit to undergraduate students, but placement data is not yet available)
[9] A combination of data returns and document review (one area unclear).

increasingly supported by joint HEI/LA posts and a growing pool of teaching practitioners who are supported through 'practitioners who teach' type programmes. As a result, increases in the proportion of the curriculum delivered by practitioners[10] are reported at both under graduate and post graduate levels. Joint working is helping to overcome initial cultural differences around the optimum balance of academic and practice content and delivery. Practicing social workers can struggle to balance work pressures with teaching responsibilities. However, there is common evidence across partnerships' local evaluations, that students place high value on practice input in the curriculum, enabling them to make better links between theory and practice.

Academic and practice collaboration

Most partnerships[11] have attempted activity to support academics to spend time in frontline teams, refreshing their experience and observing contemporary practice but this activity does not appear as structured (in terms of application processes or release policies) or as consistent as other work delivered by partnerships. However, feedback from these academics consistently demonstrates the value of immersion in everyday practice in terms of credibility, refreshing knowledge and learning about local tools and practices.

More activity has been focused on developing ways of embedding joint learning between practitioners and academics, using shared knowledge to use academic theory and research to address 'real life' practice issues. Approaches include Centres of Excellence or Learning Hubs, as well as conferences, events and learning symposia. There are examples of these leading to better working relationships, useful research (which could be shared more widely) and limited examples of changed systems and practice as a result.

Workforce planning and development

Analysis of workforce data[12] attributable to the TP is taking place in around 8/12 phase one and two partnerships, although the extent of this appears quite limited in some of these areas. TP funded specialist consultancy support has been effective in overcoming challenges of poor data collection and analysis in several areas. Partnerships are using data to better monitor specific concerns and more strategically for recruitment and retention. This has led to some micro impact on caseloads and agency staff in specific

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[10] Combination of data and document review
[11] The document review found evidence that 10/12 TPs have delivered activity in this area, with evidence of plans but not necessarily delivery in the remaining 2. Activity levels appeared lower than across other workstreams.
[12] For example developing and/or analysing workforce statistics (recruitment, turnover, cost/agency costs, sickness, demographics; progression of students to ASYE; demographic needs).

LAs and also supported more strategic developments such as recruitment and retention initiatives – for example a successful gateway[13] (to SW qualification) programme for existing staff, successful return to work programmes and an initiative in a rural area that has increased ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) retention. A key challenge in this area remains the quality of data, ability to influence national trends at a local level and sense that this is perhaps more usefully carried out at a regional level.

All partnerships have a (Continuing Professional Development) CPD workstream, with just under half (5/12) re-organising this through clearer progression pathways covering ASYE, specialisms and management and leadership. All have reviewed and or developed new accredited learning to support these pathways that reflect the KSS and other expected standards. Several partnerships have developed leadership and management qualifications, including PG (Post Graduate) certificates, diploma and PhD to support progression. It is too early to say if these initiatives are impacting on retention, progression or recruitment.

There is documentary and data evidence of all phase one and two partnerships[14] enhancing, changing or bringing more consistency to the existing local CPD offer through the provision of additional learning opportunities that support TP objectives (e.g. skills modules, masterclasses, PE training, applied research). Many have used TP grant funding to subsidise programmes to support access to the provision. Work pressures (and sometimes travel) remain a cited challenge in terms of attendance and committing to further learning, although flexibility is in evidence, for example through the use of technology (e.g. KSS podcast) and twilight sessions. In the document review, there are many examples of positive feedback around workforce development, and some local examples of impact on practice.

Benefits and sustainability

The reported benefits are of value to all stakeholder groups. It is too early to report the impact of these on higher level aims, but most partnerships feel confident that the programme has moved them further towards their goals, despite real challenges in the external environment. These include financial constraints, changing policy and the issues of recruitment and retention that they are trying to tackle.

There is evidence from sustainability plans[15] and two case studies that the collaborative culture and certain strands of work will be sustained regardless of future funding. A genuine commitment to ongoing collaborative working and learning seems to be in place

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[13] All 26 students passed the certificate in social work and four have already progressed to the MSc programme
[14] Although this is very limited in one partnership, where the focus has been on the undergraduate journey
[15] We reviewed eight phase one and two sustainability plans in the document review

and processes for admissions, placement organisation, ongoing curriculum development and practitioner teaching are embedded in some way in all eight sustainability plans reviewed. Partnerships report other specific areas of activity that they want to sustain, but these are not yet fully embedded. In general these relate to overall structures built to facilitate joint learning and progression, improved methods of practice placement support (reflective group support, skills days), workforce development and continued focus on specific workforce challenges.

Most (but not all) partnerships feel that they need to keep certain posts to maintain and further progress activity, and in the long term that may be challenging. This particularly applies to project management functions and posts that span placement support and practice development, with other areas of activity either embedded already or easier to maintain through existing capacity. The planned use of underspend or continuation funding in phase two sustainability plans would suggest that longer term sustainability is an area that partnerships are finding challenging. This reflects an informal view expressed by several partnerships that they are not yet able to be wholly self-sufficient. There are some successes however, with at least three partnerships making real progress to sustain their progress through LAs and/or HEIs absorbing costs of posts such as Practice Consultants, Practice Educators and Partnership Practice Educator Leads.

Conclusions

The evidence collected so far indicates that the teaching partnerships programme has brought new levels of collaboration to the way social work education is designed, planned and delivered across the six workstream areas. Building and maintaining this level of collaboration is itself considered of real value by the stakeholders interviewed in this evaluation, and many see this as a key achievement of the programme.

A range of approaches to delivery have been undertaken across workstreams which reflect different local contexts, including historical relationships, size, composition, geography and specific local issues.

The document review and case studies consistently demonstrate that improved partner relationships and TP funded infrastructure posts (project management and posts related to curriculum and placement development) have added real value to the pace, expertise and volume of work delivered.

Benefits of value to all stakeholder groups are reported, including collaborative working itself and perceived improvements in quality of the learning for students and the structure and range of learning for the existing workforce. This has been achieved in a challenging environment, including significant capacity issues facing both HEIs and employers.

It is too early to expect significant impact on higher level goals, for example retention or quality of social work practice, however partnerships seem positive that activity is moving them towards these goals.

All partnerships know they need to consider sustainability in the way they are working. Activity around admissions, embedding the KSS, curriculum changes, placement QA and elements of placement support and workforce development seem embedded (because the underpinning processes are reported in documents to be in place as business as usual) and therefore sustainable. The desire to maintain these processes is also evident in the eight sustainability approaches reviewed. Maintaining and building on the improvements made in other areas (particularly placement support and practitioner teaching in the curriculum) seem more reliant on TP (grant) funded posts. Three of the eight plans reviewed showed partners who have agreed to absorb the costs of these posts. On the whole, partnership underspend and continuation funding seems to be being used to 'buy more time' to embed key functions.

Context

The Social Work Teaching Partnership (TP) programme was developed by central government (Department for Education [DfE] and Department of Health and Social Care [DHSC]) to transform the quality of education and experience received by social work students and practitioners, following reviews such as Narey and Croisdale-Appleby[16]. These reviews highlighted weaknesses in the system where newly qualified or established social workers were not always equipped with the right knowledge, skills and experience to undertake the challenges of the role.

The Teaching Partnerships (TPs) initiative aims to bring educators and employers together to make education more relevant to practice, raise standards and drive up quality for all social work students and practitioners in children's and adult social work. By much greater involvement of local authorities in the initial and continuing education of social workers, TPs seek to establish a collaborative relationship between them and the HEIs, where the curriculum and training can be jointly developed, delivered and owned.

In 2015, four pilot TPs were established and an early evaluation[17] demonstrated the potential of this approach to effect change. Eleven additional areas made successful applications for two year funding in phase two (2016) and ten more in phase three (2018). As a result of an amalgamation[18], the current programme comprises 23 partnerships in total. Four of these partnerships are now self-funded (three remaining phase one partnerships and one phase two partnership), with 19 partnerships from phase two and three in the funded phase of the programme. These partnerships represent 113 local authorities (LAs), 54 higher education institutes (HEIs) and 32 Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) partners. This represents 70% (54/79) of all HEIs offering social work[19].

This report is based on twenty two of these partnerships[20], representing 109 Local Authorities (LAs), 52 Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) and 29 Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) partners.

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[16] Martin Narey (2014). Making the education of social workers consistently effective. Report of Sir Martin Narey's independent review of the education of children's social workers. David Croisdale-Appleby (2014). Re-visioning social work education. An independent review.

[17] Social work teaching partnership pilot programme: evaluation; Final research report; May 2016; Dorothy Berry-Lound, Sue Tate and Professor David Greatbatch – HOST Policy Research

[18] Two partnerships (one from phase one and one from phase two) merged with other local authorities to form one of the phase three partnerships

[19] Source: www.whatuni.com

[20] The method did not include the partnership from phase two that did not apply for the second year of funding.

The aim of the funding is to provide a catalyst to improvement and for teaching partnerships to create sustainable changes within their regions. Partnerships had to meet eligibility criteria, and bid against stretch criteria (Annex One), to facilitate the development of local improvements across:

- Governance (strategic and operational delivery)
- Admissions
- Placements and curriculum
- Academic delivery and academic experience of practice
- Practice support and delivery
- Workforce planning

Partnerships have funding conditions that require them to:

- Raise the standards of entry for students onto courses (through the raising of minimum entry requirements).
- Provide quality placements in statutory settings (every student to be guaranteed at least one statutory placement, although two placements are prioritised within funding applications).
- Embed the Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS) throughout continuing social work education.
- Have frontline practitioners and managers employed in statutory settings, providing 'classroom' teaching.

Partnerships were initially supported with funding for 2 years[21], with all phase one partnerships receiving a contribution to sustainability in their 3rd year, also recently agreed for phase two partnerships (who are coming to the end of their initial funding).

Overall, the TP programme has engaged 199 partners – 113 local authorities, 54 HEIs and 32 private, voluntary, NHS and other partners. Key features of the partnerships programme are set out in Table 1 below.

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[21] One partnership from phase two did not apply for funding for two years, entering the sustainability phase early

Table 1: Partnership Details

Partnership Details	Total	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Number of Partnerships	23	3	10	10
Number of LAs (at application stage)	111	18	45	48
Latest number of LAs	113	19	46	48
Number of HEIs (at application stage)	51	4	22	25
Latest number of HEIs	54	6	23	25
Number of PVI & other	30	1	11	18
Latest PVI and other	32	2	12	18
Total number membership latest	199	27	81	91
Number of partnerships with one HEI	7	1	2	4
Number of partnerships with one LA	3	0	1	2
Number with 1 LA and 1 HEI (both fairly rural)	2	0	1	1
Range of LA partners	1-15	4-10 (4,5,10)	1-13 (6TPs have 2-4 LA partners)	1-15 (4TPs have 5+)
Range of HEI partners	1-9	1-3 (1,2,3)	1-6 (6TPs have 2 HEI partners)	1-9 (4TPs have 2 HEI partners)
Geography size	-	1 very large	1 regional	1 regional
Remit - masters students only	-	1	3 (although 1 of these expanded its remit 2018-19 to include UG)	-

Evaluation aims and objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is to explore:

- What activity have TPs delivered?

- How have TPs delivered that activity, and what can be learned from their experiences and shared?

- What are the early impacts of the TP activity?

- How is sustainability being approached?

It is useful to note that whilst enough time has elapsed for partnerships to experience benefits from their work, it is too early for the programme to demonstrate significant impact on quality of social work education and practice. The student cohorts exposed to the programme are limited at this stage, with undergraduate students in only two partnerships having completed the journey to ASYE[22].

Method & issues

The evaluation is taking place between Jan 2019 and March 2020. The evaluation method is led by the evaluation specification provided by DfE, and includes:

- Initial document review of phase three partnerships

- In-depth document review of phase one and two partnerships

- MI review of existing partnership level data (phase one and two)

- Case studies with 6 partnerships (two phase one and four phase two)

Although the initial intention was to spread the evaluation relatively evenly over the evaluation period, the DfE requested an increased focus on delivery in the period January to March 2019, to enable better timing of sharing the learning for phase three and non-funded TPs. The following activity has taken place within this period, and is the evidence base for this interim report. Annex two provides further detail.

- **Document review** – DfE provided initial documents and these were supplemented (in large numbers) by local partnerships. Overall 350 documents were reviewed from phases one, two and three. These were analysed using a template against key headings relating to progress, benefits, learning and sustainability.

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[22] Two partnerships have not included undergraduates in the remit of the TP to date (one phase one; one phase two) and an additional phase two partnership introduced third year U/G into the TP remit for the A/Y 18/19.

- **Management Information (MI) review** – the intended method was to use the document review to draw out partnership level data across a limited core range of delivery and quality areas, using telephone discussions with project managers to fill key gaps. However, it became clear that limited data was available in the documents provided. A pragmatic and revised method was developed with DfE, which involved project managers co-ordinating data collection from partners to complete a collection template. Partnerships put significant efforts into generating data, and 9 out of 12 partnerships returned data templates at varying levels of completion. The data used from this should be treated as indicative due to mixed levels of completeness and reliability. See Annex Three for more details.

- **Case Studies**: Two case studies were conducted with phase one partnerships, involving key stakeholders across the six workstream areas. These focused on understanding partnership journeys in terms of delivery progress, approaches, lessons learned and sustainability.

The next phase of the evaluation will comprise a focused data refresh (phase one and two partnerships) and in depth case studies with selected phase two partnerships. Case studies will comprise research with key stakeholder groups, focusing on generating a more comprehensive understanding of the:

- approaches taken and rationale;

- challenges, enablers and lessons learnt;

- benefits and outcomes;

- perceptions of early impact;

- approaches to sustainability.

Partnerships have been offered confidentiality in order to maximise their contributions to the evaluation. For this reason, partnerships are not named in the report.

Teaching Partnership Activity

Delivery activity has been spread across the expected workstreams:

- Governance
- Admissions
- Placements and curriculum
- Practice support and delivery
- Academics delivery and experience of practice
- Workforce development and planning

Partnerships in phase one and two have delivered activity across all of these areas, at varying levels. In general, the stretch criteria (Annex One) are more explicitly used to guide the initial workplan for year one and two delivery. At a programme level, less relative activity has been seen in terms of workforce planning and academics spending time in actual practice. All areas have spent significant time on governance, placements, practice support and delivery and workforce development. This is reflected in spend data[23].

Governance and management

Relevant stretch criteria: 'A strategy to raise the quality of education and practice training through the Teaching Partnership is co-owned by all the leads in the partnership.

The partnership has a credible plan for improved performance for 2018-20, which senior managers in all partnership organisations own and will deliver.'

Key findings:

- Effective governance and management structures are in place across all partnerships in the programme, and partnerships have generated commitment from leaders across partner organisations.

- All partnerships have developed co-owned, credible strategies, delivery plans and associated inclusive structures and processes to manage and deliver these plans.

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[23] Source: Three data returns on workstream spending combined with activity levels from document review

- Achieving robust governance is an ongoing activity, with all partnerships continually reviewing and adapting their structures to maximise effectiveness.

- Monitoring and reporting performance at overall partnership level against eligibility and stretch criteria is underdeveloped in most partnerships.

- Service users have been formally involved in delivery structures in all partnerships, less so decision making structures, although this is increasing.

- The equal engagement of Children's and Adults services at all levels has proven challenging for most partnerships due to contextual factors.

Structures

All partnerships have spent considerable time and reflection on developing clear, inclusive and effective co-owned governance and operational management structures. Partnerships have rightly focused on this as an immediate priority on receiving funding. The underpinning work on designing and agreeing governance and operation is complete across all partnerships, although at the time of the research, a minority of phase three partnerships were in the final stages of signing off elements of their structure. On average, partnerships are requiring 6-12 months to develop their governance and management structures and processes. This partially relates to the time taken to recruit the project manager, a role that is key to building a robust governance, management and operational structure.

All partnerships, except one[24], are governed through an LA led strategic level board (directors/senior leaders from key partners) which meets quarterly, and an operational level board (senior managers across key partners) – meeting monthly or every two months. The operational board - or equivalent - oversees the work plan, which is normally delivered by formalised groups that report into it (which may be sub committees, working groups, hubs or task and finish groups – or a mix of these).

Some partnerships have 'membership led' groupings that feed specific stakeholder views into the operational board, for example User Groups, HEI forum. Several partnerships have non-delivery focused groups such as research and evaluation or scrutiny committees. There are minor variations to this structure, which are influenced by historical structures, partnership size and stage of development.

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[24] The lead partner in one area is a jointly commissioned organisation providing the children's social care functions for two LAs

All partnerships have a jointly developed strategic plan, implementation plan and operational plan. Monitoring processes for delivery of activities are in place in all partnerships. These appropriately vary in sophistication depending on the complexity of the partnership, and in some cases rely heavily on the project manager or business support role to collect and collate update reports. Evaluation and performance management of strategic objectives does not appear well developed, with few qualitative and quantitative measures embedded at partnership level in most partnerships. A piece of national collaborative work to develop a selection of potential strategic performance measures was completed, which demonstrates interest in strengthening this area going forward.

Communication strategies and plans appear to be in place in all partnerships. These vary in their focus – several partnerships have a strategic communication plan focused on the content of key messages for specific stakeholder groups and the majority of partnerships have communication plans that focus on the dissemination processes to different stakeholder groups. All partnerships have developed (or are developing) their own websites as an information dissemination tool.

Partnerships have demonstrated how they effectively reflect and adapt their governance and management structures and processes over time. Several partnerships have started off with larger structures, which have been streamlined as a result of achieving initial goals, to enhance synergy between interlinked priorities, to reduce duplication of individuals attending multiple meetings and/or to support sustainability going forward.

Operationally, a typical pattern is to adapt the way the workstreams are managed, with many partnerships starting with a separate working/delivery group for each workstream (e.g. up to 8 working groups), but then amalgamating related working groups to cover multiple workstreams. One phase two partnership has amalgamated from eight down to two workstreams: pre-qualification and post qualification. Occasionally partnerships have increased their delivery structures to adjust for underrepresentation, accommodate new priorities or meet specific needs e.g. separating out children and adults functions; task and finish group to develop practice around mental health.

Membership

The twenty two partnerships contributing to this interim evaluation have engaged 190 formal partners into the programme – 109 local authorities, 52 HEIs and 29 other partners (PVIs, NHS trusts and others)[25]. Membership profiles of partnerships suggest that partnerships are effectively using their structures to generate strategic and

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[25] One partnership is not included in the evaluation as it moved to the non-funded sustainability phase of the programme following its first year.

operational commitment across key partners, through the use of executive and operational boards. Some partnerships have invited organisations to be Associate Members and other key bodies, such as Regional Association of Directors of Children and Adult Services into the partnership – to reflect their key stakeholder base.

Memorandum of Understanding/Co-operation documents are signed at senior leadership levels across both LAs and HEIs, and other formal partners. Some partnerships report these being useful in generating higher level commitment. Building and maintaining genuine organisational commitment at organisational level is an ongoing activity, often related to external circumstances (e.g. re-structures, recruitment, Ofsted findings).

Service users and carers (SUC) are formally involved in strategic or operational boards in a minority of partnerships, through structures (existing and new) such as a Regional Service User and Carer Reference Group and a Public Involvement Board. This is not reflective of the larger involvement of SUCs in workstream groups.

Many partnerships report some difficulties in maintaining the equal engagement of both adult and children's services in their strategic and operational structures. This appears to be as a result of differing stages of development, needs and capacity in adult services. As a result, partnerships have taken specific actions to address this at a structural level, for example, in one partnership by treating children's and adult services in each local authority as separate partners.

Expansion of partnership members has taken place in a limited number of cases. One partnership incorporated both a new LA partner and a new HEI partner; two partnerships incorporated a new HEI as a partner and another incorporated one LA. Partnerships have considered expansion very seriously, with much deliberation over the impact on the existing partnership and whether expected standards should be met on entry or over a period of time (for HEIs in particular). All partnerships report that expansion has overall been of benefit, but expansion has also brought challenges and highlighted tensions which have taken time to improve. Several partnerships are considering future expansion, one through the use of affiliate membership.

All partnerships have used DfE funding to provide additional capacity to deliver partnership work through specific roles. Most commonly this is a project manager role, who has supported the development of governance, management and operational structures by supporting partners to develop structures, engage stakeholders, turn the bids into implementation plans, develop evaluation, monitoring, communication and risk management processes and ensure robust financial processes are in place. Some partnerships have created more than one core infrastructure role, for example Programme Manager, Business Support Officer, Project Administrator - depending on the size (although this is not always the case), funding and complexity of the partnership. All

core infrastructure roles are reported as critical for achieving progress, pace, accountability and quality, at least in the first two years.

Specific roles have also been funded to increase capacity to manage workstreams. These include roles such as Partnership Development Officer and roles that have both a management and delivery expectation (e.g. Practice Education Consultant, Principal Practice Educator Lead, and Workforce Development Lead). These roles have provided essential capacity, with partnerships reporting that these roles enable partnerships to achieve more in the timescale than would otherwise have been possible.

Admissions

*Stretch Criteria: '*The partnership owns a plan for the involvement of those with lived experience and employer representatives at all stages of admissions from Sept 2018, including decisions about applicants; The partnership is committed to a minimum of 120 UCAS points or a 2:1 requirement to undergraduate and postgraduate courses respectively from Sept 2018, requirements also maintained at clearing; The partnership develops and implements by Sept 2019 tests at the point of application before an offer to study is made. Tests will assess all applicants' intellectual ability, social work values and behaviours. The tests must include written assessment, verbal reasoning, group discussion and scenarios/role play in all cases. These tests should be applied to all applicants, including those from access courses.'

Key findings

- All partnerships are committed to meeting the raised admissions criteria for undergraduate and post graduate study, with the vast majority of HEIs having achieved this by the entry cohort following their first year of funding.

- Around half of partnerships have one or more HEIs with an exceptions policy for undergraduate and/or masters level entry, but most report low use of these.

- All partnerships involve SUC and employer representatives in HEI admissions processes, including at least eight out of ten phase 3 partnerships.

- All phase one and two partnerships have improved their recruitment and selection processes to better assess ability, values and behaviours – with phase 3 partnerships all having plans to do so (if not already implemented) for their next cohort entry point.

Entry Criteria

Entry criteria to social work degrees are higher[26] and more consistent across partnership areas as a result of the TP programme[27].

Partnerships report that they have a commitment from HEIs to increase and/or maintain entry standards at a minimum of 120 UCAS points for undergraduate degrees and entry criteria of a 2.1 undergraduate degree for masters level degree. This commitment is reported to be fulfilled and maintained in the majority of partnerships. Many HEIs already set entry criteria at this level, but are now maintaining a more rigid adherence. Around half[28] of the phase one and two partnerships include one or more individual HEIs with an exception policy but this appears to be used infrequently[29].

- At least six partnerships (out of the twelve phase one and two partnerships) have one or more HEI with an exception criteria, most usually defined as those candidates having experience that compensates for not meeting desired standards.

- There are at least two phase one and two partnerships where there is agreement on paper to increase entry standards, but there is not 100% confidence this is being implemented consistently[30].

In these cases, evidence from the document review and case studies suggests that HEIs are:

- balancing the desire to increase entry criteria against the viability of courses when there are several HEIs in a partnership;

- perceiving that rigorous processes may be more effective than entry criteria at identifying those who will make high quality social workers.

Rigorous Processes of Selection and Assessment

All phase one and two partnerships, and most phase three partnerships, have reviewed their assessment and selection processes against ability, knowledge and behaviour expectations. They have all implemented improvements (with the possible exception of one phase two HEI where the partnership is satisfied with the high quality of students

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[26] At a programme level these are higher, although for many individual HEIs these are unchanged.

[27] This is set out in workstream plans and minutes for admissions workstreams indicating attribution that those who have raised them have done so as a result of the TP programme

[28] Taken from the quantitative data, which showed higher levels than in the document review

[29] With the exception of one HEI at masters level, who reported high levels of candidates accepted at 2.2 level (c50%)

[30] Where this has been raised we have reviewed website information, and this would suggest that the entry standards are not being maintained in some partnerships

from historical processes). Even in partnerships where HEIs already felt they had robust and varied selection processes, the review process was found to be useful and led to further improvements and greater consistency across partnership areas.

Developments include:

- Increasing rigour and range of areas tested through the use of combinations of written assessments, verbal reasoning, group discussions, interviews and scenario/role play; some partnerships are paying actors to deliver simulated role play (although one HEI has found this too expensive, and may use drama students or not continue). One HEI has changed the setting of role plays from voluntary sector to statutory sector.

- Using KSS to update the tools used in the assessment process.

- Harmonising processes across HEIs in the partnership, with partners jointly reviewing their processes, tools and guidance and developing this into a single shared assessment process, building on each other's effective practice.

- Developing a set of guiding principles and a set of assessment tools to contribute to consistency across institutions but still allow variation to fit the character and requirements of each HEI. The assessment tools comprise of a bank of interview questions, written tests and a standardised format for group interviews.

- Bringing assessment in line with evidence based processes used for Step Up to Social Work.

- Developing a sampling model to analyse decisions and ensure consistency and quality.

SUC and employer engagement

Prior to the teaching partnership programme, many HEIs already included an element of service user and practitioner involvement in admissions processes. This has been extended and formalised by the teaching partnership programme, with all partnerships and their HEIs committed to increasing the engagement of service users and practitioners in selection processes.

In phase one and two partnerships this commitment is clearly evidenced in three main ways:

- the increased guidance and formality with which service users and practitioners are being involved;

- the increase in support and training for service users in particular, to facilitate confidence and skills so they can contribute effectively;

- the greater role and influence of service users and practitioners in marking arrangements and final decision making.

The document review indicates that most phase three partnerships have reviewed admissions processes and have enhanced practitioner and service user involvement in arrangements for the 2019/20 cohort. In addition, for most partnerships across all phases, there are plans to further increase involvement going forward.

Examples of activities taking place include:

- Engaging service users and practitioners in the design of new admission and selection processes.

- Developing central registers of pools of practitioners who would like to participate in selection days, to increase accessibility, diversity and practicalities of having substitutes in the event staff have emergencies or reasons they can no longer participate.

- Linking in with established service user groups to ensure a steady supply of relevant and diverse service users, including developing formal processes for securing user input into working groups and (less often) operational management boards.

- Formal assessment guidance that expects and supports service user and practitioner involvement in all aspects of the assessment process.

- Marking regimes empowering service user and practitioner involvement to influence decision making for selection of candidates (e.g. service user marking is weighted at 25% of the process in one partnership).

- Teaching modules within HEIs to develop the capacity of service users to participate effectively.

- Monitoring frameworks to ensure that the work of selection is shared equally and there is standardised practice for those involved in admissions and standardised scoring.

Practice Placements

Increasing the quantity, type and quality of practice placements and the 'support around the student' has been a key focus of activity in all phase one and two partnerships. All phase three partnerships have ambitions to make improvements, with at least two partnerships from this phase already reporting progress.

All phases of partnerships have co-developed a joint workstream focused on improving placements. In some cases, the workstream is delivered through a working group specific only to placements – but most often the placement workstream is part of a working group with a wider remit e.g. curriculum development, practice development, CPD. This is indicative of a move towards locating practice placements into the wider context of integrating practice based learning into social work education – for pre and post qualified social workers.

Quantity, setting and matching

Stretch criteria: Partnerships offering both statutory placements relevant to students' preferred areas of practice in contrasting settings from AY 2018-19 will be prioritised in the assessment of applications; Programmes providing units in child and family and adult areas of practice will be prioritised; All placement students are guaranteed statutory placements relevant to their preferred areas of practice, which they are offered from AY 2018-19. In child and family settings, these will offer all students significant experience of using the statutory framework for child and family social work. In adult services, students will have experience of using statutory frameworks for adult social care in delivering outcome-focused, personalised responses.

Key findings:

- All phase one and two partnerships expect to provide two placements (1x70 day and 1x100 day), within the funded period, with at least one of these placements being in a statutory setting.

- 7 out of 9[31] phase one and two partnerships offer 2 statutory placements at undergraduate level, and at least 7 out of 12[32] partnerships offer 2 statutory placements at masters level.

- The TP programme has achieved a significant increase in placements taking place in statutory settings, with at least six out of nine partnerships reporting increases at undergraduate level and 7/12 at post graduate level[33]. This is considered a key achievement by partnerships.

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[31] Three partnerships do not have undergraduates in their remit (one of these has recently included undergraduate students, but placement data is not yet available). A combination of data returns and document review has been used to generate this figure.

[32] A combination of data returns and document review.

[33] From data return and local evaluations 6/9 eligible partnerships (undergraduate) reported increases; two additional areas showed high % statutory placements but only provided latest data (no comparator). Data return and local evaluations and case studies suggest minimum of seven partnerships have increased statutory placements. This could be an underestimation.

- Two partnerships have added 30 skills days and development days to their placement offer (which they specify as 2 x 100 days).

- The process of developing and providing sufficient quality placements is jointly owned by HEIs and employers, and more formalised guidance, structures and new methods of support have been developed.

- It has taken significant effort to increase placement numbers, with most using a multi-method approach that includes PE training, placing new expectations on LAs and reviewing PVI capacity.

- The majority (9/12) of P1 & 2 partnerships have adopted an element of 'mixed model' to increasing placement numbers, which involve PVIs in some format. They are simultaneously working to increasing the number and proportion of placements hosted in statutory settings within this mixed environment.

- Matching to specialisms and preferences is less well developed. Overall both qualitative and quantitative sources suggest there are fewer placements in adult services than children's services, although for some this is equalising.

- TP funded posts have increased the capacity of partnerships to improve the sufficiency and quality of placements.

- Placements are being integrated into a wider practice learning curriculum.

The Teaching Partnership programme has significantly increased[34] the provision of placements that meet the definition of 'statutory placement'[35] at both undergraduate and masters levels. The number of placements hosted within local authority adult and children services is also increased[36]. The evidence from the document review, local evaluations and initial case studies indicates this trend will continue.

The approaches taken to increase statutory placements fall into two categories - a 'pure' approach where placements are only hosted in local authorities (or NHS trusts) and a 'mixed' approach which involves PVIs in some format. At least three out of twelve phase one and phase two partnerships [37] report a 'pure' model where they are providing all (99%+) placements in a local authority setting.

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[34] Evidence is a triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data.
[35] Defined in the DfE/DHSC application form as placements that: take place in a local authority setting or settings delivering delegated statutory functions on behalf of the local authority e.g. NHS trusts; involve work on S17 or S47 cases (under the Children Act 1989); or delivering requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Care Act 2014; require case records to be updated by the student, under appropriate supervision.
[36] Document review and data returns
[37] From triangulation of data returns and document review. This may be an underestimation.

The majority (9/12) of phase one and two partnerships have adopted a 'mixed model' approach (also called blended, hybrid, hub and spoke, integrated and meshed) to increasing placement numbers, which involve PVIs in some format. There are two main 'mixed' models:

- Whereby the lead body is the TP or LA, but part of the placement takes place in one or more PVIs that can provide experience of statutory frameworks. This appears to be the most used model.
- First placement being a more 'traditional' PVI led model, with additional levels of guidance and monitoring introduced by the TP.

For those that continue to work with PVIs, there remains a commitment to develop processes to review and monitor PVI capacity to meet the 'statutory' definition. All partnerships using a mixed model as their core model also appear committed to increasing the proportion of placements taking place within a statutory setting. For example, one phase two partnership using a mixed model has increased the proportion of placements hosted in a statutory setting from 63% to 94% by year 2 (with 100% meeting the statutory definition).

All phase three partnerships are expecting to provide two placements meeting the statutory definition, with at least three partnerships (out of 10) committing to two placements in statutory settings (by academic year 2018/19 or 2019/20). For those working up to this commitment over time, they are retaining placements in existing PVIs, with work planned to review whether these can offer the expected statutory experience.

Driving up the number of statutory placements has taken considerable effort given that prior to teaching partnerships many students received one (or for some, no) placement within a statutory setting. Inevitably this has meant the deployment of significant resource to identify new placements and to review and develop PVI placements. Whilst more placements appear to be provided in children and family services, compared to adult services, several partnerships have successfully put efforts into developing more places in adult services. For example one partnership has equalised placements by the end of year 2, compared to a previous 66% of placements in children's services.

Where partnerships are phasing in the provision of placements in statutory settings, priority has most often been given to masters levels students or through a combination of final year bachelor students and/or those studying at masters level.

Approaches to increasing placement numbers in statutory settings include:

- Requiring all LAs with teams working in adults and children's statutory frameworks to make placements available. This has resulted in the participation of LAs that have not offered placements before. In at least one

partnership, placements are purposefully being developed in teams where there are vacancies.

- At least one phase one partnership and several phase two partnerships have provided placements in LAs outside the partnership area to increase statutory setting for placements (e.g. one phase one partnership achieved 99% of its placements within LAs, with 72% of placements in LAs within the TP and 27% of placements in LAs outside the partnership area).

- Increasing support capacity through increased PE training and development [see page 27 for more details].

- Using pods or hubs to support students to alleviate pressure on the number of PEs needed and provide a different learning experience.

- HEIs in the partnership getting preference for placements at LAs in the partnership.

- Students will only be offered placements in one area of the partnership to encourage taking up unused opportunities in the more remote parts of the county, supported by practical assistance.

- Staggering placements (e.g. BA and MA students) to require fewer placements at any one time, using the same placement twice in one academic year for different students;

- One HEI spans two partnerships, with each LA providing 50% of the required placements.

Activity to achieve placement numbers as part of hub and spoke models (where a local authority is the lead, but PVIs or NHS settings are used for specific elements of placement experience) include:

- Strategic review of the capacity of the PVI sector and structures to understand sufficiency and need;

- Developing PVI Equivalence Statements – or similar, setting out the agreed definition for 'statutory placements' for students;

- Partnership processes/checklists to review individual PVI placements against KSS and definitions provided;

- Developing guidance and processes to quality assure and enable a multi-setting placement;

- One partnership reviewed the viability of the hub and spoke model and found it not viable financially in the longer term, so have decided to continue with the 'pure' model with the option of developing occasional placements in PVI settings.

Less progress appears to have been made in terms of matching students to their specialisms or preferences and providing a contrasting second placement. Partnerships aspire to offer this (either through matching placements with skills and experience; or matching to specialism preference) – but their first priority has been on achieving the total number of placements required.

There is evidence of 8/22 partnerships developing matching processes to support this aim. Examples of approaches include:

- Placement matching or panel meetings (by Practice Education Consultants (PECs) or equivalent) to purposefully organise placement allocation based on skills and experience

- PECs and HEIs have co-developed new allocation processes to provide earlier LA involvement in matching, followed by 'speed interviewing' between PEs and students

- Practice Educator Lead (PEL) led - Student and placement profiles have been established to aid matching process and students

- Principal social workers (PSWs) and/or Workforce development leads (WFDs) work with HEI to establish placements matching to students' preferred areas of practice. Preference forms are completed by students to provide time to arrange placements.

Quality Assurance

The review of progress reports, case studies and local evaluations indicate that phase one and two partnerships have undertaken significant levels of activity to improve the quality assurance of practice placements. Placement quality assurance is also a priority for most phase three partnerships, although most have not yet made significant progress.

LAs and HEIs have worked jointly to improve the quality assurance of placements at a partnership level, through more consistent Quality Assurance in Practice Learning (QAPL) and clearer and enhanced quality expectations and processes. All partnerships report having a credible plan for assessing the quality of learning from practice placements which incorporates the KSS (and/or Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)).

Approaches include:

- Reviewing and building on individual HEI QAPL processes and using best practice to inform more consistent, partnership level QA processes. This includes developing specific processes to assess portfolios more consistently through use of the KSS/PCF, and clearer approaches to

identify and address 'potential to fail' issues earlier. Linked to this is the development of partnerships level guidance documents setting out clear responsibilities and expectations.

- Increased individual placement monitoring processes, including learning from greater levels of student feedback and placement provider feedback. One partnership has developed a learning agreement which is monitored mid-way and on completion; another TP now offers enhanced tutor visits (increased from 1 to 2 per placement). One partnership has developed a TP wide quality survey for students (whereas most have retained this at HEI level).

- Continued use of practice inspectors, with some partnerships using new TP funded roles (such as practice education leads) to fulfil this role;

- Increased monitoring of the quality support provided to students by PEs, through increased and improved mentoring and supervision, most often by PECs (or equivalent).

Quality of support for students on placement

Stretch Criteria: 'The partnership describes a credible plan for ensuring that students will be supported and developed throughout their placements by a broad set of child and family and adult practitioners appropriate to their placements. It will commit to using no more than 20% independent PEs by or before March 2019; All those supporting and developing students must be familiar with the CSWs' Knowledge and Skills statements'.

Key findings:

- The capacity to support practice placements has been improved by increased numbers of more highly trained PEs[38] and new approaches to student support – including recruiting specialist practice education co-ordinator or supervisor roles who directly support individuals, groups of students and PEs.

- Enhanced support to students is often through learning groups (e.g. learning pods, hubs, symposia) and additional programmes of skills days (at least two partnerships).

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[38] 5/8 responses to the quantitative data return reported increased training of PEs at level 2 and 3/8 at level 1; Document review shows this may be an underestimation (possibly as result of missing partner data).

- Most partnerships report the use of fewer – or minimal use of independent PEs[39] and most phase one and two partnerships[40] have PE caseloads of one, with only two areas reporting greater caseloads[41]. Local evaluations show evidence of protected time for PEs, but it is not always enough or protected in order for PEs to fulfil the role effectively.

- There is increased evidence of activity to embed KSS into the training of staff who are providing placement support.

Overall, higher numbers of better trained PEs are available to support and supervise students[42] whilst on placement, and partnerships have enhanced the range of support available to students whilst on placement. A multi-strand approach has been taken in most partnerships which includes:

- Developing a partnership level baseline to determine existing capacity to support students (through data analysis and PE surveys) to inform new approaches (number of PEs/workplace supervisors, level of accreditation, caseloads, predicted need for placement support).

- Providing more opportunities to undertake PE training at levels 1 & 2 (and refreshers or combined courses), underpinned by the KSS, to increase numbers of PEs who are more highly trained and more fully understand current expectations. Many partnerships have used DfE funding to offer training free of charge. Some partnerships have developed clearer guidance around ongoing capacity and refresher requirements to support this.

- Ongoing support is provided through updated practice handbooks revised to incorporate the KSS, PE networks supported by PECs (or equivalent) and protected time (although local evaluations suggest this can challenged by work pressures). One partnership has introduced a Critical Reflective Practice Programme, designed to improve supervision of students (guided by KSS). The PEC/placement co-ordinator type roles have also provided trouble shooting/problem solving to support PEs and students.

- Embedding PE training in progression pathways – including in some partnerships from ASYE onwards. In one partnership PE training is now

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[39] 9 data responses; 5 contained comparative data with four reporting reductions and one maintaining 1 IPE; one additional response showed the use of offsite PEs in mentoring, not direct support of students
[40] From data returns 6/8 reported PE caseload of 1
[41] One area reports PE caseloads of between 1-2 and one area of between one and 3.4
[42] 5/8 responses to the quantitative data return indicated increased training of PEs at level 2 and 3/8 at level 1; Document review shows this may be an underestimation (possibly as result of missing partner data).

used as a gateway to management level roles (to mixed response from practitioners).

Different methods of placement support for students have been developed and some are embedded consistently across the TP area:

- Developing a hub or pod method of support, supported by PECs, PEs or academic staff (at least four P1 & P2 partnerships have taken this approach), some based on formal reflective practice methods such as InterVision (a peer led group reflection method).

- Additional skills and development days as part of placement delivery, to enhance the practice placement learning experience. At least 2 partnerships (P1 & P2) have added 30 skills days to the placement, increasing placement days to 100.

Curriculum and Academic Delivery

Stretch Criteria: The partnership can evidence enhanced collaboration between employers and HEIs to undertake long term planning for training and development of the social work workforce throughout their careers; The partnership can demonstrate an increase in the amount of child and family practitioner and adult practitioner teaching on the initial education academic programme in 2018-19 compared to existing baselines

In feedback, 90% or more of students rate academic delivery as at least good. The partnership can evidence how experienced, effective child and family, and adult social workers (whether or not they are PEs) are involved in curriculum development

Key findings:

- The KSS are embedded to underpin the relevant curriculum in all partnerships.

- Curricula at both undergraduate and masters levels have been jointly reviewed and changes have been made as a result of practitioner input.

- Data indicates that students in TPs continue to be taught by very high proportions of qualified, registered social workers (employed by HEIs). These core teaching staff are increasingly being supported by joint posts, and a pool of practitioner teachers.

- It is more difficult to assess the level of SUC involvement in developing and delivering the curriculum, but several partnerships are proactively engaging service users to provide input into teaching.

- Most HEIs have methods of measuring and refining the quality of their courses using student feedback. It is unclear if these are routinely shared at TP level.

All phase one and two partnerships have increased the role of the KSS in underpinning the curriculum and assessment for the undergraduate and masters curricula overseen by the TP[43]. Partnerships have jointly reviewed or mapped the curricula through partnership workstreams, with both employer and HEI members, and occasionally SUC. Evidence of this can be seen in guidance documentation that partnerships have produced, which relate specific elements of the curriculum to the KSS. For many partnerships, this review is across all elements of the initial and higher education curriculum, PE training, supervisor training and CPD.

A key focus of phase one and two partnership activity has been jointly developing a curriculum with a new balance of academic and practice elements, and increasing the amount of the curriculum that is taught by practitioners. Activities include:

- Reviewing the curriculum and identifying areas and modules that would benefit from a practice perspective, making suggestions and/or adding in practical elements such as 'real' assessment documents used through 'review day' events, or joint working groups.

- Posts (often jointly funded) who review and teach significant amounts of the curriculum, and also facilitate SUC input into teaching (e.g. Teaching Consultants, Learning Practitioners, Practice Development Workers, Principal Practice Educator Leads).

- Developing a pool/register of social work practitioners who would like to participate in teaching, co-teaching or providing input into modules.

- A proactive CPD approach to build practitioner teaching skills – e.g. practitioners who teach programme; PLE3 module developed (coaching, mentoring, teaching); Practitioners being encouraged to develop their own CPD portfolio by delivering SW practice teaching in HEIs; train the trainer programme for practitioners to develop teaching skills, potentially leading to PG Certificate in Advanced Practice.

- SUCs facilitating sessions and providing additional input into elements of the curriculum, supported by modules taught by HEIs to support them.

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[43] All those responding to the data return showed % increases in the extent to which the KSS was embedded into the curriculum. UG and PG: 100% (7/7) increased, and one partnership answered qualitatively [UG Baseline range from 0-100%; latest year range 30% to 100%] [PG range baseline: 5%-90% to latest range 35%- 100%]

- Maintaining high levels of HEI staff who are registered, qualified (and in some instances practising) social workers[44].

- Greater exposure of HEI lecturers to practitioners and practice, through the academic in practice workstream (see below).

All partnerships from phase one and two[45] report increases in the level of practitioner teaching in the curriculum, although this is not necessarily consistent for all HEIs within a partnership. It is challenging to quantify the extent of these increases, but indicative data is provided by the data returns:

- of the seven phase one and two partnerships providing comparative data for undergraduate level courses, increases were of between 5 and 50% with most HEIs stating that between 30-60% of the curriculum is now taught by practitioners;

- five partnerships provided comparative data relating to masters level students, with all reporting increases of between 5-25%, with most reporting that around 15-55% of the curriculum is taught by practitioners; three further responses (qualitative) reported significant activity in this area;

- One partnership reported that approximately 20% of the curriculum receives input from SUCs.

At least one local area has embedded specialisms into the curriculum:

- The HEI provides specialist pathways in children's and adults social work and 32% of their curriculum is specialist content. From 2016-17 they have offered integrated specialist streams into the final year curriculum increasing specialism to 30% in addition to practice placements.

The data returns also indicate that students in TPs are being taught by qualified, registered social workers. Out of 8 partnership responses[46], all reported that HEIs have maintained high levels (over 86%) of teaching staff who are qualified, registered social workers, with a small number who are also practising (most commonly 1 per staff body, although one HEI reported 25% practising staff). This does not represent a significant change, although two partnerships indicated that the TP programme has raised the importance of having some staff who are in practice, with at least one partnership writing this into new teaching staff contracts.

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[44] Data returns (from phase one and two partnerships suggest the vast majority of staff were already qualified, registered social workers before and after the TP programme
[45] Triangulating qualitative and quantitative data
[46] Please note that this data is not representative of all HEIs in these 8 partnerships, most likely it is representative of one HEI from each.

Academics' experience of practice

Stretch criteria – Practitioners involved in teaching are supported by employers to do so. There are joint appointments across practice and education; there is a plan to embed practitioner research approaches for students and ASYEs in partnership with HEIs.

Key findings

- Most partnerships[47] have attempted activity to support academics to spend time in frontline teams, refreshing their experience and observing contemporary practice, although this activity does not appear as structured (in terms of clear application or release policies) or as consistent as other work delivered by partnerships.

- More activity has been focused on developing ways of embedding joint working between practitioners and academics, bringing together academic theory and research to address 'real life' practice issues – using structures such as Centres of Excellence or Learning Hubs.

- There is evidence from the document review, and indicative data from the data returns, that HEIs are supporting research approaches within ASYE and through joint research opportunities and skills modules as part of CPD.

In around five partnerships, 'Academics in practice' underpins core partnership structures to bring together academics, practitioners and users to share knowledge and work jointly on a specified activity – which could be to address practice challenges or explore a joint research interest. Centres of Excellence, Learning Hubs or the Centre for Co-production are examples of these. Conferences and learning events – seen in all phases of the partnership programme – have also furthered the spirit of the academics in practice workstream.

The academics in practice strand has also been interlinked with developing the curriculum – bringing academics and practitioners together to inform the development of academic content and practice teaching (see curriculum and academic delivery section).

More discreet approaches include

- academics spending time in practice, as part of an ongoing commitment (e.g. sitting on ASYE assessment panels) or as a specific one-off learning

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[47] The document review found evidence that 10/12 TPs have delivered activity in this area, with evidence of plans but not necessarily delivery in the remaining 2. Activity levels appeared lower than across other workstreams.

activity e.g. most often spending 5 to 8 days in a frontline team experience and observing specific areas of practice as a 'refresher' or to gain insight into the use of guidance and processes in practice e.g. thresholds, assessments;

- developing a research based culture and research in practice activity, which most often involves academics supporting practitioner research through formal processes, such as a 'practitioner-research programme' or TP task and finish group on an agreed area of challenge – to less formal activity to encourage research based activity;

- providing CPD training around critical thinking and applied research as individual modules or as part of newly developed leadership courses.

Consistent release of staff for these activities is not often evident at partnership level. However, at individual HEI level, the document review, case studies and data returns suggest that protected time is commonly provided for at least 10% of HEI teaching staff[48] - with some individual HEIs offering protected time to 50% (n1) and 100%(n1) of staff. The 'normal' level of protected time appears to be around 10-15% per A/Y or a range of between 2-8 days for specific time in practice. Data returns suggest an increase in the protected time in two (out of nine) partnerships as a result of the TP, although the document review would suggest this may be an underestimation.

CPD and workforce planning

Stretch Criteria: 'The partnership has a plan for embedding the CSWs' Knowledge and Skills statements, ASYE requirements, Approved Child and Family Practitioner (ACFP) and DfE supervisor proposals into practitioner CPD from Sept 2019; the partnership describes how it will produce by March 2019 an improved medium-term labour market plan (3-5 years). Implementing the plan will attract more students into social work training and posts and retain higher numbers of practitioners with local and regional employers. The partnership's application specifies what expert support would be useful to assist with the plan; There is a credible plan to deliver AY 2016-17 employment rates in social work of at least 70% and 80% 6 months and 12 months respectively after graduation and at least the same in the following AY.

The partnership can evidence that a system is in place to support final year students in their transition to qualified practitioner, above and beyond final placement arrangements'.

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[48] All 9/9 of those responding to the data returns said 'yes' to the question – Can the partnership evidence that 10% of academic staff are supported to have protected time in practice during 2018-2020?

Key findings

- Workforce analysis attributable to the TP is taking place in around 8/12 of phase one and two partnerships, and data is being used to support a range of operational actions in specific areas of challenge.

- All partnerships have a CPD workstream, with just under half (5/12) designing new progression pathways (including ASYE) within a TP level framework. All have reviewed and or developed new accredited learning to support these pathways, which reflect the KSS and other expected standards.

- The majority of the remainder (5/7) have focused on developing new partnership level structures that bring people together to learn across the partnership e.g. Centres of Excellence, Geographical Hubs – and/or have organised learning more clearly through new partnership level offers.

- There is evidence of all partnerships enhancing or adapting their existing local CPD offer[49] through offering additional learning opportunities (skills modules, masterclasses, PE training, accredited learning) to increase the range and/or match the CPD offer to partnership priorities more clearly. Many have used TP funding to subsidise these programmes to support access to the provision.

- Phase three partnership CPD plans are generally focused on addressing specific known workforce issues, using existing workforce knowledge.

Workforce planning

Most partnerships have developed a specific workforce planning workstream, which later has become linked across or integrated to the CPD or admissions workstream. The majority (8/12) of phase one and two teaching partnerships report the collection and analysis of workforce data as part of the partnership work. Two further areas are making progress and the remaining two partnerships appear to have found this area challenging to progress. Different approaches have been used to bring together workforce data, these include: using the capacity within the partnership or commissioning an external consultant to develop a report.

Common interlinked themes that are being addressed include: high caseloads, high use of (costly) agency staff; high turnover of experienced social workers; recruitment

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[49] With the possible exception of one partnership that is seeking to do this with other partnerships across the region

(including in rural areas) and in some areas, workforce diversity. These are not new and activity to address these is ongoing, with additional approaches being tested at a partnership level:

- Joint advertising of vacancies and/or pooling resources for recruitment fayres.
- Better systems to monitor and manage issues, including caseload management systems and factors affecting caseloads sickness/turnover/maternity leave /ASYE caseloads.
- Return to work schemes.
- Building expectation of employment; offering interview or employment guarantees.
- More closely matching student places to scale of need.
- Developing clearer progression frameworks and improved CPD offers.

Workforce development

Just under half (5/12) the partnerships in phase one and two have focused considerable resources on developing a partnership level progression framework, reviewed against the KSS. Most of these frameworks develop or refine pathways for those on their ASYE and experienced social workers (e.g. practice education; specialist routes for adult and children's services; leadership and management).

At least two (of these five) partnerships have developed a pathway for existing staff to become qualified social workers, and in one area this is a key part of their progression framework (in another it is a pilot, which will inform the delivery of social work apprenticeships). All these partnerships have developed accredited learning within their progression frameworks, with one partnership piloting only accredited training in its advanced practitioner framework.

Six partnerships (including at least two of those who have developed progression frameworks) have organised new structures as a delivery mechanism for their partnership level CPD offer (with some also incorporating existing local authority level training within this structure). These include: learning hubs, Centres of Excellence, professional practice development hubs, learning symposia and one new social work academy. Another has produced a CPD handbook, which offers open access to TP and learning across LAs.

All phase one and two partnerships[50] appear to have provided a TP training offer, which has increased the level of CPD that was previously available[51]. In most areas, this is appropriately linked to building capacity to deliver TP objectives or to meet other identified local workforce needs, particularly PE training. Most partnerships explicitly refer to using the KSS and other national standards to develop their learning and development offers.

Partnerships have developed significant new accredited and non-accredited learning provision (particularly at the advanced level), and have provided a wider range of learning opportunities, to support progression and/or practice development. It is not possible to quantify the increase or range of provision, although it is clear that more areas are offering PE training and there is an increased focus on supporting ASYE (including more assessor training). Examples (this is by no means an exhaustive list) of newly developed programmes and learning include:

- For existing staff who are non-qualified: Gateway programme – a pathway for high calibre staff who wish to become qualified social workers, via a 60-credit graduate diploma in social care which (at level 6) allows them to apply onto a Masters in Social Work.

- Improved ASYSE frameworks (including one partnership offering this as a 15 credit module).

- An Assessed and Supported Year for Aspiring Managers pilot programme (AYSAM) comprising a range of development opportunities including mentoring.

- Training around KSS, including ASYE assessor training, KSS 'talking heads' podcast tool.

- MA in Professional Leadership in Social Work.

- Post Graduate Certificate in Leadership & Management

- Critical reflective practice programme for Practice Educators, Supervisors and Senior Managers

- Practitioner Lecturer programme

- Research Advocates programme

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[50] Triangulation of all sources
[51] It is possible that this is very limited in one area that has focused more on the U/G journey and is seeking to work with other partnerships to develop a regional CPD offer

- Motivational interviewing training for social workers and managers working in Adult Services.

- Research literacy programme and other applied research programmes or learning events.

- Children and mental health shadowing programme.

- Learning events led by practitioner, academic or trainer.

- PE training - levels 1& 2 or combined

- DfE supervisor accredited levels

Benefits and Early Impact

The evidence suggests that the programme is bringing a range of important benefits to partners, and there are indicative examples of early impact at a local level. It is too early to conclude whether these will lead to significant impact on strategic goals. It is important to note that only two partnerships have recruited undergraduates who have completed their learning journey through to ASYE within the TP framework. As a more general consideration going forward, there are complexities in terms of measuring outcomes and impact in terms of data availability and attribution. Additional qualitative evidence will be available through the case study fieldwork planned for 2019/20, which will provide further insight into the common range of benefits, what works, early impact and attribution. Here we bring together the evidence from the document review (including local evaluations), case studies and MI.

There are clear indications that the teaching partnership programme is bringing a wide range of benefits and some early impact to stakeholders at a local level[52] in the following areas:

- Collaboration and culture change

- Attracting high quality students

- Improved practice placement and support

- Improved curriculum and teaching

- Workforce development, learning culture and change to practice

- Addressing workforce challenges

We provide examples to illustrate the types of benefit and impact experienced, although in most cases we cannot accurately assess to what extent these are replicated across the programme, or indeed whether there is influence beyond the programme.

Collaboration and culture change

> "There is no going back to how things were before" (Phase 1)

Across the TP programme, it is evident that the TP has stimulated an increased level of collaboration across employers and HEIs in the planning, development and delivery of social work education. New relationships and collaborative working has led to a deeper understanding of the national social work reform agenda across stakeholders and the challenges, drivers and structures of partner organisations. In itself this has enabled

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[52] Document review, case study areas and elements of the data review

better working relationships and supported organisations to slowly break down perceptions and cultural differences. Greater levels of understanding, transparency and sharing of resources is perceived to have brought more effectiveness in delivering outputs and outcomes. Teaching partnerships acknowledge that tensions, competition and differences will always exist, but that relationships are now strong enough to withstand a greater level of challenge. The role of Experts By Experience[53] (EBE) seems valued by all partnerships, but the impact of this is not always reported. However, one local evaluation report states:

> "Throughout the programme I have continued to be impressed by the commitment and willingness of individuals to work with us in sharing some of their very real experiences of social work practice. The work has been both challenging and very rewarding; challenging because we have been made to think harder and more thoughtfully about how and why we do certain things and what it means to engage people properly in shaping the way we do things but immensely rewarding in terms of the real life experience that EBE's bring to the work which helps us to focus on what is really important for people who use our services. The impact of direct involvement of EBEs has been immensely powerful and has helped to enhance the experience of our practitioners across the board". (Phase two, Chair, EBE group)

Attracting high quality students

Partnerships (from the document review and case studies) feel that they are recruiting the right students via more rigorous processes, which some stakeholders feel has more impact than increased entry criteria.

Staff in several partnership areas report that students are better matched to courses, and are clearer about expectations of what is expected from them. Increased involvement of service users and practitioners is felt if to be of real value to assessing and selecting appropriate candidates.

It is not possible to report whether students recruited are of a higher quality or are more likely to be retained in social work. However, the following evidence indicates perceived early local impact:

- A noticeable difference in Newly Qualified Social Workers (Panel feedback,Phase 2 partnership)

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[53] People who have personal **experience** of using or caring for someone who uses or has used social care or other services relevant to the education and development of social workers. Some partnerships use the term service users and carers (SUC).

- "I have noticed a significant improvement in the quality and calibre of the students coming into practice since the TP was established and employers have been more involved in the training of students." (Phase 1, trainer of 7 years).

- "It seems like students are now much more ready for work – they have better interpersonal skills and communication." (Principal social worker, case study, phase one)

Improved practice placements and support

More students have experience of statutory frameworks as a result of the TP programme. There is disagreement over the level of benefit that is brought by increased access to two statutory placements. Some feel that this has vastly improved the learning opportunity by ensuring experiences of statutory frameworks, and making students more 'work ready', whereas others would favour a mix of statutory and high quality PVI placements, which they feel provides a richer experience and better enables transition of theory to practice.

> "Prior to starting placement I had a number of reservations about working and learning within a local authority as my first placement had been within the voluntary sector. I had been led to believe that local authorities were too busy to engage with students or reflect what good practice is. [The LA] have been exceptionally supportive with my learning potential and progression as a student. I have attended training and student support sessions organised by the Council and found these sessions informative and productive in my learning journey. This has been quite a contrast to my first practice placement as the focus on student progression is very much at the forefront to developing good practice for future social workers like me"

A more consistent and organised approach to assessing sufficiency, identifying, planning and monitoring placements is embedded in phase one and two partnerships. Across the full range of stakeholders consulted within case studies, and from the review of local evaluation reports, there is a consensus that these improved processes have led to significant improvements in the organisation and delivery of practice placements, and this is a key benefit to all stakeholders.

Support for students whilst on placements is commonly reported to be more consistent and of a higher quality. PE training, and support from PE supervisors, and additional methods of support (groups supervision, additional 30 skills days) has provided more opportunities for students to reflect and learn whilst on placement. The ability of PEs to use allocated protected time remains a limiting factor.

> "Placements are 100% better. The role of the PEC is crucial and the time and effort put into this has paid off." (Social Worker, Phase 2 local evaluation)

As a result of these largely improved processes, students[54] are reporting positive placement experiences across different support methods, although this is not universal with some individuals reporting inexperienced, inconsistent or too little support. A minority felt they had been left to do things that were not appropriate (unsupervised preparation of papers for court, for example).

- Students who were offered additional skills development days as part of their placement (one area), felt that there were benefits of this approach in easing their transition of theory to practice. (Phase 1)

- In a different area, a range of stakeholders (including social workers and PECs) report that the quality of placements has improved and that students feel better supported in their role. Their student post placement survey corroborates this, with 33% of the 40 respondents finding the placement very useful (45% useful). 54% found the support provided by the PEC very useful (38% useful n=40) and 100% found that when they contacted the PEC they got the response they wanted. (Phase 2).

- Students who experienced the 'InterVision' process (a peer led group reflection method) as a means of placement support cited emotional containment, perception change, learning how to reflect and professional development from university to practice (making better use of their practice learning) as the most significant benefits (phase 2).

- Feedback from TP and non-TP NQSWs shows TP NQSWs were rated higher on being ready to practice, recognising own strengths and limitations, using reflective practice and applying practice evidence and research. (Phase 2 partnership).

- Hubs provide a case discussion model of development as part of the skills development strand of their work. Students discuss, reflect on and evaluate real situations that they are facing in their placements. Feedback from practitioners (internal evaluation) reported that the experience made significant contribution to their professional development and 10/11 stated rated the experience very highly.

- In one area where PE training has been evaluated, PEs report that they have: changed their approach from modelling and teaching to being facilitative; drawn on a wider range of input to enrich the student experience; provide reflective group supervision and feel more confident to be honest about uncertainty in practice.

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[54] Feedback from focus groups in 2 case study areas and from three local evaluation reports

Improved curriculum and academic delivery

Bringing together practitioners, users and academics to design and deliver a curriculum is reported to have brought significant benefits in terms of making the curriculum more relevant to the workplace and in terms of raising awareness of national government agenda and expectations around KSS, PCF and NAAS[55]. This is expected to bring a shared benefit to LAs, HEIs and students in terms of better preparation for placements and the ASYE, although this is not yet reflected in teaching or course ratings at any reliable level[56].

Indicative evidence of the benefits are seen across individual partnerships:

- 'The practical elements are bringing a deeper learning experience for students.' (HEI Phase 2)

- 'Early findings from course evaluations have shown a positive effect of practitioner input - their recent experience supports knowledge about context of practice and promotes thinking about theory and practice together and not in isolation' (Phase 2)

- Students consistently stated that they valued input by current practitioners to all courses and that this brought their training to life for them (Phase 1)

- 'All stakeholder types can cite benefits of a more practical curriculum and students in particular are very positive about the benefits and impact on their learning'. In the student survey, 100% those who had had contact with an LP (five out of seven respondents) reported positive impact on their learning. The LP role is clearly highly valued by most students and HEIs, helping students apply key concepts and adding major value to modules'.(Phase 1)

- Academics and practitioners co-deliver the teaching, and this has had a transformative impact on the grounding of teaching in both the theory and the practice – lectures focus on real life scenarios and students are given greater confidence by being able to probe on what happens in reality. (Phase 1 Case Study)

- "This teaching experience was an exciting, new challenge; it allowed me to develop a new skill and to reflect on my practice. However, undoubtedly the most satisfying aspect was having students come up to me after the lectures and seminars to say how much they enjoyed having social workers

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[55] National Assessment and Accreditation System
[56] Low responses in data returns and little provision of comparative data; increases and decreases in those that reported.

in their lectures, how it brought the job to life and what they had learned about working with older adults". [Phase 2]

Where academics experienced time in practice, they also cited a number of benefits in terms of their teaching:

- One partnership reports that its programme has brought benefits including enhancing their credibility with students; being able to evidence the importance of remaining research-minded in practice; feel they have challenged the anti-intellectualism found in some SW settings and this has enhanced their credibility with practitioners. A better understanding of context means better teaching and better understanding of the challenges and lived experience of social workers (Phase 1)

- "The experience confirms the value of my previous social work experience and its validity in the current social work setting. The experience has however contributed to my knowledge of the changes in ways services are organised, my understanding of current thresholds and the demands on workers at different levels. This deepening of my understanding is utilised in discussion with practitioners in teaching and on placement visits. The experience also contributes to my teaching of child care law and safeguarding, particularly when considering thresholds for intervention." [Phase 1]

- Benefits include learning about areas of practice they are unfamiliar with (such as no recourse to public funds) and insights into current practice (e.g. assessments) (Phase 2)

It is not possible to evidence or attribute changes in course quality ratings as a result of these improvements, because we do not have sufficient comparative or complete data. At an undergraduate level, it is worth noting that one phase one partnership reported a 10% increase in NSS rating (between years 2-3), and one HEI in a phase 2 partnership has reported a similar increase – sustained for 2 years.

Workforce development, learning culture and impact on practice

All phase one and two partnerships[57] have provided a better structure around CPD provision and most[58] have provided evidence of benefits from the additional CPD activities designed and funded by the partnership. Benefits include:

- increased volume and accessibility of learning;

- different types of learning opportunities, including more that bring practitioners and HEIs together;

- improved quality of learning opportunities, with a focus on transition to practice;

- greater focus within learning on being 'research minded';

- potentially better progression routes (in at least half of partnerships), although it is not yet well evidenced in terms of how effective these new progression pathways are or their impact on quality of social work because new progression routes are too recently established.

Developing learning cultures across partnerships remains aspirational (and not measured), but there are some isolated examples of progress, with individuals in local evaluations citing that:

- NQSWs expect ongoing learning to be a key feature of their working life;

- Social workers re-engaged in learning were progressing onto further learning (which was also evidenced for PE training and a management and leadership course)

- A new consciousness is developing around being research minded.

In one local area evaluation report, it was found that the CPD programme was bringing a range of positive benefits:

- encouraging revisiting of theory and practice in contemporary social work;

- encouraging further progression;

- reinvigorating energy around social work;

- Enabling better transition to practice (ASYE).

In terms of the link between workforce development and impact on quality of practice it is impossible to quantify how much has changed as a result of the TP programme.

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[57] In one partnership this is very limited, focusing more on the U/G journey
[58] We do not always know the sources or reliability of the evidence

However, two LAs in one partnership had increased Ofsted rating to good, and partly attributed this to the TP. In another partnership, the Ofsted report noted that "CPD is a jewel in the crown".

In our case study research (Phase one) there were specific examples demonstrating the power of bringing partners together to change systems and practice.

- Example 1: Issue raised by LA - staff referrals at point of contact: led by an academic with an interest in the issue, the partnership brought together a range of more junior frontline staff as well as more senior support staff and social workers and also looked at the whole system of initial contact and referrals, resulting in some major structural service redesign.

- Example 2: Issue raised by LA - changes in case law around duties of social workers under the Mental Capacity Act (relating to adults): the TP brought together a specialist academic with some practice leads from adults and children's and they thoroughly reviewed how practice needed to fundamentally change in response to emerging case law. What was different about this approach was that it looked at a system change rather than an alteration and it challenged normal thinking by involving children's services practitioners who, guided solely by the Children Act, had never before taken into account the needs of the adults (parents and carers).

As expected, there is limited evidence of how progression framework and the CPD element of the teaching partnership programme has affected the retention and morale at any volume. However:

- two local evaluation reports demonstrate a link (from focus groups, phase one and two) where individuals have reported that a strong CPD programme is something that makes them feel valued and want to remain employed within the partnership; this is also seen in a 3rd partnership in relation to choosing employment (phase 2)

- Several individuals cited that they are more resilient (as a result of training), which they felt was important and made them more likely to remain a social worker.

- Students in one of the case study focus groups linked the importance of practice work to improved confidence levels when they entered their ASYE.

Addressing workforce challenges

Half of phase one and two TPs have reported better data collection and analysis because of better collaboration around sharing data or as a result of employing a data and planning specialist.

One partnership (phase two) has exceeded their own expectations, and is now able to clearly monitor key workforce factors across time – including staff turnover, vacancy rates, agency costs, numbers of students coming through from the universities, and those gaining employment within partnership organisations.

However, many partnerships have found it a challenge to develop a reliable dataset, and use it to address workforce issues, with most feeling that they are part of a larger context and would find it more effective to be working at a regional level.

Benefits from this strand include:

- Better caseload management - There is evidence that caseloads are reducing at a faster rate than before in one LA due to the success of new monitoring arrangements which include monitoring sick leave, maternity leave and ASYE capacity to better predict SW capacity needed (phase one partnership)

- Reduced agency staff (two partnerships) – this is related to better caseload management in one partnership, and reasons unknown in another except they have developed specific data measuring and monitoring processes (phase 2).

- Developing a robust workforce recruitment and retention strategy, through better understanding local trends and shared issues across LAs.

Other benefits from workforce planning include:

- Recruitment: two partnership areas report successful return to social work programmes as a result of the TP, with one partnership (phase 1) recruiting 58 new social workers this way.

- Recruitment: As a result of an accelerated entry programme which is a core workstream within the TP, 26 passed the certificate in social work and 4 are starting on the MSc programme.

- One rural area cites that through the TP they have developed a linked up multi-pronged approach to recruitment, which has successfully attracted students from a high quality HEI to take on placements and then retain them for ASYE (rather than 'losing them' as they have in the past).

- Student learning hubs impact (phase 2) - These hubs are based in frontline settings and are a unit of up to 8 students led by a Professional Education Consultant (PEC) who offers group supervision and skills based practice development sessions. Students discuss, reflect on and evaluate real situations that they are facing in their placements. As a result the partnership reports a 7% increase from 2017-2018 in students from TP

HEIs successfully recruited to TP LAs (88% against 81%). Employers noted an improvement in interview performance of TP applicants over non-TP, e.g. ability to integrate theory into case work. Feedback from TP and non-TP NQSWs shows TP NQSWs rated higher on being ready to practice, recognising own strengths and limitations, using reflective practice and applying practice evidence and research.

- Progression – most partnerships are not measuring progression at a partnership level, but one partnership provided evidence of staff receiving promotions as a result of specific workforce development, for example from an Aspiring Team manager programme where 5 staff are now in management posts.

Added value

It is not possible to quantify the extent of change resulting from the TP programme. Indeed, in all areas there was some form of historical partnership working, particularly between local authorities, and in some areas between local authorities and HEIs. However, this tended to be as individuals working with each other on a more informal level 'in their role' as educator or employer. Partnerships report a real added value from the TP programme in terms of formalising collaborative working at a strategic and operational level to ensure that shared perspectives inform the design and delivery of social work education and development. This has built more consistency, trust and everyday working relationships that were not there before.

It is agreed that whilst some of the work may have progressed without the TP programme, the pace, breadth of work and quality of activity most likely would have been different. This is in a large part because the TP programme has provided management and delivery capacity. Being supported to employ partnership staff such as project managers and business support officers has been invaluable to TPs especially in their first 2 to 3 years, whilst they realise the benefits that will sustain partnership engagement. The success of jointly employed posts, bringing practice and academic delivery together is consistently reported to be a key factor in breaking down cultural barriers and enabling real change to the level and relevance of practice in the curriculum. Similarly, being able to fund other placement support posts and training (such as PE training and skills masterclasses) has provided immediate benefit, supporting local authorities who are struggling to fund places and providing accessibility to a wider workforce.

From a DfE perspective the partnership programme is supporting growing numbers of collaborative 'platforms' (i.e. the partnerships themselves) which are better able to respond collaboratively to emerging changes arising from ongoing integration of health and social care; the development of Social Work England as the new regulator and implementation of the National Assessment and Accreditation System. This is already evolving, as it is clear that some partnerships are involved in a host of initiatives and pilot

programmes (Step Up, Think Ahead, Innovation programme; Named Social Worker pilot; NAAS).

It is not possible to determine the added value in terms of impact outside funded partnerships. There are isolated examples where HEIs or LAs that are external to funded partnerships are being supported to increase standards, but it is unclear how widespread this is. Similarly emerging practice research does not appear to be shared widely to other partnerships.

Challenges and enablers

National challenges are felt at a local level. These comprise of a combination of the issues that partnerships are trying to address (e.g. recruitment, retention, poor perception of social work as a career) and the financial and policy climate they are working in. These create an uncertain environment with restructures (affecting consistency of individuals), inherent partner competition, limited capacity and initiative overload. These can limit priority that stakeholders can give the partnership, and the plethora of social work initiatives (e.g. Frontline, Step Up), whilst supported, have sometimes caused confusion about what is in/out of the TP remit. Collaboration has supported mutual appreciation of the different challenges faced, but these challenges remain part of the working environment.

In terms of partnership size and composition, there are inevitable challenges and enablers associated with each of these. Each partnership brings its own history, context and composition of partners which makes each area different. The evidence from this evaluation suggest that smaller numbers of partners, and HEIs in particular, perhaps make for simpler arrangements, allow an intense focus on a local issue and experience less competitive and cultural tensions. However, several smaller partnerships feel that wider approaches (particularly to workforce development and planning) may be more effective at a regional level. Alternatively, larger areas may experience more complex engagement and relationship management but may benefit from a richer breadth of specialist skills, knowledge and experience; with potential for impact over a wider geographical area.

As with any form of partnership working, governance and leadership is critical and processes used to engage strategic and operational partners have been challenged by changing memberships and work pressures. Historical relationships and individual champions have helped partnerships to 'hit the ground running'. Consistent and joint leadership seem to have supported partnerships through turbulent times, but in effect partnerships rely on goodwill until visible benefits are realised (potentially 2-3 years). Equalising adult and children's services engagement can be challenging due to different needs and capacity, and treating them as separate partners may be an effective solution in smaller partnerships. In several partnerships, linking in with existing SUC groups has proved effective in formalising their involvement. Project managers and business support resource has been critical to facilitating effective structures, particularly in, although not limited to, the first 2 years, although it has taken time to recruit to these posts (normally around 6 months).

Other roles, such as Teaching Consultants, Professional Education Consultants, Practice Consultants, Practice Development Officers are reported to have increased the pace and quality of activity within their remit. Joint posts can act to break down cultural differences in HEIs and LAs faster. However, in local evaluation reports, there is evidence that

balancing shared roles can be challenging, particularly for those who still manage caseloads. The short term nature of these posts (and level of reward, which may be just a small honorarium) has affected ease of recruitment in some areas. Role fluidity, short term contracts or seconded opportunities for individuals to try out different roles have shown promise.

Building workforce capacity to enable the involvement of more practitioners and SUC involved in teaching and practice development and supporting increased numbers in the available pool has been particularly useful where staff have to rescind on their commitments (e.g. teaching in a lecture) due to urgent circumstances.

Communication, dissemination and practical engagement, particularly across large areas (where travel is a barrier to events etc.) have been challenging in some areas. New structures have enabled easier access to information (websites, CPD handbooks etc.) and technology has also proved useful e.g. KSS talking heads podcast; web based training/meetings. One area is considering whether practitioners can join lectures remotely. Other communication challenges that are yet to be addressed in some partnerships are how best to share learning arising from joint research across partnerships and the status of recommendations (whole area approach / voluntary or mandatory adoption).

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Sustainability

It is clear that sustainability is a key concern for all partnerships. From the document review we have sustainability information for eight phase one and two partnerships (out of twelve). Of those:

- Two partnerships have formally agreed a clear sustainability plan underpinned by a funding approach (Phase 1, Phase 2);

- Six additional phase one and two partnerships have a plan that is in the process of consideration.

Approaches comprise a mix of the following:

- Activity that is already or expected to be embedded;

- Core priority areas which will need some additional capacity to deliver: workforce development;

- Plans to maintain core staff required for management and priority areas of delivery.

An overview of partnership progress and approaches to sustainability is discussed below. At a programme level, this suggests that lasting benefits are likely, across many areas of the programme, but particularly in terms of a culture of collaboration, selecting able students, improved focus on practice development and providing ongoing workforce development.

Governance and management

Strategic and operational boards are considered critical in terms of leadership and stakeholder engagement, and are expected to be retained. Streamlining delivery structures is common as partnerships get clearer about their focus, specifically reducing the number of workstreams to organise the most efficient structures across core priorities and increasingly interlinked areas of work. Two partnerships are exploring associate and affiliate member structures to widen engagement.

Good progress has been made in terms of progressing a collaborative culture, stakeholder engagement and building trusted relationships – and is considered a definite step up from historical partnership working - but this is an activity requiring commitment that is still vulnerable to challenge from the pressures in the wider environment.

In terms of project manager roles, most partnerships would not have achieved the quantity or quality of the work without their project managers and/or other support staff. As a result, most feel it is essential to have some form of central capacity to

facilitate the governance and management structures and to retain the interface between management and delivery, including the key role of facilitating accountability across structures. There is an example of a phase one partnership who have been operating without a PM for some time, with key co-ordinating functions being delivered by the HEI (via a senior lecturer).

Most areas appear to want to continue with a project management type role, but as far as we know, no partnership has a long term solution for this as yet. One phase two partnership appears to have joint funded this from inception, but it is not known from the documents if this will continue.

- For the three phase one partnerships, one has identified funding for a reduced infrastructure comprising a programme manager (1 day week) and project manager (3 days a week); One area is hoping to secure funding for its core infrastructure via a contribution by partners (although not yet agreed). One partnership has chosen not to fund a project manager role, with a senior lecturer taking on the majority of the partnership co-ordination.

- For phase two partnerships, we know of one partnership that has secured a 15 month PM role (as part of DfE sustainability funding) and one partnership that has rejected the concept of 10% top slicing (we assume ESG budget) and has now divided the role between two managers in the LA for day to day management & leadership. They (like others) report uncertainties around their operational structure going forward.

All phase two partnerships have now accessed the 2019/20 sustainability funding for a further year whilst they plan longer term sustainability in more detail. One TP may replace the project manager role with a co-ordinator but is unsure if this will be effective. Secondment is another option being considered.

The impact of changes in project management infrastructures on governance and delivery is unclear, but it could be significant. A feeling has been expressed by several stakeholders in the evaluation (across phase one and two) that partnerships have come a long way, but are still not mature enough to maintain themselves.

Admissions

Entry criteria are expected to be maintained. All partnerships with exception policies (around half) are likely to keep these, and we know of one additional partnership who is likely introduce one. However, the purpose of these policies remains to enable high quality candidates to be recruited, and low use is reported by all but one HEI. Some partnerships expressed concerns about viability of maintaining entry criteria across multiple HEIs if the national trend in reduced places continue (but not all partnership HEIs are experiencing this). Across all phase one and two partnerships it is highly

likely that increased rigour and consistency in admissions processes is embedded and sustainable. It is likely that involvement of practitioners and SUC will increase in quality, diversity and quantity through embedded processes.

Placements

Partnerships have successfully developed more statutory placements but for most it has been a struggle to provide two statutory placements for all students (including for those who achieved this). However partnerships indicate that they have seen value from two statutory placements, and this is expected to remain a key part of placement provision, although potentially with more flexibility. Several (and potentially more) partnerships are exploring whether mixed models are more sustainable in achieving placement numbers, and whether through a mix of statutory and PVI setting there is a richer learning experience. However, one (phase one) partnership currently providing 99% students with two statutory placements will retain this, because the feasibility review of a hub and spoke model found it was less sustainable.

In terms of placement quality, most phase one and two partnerships have embedded enhanced QA systems across the partnership and these are expected to be maintained. Several systems of enhanced support for students including PE capacity, group learning systems and processes (learning hubs, centres of excellence, group InterVision (peer led reflection) process, additional skills days) are considered a key achievement and are priorities to embed. One area has embedded PE training 'in house' through train the trainer events. A further partnership reports explicit commitment to continue higher levels of PE training (Phase 2).

Partnerships are clear that a key driver to achievement around placement quality and a more practice based curriculum have commonly been TP funded posts such as Practice Consultants; Learning Practitioners, Teaching Consultants, Principal Practice Educator Leads. Many TPs are focusing on retaining this capacity as a priority, reporting that:

- all partners are committed to its 'placement pledge' – and reports that PEs and consultants will stay in post. (phase 2);

- the function of four PPELs have been absorbed into substantive roles within TP partners to ensure continued positive relationships, support and liaison – this change will need to be monitored going forward (phase 2);

- Two partnerships have funding agreed to continue with these as additional posts – in one area, six Practice Consultant posts will become substantive posts funded by local authorities, with a seventh still being piloted. In the second area, funding is secured for two posts - a permanent PT post at an

HEI and a shorter term commitment for the other (paid for 1/3 by HEIs and 2/3 LA & other partners).

Curriculum and academic delivery

KSS and other expectations are embedded across the curricula and curricula review processes are in place to maintain this. Similarly the involvement of practitioners and SUC in reviewing, teaching or contributing to the learning of students is embedded culturally. As stated above, two partnerships have already agreed to fund continuation of key posts in this area, with at least two other areas keen to do so.

Capacity has been built to develop pools of practitioners to contribute, although this will require ongoing systems of training to offset turnover, and support to release staff which we do not know are being retained. Work pressure remains a key influence on activities such as this. There are isolated examples[59] of HEIs supporting other HEIs outside partnerships to improve delivery – with a longer term view of building more capacity in the area.

Workforce development

Key structures that facilitate collaborative and specific workforce learning and development and progression (Centres of Excellence, Social Work Academies; Learning Hubs, ASYE and progression frameworks) are intended to be retained. Structures (particularly those bringing together academics and practitioners around research based practice) are partially embedded and partially reliant on goodwill and TP funding. From what we are aware of, in most of these partnerships there are not clear plans (yet) on how these will be further secured. One phase two TP is likely to stop its learning hub model as a result of expense and mixed response from students.

There is a commitment to maintain key features of enhanced CPD offers, including those linked to more advanced levels of progression. One partnership has set up systems to charge for training places and masterclasses outside of the TP for an income generation source and the TP has met with both universities about a new CPD contract, to include continuation of accredited modules and the Management school PGCert. In addition, non-accredited sessions for non-qualified social workers are being explored as a potential income generator. Another area seems confident that leadership and management courses will be maintained by the HEI. Two LAs had a driver of accessing higher quality training for their workforce through the HEIs

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[59] Two that we are aware of through the document review and local evaluation work

in the partnership (as opposed to the local HEI), and will retain this benefit with continuation of partnership membership.

Workforce planning

Although some partnerships have struggled to deliver as much as they had planned through this workstream, commitment to tackling key workforce issues is inevitably a high priority for all partnerships. There appears to be considerable focus on progressing recommendations from workforce analysis completed in the funded phase of TPs and working collaboratively to address specific challenges. Recruitment and retention remain key issues for HEIs and LAs, with most partnerships committed to ongoing work in these areas: for example via additional data collection systems and analysis such as ASYE retention; developing apprenticeship programmes; producing digital resources to raise the profile of the profession.

Phase three partnerships

There is a funding challenge for all partnerships in that partners are most likely to contribute funding where clear benefits are evidenced, but the time this takes (in terms of hard evidence) can be longer than the initial funding period (if measured at all).The experience of the phase one and two partnerships highlights the importance of thinking about sustainability from the outset and working in a way that embeds (and measures success of) activity where possible.

There are several phase three partnerships where consideration is explicitly being given to sustainability:

- Prior to being a 'formal' teaching partnership, the Council and HEIs were operating as a 'shadow' TP, without the funding. The plans for 2020-2021 are that they continue this partnership in a 'business as usual' format, and from 2021 onwards that they are fully sustainable as a result of the strong working relationships that are in place.

- Sustainability plans will be devised as agreements /protocols are confirmed so the sustainability plan will arise from the activity undertaken and will be collated into one sustainability plan in January 2020.

- The TP expectation is of maintained admissions standards and assessment processes, and continuation of partnership working to maintain close links between academia and practice. They would look to see continuation of quality statutory placements and the embedding of the KSS for children and adults.

Conclusions and recommendations

- The teaching partnerships programme has stimulated significant new levels of collaboration to the way social work education is designed, planned and delivered across the six workstream areas. Building and maintaining this level of collaboration is itself considered of real value by the stakeholders, and many see this as a key achievement of the programme.

- Partnerships have focused heavily (in terms of resources and energy) on governance and particular areas of local priority. Common areas of significant focus include statutory practice placements and quality of placement support, practice in the curriculum and workforce development. In general, less activity appears evident in terms of organised programmes of academics spending time in practice and in workforce planning.

- Phase three partnerships have focused largely on building their governance structures and recruiting infrastructure posts, with some reporting good progress against admissions and placement workstreams.

- A range of approaches to delivery have been undertaken across workstreams which reflect different local contexts, including historical relationships, size, composition, geography and specific local issues.

- TP funded infrastructure posts, in terms of project management and posts related to curriculum and placement development have added real value to the pace, expertise and volume of work.

- The activity delivered across the programme has brought benefits across different stakeholder groups - particularly in building a culture of collaboration, new and better relationships – as well as benefits relating to each workstream. This has been achieved in a challenging environment, particularly around capacity. There are local examples of emerging impact, but it is too early to expect significant impact on higher level goals.

- Partnerships are considering sustainability in the way they are working. Activity around admissions, embedding the KSS, curriculum changes, placement QA and elements of placement support and workforce development are fairly sustainable.

- Maintaining and building on the improvements made in other areas (particularly placement support and practitioner teaching in the curriculum) seem more reliant on TP funded posts. However, there are limited examples of these being absorbed into substantive roles or funded as new permanent posts.

Annex One: Stretch Criteria and related documents

All 2018 application details and requirements can be found [here](). We list below the stretch criteria to provide a context for TP activity and the evaluation focus.

Governance

A strategy to raise the quality of education and practice training through the Teaching Partnership is co-owned by all the leads in the partnership.

The partnership has a credible plan for improved performance for 2018-20, which senior managers in all partnership organisations own and will deliver.

Admissions

The partnership owns a plan for the involvement of those with lived experience and employer representatives at all stages of admissions from Sept 2018, including decisions about applicants.

The partnership is committed to a minimum of 120 UCAS points or a 2:1 requirement to undergraduate and postgraduate courses respectively from Sept 2018, requirements also maintained at clearing.

The partnership develops and implements by Sept 2019 tests at the point of application before an offer to study is made. Tests will assess all applicants' intellectual ability, social work values and behaviours. The tests must include written assessment, verbal reasoning, group discussion and scenarios/role play in all cases. These tests should be applied to all applicants, including those from access courses.

Placements and curriculum

Partnerships offering both statutory placements relevant to students' preferred areas of practice in contrasting settings from AY 2018-19 will be prioritised in the assessment of applications.

Programmes providing units in child and family and adult areas of practice will be prioritised.

All placement students are guaranteed statutory placements relevant to their preferred areas of practice, which they are offered from AY 2018-19. In child and family settings, these will offer all students significant experience of using the statutory framework for child and family social work. In adult services, students will have experience of using statutory frameworks for adult social care in delivering outcome-focused, personalised responses

The partnership can evidence enhanced collaboration between employers and HEIs to undertake long term planning for training and development of the social work workforce throughout their careers.

Academic delivery

The partnership can demonstrate an increase in the amount of child and family practitioner and adult practitioner teaching on the initial education academic programme in 2018-19 compared to existing baselines.

In feedback, 90% or more of students rate academic delivery as at least good.

Practice support and development

The partnership describes a credible plan for ensuring that students will be supported and developed throughout their placements by a broad set of child and family and adult practitioners appropriate to their placements. It will commit to using no more than 20% independent PEs by or before March 2019.

The partnership can evidence how experienced, effective child and family, and adult social workers (whether or not they are PEs) are involved in curriculum development.

All those supporting and developing students must be familiar with the CSWs' Knowledge and Skills statements.

Workforce and labour market planning

The partnership has a plan for embedding the CSWs' Knowledge and Skills statements, ASYE requirements, ACFP and DfE supervisor proposals into practitioner CPD from Sept 2019.

The partnership describes how it will produce by March 2019 an improved medium-term labour market plan (3-5 years). Implementing the plan will attract more students into social work training and posts and retain higher numbers of practitioners with local and regional employers. The partnership's application specifies what expert support would be useful to assist with the plan.

Progression

There is a credible plan to deliver AY 2016-17 employment rates in social work of at least 70% and 80% 6 months and 12 months respectively after graduation and at least the same in the following AY.

The partnership can evidence that a system is in place to support final year students in their transition to qualified practitioner, above and beyond final placement arrangements.

Academics' experience of practice

Practitioners involved in teaching are supported by employers to do so.

There are joint appointments across practice and education.

There is a plan to embed practitioner research approaches for students and ASYEs in partnership with HEIs.

Annex Two: Method Detail

Document review

A template for the document review data collection and analysis was agreed with DfE, focused on activity across workstreams, achievements and benefits, lessons learnt and core MI.

DfE provided the evaluators with the documentation held centrally. In addition, partnerships across all phases were contacted and asked to share key documents regarding their governance, activity, progress and learning. Informal discussions were held with project managers from the majority of partnerships to clarify and understand elements of the documents sent.

An in depth document review was undertaken with phase one and two partnerships. A 'lighter touch' document review was undertaken with phase three partnerships because of their earlier stage of development.

Areas were generous in sharing their operational documentation and over 350 documents were analysed as part of the evaluation. These documents provided a good overview of the activity delivered and approaches taken, as well as indicating a range of benefits and lesson learned. It should be noted that, outside of six local independent evaluation reports, the evidence from the document review is not independently verified. In addition, some of the documents reviewed may not reflect the latest progress or changed approaches. The information – particularly the pen picture descriptions of approaches in Annex Four - should be treated as examples of activity or intention – as these have generally not been verified. The purpose of these is to spark ideas in partnerships through understanding approaches in other areas.

Case studies

Two case studies (both with phase one partnerships) have been conducted, which included stakeholder research with key stakeholders across strategic, management and operational levels. The aim of these was to provide a more in depth level of insight into what is working and how this has been achieved.

MI review

The MI review focused only on phase one and two partnerships, due to the early stage of delivery in phase three. The planned method was to draw core MI out of evaluation and progress reports, as part of the document review – to minimise burden on partnerships project managers. However, it became evident at an early stage that this data was not available through the documents provided by partnerships. A pragmatic approach was agreed with DfE, who requested that partnership managers be asked to develop a

dataset from what already exists within the partnership. A new template was agreed (comprising a larger dataset than initially included in the document review) and discussed with all project managers from phases one and two. A timescale of four weeks was provided for the collection of anonymised partnership level data.

Nine out of 12 partnerships returned the data template. Most project managers did not have the requested data at a partnership level. Therefore the project managers needed to share the template and ask individual partners to complete sections relevant to them. Some project managers collated responses, and others sent through individual, anonymised partner level data (due to time pressures). This process has created a level of unreliability in the data, as the template was not designed as a self-completion template at partner level (i.e. it did not contain detailed guidance for consistent completion across multiple partners) – it was designed as a collation tool for existing partnership level data. However, project managers put significant efforts into trying to co-ordinate and collect data from individual partners, with some success. Most areas were not able to collect data from all partners, and the basis of data is not always clear. The data should therefore be treated as indicative. Further detail is provided in Annex Three.

The approach taken to data collection and the organising of case studies ensures that no sensitive personal data is shared between partnerships and the evaluation team. In addition, in order to maximise the contribution by partnerships to the evaluation, qualitative and quantitative data has been provided by partnerships in confidence to the evaluation team – based on an agreement that no individual partners - or partnerships - will be named in the reporting.

Annex Three: MI Data Returns

The purpose of this annex is to ensure that the source, reliability and key analysis of the data used in the report is understood. It is important to note that the data is not considered to be comprehensive and should be treated as indicative only. For more robust analysis, we have triangulated or combined the quantitative data from the data return method, with quantitative data found in the document review (and this is clearly referenced in the report).

Response rates

- 9/12 phase one and two partnerships provided a completed or part completed data return. This included two (out of three) partnerships from phase one and seven partnerships (out of nine) from phase two.

- Response rates are by individual partnerships, although over half of these do not include data from all relevant partners for all or some questions.

- For undergraduate questions, the eligible population is 9 or 10 (not 12) because:

    - two partnerships do not include UG in their remit (it should be noted that one of these did not complete a data return);

    - one partnership only included UG in their remit in the latest year (2018/9) so cannot answer most of the UG questions.

Data questions	Response rate	Key analysis
Undergraduate courses		
Number students on undergraduate courses (Split by year and course) in Year 1, 2 and 3 (and starting month if not Sept) Broken down by: - No. of applications rec'd - Offers made - Conversion from offer to firm acceptance	7/10	7/7 have experienced a general trend of a decrease in applications - although not for every year (inconsistent in 5 partnerships). Most have experienced an overall decrease in student numbers comparing pre-post TP (but variation in-between) - although some are planning or had slightly increased numbers in the latest year. No reliable total possible - missing partners, use of projections/estimates from application form and inconsistent years.
Student cohort demographics *(if available)*	1/10	Only one partnership provided data within time frame.

Data questions	Response rate	Key analysis
Is entry standard for undergraduate degrees minimum 120 pts? List all courses and state yes/no.	8/10	6 out of the 8 responding partnerships reported an entry minimum of 120pts across the partnership; the further 2 (possibly 3) partnerships have one HEI with a lower entry criteria (112pts). This reflects an increase in entry standards in at least 2 partnerships.
Entry standard for clearing - still 120 pts? Number of exceptions to TP admissions criteria	6/9	Of the 6 responses, 4 partnerships report exceptions at UG level, but where level of exceptions indicated, this is low (one TP states 4 exceptions) (one TP states 'rarely'). Two (possibly 3) TPs have individual HEIs with 112 pt entry level.
Placements		
Number and % of students offered 2 statutory placements.	7/9	5/7 responses offer 90%-100% students 2xstat placements and 6/7 have at least one HEI who has increased the % of students being offered 2 x stat placements. One offers minimal level. Most provided % not a number.
Number and % of students offered only 1 statutory placement	7/9	2/7 (eligible) provide only 1 statutory placement, 1 partnership offers this to 99-100% students and HEIs in the second are moving towards providing 1 Stat - with 1 HEI achieved 83%.
How many days do the statutory placements total (e.g. 1x70 days + 1x100 days =170)	7/9	170 (1x70 +1x100) if 2 Stat Plcts are provided; 100 days if 1 placement is provided. Priority to final year students. 1 P2 partnership has +30 days skills day
How many placements are for : Adult Services, Children's Services, PVI, other	6/9	4/6 partnerships showed more Children's placements, although placements in AS are increasing. For 3 partnerships there are broadly equal number of places in C&A. Reduced PVI evident. PVI generally not broken down into sector.
Number and % Placement pass rate (split by demographics) *(if available)*	5/9	Of the 5 eligible, all had historical pass rates over 93% and these varied between 93% up to 100% in the TP period. Not enough years of data/attribution to draw conclusions.
Placement quality (e.g. this could be via student satisfaction survey feedback for new arrangements, or you may have other evidence (or not)	4/9	A quantitative response (QAPL) was provided by three TPs and a qualitative response from 1 TP. Not enough data for trend analysis (no baseline and only latest data in 2 TPs; only 2 years in the other). The qualitative response to the data return suggested higher levels of satisfaction through more proactive engagement/intervention.

Data questions	Response rate	Key analysis
Practice in Curriculum		
% curriculum focused on KSS	7/9	100% (7 responses) indicated increases. (Baseline range from 0-100%, latest year estimated range 30% to 100%). Min increase was 15% (one HEI within a partnership where other HEIs reported much higher) largest increase 0-50%
% curriculum taught by practitioners	7/9	6 quantitative; 1 qualitative. 100% report increases. Baseline range: 10% to 36% to range 15% to 100%
Student Attainment		
Final grades (compared to historic)	1/9	No clear trend.
NSS student course ratings (compared to historic) % of students who rated academic delivery as at least "good". Prior to funded TP / post TP funding.	4/9	One phase 1: Yr. 2 to 3 - increase 75-85%. Only one other area where one HEI provided a comparative - increase from 80-90 & 94% (other HEIs in same partnership range 88-95%). Other provided latest - both over 90%; one of these reported this is steady.
Undergraduate employment rates - % of graduates gaining posts as social workers within 6 & 12 months of graduation	4/9	One phase one TP reported 3% increase from baseline. [3 P2 TPs provided data (one steady; one increase; one TP no comparator).
Student attrition rate	3/9	3 replies; all report low rates. [One TP reduced but only over one yr. of data]. No conclusions possible.
Post graduate courses		
Number students on MA courses	9/12	Numbers incomplete. No clear pattern - those reporting application numbers (3/10) had a reduction. Partnerships report variations between HEIs, 5/10 areas reporting at least one HEI with reductions and 2 reporting HEIs with increases.
Entry requirements 2:1 or above? Number of exceptions to TP admissions criteria	9/12	8/9 responding HEIs in partnerships report a minimum of 2.1 as the standard entry criteria - one is unclear. 5/9 partnerships report at least one HEI with an exception policy. Only one partnership provided exception levels, and these were high.
Placements		

Data questions	Response rate	Key analysis
Number and % of students offered 2 statutory placements.	9/12	6/9 TPs (including 100% of P1s replying (n2)) report that the TPs offer 2x stat placements to 96-100% students. One further partnership has one HEI that offers 2 statutory placements to 100% students. Three of the four that gave comparative data show large increase that indicates a clear change of policy from 1 to 2 stat places. There were smaller increases in two further TPs (increase from 87%/96% -96%/97%) One of the 3/9 reporting low levels, has dropped the offer back to 1 statutory placement. One offered 12% students 2xstat placements in yr. 2 but dropped these in yr. 3.
Number and % of students offered only 1 statutory placement	9/12	The data shows that all those not offering two placements offer one statutory placement.
On average, how many days do the statutory placements total (e.g. 1x70 days + 1x100 days =170)	8/12	100 for statutory placement. 70 for those offering information on second placement in PVI.
How many placements are for : Adult Services, Children's Services, PVI, other	8/12	8 responses, overall incomplete/poor data; one not useable. PVI experience not categorised into As or CS for some. More places in CS in most partnerships, but smaller difference than in UG placements.
Number and % Placement pass rate (split by demographics) *(if available)*	5/12	5 provided some data (percentage only for 3/5) or specified no change (1/5). All 4 providing clear data have pass rates over 90%.There is no change in 3 partnerships (One P1 reports 100% for both years). 2x phase 2 possibly indicate improvement; need more years data to draw conclusions.
Placement quality (student satisfaction survey feedback for new arrangements)	5/12	5/5 provided some form of response from some individual HEIs. 3/5 TPS reported quantitative data. One comparative response was provided, showing an increase of 5%. [96% (P1) and 90% were other ratings provided]. 2/5 reported qualitatively 'positive' and QAPL'. Data not generally being collated at partnership level.
Curriculum and Teaching		
% curriculum focused on KSS	8/12	8 responses. 7 TPs report increases (and one reported a stable 100%). Range baseline: 5%-90% to latest range 35%-100%. Generally found to be a difficult question to answer in these terms.

Data questions	Response rate	Key analysis
% curriculum taught by practitioners	8/12	Range 5-100%. 6/8 provided comparative data, all of which showed increases (5-25% change). Two TPs provided statements of number or % practitioners involved for one year (5-100%)] indicate significant work going on in this area. One partnership provided SUC involvement of 20%.
Student Attainment & satisfaction		
Final grades (compared to historic)	4/12	No pattern. Data incomplete. Many students not in TP remit for full period.
NSS student course ratings (compared to historic) % of students who rated academic delivery as at least "good". Prior to funded TP / post TP funding.	3/12	Not enough data to draw conclusions. 1 P1 possible increase, but different data source different years; 1 P1 stable at high level.
Postgraduate employment rates - % of graduates gaining posts as social workers within 6 & 12 months of graduation (latest data available. E.g. Prior to funded-TP / post TP funding etc.)	5/12	Not provided in consistent manner/limited years of data provided. No trends.
Student attrition rate	4/12	Mix qual/quant. Range 2-7% or 'Low'. Not enough data for trend analysis.
Existing workforce – LA and HEI		
Numbers practising SW on CPD courses	7/12	7/12 responses. Numbers incomplete/potential duplication as completed at individual partner levels; not all partners in partnerships completed. Trends (more reliable when triangulated with qual) - wider range of CPD; more PE training; more ASYE training. More skills based learning.
% promotions from CPD courses into leadership positions	2/12	Most TPs or partners do not collect this. Examples provided: Aspiring Team manager programme: = 5 of which are now in Management posts. Aspiring Advanced Practitioner programme positive for promotions.

Data questions	Response rate	Key analysis
Do academics have protected time in practice? % time spent by academics in practice.	9/12	7/9 responses yes (1 not protected, but can be taken out of 10% scholarly activities) and 1 DK.For those that gave percentages, 5-10% was the norm (n3). For those that provided time (n2) these were 2-8 days; 5 days. Compared to pre-TP this indicates an increase for at least 2 areas and not for one area (no other baseline data provided).
Can the partnership evidence that 10% of academic staff are supported to have protected time in practice during 2018-2020	9/12	100% responded yes (although one did not explicitly confirm the %) . 10 -15% is the norm, but up to 50% staff have this protected time in one P2 partnership (unclear if across all HEIs) and 100% in one other P2 HEI.
Number of Practice Educators used in each LA or provider (latest data available) Split by children and adult services	9/12	Total number provided for latest year is 1466. Trends: 3 report mixed (some providers increase/some decrease). 3 report overall increase. 2 report overall decrease. Data incomplete - missing many providers. Some PEs are used more than once. This data not routinely collected at partnership level. No reliable baseline.
Number/% of independent PEs used. PES not employed by member of TP *(if available)*	9/12	Incomplete (partners and partnerships missing) 5/9 provide comparative data. 4/5 of these show reduced no's of independent PEs (reductions vary from -4% -17% - 11 PEs (& no data). 1/9 shows no change (1 ind PE). One shows an increase in use of own TP borough PEs. One shows a mix - reductions by LA but increases by an HEI. Of the 3 providing no comparator - others provide current levels 20% and 20% & 'minimal', one of these uses independent PEs to mentor PEs.
Can the partnership evidence that at least 50% of all Practice Educators (PEs) currently used by the partnership have demonstrated capability against Level 2 of PE Professional Standards?	8/12	5/8 report 'yes'. Of the three that said no, one could say 'yes' in Yr. 1 but not in yr. 2 (combination of increased PE1s and resistance to PE2 training), one could evidence it for some, but not all LAs; and one reported 'no'.
Number of the above Practice Educators qualified to level 2 of professional standards.	8/12	5/8 report increases and 1/8 TP steady at 100% (because combined training). Numbers not reliable - unclear years, not all partners, mixed trends across partners. 1 decrease in line with overall PE/student reductions and 1 'minimal'

Data questions	Response rate	Key analysis
Number of the above Practice Educators qualified to level 1 of professional standard.	8/12	No reliable number as many partners missing; unclear sources. 3/8 TPs report increases. 3/8 indicate probable increases. 2 TPs report decreases.
Average Practice Educator caseload (number of students).	8/12	6/8 report '1' - for two of these there is no change; one of these reports that for offsite supervisors the caseload is 2. One partnership reported range 1-2 and another 1-3.4.
Can the partnership evidence that at least 60% of the HEI-employed academic teaching team are qualified, registered social workers?	9/12	9/9 report 'yes' (although this does not represent all HEIs in all responding partnerships).
How many (inc raw and FTE) and what percentage of the HEI-employed academic teaching team are qualified, registered social workers? Practising social workers?	9/12	Not all provided numbers. 9/9 TPs report high levels of staff who are qualified (90% - 100%) and registered SWs (86%-100%). Less data on practising numbers - indicative one or two per staff body; but 25% in one partnership. One HEI has put in the contracts of 2 new staff that they should remain in practice. Not possible to measure change.
DfE funding total	6/12	6 provided the costs of their partnership. The remainder signposted to DfE Claims or did not respond.
Spend per workstream	3/12	No pattern for expenditure except generally lower on admissions and workforce planning.
Workforce demographics *(if available)*	2/12	Two responses were made. We collected reports from other areas, but no conclusions to draw as data from different years/minimal attribution.
Turnover rate *(if available)*	4/12	Four responses. Varies 8% 20-23%. One individual LA reduced from 43 to 7% over the last 2 years but only CS and small numbers. No conclusions possible.
Qualifying route of NQSWs within TP - Fast track (Step Up, Frontline, Think Ahead) - Degree within TP - Degree (other HEI) - Apprenticeship (future years) *(if available)*	7/12	7 responses, all demonstrate multiple entry strands. Some covered by TP time period and others not; some unclear if in remit or not.

Annex Four: Examples of partnership approaches

Here we set out a small number of examples to illustrate how partnerships have tackled particular elements of their work. In order to maximise the contribution by partnerships to the evaluation, information has been provided by partnerships in confidence to the evaluation team – based on an agreement that no individual partners or partnerships - will be named in the reporting. The examples below are therefore anonymised.

The vast majority of these examples are from the document review, and should therefore be treated as not verified. They may not be up to date - approaches may have changed. They are provided in the spirit of sharing practice in order to support the development of ideas and approaches.

Admissions

Phase One Area

By year two the partnership had developed revised entry tests. A new in-house, co-designed verbal reasoning test was developed to replace the commercial on-line version. This change was introduced as a result of significant attrition (30-40%) at the verbal reasoning test stage and informed by research by The Bridge Group (2016) suggesting that on-line verbal reasoning tests disadvantage students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Service users and carers (from the Experts by Experience Group created by the TP) have been involved in assessing applicants during group discussions, reviewing applicants' written reflections, assessing applicants in role plays, asking questions of applicants during individual interviews and, with other panel members, jointly making the final decision about whether to offer an applicant a place. As members of interview panels, they have also participated in the assessment of applicants' suitability for social work, where an applicant has disclosed information which places this in question (e.g. a chronic health condition or a criminal record). Finally, they have participated in training and provided feedback on the recruitment and selection process.

Employer representatives (social work practitioners or service managers) have been involved as members of panels in the same way as Experts by Experience. Between 2016 and 2018, there has been an increase in the proportion of employer representatives on selection panels who come from Partnership LAs. During the 2017-2018 selection cycle, 11 out of 12 employer representatives were from Partnership LAs. Employer representatives (social work practitioners, service managers or representatives of local authority learning and development teams) have also been involved as members of Suitability for Social Work decision-making panels.

The local evaluation found that it has not been possible to attribute any variation in quality or quantity because of the confounding influence of other variables, such as changes to SW bursaries and impact of schemes such as Frontline, Think Ahead and Step Up.

It did find that users found involvement in admissions an accessible introduction to working in the partnership: "It feels like there's more structure now for me. I used to be quite scared of talking to students about such personal things. I'm much more confident being part of this. Our group now feels like it has boundaries and a purpose and I understand why I'm here more. For example, they involved us in the new way of admissions. That involvement makes it much easier for people like me coming in from the outside".

Phase One Area

During the first year of the partnership, the role of 'people with lived experience' and practitioners in admission processes has been more consistently applied across all HEIs and embedded as a process. By the third cohort, rigorous assessment and testing procedures were harmonised across all HEIs which, given the sensitive and commercial nature of the data sharing required to achieve this, the TP sees as a major success of partnership working. The partnership is working on a joint HEI research process to track entry criteria, demographic profile and pre-qualifying experience against academic achievement and career destination. Local evaluation suggests challenges of consistently accepting students with a 2.1, but shows that where exceptions were made it was often linked to candidates having experience that compensated for the deficit in standards set by DfE. There are concerns regarding impact on viability of courses when all HEIs in the same area are all seeking to secure students with a 2.1 level degree.

Phase Two Area

The Curriculum, Admissions and Placements Workstream established an Admissions subgroup tasked to review admissions processes and materials for the MSc. This involved input from academics, six practitioners and the Insight group (service user and carer network). For the 2018/9 AY recruitment rounds, new processes were in place:

- New admissions tests assess candidates against the Professional Capabilities pre-qualifying level, and their potential to meet Knowledge and Skills Statements for Children and Adults.

- New case scenarios from practitioners are now used in the group work test.

- Strong service user and carer involvement is being maintained.

- A plan to further increase practitioner involvement in assessment days is in place.

- Verbal reasoning tests were piloted as a way of assessing applicants' intellectual ability

Practitioners brought case scenarios from their practice to be used in the group assessment exercise. The range of case scenarios has been standardised by the admissions tutor for entry level candidates. Ongoing review of the case studies will take place during the next admissions period.

"It was a pleasure to be part of developing the assessment process for students. I am very passionate about a person having a passion for social work…I am now doing the Practice Educator training and taking a student as well. This experience provided development for myself as well as for the profession." (Reflection by a social worker involved in the admissions review process)

Placement development, quality and support

Phase One Area

A major goal of the teaching partnership is to improve the quality and quantity of statutory practice learning opportunities available to social work students. This has been an important focus of the partnership work.

Partnership funding has been used to continue to provide Practice Educator Professional Standards (PEPS) stage 1 & 2 training, thereby increasing the existing pool of qualified practice educators. A series of workshops for practice educators on the PEPS and the KSS have been run. The partnership (through an HEI) continues to provide optional workshops for all practice educators offering a placement to partnership students. Attendance at these workshops has stabilised at about 80% - a rise from only 20% attendance in 2004/5.

A partnership practice learning task and finish group has been active in preparing a cross-partnership process for designation of practice educators who meet all of the PEPS stages 1 & 2 requirements and standards. This group has agreed a comprehensive practice educator designation policy. A database of all practice educators in the partnership has been established, giving details of placement setting, qualifications, placements offered, and whether and how the practice educator has recently supported a student.

One of the Partnership's aims was to increase the overall number of statutory placements provided for students and another was to increase the proportion of these placements provided by the Partnership local authorities. The Partnership has been successful at securing additional local statutory placements for social work students. One significant factor in this may have been the establishment of a Partnership-wide matching panel. It is also the case that placements are organised by a very experienced and stable

team of lecturer and administrator. Further analysis needs to be done to determine the factors underpinning the success of the Partnership's placement activity, to ensure it can be sustained. However, overall, in 2017/8 99% of partnership social work students were provided with a statutory placement, up from 96% in 2016-7, and up from 82% in 2013/14. This compares with a regional average of 55% statutory placements in 2017-8. Employers in the partnership have provided 72% of all placements in 2017/18, up from 65% in 2016/17, and again up from 52% in 2015/16. In addition to placements provided to MA and BA students, the partnership have also provided sixteen statutory placements for the new Step-Up to Social Work programme.

Phase Two Area

The work of the Practice Educator Consultants (PEC) has been highly valued across stakeholder types in supporting the capacity and quality of placements. The Partnership has five dedicated (TP funded) Practice Educator Consultants in place, who are each assigned to LAs. These work alongside two existing Social Work Professional Learning Development Officers, who fulfil a similar role. The PEC's responsibilities are similar across the TP, and include: ensuring capacity and quality statutory placements for student, mentoring Practice Educators (PE), student induction, group supervision for students every 4-6 weeks, meeting with the university, running professional development groups for students, matching students to placements, admissions interviews, co-ordination of practitioners and co-delivery of the PE training courses. Most are responsible for student pods, where they case manage up to 6 students, holding case accountability. If a case needs to step up to CPR or be closed the PEC discusses with the team manager who is ultimately case accountable. In one area, there are too few students to have a pod, so instead PECs act as longarm Practice Educators. Going forward the TP will integrate student evaluation with QAPL processes, which will then be owned by HEIs.

Phase Two Area

The Practice Education and Placement workstream fulfilled the QAPL requirements with Practice Education Leads (PELs) acting as Inspectors of Learning. Where students have not met the required standards there are procedures in place to support them via reassessment and where necessary exit from the programme. Through a "student hub model" (geographically based hubs led by a PE Lead) placements and student learning needs are matched with the relevant team and PE. Student and placement profiles are established to aid matching process and students are now aware of their placement sooner. The role of PELs is to work with PEs and students, and they are readily available to provide guidance. They provide early intervention and draw up action plans to reduce the likelihood of issues developing which might lead to placement breakdown. Work continues with the HEIs to lay the foundation for a sustainable placement matching process that ensures student profiles are received in a timely way and matched earlier.

The PELs have worked closely with the HEIs to enable the training of 40 new PEs and have mentored 29 of the PE trainees. PELs facilitate the student learning hubs which focus on shared learning, peer supervision and quality assurance where students can speak in a safe supported environment. The hubs focus on theory to practice, reflective practice, emotional/practical support, preparation for employment and support with placement learning - and is reported to have had a very positive impact. In-house PE mentor training is being developed and it is a high priority to recruit good quality mentors for the next trainee PE cohort.

Practice in the Curriculum

Phase One Area

The Curriculum Development Group and Practice Development Groups identify areas of the curriculum that would benefit from practitioner input, and for developing the mechanisms for this to occur. This was initially facilitated by one 0.5 Practice Consultant (PC) in children's services who was appointed to work with one HEI. The PC also sits on the Children's Practice Development Group and chairs the ASYE moderation panel. The PC is responsible for ensuring the practitioner viewpoint is input to the curriculum via teaching and learning. As a result, the curriculum is perceived to be more up-to-date and more responsive to changes in the workplace. In March 2018 an additional 0.5 Practice Consultant was appointed to work with a different HEI. This role is to input to teaching and lecturing giving the practitioner's viewpoint, to draw on a wide pool of practitioners from across the TP to facilitate teaching and to take back immediate issues to the university. The other 0.5 of the post is used to chair the practice placement development group where the co-ordination, management and quality assurance of student placements takes place.

The partnership is also developing the skills of social workers so more can teach in HEIs. The TP has developed a module for delivery from Sept 2018 which will support practitioners to develop their teaching, coaching and mentoring skills and will lead to the fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.

Phase Two Area

The partnership supported a short term secondment between one LA and an HEI to conduct a scoping exercise to promote establishing systematic co-ordination of practitioner input into the curriculum at partnership level. Practitioners who had specialist skills and knowledge were identified and encouraged and supported to contribute to course delivery. This led to a Register of Teaching Practitioners which is now being coordinated through the partnership and includes all practitioners who are delivering on the social work programmes and those who have completed the 'Preparing to Teach' modules (a 2 day, 20 credit programme developed by partnership HEIs). A total of 40

places have been offered so far, including PVI organisations that currently provide student placements.

Practitioners have been involved in curriculum development and in Practice Standards panels to quality assure placement portfolios; one-off sessions and recruitment processes.

This area of work has supported links with the National Practice Supervisor Development Programme, where the partnership is supporting Research in Practice to identify a Local Delivery

Phase Two Area

The partnership recruited 16 Practitioner Lecturers (PLs) in April 2017 and 14 remain in the role. The role was created as a way of getting experienced practitioners to be involved in curriculum development and academic delivery. Almost all PLs (12) co-lectured with academics on up to 25 lectures on the MSc during the academic year commencing in September 2017. Practitioner Lecturers were provided time during work hours (ten hours per month) to undertake the role and paid an honorarium. An accredited course was provided by for Practitioner Lecturers which covered topics such as training delivery, group work and facilitation skills. PLs have formed a working group to develop course materials, involvement of service users and support for placements. Some examples of their work include:

- Direct work tools for the classroom for example, templates of assessments, role plays and case studies.

- Classroom presentations: 'Child Observations', Child Sexual Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation', 'Care Act and eligibility' and Safeguarding and self-neglect'

- Teaching resources: communication skills videos for students and audio resources. partner and HEI to participate in the programme.

Phase Three Area

Curriculum Development - Stakeholder involvement has been central to the planning of the course structures and curricula, and is of vital importance to programme development. Over an 18 month period, a working group of service users and carers has reviewed the content and delivery of the specialist BA module 'User Perspectives' delivered by the university, ensuring that the teaching, learning and assessment strategy reflects service users and carers' views, rather than academics' own perspectives/perceived priorities. Opportunities are provided for undergraduate students to work collaboratively with service users, carers and peers, on the design, delivery and assessment of group presentations.

Service users and carers observe and contribute to the assessment of undergraduate student group presentations, providing verbal and written feedback against the assessment criteria for the Service Users' and Carers' Perspectives module. Each year, postgraduate and undergraduate students are required to interview a service user as part of the assessment for Interviewing and Communication Skills modules. Opportunities have been provided for service users to provide written feedback to students about this experience to further develop students' critical reflection skills.

Academics in Practice

Phase Two Area

The partnership 'Academics in practice activity' includes academics becoming members of ASYE moderation panels, co-facilitating supervision groups and conducting research in response to LA need. By 2018 14/18, 78% of academics had protected time in practice. There has now been a shift in focus to matching academic expertise to specific LA needs and the activity is focused on support to develop evidence informed practice and activities that will have TP wide benefit (such as research into child sexual exploitation).

Phase Two Area

The partnership has set up a Practice Research Hub which aims to promote research mindedness and research informed practice. The academics into Practice programme aims to get 2-3 staff members to spend 8-12 days each in LAs to observe and support supervision and practice development. The backfill cover is paid for by the TP. By the end of year one, thirteen academics were matched with social work teams. The placement averaged 7.5 days with a total of 48 days placement per HEI, evenly spread between Children's and Adult services.

Phase Two Area

The partnership interpretation of this workstream is to bring research mindedness to practice and develop academic shadowing in LAs. Five Local Authorities have hosted an academic who has shadowed a social worker in the workplace. Local reports suggest that academic shadowing has shown to provide a space for exchange of knowledge between academics and practitioners. It has been reported to provide a mechanism for contributing to thinking about local service design. For one academic this programme helped to refresh perspectives about practice in the Local Authority. Other evidence that academic shadowing has benefitted the academics includes a greater detailed understanding of specific issues such as the MASH Team - also observation of teams has led to opportunity for feedback from a fresh pair of eyes.

Research literacy skills will be taught in the MSC and as part of the ASYE as well as through CPD at all career levels. Students will undertake research studies relevant to their final placement. 16 practitioners with an interest in promoting the use of research have been supported to become 'research advocates' through building knowledge of research and use of evidence.

A knowledge portal has been developed where research activities and practice materials from Practitioner Lecturers and Research Advocates can be referred to and used by practitioners and students.

"Our partnership with Making Research Count (provided by HEI) has helped us build a more research minded culture. We developed a new role, the Research Advocate, which has demonstrated the importance of researchers, social workers and educators' collaboration to help invigorate practice on the frontline" (Chair).

Workforce development

Phase One Area

The partnership developed the Advanced Practitioner Framework in 2016. The framework was developed jointly by the CPD/workforce development workstream partners and is designed to support social work professionals to continue to develop their knowledge and skills as professionally capable, reflective and analytical practitioners. It provides accredited CPD opportunities linked to clear career pathways for both social workers and managers: leadership and management, practice education or specialist social work.

The framework comprises accredited modules as follows:

- four courses/modules specifically targeted at adult social work practice;
- five courses/modules specifically targeted at children's social work practice;
- one course/module covering both children's and adults social work practice (The Social Worker in the Court Room);
- the Assessed and Supported Years in Employment course (ASYE) for newly qualified social workers;
- three Leadership & Management courses/modules open to both adults and children's services;
- three Practice Education courses/modules open to both adults and children's services and targeted at those who are or want to be actively involved in the professional development of social workers;

- Research in Professional Practice module open to both adults and children's services.

Over 200 social workers benefited from CPD over a period of 18 months and is hoped to encourage retention and recruitment (a link to the strapline for recruitment now focuses on the level of CPD offered).

The first Post Graduate Certificate in Leadership & Management completed in July 2018 and 18 frontline managers passed, a number of whom were reported to have been promoted into senior management positions.

Phase Two Area

As part of the partnership focus on improving continuous professional development and progression, the CPD workstream group reviewed the partnership CPD offer. A published programme of CPD was developed in which all the programmes on offer have the national framework standards embedded. The programme has been widely praised by practitioners for delivering essential requirements for the Partnership in the first year. This has been reported both in relation to specific needs identified by LAs and the general need to have resources given over to CPD when LAs have struggled to be able to afford to provide this in recent times. One student (in the local evaluation) identified the attraction of CPD for career choice and progression when seeking employment so it is being seen as contributing to recruitment and retention.

ASYE Assessor training has been introduced which includes familiarity with the KSS and how these standards inform practice and the development of NQSWs. This is appreciated both by Assessors in supporting NQSWs and by ASYEs in building confidence and resilience in their practice.

Phase Two Area

A regional career pathway framework for social workers across the region has been developed. The career framework is mapped to the standards of practice set out in the PCF and the KSS and provides a reference guide to inform the design of CPD for the different career levels. It is promoted on the partnership website and can be used locally by social workers to think about and plan their career and professional development. Six new CPD programmes have been introduced.

- Critical reflective practice programme for Practice Educators, Supervisors and Senior Managers
- Practitioner Lecturer programme
- Research Advocates programme

- Motivational interviewing training for social workers and managers working in Adult Services

- Research literacy programme

- Children and mental health shadowing programme

Workforce Planning

Phase One Area

Workforce data has been collected and analysed to inform a partnership Workforce Strategy (linked to the career pathway the TP is developing). Research by one of the HEIs concluded that there is a need to: reduce the % of vacancies covered by expensive agency staff; reduce turnover rates in some LAs and a risk of a high % of staff being newly qualified, indicating possible need for more experience and resilience. A number of priorities are identified including harmonising of career structures across the partnership area and developing the virtual Centres of Excellence as a way of strengthening decision making, knowledge and resilience. In addition, a successful introduction of a Return to Social Work programme resulted in 58 places for SWs whose registration has lapsed. This was introduced in response to employer requests, to support LAs to address the high level of NQSWs.

Phase Two Area

The focus of the partnership has been on attracting students from a high quality HEI to take on placements and then complete the ASYE locally/in rural areas (where there are high vacancy rates and too many posts are filled by agency staff). The appointment of two practice development workers to champion social work in the region, alongside jointly planned communication, marketing, careers fairs and other events between the HEI and LA are successfully achieving this and promoting social work as a career.

This is considered a key success of the partnership.

Phase Two Area

The TP has analysed workforce data to inform future prioritisation and undertaken planning using shared local data and national datasets. Data considered includes: Social worker numbers and FTE; Gender; Ethnicity; Length of service; Starters, leavers and turnover; Regional and national benchmarks. Outcomes were used to plan further workforce development with a need to focus on new approaches to improve attract students and staff focusing on: (a) gender balance and (b) BAME communities and additionally to continue to develop and refine its workforce analysis and planning by agreeing a common approach to staff surveys and exit interview as well as undertaking local labour market analysis through the Partnership.

Phase Two Area

Partners have a background in gathering workforce data since 2009. The partnership commissioned a detailed labour market audit and analysis. Actions coming from findings were to: revisit the memorandum of cooperation between TP partners to ensure there is a commitment to the pipeline of future SWs by offering enough placements, employing enough NQSWs and improving consistency of accuracy of data.

The TP subsequently produced a Workforce Strategy for 2018-19 based on strengthening social work education to alleviate recruitment and retention difficulties, provide the right environment for innovation, to help SWs to feel valued and to provide pathways to progress their careers.

Building on the work, the TP now has an adult services workforce plan, children's services workforce plan and a regional labour market plan. Plans make recommendations for changes in approach to recruitment and retention, and highlights where there are inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the way data has been recorded historically across the different partners.

Through a programme for existing staff to become qualified SWs, the TP has four students starting on an MSc programme (and all 26 passed the certificate in social work).

Further data will be gathered to develop a regional predictive model to calculate need for SWs up to 2021 (using an HEI Workforce Research Unit).

Embedding the KSS

Phase Two Area

All HEIs in the partnership provide an introduction to KSS for students. A partnership KSS mapping tool has been developed, piloted and adopted by the local authorities. The tool is being used to "gauge the training currently offered within organisations and whether this meets the KSS as required". It contains tables for the appropriate KSS items for both adult and children's services and is in the process of being completed by local authorities. The development of a partnership Annual Appraisal document is linked to the KSS and forms part of the area CPD Framework.

Phase Two Area

A partnership task and finish group worked to map the Annual Appraisal tool against the KSS: These tools (one for children and one for adults) have been piloted across all authorities in the region and are now available for use across the partnership area. The collaborative approach means that the KSS is embedded into university curricula, into frontline practice and CPD.

The TP has also developed a podcast on all the KSS as a training tool for practitioners, students and managers.

Phase Two Area

The partnership has produced KSS self-assessment documents for appraisal process; a mapping document for practitioners and another for 1st and 2nd year students to support the PEs. Work is ongoing to integrate self-assessment fully into the formal performance review process. Social workers are also evaluated against direct observation and service user feedback. Students self-evaluate against the KSS at the start and end of their placements.

Annex Five: Glossary

ADCS Association of Directors of Children's Services

AMHP Approved Mental Health Professional

ASYE Assessed and Supported Year in Employment

AY Academic Year

CPD Continuing Professional Development

CSWKSS Chief Social Workers' Knowledge and Skills Statements

DfE Department for Education

DHSC Department of Health and Social Care

HEIs Higher Education Institutions

KSS Knowledge and Skills Statements

LAs Local Authorities

NAAS National Assessment and Accreditation Scheme

PCF Professional Capabilities Framework

PE Practice Educator

PEC Practice Education Consultant or Professional Education Consultant

PPEL Partner Practice Educator Leads

PEP Practice Education Pathway

PSW Principal Social Worker

PVIs Private or Voluntary Institutions

QA Quality Assurance

QAPL Quality Assurance in Practice Learning

SUC Service Users and Carers

SWTPs or TPs Social Work Teaching Partnerships

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