



Department  
for Education

# **Social work teaching partnerships: An evaluation**

**Technical annex: Case studies and  
examples of practice**

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## Introduction

This technical annex comprises detailed examples of approaches taken by Social Work Teaching Partnerships (TPs) to deliver different elements of expected activity. This research was undertaken as part of phase two of the national evaluation of social work teaching partnerships and forms part of the final evaluation reporting. The research was undertaken between October 2019 and February 2020. Further details regarding method for each specific area of research are set out in the annexes below.

We would like to thank the partnerships for their participation in this research. The case studies are presented with the permission of individual partnerships to enable dissemination of learning.

## Annex Four: Depth case studies

Four areas were chosen to provide examples of the different types of approaches that Teaching Partnerships have taken. These were selected on the basis of size, geography and areas of good practice identified in the phase one and two document review (which took place in January 2019). The case study research took place between November 2019 and January 2020.

Case studies involved interviews with project managers and an agreed range of stakeholders. In total, around 55 stakeholders were consulted through face to face and telephone consultations, focus groups, attending meetings and observations. These included staff from Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) (e.g. subject and curriculum leads), Local Authority (LA) project managers and other lead officers most relevant to the area of effective practice identified.

The case studies provide description of aims, activity and also share reported challenges, enablers, benefits and sustainability in specific areas of activity.

Consent has been provided by each Teaching Partnership area to share their information and learning in this report.

Selected areas were:

- South Coast Regional Centre for Social Work Education - Student Learning Hubs
- West London Teaching Partnership
  - Critical Reflective Practice Programme
  - Developing a research culture
- D2N2 - Practice Development structure, workforce data and placement experience
- Suffolk and Norfolk Teaching Partnership
  - Service User Carer Involvement
  - The role of Practice Educator lead (PELs) and their impact on the quality of student placements through the development of student hubs

# South Coast Regional Centre for Social Work Education: Student Learning Hubs

## Rationale and context

The South Coast Regional Centre for Social Work Education (SCRC) is primarily focused on recruitment and retention. It manages its work through three hubs – a Professional Practice Development Hub, a Practice Research Hub and Student Learning Hub model. Each is led by a collaborative management group. The recruitment strategy for the partnership is focused on ‘growing its own’ future workforce by improving practice readiness and supporting effective transition to the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) within the partnership.

Student Learning Hubs (SLHs) feed into this strategy by strengthening the join up between academic and practice learning. They aim to provide a safe space for students to reflect, promote curiosity and practice their skills using the real and immediate experience of their local authority statutory placements. It was anticipated that this would help to tackle student anxiety about ‘getting it wrong’ whilst on placement, provide a relatively ‘unassessed space’ and to help to embed reflective practice as the norm. Although opportunities for group reflection and skills development are part of HEI courses, SLHs aim to offer a different environment in terms of being smaller in size, bringing together students from both HEIs, being peer led and providing a greater opportunity for personal engagement and contribution in a ‘real-time’ practice environment. ‘[SLHs are] An opportunity to provide the ability to stop, be, notice the experience of social work practice. To decide together what are the aspects of practice that are causing concern – to offer a more collaborative learning approach’.

The funding from the TP programme galvanized partnership commitment and provided a catalyst for action and ensured that a high-quality research-based model could be designed and fully resourced. The model has subsequently been transferred for use with Step Up programme participants.

## How has this been implemented?

Six full time equivalent Practice Educator Consultant (PEC) roles have been funded through the TP, with each PEC leading one or two student learning hubs for around four to eight students whilst on placement. LAs looked at how these PECs might be deployed, and flexibility was needed to reflect the different structures within the local authorities and within children and adults services. It was agreed that in each of the two LAs, there would be two PECs to facilitate Children’s Services SLHs and one PEC to facilitate SLHs in adult services. PECs came into the roles at different times, but there has been good stability in the PEC team over the last two years. One SLH is facilitated by an independent Practice Educator (PE) who has historically worked in the LA area.

The student hubs are in addition to the support and assessment provided by PEs in one LA, although in the other LA the model is different with the PECs also delivering or contributing to the PE role (so they have a formal role in assessment).

The SLHs follow a prescribed model. The delivery model is based on the work discussion model of group supervision and the PECs attend group supervision every six weeks to support them in their role and to embed the model. This provides useful modelling for the PECs on how to deliver the SLHs true to the original concept. In addition, it is a professional development activity that supports the PECs to deconstruct their own facilitation style, what they may bring consciously or unconsciously to their approach and raise understanding of how this influences their personal approach. The approach aims to support the gradual movement towards a whole organisation culture of reflective practice across the LAs.

The SLH model is based on weekly sessions which alternate between reflective practice and practice skills sessions, following a set facilitation approach:

- Reflective skills practice: this follows a clear structure whereby after 'check-in' students are given an opportunity to present and to have their issue/challenge reflected on. The student presenting their case provides time limited background information across key factors and then sits out of the group to listen to the group exploring the issue/dilemma raised (not problem solving). The student re-joins the group and reflects on what has been discussed.
- Practice skills: this is peer led, based around experience on placement. The identified practice area is fully explored through group application of knowledge, skills and analysis tools. The facilitator (PEC) brings relevant resources to support the group to apply and develop skills as part of the session.

There has been experimentation with which students are supported through SLHs – including focusing on first placements and post-graduates. The current model (widely considered sustainable and correctly targeted) provides SLHs to all undergraduate and post graduate students on final statutory placement within the partnership LAs. This offers students a peer support group whilst on final placement, drawing together students from the different HEIs and courses to share and gain experiences and perspectives.

The student learning hubs normally comprise six to eight students, although in 19/20 there is one SLH that has nine students. They are compulsory and weekly, meaning students are offered 14-18 hubs during their 100-day statutory placements. Each session is 1.5 hours long, although in practice may be extended to up to two hours at times to ensure full participation. The PECs facilitate each session as per the set model, alternating between group reflective supervision one week and practice skills development the following week.

In practice the SLH model is delivered slightly differently across Adult Services (AS) & Children Services (CS) within authorities and across authorities because social work education/development structures and placement support structures are different. Additionally, PECs and students bring an individual dynamic to each SLH with different topics, resources and experiences shared. However, overall PECs perceive that the reflective skills sessions are delivered consistently, supported by reinforcement of the model at the PEC supervision and through the PEC management meetings.

SLHs are perceived to be highly influenced by student needs and by the midway all PECs suggest the SLHs are extremely student led because students are by then fully immersed into their practice experience. Using live practice examples that students genuinely need support with allows the transferring of learning immediately into practice. PECs report:

‘They can go and do, come back and apply thought processes’.

‘The HEI teach good practice, the placement brings the realism, complexity and dilemma; the thresholds and impact of austerity in practice’.

Over time it has become clear that there is significant consistency in what students want and need from the Skills Development sessions, although groups vary. This year, one PEC spoke about how the students have highlighted skills needs around ‘having difficult conversations’ for the first time since she has been facilitating the SLH. From the skills-based sessions, the PECs have built up a bank of useful resources available to students to support their transfer of theory to practice in specific areas.

Students are invited to complete a Group Reflection Tool after every session – this is not mandatory. For example, one PEC explained how she reminds students to do this through a follow up email after every hub, along with key points, signposting to reading and to affirm contributions. Some students complete it every week – particularly if they presented a case study. This provides good evidence of learning and can contribute to their portfolios.

In addition to the learning function, the SLHs support effective placements through allowing students to safely reflect on relationships in their placements and challenges they face in their placement environment. PECs can also meet students individually if they feel it is useful to check in or meet specific needs.

To ensure SLHs are meeting the needs of students, each PEC does a stop, start, continue exercise at various points. The PECs also meet as a group across LAs to share experiences and create a supportive space for their own learning – and to discuss operational challenges, improvements and themes. Any key issues are fed back into the

partnership via the SLH management lead. The SLHs were evaluated in 2017, and as part of a wider partnership evaluation in 2018 which has supported their effective development.

## What helped/facilitated success?

- The PECs are highly skilled practitioners which maximizes the value from the model 'We are very lucky that our practice education consultants are outstanding' Principle Social Worker (PSW), 2019
- PECs have developed a strong identity, helped by being managed directly through LA social work education and/or workforce development (WFD) leads who are PSWs. This is reinforced through the PECs being maintained as a cross authority team.
- 'The beauty is not being too rigid but to be flexible to the different organisational structures and environments but to ensure the principle and essence is the same' (PEC, 2019) - this is maintained through consistent process and focus on the SLH framework.
- Immediacy is key - the transfer between theory and practice is real and happening 'now' which is different to the support in HEIs where they do not have the case complexity or their personal experience and responsibility; or the detailed knowledge of tools and processes used in LAs.
- PECs maintaining the SLHs as a safe, confidential space – students are reported to like that it is not/does not feel assessed.
- Students like that it is a mix of postgraduates and undergraduates at both universities – bringing together different people, experiences, knowledge and perspectives.
- Being compulsory has been important because initially there can be a perception that it duplicates other support, but over time students realise how different a learning space it is and experience the benefits
- Six to eight is the optimum number of students in each hub, allowing everyone to participate and enabling it to be bespoke and needs led, versus larger, more generic groups at the HEIs.
- It allows students to participate differently, allowing different learning styles to be met. E.g. some are present in their learning through thinking, and space can be created for them through paired work etc.
- Alternating practice skills and supervision is effective – if students practiced reflective supervision every week it would be too much in addition to other support (i.e. 1:1 supervision; reflective time and team development sessions).



- Supervision for PECs was very important and helpful at the start – in building confidence and competence to support delivery.
- A video showing students discussing the benefits of the SLHs helps the PECs demonstrate to students and HEIs what the SLHs offer.
- SLHs are an opportunity for students to see behaviours modelled – they experience relationship-building best practice.
- It often works best when the PEC is not too close to cases and colleagues involved in the students' work.
- SLH initiative is driven by PSWs – with minimal micro-management by directors, although they are supportive and enable it to happen.

## Challenges and responses

- In the first six to 12 months, challenges highlighted by a local evaluation included: implementation issues; need for clarity of the differing support roles (PECs, HEI tutor, Work Based Supervisors (WBS), PEs, HEI tutors, team supervisor); impact of differing experience/knowledge of the PECs on student learning; ensuring student led elements felt planned; desire for more focus on theory, research and learning outcomes and greater guidance needed about embedding Knowledge and Skills Statement (KSS) and Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF). This learning led to various changes and greater guidance to strengthen the model.
- Sustainability and volume – supporting statutory placements for first and second placements put pressure on the SLH model. Focusing on providing SLHs for final placement undergraduate (U/G) & postgraduate (P/G) is more workable.
- Staff turnover has led to changes in personnel across the PECs & PEs and creates a need to rebuild knowledge with the wider workforce. Early churn in PECs at beginning affected the stability of the model and it was difficult to build a group approach. Retention of staff has supported building a group approach by the PECs and stability of the model.
- Initially HEI placement timetables were all at different times affecting when and how the SLHs could run; now statutory placement dates are aligned which has resolved this issue.
- The occasional student does not like it - it is not everyone's natural learning style and for some students there is too much focus on reflection, however PECs perceive that these students benefit greatly because it is a key part of practice.
- Where the PEC has a role in assessing the placement, this can be difficult for some students as this can affect the safety of the space, although this is well 'navigated' by the PECs who build positive relationships with students.

- HEIs are supportive but some individuals outside the TP are perceived to find it difficult to understand. In hindsight it is generally recognised that more could have been done by LAs to align with HEIs and communicate more effectively.
- At least one HEI stakeholder – whilst recognising the value of the SLH - would have perhaps preferred to attempt something more creative with the funding.
- From an HEI perspective, there is an inconsistency in student support - if one of their students is in a local authority placement outside the TP, they don't get offered a hub. HEIs now clearly communicate this to students.
- The model - in terms of culture change - is a slow burn, which can cause frustration in a culture of innovation and quick fixes.

## Perceived benefits

- Reflective practice skills – SLHs are embedding a reflective mode of working, which PECs feel builds maturity to practice safely. PECs see students improving their understanding of dynamics of a situation; what is not being presented and reducing impulses to focus on immediate solutions. This also helps to develop the students' identity as a social worker through understanding themselves better. PECs report seeing students developing a complexity of thinking and learning around how to sit with risk and an acceptance of feelings of vulnerability (rather than non-acknowledgement).
- Different environment: the comfortableness of the space encourages students to ask questions, explore challenges issues or personal responses to placement experiences. They can also talk about power dynamics with practice supervisors which supports a more effective placement. Placement experiences can be very confronting and challenging and SLHs provide support around needs and expectations, which helps to build resilience and maturity.
- Reinforcement of theory – making the links much better – with one of the HEIs reporting that in the last year, two final year tutor groups were very confident in transitioning theory into practice.
- Shared learning opportunity – students learn about other placements e.g. placement in asylum seeking team is learning lots of information to share with other students in different teams – even when in the same team they learn not all families are the same.
- Improve student's professional leadership skills – having to present cases in group supervision or in a professional environment can improve their ability to speak to their own work.

- Reduces isolation when on placement, especially if the student is the only student in a team.
- Supports the student journey: although not a core aim, the SLHs support the student cycle e.g. discuss the normality of drop in energy around week four; discuss assignments and reduce anxiety about what needs to be done when thinking about final assessment/interviewing.
- Helps to support placement stability – LAs find out sooner where there are placement issues; PECs get anecdotal feedback on the support from PEs/PSs so they can support resolution more quickly and ensure processes are followed.
- Supports work-based supervisors/PEs (especially when they are by themselves) by providing increased and/or different support to students.
- Provides different evidence around student performance – PECs can input helpfully into assessment as they have a different perspective on what is happening for the student – for example, how they relate to each other in a group setting; student reflective logs can be very useful for portfolio evidence.
- Additional materials have been developed to support specific areas of skill or knowledge, so now there is a 'bank' of useful materials for students to access.
- Capacity built within PECs - PECs own skills have developed, with them feeling well equipped to run sessions capably and confidently – and deepen their own reflective practice. PECs growth in confidence supports more fluidity and flexibility within SLHs, better refining the SLHs to the needs of the specific student group.
- PECs have relationships with a wider range of HEI staff and vice versa – they have got to know more about who does what, which means it's easier discuss issues or ideas.

'I have grown in confidence by using the different practice skills which I learnt through the hub. This has had an impact on my willingness to explore' (Student, Evaluation Report 2019)

'I was able to recognise the impact of self in interaction with others, and have identified steps to manage and promote my own wellbeing and emotional resilience' (Student, Evaluation Report 2019)

'It was comforting to be reassured that sometimes we do all that we can and that we often don't see the results of that for a while, but that doesn't mean it hasn't had impact' (Student, Evaluation Report 2019)

## Evidence of impact on recruitment

In the data analysis conducted as part of the local SCRC evaluation (2018), the percentage of Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs) recruited by the two LAs increased from 81% to 88.5% (between 2017-18). It was reported that, in interview, applicants from the SLHs were consistently able to integrate theory into the narrative of their case work and provide good examples. Their overall performance was of a much higher standard than non-TP applicants. This is considered a demonstration of the positive impact of the TP in helping to produce practice ready NQSWs and that SLHs contribute to the 'grow your own student social worker' strategy by encouraging local ASYE applications.

'SLH as part of final placement has a strong influence on where to apply – you can see they are more conflicted if the geography doesn't work as well for them. SLHs have been taken as indicative of a supportive environment and boosted applications for ASYE'. PEC interview, 2019.

'Value based interviewing showed students who were part of SLHs were different – they were more able to bring themselves into the interview – showing reflectivity, self-awareness, a more rigorous discussion about working relationships with clients; more specific about the skills they have learnt – they had different insights'. PSW interview, 2019

## Impact on practice readiness

NQSWs were asked to rate themselves against a short set of questions to consider their resilience, reflection and readiness to practice. In general, those who had been part of the TP answered more positively to the questions. The TP group were more positive with regards to rating confidence in being ready to practice (+6%), recognising own strengths and limitations (+10%), using reflective practice techniques (+19%), applying practice evidence and research (+17%). The results of the questionnaire suggest that TP NQSWs have increased confidence and practice skills in comparison with non-TP NQSWs. [Taken from SCRC local evaluation Dec 2018]

'I interviewed 60 newly qualified social workers and I can tell you that those attending the student learning hubs are head and shoulders above of the others at interview. For example, when we asked them questions about analysis of assessments or direct skills work, other students struggled with these questions and those attending student learning hubs could confidently respond.

The capacity to articulate their understanding of their cases was quite marked'. PSW interview, 2019

'ASYE feedback from practice managers demonstrates that social workers are performing really well and are practice ready'. PSW interview, 2019

## **Impact on retention**

It is too soon for quantitative evidence around retention, but it is felt that if resilience and practice readiness is improved, then potentially this may help to address a turnover of staff. This is an issue particularly after years two to three in practice.

'However much they are prepared for reality, what they encounter is different – it will not be a seamless transition, but they have a better skillset to work with' HEI interview, 2019

## **Impact on cultural change:**

It is too early to evidence cultural change, but expectations are that the SLHs will contribute to the slow transition towards a more reflective, supportive and research minded working environment – which is hoped will result in high quality practice, better morale and improved longer term retention.

'Supports creating a reflective supervision culture more widely, and as these students move into employment this should continue' PEC interview, 2019

'A values-based approach has been embedded within the PECs and there is support from senior managers for this approach. This will help us to build a new culture'. HEI interview, 2019

## **Sustainability**

PECs are continuing at the current time, supported by their wider role in taking on core Social Work England functions and workforce development functions. Some PECs are supported through core funding or a creative mix of baseline, Step Up and other funding sources depending on the LA and whether the PEC is in adult or children's services.

HEI supervision of PECs (around the Student Learning Hub model) is built into the sustainability plan as part of reciprocal arrangements under the Practitioners who Teach programme.

Senior managers modelling behaviours and building the same values base into dominant culture will support sustainability of outcomes.

## **D2N2: Practice development structures, use of workforce data and their impact on quality of placement experience**

### **Rationale and context**

Raising the standard, status and volume of practice education and producing students who were equipped to practice was a critical aim of the Teaching Partnership. There were challenges in being able to secure the required volume of placements and sufficiently qualified practice educators.

The aim was to develop a sustainable model of social work placements which would meet national, regional and local requirements and equip students, when qualified, to be ready to practice and able to meet the needs of employers. It was believed that the positive student experience would lead to higher levels of student recruitment locally, with a smooth transition from study into employment. In addition, by enhancing, supporting and promoting the Practice Educator role the experience of taking students would increase interest in this role and support retention of existing and future staff.

### **How is this implemented?**

Analysis of workforce data has underpinned the planning and development of the student experience within D2N2. Recruitment and retention being a key driver for all four LAs and a shared need to reduce the volume of agency workers within their service. The TP built on existing good practice where some of the HEIs had links to placement coordinators in agencies and LAs. TP funding was used to create four posts of Principal Practice Educator Lead (PPEL) and linked each to the four LAs which would be the main source of statutory placements. They were tasked with what were seen as the core aspects of the provision of social work placements to secure high-quality learning and development opportunities.

The PPEL linked closely with the Placement Coordinator within the agencies and the placement experience was placed at the core of the Practice Learning System (PLS) which was developed. This combines quality assurance and monitoring. There are several parts to the process. It begins with a Placement Audit which is prepared by the agency and shared with the HEI to provide an overview of the placement support and potential opportunities within the setting. To cover the period of the placement a Quality Assurance Placement Monitoring Process (QAMP) was developed which looks at the progress of the placement at four weeks, midway and at the end. At each point the process addresses the quality of the placement experience, checking out opportunities, support and performance. It ensures that all parties are engaged and up to date. Any issues identified at any stage are addressed and resolution sought. The QAMP system includes the data that used to have to be provided through the QAPL system. This PLS

process ensures that issue or concerns are identified and resolved as soon as possible and its being combined with the PPELs and their key role in providing a bridge between the agencies involved in placement has resulted in speedy resolution of issues.

## **What helped/facilitated success?**

From the outset there was a shared belief that a social work career starts as a student and a high-quality student experience would enhance the volume of confident practitioners. Employers approached engagement within D2N2 as a vehicle for recruiting and retaining staff. Students were viewed within placements as potential employees and therefore there was a strong vested interest in ensuring the academic and placement experience was of a high quality to equip students to practice. From the start there was a collaborative approach adopted with the working group from the partnership including Service Users and Carers (SUC) led organisations, Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI), LAs and HEI in addition to the PPELs. The approach adopted by the project team, in valuing and continually communicating to all parties underpins the success of the work of the TP. The workforce lead developed an effective communication strategy at the beginning which has underpinned the work, and which was implemented by the administrator at the outset but is being continued on currently. A strong climate of collaboration and compromise is in place between partners to deliver their shared vision.

## **Perceived benefits**

There is a shared perception that the quality of placements has improved and that there is greater coherence to the process. The support, opportunities to engage in teaching and research, high quality continual professional development (CPD) and the enhanced profile has greatly increased the attractiveness of the role of PE and increased the opportunities for placements. These have likewise improved the student experience and their readiness to practice. They are also felt to play a part in retention of staff who have more opportunities to engage in TP activities. It is believed that there is greater appreciation of having students within settings when the process is well supported and reduces the strain on the settings. High quality and relevant CPD, stronger links between current academic approaches and current social work practice with academics and practitioners working closely together is felt to be positive and beneficial to all.

The TP has also worked proactively to secure required statutory placement experience within SUC partner organisations which has been mutually beneficial. The ultimate beneficiaries should be service users though this is difficult to capture or to link directly to the TP.



## **Evidence of impact**

The HEIs attract students from across the country and internationally. Within this there are always students who move to the area for training and always intend to leave when this is completed. Nonetheless there is strong emerging evidence that a higher percentage of students are remaining in the area than before the TP. The nature of the area means that social workers and the wider geography has meant that staff also access LAs in all directions beyond the TP area, such as Doncaster, Lincolnshire and Sheffield and have always moved between the local authorities within the geographical area of the TP. Student satisfaction levels are high and anecdotal reporting is that they are better able and better equipped to meet the LA requirements post qualifying because of the high quality of the statutory placements within their training and their experience within the HEIs. The TP is felt to have brought about greater coherence between the LAs and the HEIs and offers a more natural flow for students. Current figures indicate 78% of students joining the LAs from a previous level of 45%. The CPD opportunities afforded through the TP are highly valued anecdotally and via evaluations. The enhanced valuing of the PE role coupled with the support received by them and wider teams is felt to be supporting greater levels of retention of students.

## **Challenges and responses**

The challenges faced by the partnership as a whole including geography, competition, time, capacity and the wider world beyond the TP all played a part and have had to be overcome. The shared vision and very strong commitment to working effectively together has been a key driver in overcoming the challenges. The effectiveness of the strategic and operational structures with clear reporting, accountability and monitoring has been critical. The high levels of trust and willingness to challenge, support and change have played a key part. Use of technology, particularly establishing and servicing a highly effective website has been a key aspect of supporting students and practitioners alike and in communicating to and supporting the wider community beyond the TP. Through the effort of the workforce development lead, who is based in one of the LAs, the TP website runs on this County Council website. It supports the TP and the wider community providing a wide range of resources and links. The TP has run an extensive programme of highly valued events which play a major role in CPD. The approach is being adapted to meet current and future funding challenges to seek to continue to offer such valuable and valued provision. These approaches continue to help raise the overall profile of the TP in the region.

## **Sustainability**

The TP undertook a review of its structures and processes in 2019 and produced a number of options for going forward without DfE funding.

The overall structure has been reduced and rationalised with key functions embedded within core posts where possible. Programme Management, Workforce Development and PPEL functions remain in place within substantive roles however the postholders are no longer engaged in the roles full time and face a greater challenge from competing priorities than was previously the case. There has been a significant reduction in business support time. Time will tell how these changes will impact on the work and the sustainability of the TP. D2N2 are continuing to address the long-term challenge of sustainability in the face of financial challenges and other demands within the partner organisations. There is a shared belief in the exceptional value of the current PMs capacity to coordinate the delivery of the TP, through neutrality and even handedness towards partners, and concern that this would not be achieved if this dedicated role disappeared.

### **Other notable benefits and outcomes**

The strong SUC organisational focus has provided employment/volunteering opportunities for students which has enhanced their experience during training and been mutually beneficial to them and to the PVI providers.

Several people cited the value of students seeing strong and close links between practice and academia in breaking down barriers and enhancing practice. Whilst roles remain distinctive there is emerging evidence that ongoing practice in the field and learning within the HEIs are influenced by each other and students are emerging with research at the heart of their practice and practitioners having enhanced research/theory focus to their practice.

# Suffolk and Norfolk Teaching Partnership: Service User Carer Involvement

## Rational and context

Both the universities have experience of involving SUC in the delivery of their courses and have done so for some years. Each Local Authority also has some experience of SUC involvement but not in as structured a way as the universities. The TP set out from the beginning to have meaningful SUC involvement at all levels of social work education and training ensuring that they were involved in the co-production of TP initiatives.

## How has this been implemented?

The TP appointed a SUC co-ordinator who led this work until funding ended in April '19. She developed a network of service users and carers across the TP and ensured and supported SUC involvement from both universities in all boards and workstreams. She also ensured that the SUC group could take forward the development of tools to support the TP to ensure that SUC involvement was meaningful.

In university 1 the service users were part of a wider group focused on Health and Social Care. Separation of these two areas meant a separation of the SUC group which is now quite small but very active. LA1 and university 1 are combining funding to jointly appoint a part-time Citizen Involvement Co-ordinator for two years. This role will focus on expanding the representation of SUCs and continuing to develop areas where they can play an active role.

University 2 has had a part-time SUC Co-ordinator for two years. Her role is to support the members of the SUC group, not only to ensure their voices are heard but also to ensure they are paid for the work they do, and the necessary arrangements are made for their involvement. She has also established a process to expand membership of the group.

The two university groups were brought together for a number of meetings to get to know each other. The SUC groups also got to know each other through Board and workstream involvement. One interviewee said that although she didn't attend TP meetings, she knew a lot about its work because of the discussion that took place in the university SUC group.

A number of tools have been developed by the SUC group to facilitate SUC involvement:

- An analysis of SUC payments and impact on benefits
- 6Ws- a tool to remove barriers to participation, to provide meaning to change and to take people along with them

- Object Project
- Baseline SUC questionnaire.

SUCs are now actively involved, not only in the admissions process at both universities but in the delivery of modules throughout all social care courses run by the universities. The local authorities are now including them in some of the ASYE support, but all partners recognise the potential to expand this area of work. Service users themselves talk about the need to identify 'our individual skills and areas of expertise' that we can bring.

## What helped/facilitated success?

- Sharing information: this was seen as vital. The admissions process in both universities was standardised and influenced by the SUC group. University 1 had included a group discussion involving SUC in the student interview process. This was subsequently adopted by university 2 and has become the TP admissions process. In fact, the process now has three elements with SUCs being involved in each one. One service user said, 'our scores often reflect the difference in perception between SUCs, lecturers and social workers but we are always asked to verbalise our reasons for the scores, and we are always listened to'.
- Enthusiasm and passion of the SUCs: members of the SUC group have long histories and experience of social work involvement in their own and their families' lives. One SUC summed it up as, 'my attitude to social work has mellowed a lot since being involved in the TP. I have more empathy. The scaffolding around social workers is so poor, we lose them after seven years. The TP challenge is to ensure we retain and support social workers to have longer careers with resilience to do it'.
- Commitment of the partner agencies: without exception TP members referred to the valuable role the SUC members had made to the work of the TP and many referred to the potential to involve them much more widely with CPD and with local authority staff to influence practice.

## Perceived benefits

- Student consistently highly rate the value of SUC involvement in local evaluations, with one student stating that the SUC session was the most valuable part of a 12-week module.
- Social workers feel there is a benefit in terms of service delivery, with one social work manager reporting 'The TP SUC group really influenced me to look at the potential impact they could have on service delivery in the long-term. They each

have their own strengths and qualities. We need to encourage social workers not to be afraid of service user feedback’.

- Universities report benefiting from the experience that the SUCs bring in the selection of students and in their training and education.

## **Evidence of impact**

Anecdotally, stakeholders are in no doubt that the SUC involvement has an impact on students.

## **Challenges and responses**

- Payments for SUC: many SUCs are in receipt of some benefits. Payments for SUC involvement could prompt the withdrawal of payments. The SUC group has undertaken substantial work to identify potential difficulties and provide advice to SUCs about ways to manage this. Guidance about payments is now available.
- Diversity of the group: both SUC groups acknowledged that they are not truly representative of all potential service users. Soon both universities will have someone in post who will be responsible for expanding the reach of the SUC groups.
- Budget for SUC involvement: All partners recognise the need to identify a budget for SUC involvement and some have. One university noted, ‘If we believe in it, and we do, we need to find the budget for it’.

## **Sustainability**

The TP is very committed to meaningful SUC involvement. The SUC groups are powerful advocates so the likelihood of it continuing is strong. Most of those interviewed saw it as a strength of the partnership and something they would not want to lose. One SUC member said, ‘We’re not equal until we don’t need other people’s approval. SUCs need to lead themselves. It can’t be achieved overnight but eventually it could be’.

## **Other notable successes**

- Practitioners into academia: there is now a more structured approach to involving social workers in academic delivery in both universities.
- A review of course content took place across the partnership and all programmes have been mapped to the PCF and KSS.

# West London Teaching Partnership: Critical Reflective Practice Programme

## Rationale and context

TP wanted social workers to have a reflective mindset. They want this to be the *golden thread*.

It was designed to embed a new culture of critical reflective practice in the workplace, whilst also focusing on skill development and strategies for social workers in practice and in leadership roles. In particular, the programme for supervisors is guided by the new Knowledge and Skills Statement for Practice Supervisors.

The programmes aim to transform ways of thinking, and being, at all levels of the organisation. The programmes explore how a critical reflective mindset can be created in the workplace. It involved working with senior managers to explore reflective leadership and leading a reflective organisation. The programmes also developed practice supervisors and practice educators to facilitate reflective practice in supervision and in their teams.

## How has this been implemented?

It was facilitated by a professor specialising in critical reflection and was provided at three levels:

- Practice educator – all trainee practice educators
- Practice supervisor
- Executive program

The Practice Educator programme is for experienced practice educators and/or a practitioner lecturer, interested in reflective learning.

The Executive programme is for those who are a senior manager, principal social worker who wants to lead a culture of critical reflective practice thinking within their organisation; and would welcome a concrete strategy to embed critical reflective practice within their service.

The Practice Supervisor programme is for those supervising qualified social workers and managers who are looking for opportunities to develop supervision skills and reflective supervision; and who would welcome a framework to develop professional expertise and who want to develop skills in line with the new Knowledge and Skills Statement for Practice Supervisors.

The programme consists of three elements:

a) Skills development:

- Level 1 course for Practice Educators
- Level 2 course for Practice Supervisors
- Level 3 course for senior managers and principal social workers (Executive Programme)

b) Embedding learning through: workplace exercises; providing reflective supervision; running critical reflective practice groups in teams.

c) Developing a critical reflection strategy for the organisation: throughout the duration of the programme candidates will be expected to work with colleagues to shape and implement a concrete strategy and plan to embed critical reflective practice in their organisation.

Six courses have been delivered for 81 participants.

### **What helped/facilitated success?**

- Senior manager buy-in at executive board – really committed
- Already an area of interest
- It was pitched as '*a different way of being*' rather than critical reflection. It was about the conversations and considering power, social culture, being curious and open
- Wanted a different relationship for practice educator and student. It was a *mindset program*
- Participants created action plans – things they wanted to develop in their service area
- Course one - presentation to operational board – another local authority wanted to implement it in her local authority – it grew from there

### **Benefits**

Evaluation carried out prior to and after program identifying why participants wanted to attend, what they thought it would help with and how they would embed into practice. All respondents agreed that the expectations of the program were met, vast majority reported changes in understanding around critical reflective practice and 100% would recommend the program to colleagues.

They reported that the following elements were most useful:

- Practising reflection and the critical reflection model
- Loved looking at action plans and possibilities
- Sharing critical incidents and learning from others
- Increased ability to think more critically and to search for a deeper meaning
- Helped to explore and develop a critical mindset to help in assessment supervision, forums and team meetings

## **Challenges**

One stakeholder reported: If I was being critical, I think the people who attended benefited from it, but it will not go wider. I think it has a short-term nature.

## **Sustainability**

This was TP funded and so will not continue, although one LA can potentially commit to running one per year.



# **Suffolk and Norfolk Teaching Partnership: The role of PELs and their impact on the quality of student placements through the development of student hubs**

## **Rational and context**

In its bid to the DfE the TP identified the need to raise the standard of Practice Education across both local authorities. They wanted to ensure that students would have a positive experience during their work placements which would encourage them to remain in the region and take up employment in either of the LAs.

## **How has this been implemented?**

How they have done it varies in each LA because of their different circumstances and needs but each LA was allocated three FTE Practice Education Lead posts from the DfE funding.

LA1: the model was based on an initiative already underway in one locality within LA1. Three PELs were appointed each to a separate locality and were responsible for developing student hubs to bring together newly qualified social workers (ASYEs) and students on placement to learn from each other. The students and social workers came from both Adults and Children's social care departments. The PELs led sessions looking at areas for development relevant to the students and ASYEs at that time. It is important to note that there was a high turnover of people in these posts while they were funded by the TP which impacted on the consistency of delivery. These posts are no longer funded by the TP and the responsibility for the PEL role sits with two members of the Workforce Development department within the LA. However, the delivery model for the student hubs will be closely aligned with the LA2 delivery model. The changes are based on feedback from 'This is my Oasis', an evaluation of the support for social work students' well-being and development of professional resilience in a Teaching Partnership undertaken by the TP and individuals from two HEIs.

LA2: originally four staff filled the three FTE posts delivering in four localities in this area. When the DfE funding for these posts ended in April 2019, the local authority agreed to fund two FTE posts for a three-year period (until April 2022). These two FTE posts are shared across three of the original four PELs, there are now three localities, providing consistency and continuity throughout the life of the TP. The hubs focus on students only although they will continue to support Assistant Practitioners when they first come into post and until they are registered and can take up a post as ASYE. They are then supported as an ASYE through their local Institute for Practice Excellence. The first six months in post were largely spent establishing processes and documents such as placement profiles and a detailed student handbook which covers all that is required in a

placement, but it also involved meeting with Practice Educators, on-site supervisors and social work teams so that everyone was clear about what was involved in supporting a student on placement. The student hubs are held once a month in each of the localities, the curriculum is driven by the students but there are always common elements such as well-being and PCF domains. The PELs provide a range of resources to meet the students' needs, including the Knowledge Hub, an on-line learning environment. After each hub, the PELs send the students' PEs a summary of content with the PCF domains so they can include them in their student assessment. The PELs also support the PEs in localities through workshops which have introduced skills and tools necessary for their PE roles and through online seminars. One PE said, 'My PEL is a fountain of knowledge, readily accessible and a good conduit for training materials'. The PELs also mentor new PEs undertaking the PEPs course at the university. They find this helps to assure the quality of PEs in the county. Several people interviewed felt that the PEL role in supporting concerns meetings had reduced the number of placement breakdowns experienced.

## **What helped/facilitated success**

- In the case of LA2, consistency and quality of PEL appointments has had an impact. Several of those interviewed spoke of the knowledge and experience of the PELs and the confidence that gave them (students and the PEs).
- A TP decision that all LA frontline teams must take a student each year has helped to promote a culture of curiosity and reflection and refreshes teams by bringing in some fresh thinking.

## **Benefits**

- Early evidence is that recruitment figures from the two partner universities have increased.
- The standard of Practice Education has improved, and more in-house PEs are taking on students and feel supported to do so but they also feel it has a positive effect on their own social work practice. One PE reported, 'The workshops and the materials we look at are enlightening and have helped me reflect on my cases'.
- Some placement breakdowns are averted by PEL support. However, this does not mean that placement breakdowns have reduced. A few people referred to the improved skills of PEs and that they now feel more confident to address difficulties and fail students where necessary.

## **Evidence of impact**

- It is too early to be conclusive, but anecdotally interviewees referred to new ASYEs appearing to be more grounded and informed and that students on the second placements were now better prepared for the workplace. The PEs interviewed reported that they were much better supported to fulfil their PE role and felt enthusiastic to be able to play a part in the development of a new social worker.

## **Challenges and responses**

- Funding and continuity of staff has presented a real challenge in LA1. The fact that the PEL role is being delivered on the back of substantive posts means that student hubs currently meet less often than in LA2 while the LA1 business as usual PEL function is being established.
- LA2: the funding of two FTE posts funded across both Adults and Children's Services has ensured the consistency of these key posts which bridge the gap between the universities and the local authorities in their delivery of TP objectives.

## **Sustainability**

- The LA2 funded PELs are funded until April 2022.

# West London Teaching Partnership: Developing a research culture

## Rationale and context

A University Department – as part of the making research count – ran a series of programs to increase confidence in using research and not being scared of it. There is an appetite for more – social workers feel that they cannot easily access research.

## How was this implemented?

The research literacy workstream has been an important component of the work programme over the course of the first two years of the West London Teaching Partnership (WLSWTP).

In the first year, individual research advocates in each of the agencies (two from each LA- total 16) developed some useful individual projects and there was some important learning through the Making Research Count project across agencies. This was of limited impact and in the second year a more strategic approach was taken with the launch of practice and research development groups.

These could reach much larger numbers and involved bringing together interested practitioners from across agencies with academics to look at practice issues identified by the operations board as being key to practice development in the region. These were:

- contextual safeguarding
- mental capacity and decision making
- family group conferencing
- professional resilience
- adoption and prevention and well-being.

The groups recruited over 100 practitioners and managers so were well attended. Research advocates energetically led these groups (they had very wide-ranging roles) to produce practice friendly research and to tease out the main messages. e.g. mental capacity - they discovered high levels of anxiety amongst the workforce, stresses around working with family and carers.

In year three, going forwards they plan to have two research groups focused on:

- Loneliness – adult services
- Interfamilial abuse – children services

Research advocates have said that they need to continue to be very purposeful.

The groups have all followed the same steps:

1. Scoped the professional issues associated with their areas of interest whereby practitioners have explored what constitutes good practice but also some of the challenges that they face.
2. Reviewed the existing knowledge base including theoretical, evaluative and research-based literature.
3. Identified the areas that need further exploration in the agencies with participants undertaking an audit/ practice review in their respective agencies.
4. Reviewed the feedback from colleagues in the agencies and identified emerging themes.
5. Further analysed these themes in the context of existing research and developed a series of messages for practice and for the agencies in the WLSWTP.

At the outset of the process, 15 research advocates were recruited from across the local authorities across the region. These were experienced practitioners and managers whose role was to support the facilitation and management of the groups. To enable them to develop their role, a series of eight workshops were provided. These workshops were a forum for discussing the progress of the 6 practice and research development groups. They also followed a curriculum that included:

- The meaning of knowledge informed practice in 2019
- Models of research dissemination and knowledge transfer
- Practical strategies for identifying and accessing research
- Applying research to practice
- Understanding research methodologies and their application to practice
- Ethics, values and anti-oppressive perspectives in applying research to practice
- Exploring the policy context of innovation and practice development: the role of research practitioner expertise and the voices of service users.

The research advocates received an honorarium paid for from the TP funding.

## What helped/facilitated success?

- Overlapping relationships have been the key enabler – working together on areas that are of mutual interest and areas which are linked to other priorities.
- Long-term history of partnership working.
- Helpful resources and helpful forums for discussion/learning – the conversations are perceived to be powerful.

## Benefits

An independent researcher is contacting participants in order to carry out a fuller evaluation. Interim feedback suggests:

1. That the groups have been a useful forum for understanding about the role of research in developing practice
2. The groups themselves have been a helpful learning developmental experience
3. The groups have generated some very constructive discussions within agencies
4. Participants have been able to feedback some of the findings from the groups to their agencies
5. The role of research advocate has not been fully developed and while the programme and support groups have been positive this model of practice and research groups does not require the full research advocate role
6. Accessing research is more complex than it first appears and some of the practical strategies have been useful
7. We need to be clear with agencies about the role of 'audits of practice' etc as they can be potentially exposing and therefore the boundaries and the basis of such processes needs to be clear.

Advanced Practitioner in CSC perceives that:

'The biggest plus was meeting with others. We had different roles in local authorities and could share learning and good practice'

'Not enough opportunity for practising social workers to meet with others who are practising -now you can take ideas and support your own staff'

'PSW adults' research advocates were useful'.

An ASW reported:

the mix of students was good, they were well run and provided lots of research examples. We had time to consider how useful to apply to practice and learn from others using it.

Feedback from the contextual safeguarding group included:

- It was interesting to see that other local authorities were training cleaners, fire station staff, tube station staff.
- Cross pollination of ideas was tangible.
- We shared research papers and views of young people and then discussed them. The facilitator ensured that the process was managed and focused. He could also draw links between what people were saying.
- It is about facilitating the time for a discussion. I think this is more useful than training. It is not certificated but the effect on how I behave and work with children is tangible. I would prefer this to shorter training programs where we do not get time to discuss and reflect enough. It is essentially a guided topic and an opportunity to talk and think.

## **Future plans and recommendations**

At the last operational board, the following plans were agreed for further discussion.

1. The launch of five further groups, two of which focus on an adult services area of practice, two on children's services and one more generic group. The launch of these groups should be staggered so that they function more as a rolling programme which can be, it would be hoped sustained in the longer term.
2. That the identification of the topics for these new groups be facilitated through a workshop/ forum to which members of all of last year's groups are invited so that the operational Board's deliberations can be informed by their experience and expertise
3. That the research advocate role be replaced by a research 'champion' role. This would not involve the payment of a honorarium but the expectations would be less in than that the champion's role would be exclusively around facilitation and support for the group facilitator
4. The champions would have access to a development programme (to run monthly from September 2019 to March 2021) that focuses on accessing research, dissemination strategies in agencies and how research can be applied to practice

5. That the existing groups continue on a quarterly basis to meet. This has been a strong message from group members. They have proven to be very useful forums for building regional links and sharing expertise. In addition, The Family Group Conference Group is going to work strategically with the London wide network

6. That a regional learning event is held that shares the learning that has emerged from all 6 of the existing groups.



## Annex Five: Deep dives

The aim of this deep dive research was to establish, in detail, four partnership approaches to particular areas of effective practice. Areas were selected on the basis of geography, size and area of good practice identified from the phase one and two document review – and the phase three review of case studies.

Areas selected were Yorkshire Urban and Rural (Practice Education); Leeds and Wakefield (Relationships and Engagement); West London (Research Culture); North East London (Workforce Planning). A mix of telephone and face to face interviews took place with stakeholders relevant to the particular area of research.

### West London Teaching Partnership: Labour market analysis

WLSWTP recruited a consultant who sourced and analysed data and produced a labour market analysis. The aim of this was to provide an indication of the number of qualified social workers required across the teaching partnership over the next three years. This was to be used to identify specific priorities to inform a regional workforce strategy/plan. Given that the focus of the West London Social Work Teaching Partnership (WLSWTP) is to improve the quality of social work education and social worker practice, the recommended actions for implementation centred around initial social worker education (i.e. recruitment) and Continuing Professional Development opportunities post-qualification (i.e. retention).

The main sources of workforce data that were utilised to inform this labour market analysis were:

1. The Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS), formerly known as the National Minimum Data Set for Social Care, managed by Skills for Care for the Department of Health and collated by NHS Digital
2. The Department for Education Statistics on the Children's Social Work Workforce obtained via the annual statutory Children and family social work workforce return.
3. Numbers of students on social work degree courses, published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)
4. Local authority records of the numbers of Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) social workers, student placements and trainees being supported through an employment-based qualifying training programme.

A set of assumptions were made that informed the framework for the forecasting model. Regional demand and supply of social workers was measured.

Examination of the labour market, including historical trends in supply and demand, enabled the WLSWTP to profile the current workforce and identify potential future challenges with respect to the supply of social workers. The workforce analytics gave rise to several generic workforce planning issues, including:

- Increasing turnover and short length of service profiles
- Over-reliance on younger, less experienced staff
- Increasing vacancy and agency rates
- Inadequate supply of university social work graduates
- Uncertainty about the future of employer-led training programmes

The final phase of the labour market analysis was to make recommendations for strategic activity to address the forecasted gaps, and to inform the regional learning and workforce development strategy. This strategy is to centre around social worker initial education and professional development training because the focus of the WLSWTP is to, 'improve the quality of social work education and social worker practice'. There was no expertise in this area and so no informed strategic planning. The consultant also ran some workshops to:

- Share analytics
- Help decide what the partnership needed and help align regionally
- Support workforce planning

Our learning is that this should be done first before any other planning for the partnership. For example, 'we provide placements but how do we know how many we need and whether we need any more?'

'This gets us into big picture – strategic planning – it helps us to understand what to focus on, helps us to benchmark where we are, to set targets e.g. we increased 20 placements a year'

It helped to:

- Know where ASYE are coming from
- Know that a higher percentage are leaving in year one
- Understand better as a region and locally
- Helps set direction and prioritise
- Monitor what we're doing/evidence base

This was a one-off activity funded by TP and will not continue going forward.

## Yorkshire Urban and Rural Teaching Partnership: Practice Education

A key focus of the TP is to strengthen the whole system around placements and practice education to ensure that students:

- have the best possible placement learning experience
- are more practice ready
- want to stay in the local area as Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs).

This aim has been operationalised through a collaborative TP Placements Group which drives the placement workstream. Over time, the TP placement group has become an embedded way of working, maintaining itself during a six month gap in PM resource. The placement workstream is supported by Practice Education Consultant (PEC) roles.

The TP funded six PEC roles in three of the local authorities (LAs) and a shorter-term post to add capacity to existing roles in the fourth LA. The PEC model was developed and tested through the two-year grant funding period. It was so successful that three out of four local authority partners agreed to continue the investment in the PEC posts to sustain the new ways of working, with the work of the PEC role being embedded in existing roles in the fourth LA. LAs have brought together elements of different funding streams to sustain the PECs, including placement fees, Skills for Care (ASYE related element) and core funding.

The work of the TP Placement Group, and delivery by PECs, comprises a wide range of activity:

- Development of TP protocols, processes, quality assurance and standards around placements and practice education. For example, the placement offer form is now mapped to the PCF. Transparent placement panels have been developed to support students who are struggling in their placement.
- Leading on placement allocations; facilitating a well organised, participative matching process; PECs plan and deliver student inductions instead of PEs doing that.
- Developing curriculum delivery e.g. involvement of PECs in the Practice Development Group and student skills development days, bringing the local practice context into learning. In some areas PECs run monthly student support groups where students discuss placement experience learning and issues.
- PECs support PEs and students by attending learning agreement meetings and mid-way reviews (and in some areas provide the PE role to student pods).

- Maintaining oversight of PE capacity and qualification currency across LAs (includes checking the PE has supported a student within two years, is engaged in annual CPD; and checking-in with the PE's manager to check appropriateness of the placement with regard to caseload/any other issues);
- Delivering PE training and support – HEI leads and PECs work together to co-design and co-deliver sessions on PE 1 & 2 courses; PECs have delivered two successful annual PE conferences and provided PE support groups, mentoring and individual support. Practice supervisor support is also provided in some areas.
- The TP workstream, and the role of the PEC, also contributes to wider TP activity, facilitating practitioner input into HEI admission processes, advising on CPD needs of PEs, contributing to practice development initiatives, delivering sessions to final year students around job applications/interviews; planning for progression to NQSW role; encouraging practitioners to contribute to teaching specific sessions or practice topics at the HEIs.

In some areas, the PEC role has been expanded to include practice placement coordination and supervision or support for ASYE programmes, and other routes to entry e.g. apprenticeships and return to work programmes. Some PECs are the link officer/key contact for e.g. Research in Practice or Social Work England.

Stakeholders have consistently identified a range of key benefits brought through the TP Placements Group and the PEC role:

- Collaborative working within the workstream has developed a better understanding across organisations of their different perspectives and environments. This has led to better working relationships, more effective responses to issues, improved practical support across organisations, greater levels of shared learning issues and overall, more consistency around placements.
- Placements are higher quality as a result of clear and robust processes across all aspects of placements. Everyone knows what needs doing, who to go to and where to get support. Better placement stability is achieved by having multiple ways of identifying placement issues at an early stage. The student placement survey fully evaluates the student experience, which facilitates continuous improvement.
- Increased support to the HEI curriculum/PDG and teaching specific sessions brings local context and practice into student education, helping students to be better prepared for placement. Early contact with students helps PECs get to know them and (along with knowing the PEs) further enhances the quality of the

placement matching process. Most students get first or second preference, which makes for a positive start.

- Improved numbers of better supported PEs has meant that all students can be offered statutory placement opportunities. PECs have developed several high-quality integrated placements which offer coherent LA and PVI placements, meeting the preferences of individual students.
- 96% rated the support from their Practice Educator as 'good' or 'very good'. When asked about specific types of support such as providing reflective supervision, challenge and feedback, responses were consistently positive.
- Pro-activity around issues that need addressing. Concerns regarding the experiences of overseas students were explored through initial research and a learning report. It was agreed that this learning was transferrable to students of a BME background and all organisations agreed to apply the learning to their own settings. There is funding to undertake further research to understand barriers facing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students which will be used to improve support processes.
- PECs involvement in the design and training for the PEPS has brought more realistic expectations into the training. Also, by supporting PEs to adopt reflective supervision with students, there is an opportunity to support wider culture change.
- PEs are perceived to feel more valued and less isolated as a result of being well supported, not having to do inductions or paperwork themselves, and being provided with resources (e.g. all PEs are given Self Care cards). Through multiple channels of support (including the annual conference), PECs get to know PEs and can identify development needs. The PE role is perceived to have become more attractive.
- Having PECs in both adult services and children's services has brought more networking and understanding within and across local authorities. See the report on the Social Care Matters website entitled 'Bridging the Gap Between Adult's and Children's Social Work'. [Here is the link to the article.](#)

## Enablers

- Hard work, skills, extensive experience and relationship building approach across PECs and HEI placement co-ordinators; commitment and willingness to work through issues.
- Engagement of senior staff in the TP meant the PEC roles were embedded within organisational approaches from the start, and that senior staff understood the benefits. This helped make the case for longer term funding.

- The PEC role and HEI goodwill has provided time and capacity to do this work thoroughly and to build strong relationships across HEIs, PECs, PEs and students. These relationships have underpinned the success of the work. 'Getting to really know your teams is the best advice I can give'. [PEC]
- The geography works well, with the two HEIs naturally linking in with specific LAs reducing competition and complexity around placement organisation.
- Being flexible to the different LA and HEI environments

## Challenges

- Changes to the degrees offered, and competition for placements from fast-track schemes will require further significant effort as placements will all be needed at the same time
- Financial climate poses a challenge in terms of PE/staff turnover which affects relationships and loss of experience; PVI loss of funding has affected availability of some good quality placements.
- House prices affect student retention in some areas. More non-drivers and large rural areas.
- Culture change can be slow, e.g. in terms of embedding reflective practice as norm and managing PE expectations of students.

## Perceived impact

Improved quality of student learning and readiness for practice:

- 'when asked about the overall learning experience provided by the placement, over 90% of respondents rated the placements as good or very good across four elements including confidence to become a social worker' [2019 placement survey]

Recruitment of NQSWs is improved, with more ASYE opportunities in some areas. This is supporting the partnership approach to 'grow our own' social workers.

- 85% would apply for a job with the placement organisation. Of those who would not, reasons cited included the distance from home or lack of permanent positions available [2019 placement survey]
- PECs provide capacity to participate in other recruitment and retention initiatives, e.g. Apprenticeships, Step Up, Frontline.
- 'The ASYE's who came from the TP are better equipped than those that didn't' PEC

- 'It's value for money now! It's been such a lot of work over the last two years, but now processes are embedded and working together is just normal' HEI

## **Leeds and Wakefield Social Work Teaching Partnership (LWSWTP) emphasis on the Adult and Children's partner focus: Effective partnership working**

The LWSWTP comprises two Local Authorities and two Universities. The TP development was supported by the existing philosophy amongst partners that the quality of social work education and delivery within adult and children's services was of equal importance. The agreed purpose of the TP is to influence and improve social work training for newly qualified and experienced workers regardless of point of delivery. By supporting new and experienced staff the TP enhances best practice and supports retention and recruitment of high calibre students and practitioners equipped to operate within the current complex social work climate.

In practice the formal partnership of four, has always been reflected, at strategic and operational level, as a partnership of 6 where the voices from adult and children services from each local authority are equally valued and heard. Initially there was a level of scepticism that adult services would have parity with children's, but adult service partners took personal responsibility for ensuring that this happened and found that there was universal willingness, and eagerness for this to happen within the TP. There is a sense that partners believe 'you get out what you put in' so by being proactive, committed and present balanced initiatives have been developed which reflect the needs of adult and children services. Of equal importance has been the need to ensure that both LA voices are reflected in the TP and embedded within the student experience within the HEIs. It is now seen as vital that the TP reflects all partners and that HEI staff are knowledgeable about current practice in both LAs and from adult and children services so that students hear and see examples of work from both within their academic learning. Within the TP the HEIs have worked much more closely for the benefit of all for example, developing the same paperwork for student placements. The TP has consciously identified and worked on issues which arise when working with families or individuals and the students usually have a placement in each discipline

The TP has built on existing relationships between the LAs and the HEIs. These have been enhanced by much greater levels of engagement with partners much more actively influencing every aspect of social work training from admission to qualification. Common and differing challenges between partners are sought, found and worked on collaboratively, especially through joint events and training where staff come together to plan, deliver and participate. Alongside strong collaboration there has had to be

compromise. The different challenges between and within the LA disciplines are acknowledged and robust and honest discussions have taken place about their specific and different needs and how these can be accommodated or addressed. As participation has grown and developed partners have recognised the benefits of collaboration and there is increased partnership working on a range of issues beyond the TP remit at operational and strategic levels.

The HEIs and the LA departments share the aim to enhance the practice and academic experience to reduce the risk of losing newly qualified staff. This aligns to a desire to improve the PE experience to increase their number, quality and status and to provide effective CPD to retain experienced social workers. Workforce leads were already in place for adult and children in the substantive structure of both LAs and have played a key role in TP developments.

Effective partnership working has been reflected at senior levels, across children and adults, within the HEIs as well as the LAs. The Operational Board secures shared agreement and accountability. From the outset the PM, Workforce Lead and Board adopted a conscious focus on building relationships with the right people, through high levels of engagement supported by effective, open communication. This resulted in trusting and realistic relationships which fostered a willingness to proactively address and resolve issues and challenges. By recognising individual partner organisational drivers, priorities and challenges, the TP agreed common shared priorities. Alongside a culture of participation decisions to opt out as well as opt in are accepted. Partnership working has been strengthened by incorporating and celebrating the different components within the TP and partners feel that approaches have been strengthened and validated through the existence of the TP.

Staff turnover has been a challenge especially given the focus on effectiveness through strong and trusting relationships. It has been mitigated by embedding the work within partner organisations and through structures and systems which support new personnel. A formalised induction structure is being developed. The numbers of adult and children PEs has increased, and the TP is able to meet the needs of the HEIs. Evaluation of training and development indicates that PEs feel valued and better supported. Students report and are reported to be better prepared for practice and more able to work collaboratively across disciplines and within either LA. The placement experience is reported to have improved through the proactive support of PE champions. CPD regularly brings together Adult and Children's workers who report benefitting from the diversity this offers. Practitioners feel they are working more closely together and more realistically understand the needs of both children and adults. The strong focus is felt to be driving more innovative and creative approaches for the greater benefit of SUCs. The culture shift of partnership working across disciplines is embedded. Partners are committed to this way of working and cannot envisage why they would not continue to do



so. Sustainability has been in-built from the beginning with partners committed to working together through a slim delivery structure and with key functions like recruiting and supporting PEs/student placements/practice into teaching, embedded within substantive posts. TP funding supports wider CPD activity and PM role and planning to address sustainability without funding is underway.

Advice from this TP to others would be to take time to understand the point of view of other partners and be clear what all partners want to get from partnership working and what each partner can give to the process. All partners should be clear that they need to take responsibility for ensuring their voice is heard and their service represented and reflected. At the same time ensure that there is effective feedback into your service so that the work of the TP is known and valued, and influence is clear. Whilst being willing and able to adapt, ensure through checks and balances that the agreed goals are kept in focus.

## North East London Social Work Teaching Partnership: Labour Market and Workforce Planning

This phase three teaching partnership covers six local authority areas with two HEIs delivering social work programmes. Prior to the TP bid most of the partners met regularly as the North East London Partnership and had already developed a strong collaborative partnership. A key challenge for the partners has always been the fluidity of staff who can migrate easily between local authorities in and around London. The partnership committed to achieving a comprehensive labour market analysis which would inform future planning in terms of recruitment, retention and migration of staff and the professional development of students and social workers across the partnership areas. They set about creating a bespoke mechanism which can be used to forecast their workforce needs in the next five years but is also able to generate what is needed at various levels and can be adjusted according to drivers of demand. The Workforce and Labour Market Planning Project is being implemented by a University in collaboration with members of the wider partnership. It is concerned with measuring and analysing the recruitment, retention and migration of qualified social workers within the North East London Social Work Teaching Partnership (NELTP) by:

- Modelling data in the public domain
- Considering current literature on workforce issues
- Developing and operating improved collection and analysis of data supplied by the partnership's HEIs and the LAs.

A significant challenge for all partners has been the sharing of detailed staffing information within the confines of data protection legislation. In order to overcome this, they established a method that allows pseudonymised personal data from LAs and HEIs to be cross-referenced which, in turn, allows analysis of individual learner and employee journeys. Full and robust data security has been designed into the approach in a way that exceeds the expectations of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

A university, on behalf of the partnership, has created an interactive tool that allows users to manipulate parameters linked to workforce management and to test a range of approaches to making wellbeing, service and cost improvements. The forecasting model has been built based on a calculation of labour supply based on historic retention and progression rates of staff from one year to the next, as well as the supply of newly qualified staff. The tool allows parameters to be tested on the following dimensions:

- Retention rates of those currently in the workforce
- Numbers of Leavers, through resignation, retirement or other factors
- Numbers of Joiners

- Proportions at career stages including 'newly qualified', 'early career', 'experienced' and 'senior'
- Proportions of students drawn from local institutions
- Proportions of agency staff
- Child and Adult Workforce
- Population and other local demographic factors as they differentially affect Children's and Adults workforce demand
- Average caseload
- Six-year forecasting
- Basis for forecasting by taking most recent year or by averaging the last four years
- Cost.

The model also allows improved workforce outcomes to be dynamically explored and visualised at workforce, local authority and partnership level. Key outcomes of the project are:

- workforce projections for each local authority over a five-year period based on the intersection of multiple sources of evidence; and
- planning approaches and systems improvement to allow workforce planning to be sustained across the partnership.

The project has established use of Microsoft Excel as its analytics tool although this may change. Their distinctive approach allows for the generation of visualisations of queries against different characteristics, e.g. gender, ethnicity, age. A series of initial questions have been encoded into Excel, but the tool will also provide the flexibility for new questions arising in the future to be modelled and visualised. This is a key aspect of the partnership's sustainability strategy.

## **Annex Six: Sustainability case studies**

Partnership areas were selected as a result of demonstrating different features of sustainability that would be of interest to other partnerships, in addition to geography and size. Areas selected: South Yorkshire, North London, Cumbria, and North East (region). This involved telephone consultations with the project manager, and other nominated stakeholders who the project manager selected to contribute.

### **North East Social Work Alliance (NESWA): Sustainability Case Study**

NESWA is one of the biggest Teaching Partnerships with six HEIs and twelve Local Authorities (18 partners). There is a strong regional identity and a history of LAs working together at senior levels. Within the region, before the TP was established, there were collaborations between certain HEIs and Local Authorities via Regional Workforce Leads but there was nothing on the scale of the TP. Relationships, across the board, are strong and there is high level commitment though inevitably levels of engagement fluctuate and this is recognised, accepted and managed within the TP. For the first phase, one of the LAs housed the operational team and a different LA chaired the TP. Since April 2019, in the current phase, a different LA has taken over the lead role following the allocation of extension funding by DfE. From the outset there was a proactive approach to sustainability, which underpinned the decision for this very large partnership to establish a small delivery team.

The partnership highly valued the contribution made by each individual organisation. As a result, when the central funding stream was coming to an end there was agreement that NESWA would only continue if all were able to contribute, equally, to providing ongoing funding for its work. The initial funding was due to end in March 2019 and in July 2018 discussions began in earnest around the future of NESWA. Two options were explored which were to either end the formal partnership with a plan to embed identified critical elements of the work into other structures and processes or to continue with NESWA structure and operations, if every partner was able to commit to allocating £10k funding per year for three years. This would provide resources, retain a central structure and manage transition to a future self-sustaining structure.

To support the internal and external decision making the partnership identified its key priorities aligned to each option so that the benefits and progress made through NESWA would not be lost whichever option was adopted. The partners recognised their different financial and operational constraints and that each organisation would have to make its own decision. In the event, it was not possible for all partners to commit to three years of funding and the focus shifted to further developing the option of ending the TP in March 2019. NESWA was clear that this would not mean an end to regional partnership working

but that some of its work would need to be embedded within other regional structures and that the focus would be on identifying ongoing priorities to support social work education, development and reform and identifying how to preserve and utilise the legacy of the TP. Existing operational links between LAs and HEIs were identified including a regional group for PSWs, workforce leads and placement co-ordinators chaired by Skills for Life. Progress of agreed priorities would be reported through regional ADSS structure.

As this planning was being developed by the operational team and agreed by the NESWA executive, the opportunity to apply for Sustainability Funding from DfE was announced. The TP undertook a transparent and rigorous analysis to decide if such an application should be made, given that the joint agreement to end the partnership had been made and that planning on transition had been significantly progressed. After discussion and debate all NESWA partners agreed to apply for sustainability funding and at the same time to press ahead with dismantling the existing operational structure and transitioning to a more embedded approach to delivery of the agreed priorities.

Currently, NESWA has managed the transition to an even further streamlined operational structure. A Project Officer is based within one LA and has close links with the Service Director Adult Social Care who is chair of the TP. A 'task and finish' approach is taken to operational delivery and technology is being explored to reduce time and costs of travel for engagement. Where it makes operational sense then sub regional groupings can be established. As before, securing high quality placement capacity and PE support remain key drivers for the TP alongside providing opportunities for practitioners to contribute to the formal learning process and academics to experience and influence current practice. Service User participation remains a priority within all aspects of the TP. High quality CPD continues to be offered and current plans are exploring virtual training, low cost/no cost venues, shorter courses (part day) and asking participants to provide their own food, as cost saving strategies to support sustainability of CPD.

At a senior strategic level, the work of NESWA is being embedded within regional LA structures as planned and the profile remains high. There are bigger challenges in linking in all HEIs at this executive level as there is no structure to do so and this is being addressed. Levels of consensus and commitment to sustainability vary but the focus on long term sustainability remains and the partnership is in the process of developing a long-term plan. NESWA believe that the decision to adopt a regional approach and create a large TP was the correct one and that there is great strength in having all the LAs and HEIs within the partnership. A strong and effective relationship has been developed between and within the partner members and this is opening up new partnerships for other areas of work, development and research. There is continued belief that the consensus approach to decision making of the future of the TP is beneficial. NESWA report that the work to transition the priorities to other operational or strategic structures has provided a strong foundation for long term sustainability planning.

## South Yorkshire Social Work Teaching Partnership

This phase one teaching partnership covers five local authority/trust areas with two HEIs delivering social work programmes. Prior to the TP inception most of the partners already met to carry out specific tasks but there were no meaningful actions that came out of those meetings. This is markedly different from the current situation where members describe a strong collaboration focused on a clear vision and purpose and where members feel able to talk openly and honestly with partners. Reaching that point has not been without its challenges and each local authority had its own internal and external demands brought about by inspection and national policy. Members, local authorities and HEIs, now talk confidently about the benefits of being part of a thriving partnership which has brought about improvements not only in both readiness for practice of social work students and continuing development of the social work workforce but also in terms of HEI staff being linked much more to practice and research being embedded in local authorities.

Sustainability has been a topic for the partnership almost since the beginning as it was always assumed that bespoke funding would not last indefinitely. Two years ago, the partnership began to discuss it more rigorously and this culminated in a visioning day in June 2019 when sustainability was a main item. The partnership agreed that in order to continue to drive improvements in social work education, as well as maintaining robust partnership working across both adults and children and families within local authorities/Trust and HEIs, it had to secure funding to maintain a core team, comprising the Project Manager three days a week and the Programme Manager 1 day a week. The existing lead council will continue to be the lead partner so there are related costs attached to that. In addition, the partnership needs a small budget for miscellaneous expenses such as E-portfolio maintenance, printing of CPD brochures and the annual conference. After considering a number of options each partner has agreed to pay an annual subscription of £3.5k per service (as some authorities only have children's services in the partnership) which covers the three days of the Project Manager salary and the miscellaneous budget only.

A key element in its sustainability plan is the income-generating potential of the partnership's CPD programme which is well-developed and popular across all the authorities. Both the universities currently deliver CPD modules for the social work workforce in each local authority/Trust. The TP also commissioned one day Masterclasses/learning sessions from both HEIs and independent experts to deliver training to the social care workforce at a reasonable cost of £50 per place, providing training where there was an identified gap. The income generated covers the cost of the speakers with the surplus being added to the TP budget. The partnership intends to develop a themed package to offer to social workers and agency workers for registration compliance which will deliver a far greater return on investment. This will enable social

workers to meet the new CPD requirements set by Social Work England. Financial regulations state that the budget at the end of the financial year must be spent and therefore any 'profit' will be pass-ported back to local authorities to refund the Project manager salary, lead partner costs and the annual subscription and training costs. This income generating strategy will ensure that the partnership is financially sustainable in the long-term.

In addition to the subscription and the income generation, each partner makes a considerable contribution in kind to the sustainability of the partnership in terms of staff time to attend meetings and carry out specific tasks for the partnership, provision of venues for meetings and training events, etc. The two HEIs have each funded a part-time Practice Consultant post who support frontline teaching in classrooms. One university intends to invest in the continuation of this post, the other intends to use the social workers who have completed the Practice Development Educator course, giving them teaching status, to teach students in the classroom; additional contribution will be invested by linking a research lecturer with each local authority.

The partnership has adopted an innovative and entrepreneurial approach to sustainability. They believe they rose to the challenge presented by the DfE when it established the teaching partnerships. The stretch criteria demanded collaboration and transparency about the curriculum and the management of the social work workforce and this was helpful to the partnership in terms of breaking down the barriers between individual organisations and prompting them to develop a strategy which would result in change. That change brought about notable improvements which have encouraged the partnership members to sign up to sustaining the partnership in the longer term with the intention to keep ahead of the game and engage with SWE so that it can influence the direction of travel. The local authorities have bought into the plan because they see the benefits for their workforce whilst the universities feel that working closely with local authorities and external partners is part of their civic responsibility and invaluable in terms of knowledge exchange.

## North London Teaching Partnership

The North London partnership comprises six local authorities, a charity and one HEI. It is one of the largest funded TPs and became operational as part of Phase Two. The ambitious teaching partnership programme has worked across all DfE priorities, with a focus on developing progression pathways at all levels, particularly developing leadership. For example, the partnership:

- Worked with one HEI to develop the UK's first MBA in Social Work.
- Funded 30 places across leadership courses (MA/PG Dip/Cert) including 6 places on the MBA course.
- Funded 40 PE training places and 10 PE Researcher places.
- Developed and delivered a programme of Management Masterclasses, adult and children's social care specialist training (Learning Symposia), Read and Reflect hour (research), Specialist Knowledge and Exchange Forums and other learning events.
- Developed co-teaching opportunities for practitioners, refreshing the range of practitioners co-teaching on HEI course units and ensuring that co-teaching reflected current practice and experiences.
- Improved opportunities and guidance for practitioners (and service users) to be involved in student interview processes.
- Improved placement matching processes, including practitioners on placement panels
- Improved consultation with service users to influence education and practice, resulting in training sessions for practitioners and students on the user perspective and two good practice guides (for students and the workforce).

The TP started thinking about sustainability at an early stage and adopted a two-stage process. Firstly, a large sustainability event was held in 2018, bringing together governance (Director) level stakeholders and facilitated externally to enable broad set thinking. They considered what activities they wanted to keep and how to sustain them. Senior engagement in this process was essential to effective decision making – to ensure a holistic view of individual partner needs, limitations and needs.

- A number of activities were already embedded as business as usual, including improved placement processes, student and practitioner involvement in interview panels and improved processes around placement matching and quality. It was agreed to embed the practitioners who teach processes (HEI to lead); 'Read and reflect' hour (PSWs to lead), the process for academics in practice (self-responsibility) and the leadership courses would continue to be offered by the HEI.



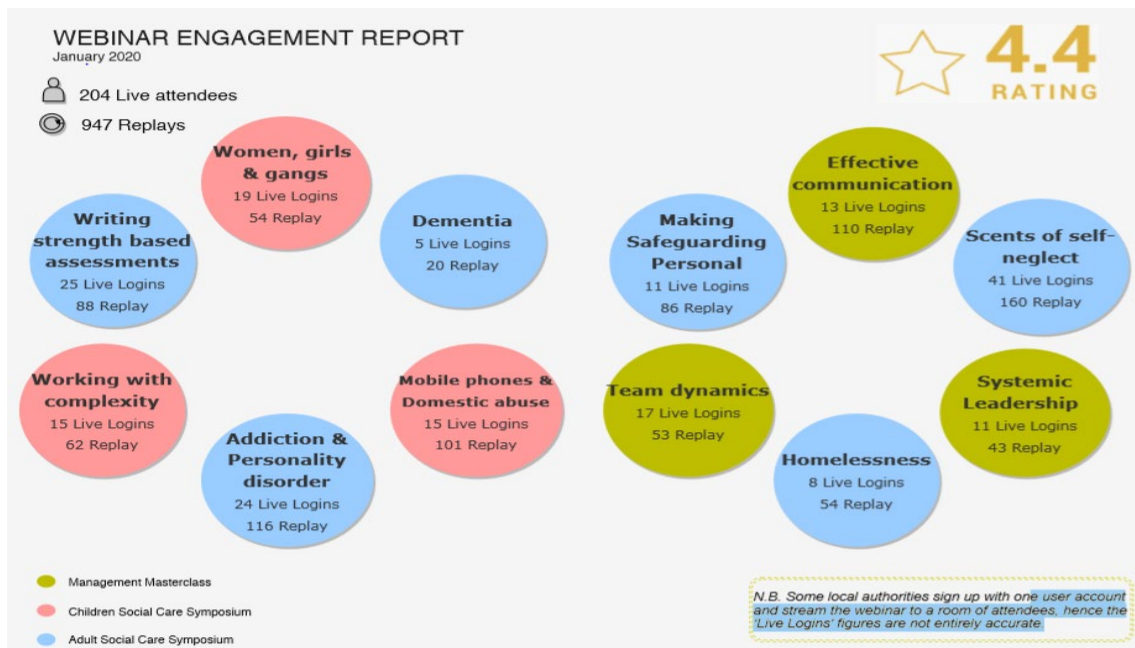
- It was agreed to significantly reduce the core project staffing team (of seven) by 25% by March 2019 and a further 60% by autumn 2019 (two staff remain)
- Savings would be made by moving the Management Masterclasses and Learning Symposia for practitioners online.
- Attempts to embed the SKEFs (face to face Specialist knowledge and exchange forum) throughout the Partnership were not successful due to capacity limitations and so has stayed as a core TP Project team responsibility, these training sessions are recorded live to allow Practitioners who were unable to attend the live session to replay them.

## **Moving training online**

The process of moving the training programme online took just under five months (Jan–May 19). The replay function (i.e. availability to watch a recording at a different time) was launched a month later. It took time to find a platform that was compatible with the different systems in all LAs, and one that could be used from all devices (phones, laptops etc). LA engagement was critical and was supported by asking LAs for a named champion to facilitate ‘going online’ in their area. This was slower in some areas due to anxiety about what being a champion would entail. However, all LAs have become effectively engaged as the benefits and savings of online training have become apparent.

The sessions take an interactive training webinar format. During the training, participants can type in questions and the trainer responds to the questions that have most global interest. The first sessions were one hour long but following the feedback received, they were increased to 90-minute sessions. There were technical issues with the first few sessions, but these were quickly resolved (sound, angles etc).

Moving training online has enabled the partnership to make huge savings in comparison to the cost of booking rooms (and no-shows). This will enable the funding to support the project team (now two staff) and continue to deliver/support training opportunities to practitioners and students until March 2021. Online learning has also enabled greater accessibility – it is compatible with all devices, there are no capacity issues and the replay function allows access at any time (so even if a session is missed, the training can still be utilised). This flexibility (along with reduced travel and associated time loss) makes it easier for managers to release staff. Engagement in the training has been excellent with well over 1000 individual participants in the first year. All training is also open to students at the HEI.



The TP project team had to work tenaciously to make it happen, finding innovative ways to overcome practical, policy and procedural issues to get the necessary approvals and operational systems in place. Reductions in the team capacity affected timescales. There are still occasional challenges including finding expert trainers and procurement policies around this. A key enabler for this work stream is having an assigned person in the finance team to work with the TP.

Phase two of the sustainability planning is now a focus for the TP, in order to plan for beyond March 2021. Governance meetings have been reduced to three times a year and the previous quarterly steering group is now rebranded as a bi-monthly Working Group, where training and progression needs are identified (this comprises workforce leads from each partner). Relationships across the partnership are sustained and senior engagement is an ongoing enabler in maintaining direction and operational engagement.

The two-phase approach has allowed the TP time to collect data on what is working – and to see what is genuinely able to be embedded within existing capacity - before making final decisions around priorities and any long-term infrastructure required. For example, it has been challenging to find capacity to continue activities that require significant organisation. HEIs have found it difficult to find capacity to refresh the CV collection for practitioners who co-teach, some MBA students have deferred modules due to pressures in their work roles and PSWs have struggled to continue the successful Read and Reflect hours. The TP have costed its infrastructure and in, anticipation of post March 2021, the TP is beginning to explore if and how partners can contribute ‘fairly’ - financially and ‘in-kind’. Partners are keen to maintain momentum of the online training and are exploring alternative avenues of funding support for this. The importance of this early exploration and planning is critical to being able to take pro-active decisions around how the activity of the TP can be maintained in the longer term.

## Cumbria Teaching Partnership

Cumbria is a large rural area. The TP includes one HEI, One LA and four PVI sector organisations.

The LA know their area well and are aware that many Social Work students train and live in the area for their whole careers. Another HEI is also a large supplier of social workers for the area so although not involved formally in the TP (it did not meet DfE criteria) the learning from the TP was shared with them, and they and the LA will continue to work closely with them and support them around quality assurance in order to support sustainability. Their sustainability plan remains committed to supporting practice education across the county, including the wider requirements for all HEI placements and PVI PE provision as they seek to establish a vibrant and committed sector.

In year two it became obvious to the partnership that they needed sustainability for Practice Educators, and this needed drive and focus. *'The problem was that it fell into people's roles but was not their focus and we needed to foster a strong pipeline of progressing those staff through the PEPS stages and consolidating their involvement in PE as so to deliver a sufficient quantity of high quality placements'*. They know that organisational culture around PE in the area needs to be further reformed so that the value of, and the contribution to, student learning is championed at every level.

The TP jointly appointed a practice educator, paid for by the local authority. Their feeling is that the Practice Educator role should be highly valued. *'There needs to be a culture around this. Unless we increase the number of PE's and support them to a high standard how can we recruit and retain good quality social workers? We need to invest in supporting them in the early years as this will benefit their lifelong careers and future SW to come'*.

It has also been agreed that Practice Education will become a standing agenda item on the monthly Directorate Management Team meetings, chaired by the LA Executive Director (People), as well as the 'workforce board' (operational decision making forum including senior/service managers and the two Principal Social Workers, who are now champions for PE in the LA).

They have plans to further increase, train and retain the numbers of PE's and provide regular access to CPD. This is seen as vital to the continued growth of their People Social Work Academy. They have also found that once going, PE forums can run with minimum support as PE's are excited and keen to be involved/support each other. They also want to know what each other are doing and share information, stories and research.

The HEI in the TP will continue to support the TP by moderating ASYE portfolios, training practice educators, providing places on their teaching qualification, inviting LA staff to events/conferences funded by their research grants, supporting lecturer practitioners and by lecturers regularly going into practice which is well embedded. The TP currently have a joint project on rural social work with research soon to be published and two practice guides for social workers produced to assist with working in a rural context. The rural social work research will continue in the year ahead and findings shared nationally.

## **Annex Seven: 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 System**

**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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