

## The PSSRU 2003–2005

### Evaluation of individual budgets

Individual budgets are at the heart of social care policy proposals for the coming years. In the autumn of 2005 a proto-pilot will be launched in West Sussex, with other pilot authorities to be announced later in the year. The PSSRU (coordinating across all three branches) will be carrying out a collaborative evaluation jointly with the Social Policy Research Unit (University of York) and the Social Care Workforce Research Unit (King's College London). The work will be funded by the Department of Health.

For information on other new work, see pages 32–33 and the research plans section on pages 6–9.

### Collaborative research

The PSSRU works together with a number of organisations, sharing expertise, knowledge and perspectives. Some recent initiatives are mentioned here.

Paul Clarkson and David Challis from PSSRU Manchester took part in three day-long presentations in Tokyo and Nagoya, Japan on 31 August and 3–4 September 2004. These were to begin collaborative research funded by the 21st Century Centre of Excellence Programme at Nihon Fukushi University, Nagoya.

This work is to extend the Performance Measurement programme, developed by Paul and David at Manchester, and to learn some lessons for future work in the UK. The presentations were very warmly received by audiences of care managers, planners and researchers in Japan and plans were made to continue the project.

Also building on previous work at PSSRU Manchester, a project looking at patterns of admission to care homes of older people has recently begun in collaboration with Professor Paul Williams and Dr Raisa Deber of the Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation, University of Toronto.

### Long-term care in the EC

Adelina Comas-Herrera spent two weeks at the European Commission, as a visiting fellow to the Directorate General of Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN), in autumn 2004 and is spending a further two weeks there in autumn 2005.

The PSSRU Long-Term Care Finance team provided advice to DG ECFIN for their first set of projections of public expenditure on long-term care and conducted a comparative study for the EU of projected expenditure on long-term care for older people in four European countries. DG ECFIN requested our advice on

methodologies for their next set of projections. There is more on the LTCF programme on pages 20–21.

### Conferences

LSE Health and Social Care (of which the PSSRU at LSE is a part) hosted the 5th European Conference on Health Economics very successfully in September 2004. There were presentations on all aspects of health economics, including financing and resource allocation, economic evaluation, econometrics in health economics, incentives in health care, equity in health and health care, outcomes evaluation, pharmaceutical economics, social care and mental health economics.

The two plenary presentations, by Professor Bo Rothstein on social capital and Professor Lord Layard on happiness and public policy, are available in the LSE Health and Social Care discussion paper series at [www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEHealthAndSocialCare/](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEHealthAndSocialCare/)

LSE Health & Social Care continues to organise a well-attended seminar series which is open to all. Details are available at the same website.

In July 2003 the Kent and LSE branches of the PSSRU jointly organised the summer meeting of the Health Economists' Study Group at the University of Kent.

### Older people as research advisors

How can we make sure older people's views, priorities and interests are reflected in our future work? What methods help and encourage older people to take part in research?

The PSSRU Housing and Care Programme has formed a research advisory group made up of older volunteers to help us address these issues. Most of the older people in the group live in one of three local housing schemes providing extra or enhanced care. However, we also have advisors who live in non-specialised housing but who are part of a local user involvement and empowerment group for older people with mental health needs.

The programme has consulted members of the group about the issues that are important to them and used this to help shape our plans for the future programme. Most recently, we consulted members living in two of the housing schemes about research material for one of our new projects. The comments and advice we received led to improvements in the consent forms, information leaflets and show cards used in the project.

The programme produces a newsletter for research advisors to give the group feedback on how their involvement has shaped our research.

## Staff news

### New chair of PSSRU Executive Group

David Challis, director of the PSSRU branch in Manchester, has now taken over this role in rotation from Martin Knapp.

We also congratulate Jennifer Beecham, who leads the PSSRU economics of child social care research programme (see pp. 18–19) on her appointment as Reader in Social Policy at the University of Kent.

### Higher degrees

The PSSRU encourages staff to work towards higher qualifications alongside their research work and senior researchers regularly act as supervisors. A number of staff have recently been awarded degrees.

At Kent, Karen Jones has been awarded a doctorate in health psychology, and Zoe Boutsoli, Ann-Marie Towers and Jacquetta Williams are working towards a higher degrees. Postgraduate students working with the Kent branch have included Jamie Banks, and Marion Witton, who have both successfully completed PhDs.

Three staff at the LSE branch of the PSSRU have been awarded doctorates: José Luis Fernández, Julien Forder and Andrew Healey. Other staff are working towards PhDs: Adelina Comas-Herrera, Claire Curran, Derek King, Roshni Mangalore, Tihana Matosevic, Francesco Moscone and Linda Pickard.

LSE students Christina Curry, Jackie Damant, Heba Elgazzar, Helena Medeiros, Tamara Shulman, Catherine Staite and Hannah Monica Yesudian and have all been working with the PSSRU.

We also welcomed visiting PhD students Sangeeta Ahluwalia, Jolanda Dwarswaard, Jae-eun Seok, Guk-Hee Shu and Birgit Trukeschitz.

At Manchester, Gemma Wong, from Hong Kong University, has been awarded a PhD from the University

of Manchester based on work undertaken in PSSRU. Paul Clarkson is also working towards a PhD.

### Secondments

As well achieving his PhD, Julien Forder has recently completed a two-year secondment to the Strategy Unit in the Department of Health where he worked on, among other things, the NHS Improvement Plan and the Green Paper on adult social care.

Andrew Healey is currently on secondment to the Home Office as an economics advisor.

### Andrew Bebbington

Andrew Bebbington left the PSSRU recently after more than 30 years. When Bleddyn Davies established the Unit in 1974, Andrew was his first appointment, closely followed by Martin Knapp and David Challis.

At Andrew's leaving party, Bleddyn talked about Andrew's crucial contribution to developing computing infrastructure at a time when social science computing was mostly rudimentary; his vital work on needs indicators, his insights into methodology for the domiciliary care project, and his continuing contribution as one of a few leading researchers on healthy active life expectancy. Andrew thanked all his colleagues, past and present. The PSSRU, he said, was characterised by a friendly spirit of collaboration and his work had given him the opportunity to have quite a direct influence on policy, not the case with much academic research.

He then produced a letter from Bleddyn which set out a daunting list of projects his first recruits were to undertake – much of it radical work at the time. He had wondered at the time how on earth they were to cope with all of them; he would have been even more alarmed if he had known he would be still working on the same themes 30 years later!

Andrew revealed that at the age of eight had written down his ambitions:

to be a postman and a train driver, and to travel round the world. The latter ambition may now be realised – he has already crossed the Atlantic under sail – if not perhaps the first two. He remains active in research projects with the PSSRU and others.

### Arrivals and departures ...

We also said farewell to Judy Lee, who moved from PSSRU at Kent to be Departmental Administrator for the School of Social Policy and Social Services Research at the University. Jane Dennett has taken over as Administrator for PSSRU Kent.

Dr Jeremy Kendall will be moving from PSSRU LSE early in 2006 to take up a senior lectureship at the University of Kent. Moving in the opposite direction was Dr Judith Shapiro: at PSSRU Kent during 2004–2005, she recently took up a post in the Department of Economics at LSE.

Other staff who have moved on since our previous Bulletin include Tony Amatrudo, Fayaz Aziz, Louise Barnard, Reba Bhaduri, Gemma Buckland, Tom Cockcroft, Susan Downey, Jennifer Francis, Kate Hamilton-West, Michelle Slead, Karen Stewart and Robin Saunders, while Iain Beattie and Pam Brown were with us for a short time in 2004–5.

New staff joining include Laura Dawson, Karen Jones, Juliette Malley, Roshni Mangalore, Sue Martin, Alison McQuade, Francesco Moscone, Sara Northey, Margaret Perkins, Ann-Marie Towers and Sima Sandhu.

At the LSE branch we are very pleased to welcome Gerald Wistow as Visiting Professor and Dr Jocelyn Cornwell as Visiting Fellow.

Since the previous Bulletin we have also welcomed, to the world, Alexander Nicolaou-Frini, Alexandra Holder (to Jacquetta Williams) and Jennifer Swandale (to Rosalyn Bass) and congratulated Claire Curran, Jackie Damant, Francesco Moscone, Demetra Nicolaou and Ann-Marie Towers (née Muncer) on their weddings.