The PSSRU

The Personal Social Services Research Unit was established in 1974 and now has branches at three UK universities: the University of Kent, the London School of Economics and Political Science, and the University of Manchester.

Its mission is to conduct high quality research on social and health care to inform and influence policy, practice and theory.

Contact details for the staff at the three PSSRU branches are on pages 38–39.

PSSRUlist

To subscribe to this email list for announcements of publications, events and developments at the PSSRU, go to www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/pssrulist.html

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Introduction

PSSRU is 36 years old in 2010, and this is the 19th in its series of Bulletins. An enormous amount of social care water has passed under the research bridge during that period. To pursue that metaphor further, PSSRU research has stirred those waters, and sometimes channelled and influenced the direction and speed of flow.

This much is again clear from a look back over the past year. PSSRU staff in Manchester, Canterbury and London have been active across many topic areas, getting messages from research into policy and practice discussions at local, national and international levels. They have also achieved high rates of productivity in terms of conventional academic outputs.

An immediate impression from flipping through the pages of this Bulletin is of the enormous breadth of work that is underway. Reading through the associated reports and publications also demonstrates the depth of argument and insight. There is new work on assessment and performance measurement; continuing work to build better outcome and cost measurement tools; examination of care coordination for older people at home; construction of a dynamic micro-simulation model to explore new ways of organising, delivering and funding social care; continued development of the Unit’s macro-simulation model that allows future need, cost and funding projections to be made; studies of prevention; detailed studies of housing and care; and evaluations of care and support arrangements for people with mental health needs. Work across many needs groups has invested in methods and produced new evidence on prevention and promotion; and there are studies of children, young people and parenting.

PSSRU research has contributed to national thinking about the future organisation and funding of care (including the technical work underpinning the Green and White Papers). The development of the micro- and macro-simulation models, building on PSSRU knowledge and analytical techniques, have given this contribution a particular authority.

Another high-profile activity in the past year has been the demanding evaluation of the Partnerships for Older People Projects (POPPs). The report was launched by the Secretary of State in early 2010 (see page 24). Last year also saw the launch of the NIHR School for Social Care Research, with three of the six constituent groups being the PSSRU branches (page 20); and in late 2009 the centre at LSE of which PSSRU is a major part was awarded the Queen’s Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education.

This will be the last PSSRU Bulletin in this form. With the growing independence of the three PSSRU branches and developments in communications we will work through new channels (see page 5).

We are confident that PSSRU’s research will remain as relevant as ever – particularly with social care so prominent in national debates.

Martin Knapp, PSSRU, London School of Economics and Political Science, March 2010

About this Bulletin

The PSSRU Bulletin is available to download free of charge from the PSSRU website. The text is available in large print on request. It records recent developments in the Unit, presents recent findings from each of our main programmes of work, and gives a concise overview of research projects and recent publications with contact information. We welcome comments on this Bulletin or other aspects of our work.

Other PSSRU publications

A wide range of publications reports the PSSRU’s work. Some are mentioned in the articles which follow and listed in the section beginning on page 32.

The Unit website gives a complete listing, with many downloadable publications (including this Bulletin and previous issues), along with more information on current and completed research.