Commissioning and Performance

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The launch in July 2009 of the Government’s Green Paper, *Shaping the Future of Care Together*, added further stimulation and ideas to the debate about the organisation, delivery and funding of social care in England. Members of the PSSRU’s Commissioning and Performance team have been very closely linked with the development of the Green Paper and to the debate more generally.

A technical paper (by Julien Forder and José-Luis Fernández)

- described the methods and assumptions underlying the newly-developed PSSRU dynamic micro-simulation model used for analysing long-term funding systems
- gave details of potential and actual users of care, their levels of need, and their income and assets
- detailed the system of support available, the current funding arrangements and the benefits system
- looked at costs and the degree to which population need is being met
- gave an assessment of the current system

A range of other PSSRU research will also contribute to the debate.

Current projects within the C&P programme include:

- **Choice and personalisation**: The high-profile IBSEN evaluation of individual budgets in social care reported in 2008. With our partners in other universities, we are analysing findings further and publishing papers.
- **New care technologies**: We are contributing to the Whole System Demonstrator evaluation of telecare and telehealth in three pilot authorities in England; and developing and evaluating accessible technology for older and disabled people in six European countries within the MonAMI project.
- **Balance of care**: Evaluation of the national Partnership for Older People’s Projects (POPP) is led by Karen Windle (Kent) with LSE support. Evaluations of the local POPP project in Kent and the Brighter Futures initiative in Kent were recently completed. A key theme is the interdependence of costs and benefits of the health and social care systems.
- **Local variations in care patterns**: Local authority data are being used to explore the extent to which local factors (such as need, costs of services, policy priorities and socio-economic characteristics) explain the significant heterogeneity in local patterns of use of social care services in England.
- **Health England**: Modelling possible cost-effectiveness gains for the health system from preventive social care measures for a range of user groups.

Selected publications


Modelling Social Care Reform Options
José-Luis Fernández, Julien Forder and Raphael Wittenberg

The recent growth in social care expenditure in England has been significant. Over the last ten years, for instance, local authority gross expenditure on older people increased by 80% in nominal terms and by 44% in real terms. Such an increase responds to a range of key drivers, which include rises in demand for care linked to demographic patterns, reductions in the availability of alternative sources of support (and in particular of informal care giving) and above general inflation increases in the unit cost of social care services (linked to real rises in wages in the social care sector).

Heavily means-tested, the English social care system concentrates public support on individuals with low financial means and with very high dependency levels, and leaves significant proportions of older people in need of care to purchase care privately, rely on informal care or face unmet need for care.

Ever since the Royal Commission on the Funding of Long Term Care was set up in 1997, PSSRU researchers have made significant contributions to the growing public debate about future funding arrangements for social care. Using a range of modelling methods (including macro and micro, static and dynamic simulation models), they have explored present and future costs and benefits associated with alternative scenarios associated with different assumptions about patterns of disability, care service provision, unit costs and funding systems.

Key such contributions include a large number of scenarios modelled for the Royal Commission, IPPR, the EU Commission, the Joseph Rowntree long-term care funding enquiry, and the quantitative and policy analysis of the Kings Fund Wanless Social Care enquiry (managed by PSSRU staff) which advocated more universal support with long-term care needs. Recently, PSSRU researchers have also developed a model exploring future long-term care costs for young people with physical disabilities and for people with learning disabilities.

These key analyses have informed and influenced the Government’s Green Paper on care and support. The PSSRU has provided significant quantitative analytical support to the Green Paper team, using purpose-built aggregate and dynamic micro-simulation models allowing the analysis of longitudinal and distributional implications of alternative funding arrangements. Further analyses are planned which will examine in greater detail key issues for the future of the social care such as likely future patterns of prevalence of disability, availability of social care workforce in the future, and the interrelationship between social care and other related systems (e.g. health care, housing, and pension systems).

After many years looking for a new solution for the funding of long-term care in England, the care and support Green Paper could mark a significant step towards a more universal, more efficient and more fairly distributed financial burden of caring for dependent people.

References