

ORGANISATIONAL, PROGRAMME AND PROJECT EVALUATION/ SHORT AND LONG –TERM RESEARCH

In order to ensure that health and social care practice is constantly underpinned by best practice; it is imperative that service provision (at project and programme level) is monitored and rigorously evaluated (including authentic service user and carer involvement).

Allister's research and programme evaluation (R &PE) skills could be a "fit for purpose" link to your organisation/project. My R&PE background includes various methodological designs and conducted in a diverse range of national (Cornwall, Sheffield and Canterbury) and international settings (UK, South Africa, USA, Australia, Norway, Sweden and Holland). I have over 15 years experience in the field of social research. Both my MA and my PhD were focussed specifically on social research methodologies. I have conducted numerous research studies and programme evaluations during this time. Furthermore, I have been responsible for numerous aspects of the Social Research Methodology training in the Faculty of Health and Social Care at Canterbury Christ Church University, and will be able to bring an extensive background knowledge and experience to your organisation/project.

My PhD study was titled "A qualitative study of the coming out process for gay and lesbian youth in post Apartheid South Africa." (read more Doctoral Dissertation AND Scholarship and Research – annotated bibliography). Upon completing my Ph.D. in South Africa in 2000, I took up the post as a Research Fellow for the Cornwall and the Isle of Scilly Health Action Zone (read more Scholarship and Research – Health Action Zone). I supported research and evaluation capacity building with 28 children and young people's project leads from the various statutory and voluntary sectors, including the Cornwall Young Carers project (CYCP).(read more Scholarship and research – Young Carers). As part of the University of Plymouth evaluation team I was commissioned to conduct the first evaluation of the CYCP.

I have been published in a wide range of specialisms, ranging from young carers, gay and lesbian youth, homophobia in secondary education, support for parents in coping with their child's homosexuality, workforce development, and international social work practise, amongst others. I have been invited as an international Socrates scholar to teach and disseminate my research findings at various higher education institutions in Europe (Sweden, Holland, Denmark and Norway). I have recently (2005/2006) presented papers at international conferences in Norway, Australia and South Africa. Furthermore, I was invited to present two papers at the International Child and Youth Care conference in Canada (2003). In 2005 I had two articles published in the first International Encyclopaedia of Youth, Education and Sexualities. (read more Scholarship and Research – International Conference Presentations)

All of the research and programme evaluation I have conducted has been done within the context of partnership working and active service user/client participation and involvement. As stated earlier I was responsible for evaluating 28 different children and family projects in Cornwall. All of these projects had a significant element of user participation and direct involvement in the evaluation process. In

light of this I developed a programme evaluation model called AAAQI (Aims, Assumptions, Activities, Research Questions and Indicators), which tracked the direct participation and involvement of families and social care agencies in the direct work being carried out by the various projects. All of my research has been embedded in a context of partnership working in order to deliver not only rigorous and solid social science research and evaluation, but furthermore, to ensure that the research findings have a direct impact on informing practise.

Another example from my research practise is a study I conducted titled: "An oral history of gay men living with HIV/AIDS." This study utilised a qualitative paradigm of data collection and analysis and relied not only on the perspective of gay men themselves, but also focussed on the critical link between the research participants and their social environment i.e. their experiences of the partner health and social care agencies providing support services. Additionally, one aspect of my Doctoral study evaluated the impact of gay and youth experience of their socio – political environment. This required developing research partnerships with various educational, social services, religious and community based organisations (NGO's and CBO's).

I was also commissioned to conduct two separate a 5-year programme evaluation study with the Cornwall Young Carers Project,. as well as the Isle of Wight Young Carers Project. This demonstrated the significant way in which I included all the various partner agencies in the development, administration, analysis and dissemination of the research findings. (read more Scholarship and Research – Young Carers AND International Conference Presentations - CYCP Conference Cornwall 2005).

I have lead the research methodology and methods of inquiry modules at Sheffield Hallam University (at undergraduate levels) and served as the research methodology and dissertation leader at Canterbury Christ Church University (at post graduate level). Furthermore, I have been responsible for overseeing the supervision of MA dissertations. As part of the Faculty's RAE submission (for 2007/2008) I have provided 4 (out of a possible 4) peer reviewed publications for submission. I continue to be research active.

Services:

- Developing Research and Project Evaluation (R &PE) designs with clients and partner agencies/stakeholders
- "Walking" an evaluation through its various stages of development – inception, conceptualisation, planning, costing, proposal writing, data collection and analysis, report writing and dissemination
- Developing evaluation proposals that are client/market driven. This has included tailoring R&PE proposals to the clients' needs, specifications, remit and financial considerations.
- Developed rigorous and robust evaluation strategies, with a triangulated methodological perspective.

- Understand and respond to the market – proactively procuring research grants/pots of research money
- Action orientated research praxis. Given my background and training as a social work practitioner, researcher and educator, I have always had a strong commitment to the facilitation of a process whereby research findings/outcomes have a “very real” impact on direct health and social care service delivery and policy formulation.
- R&PE capacity building/workshops/ project based research training
- Developing and delivering R&PE at the oftentimes complex interface between partner agencies. These have included:
 1. Between the statutory and PVI sector
 2. Between Local Health Authorities, Social Services and Local Education Authorities
 3. Between University/HEI’s and funding bodies
 4. R&PE strategies driven by DOH/Health Action Zone – wherein competing agenda’s and prospective targets have to be sensitively defined, negotiated and ultimately achieved in a partnership context
- Service user consultation, inclusion and feedback at the core of my R&PE strategies
- Linking research to national policy and legislative frameworks e.g. Every Child Matters, Carers and Recognition Act (1995), National Service Framework for the Assessment of Children and Family in Need (DOH), amongst others.
- Dissemination of research findings, in both oral and written formats, for example.
 1. Discussion papers
 2. Final R&PE reports for funders
 3. National and International Conference paper presentations re: dissemination of ideas around good practice
 4. Writing peer reviewed articles for publication
 5. Key note addresses re: presenting findings from my research
- Research around national and international workforce development
- Developing and delivering longitudinal studies i.e. tracking identified themes and intended outcomes, changes, development and modification in service delivery, service user consultation, etc

Details:

Venues: Sessions held at client's venue
Times: Scheduled to suit client's availability
Fees: Hourly, daily and retainer rates

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