The Contribution of Social Sciences to Health

Call for evidence

The Campaign for Social Science is commencing a new project, *The Health of People*, to demonstrate the vital role of social science research and practice in contributing to health and addressing specific issues facing the NHS, UK healthcare, and health more broadly. It will set out major problems facing UK health, and provide concrete examples of how social science research and expertise can address them, such as the prevention of ill-health, optimising the benefits of biomedical advances and managing long-term conditions. The project will set out an agenda for the better use of social science research in health policy making and service provision.

As part of the report, we are seeking case studies of research in which the social sciences have made a significant contribution to improving health and/or the quality of our health services – and in which there may scope for even greater contributions in future if the social sciences were more fully harnessed.

We take a broad approach in this call for evidence and hope to include examples from a wide range of academic disciplines (e.g. sociology, psychology, health economics) and practitioners (e.g. clinical, public health).

Key themes

We would particularly welcome case studies that fall within our six key themes, selected using a framework adapted from the 2016-17 ‘NHS Mandate’ (the summary of key priorities given by the Department of Health to the English NHS to guide their actions during the course of the year):

- Improving outcomes and tackling inequalities
- Safety
- Efficiency and productivity
- Prevention
- Access and quality
- Rebalancing the health system away from a crisis focus, towards care closer to home and the community (this includes better access to GPs, improving mental health and learning disability services, and creating more integrated care)
Case study questions

For each case study, please address the following key questions with a maximum of 100 words for each section:

1. **Problem** – outline the issue at stake
2. **Purpose** - outline the aim of the study
3. **Social Science contribution** – detail the specific social science contribution
4. **Impact** – detail the impact (including any direct lessons for policy and practice)
5. **Scope for further social science contribution** – comment on the scope for even greater contribution in this area if the social sciences were more valued
6. **Details** (using the Harvard system of referencing) to the full study (‘For further information, see Smith et al (2015)’)

Submissions

Please submit your contributions via email to d.puska@acss.org.uk or by post to Daniela Puska, Campaign for Social Science, 33 Finsbury Square, London, EC2A 1AG.

Deadline for submission is 22nd April 2016.

Submissions may be published in the report or on our website. Please inform us if you do not want your name and/or your submission to be made public.

About the Campaign for Social Science

The Campaign for Social Science was set up by the Academy of Social Sciences in 2011 to promote social science to the government, media and the wider public.

We campaign for policies that support social science inquiry in the UK, such as the retention of large-scale longitudinal research programmes. We promote social science on social media and organise events to explain its value.

About the Health of People Working Group

The Health of People project is led by Professor Susan Michie, Director, Centre for Behaviour Change, University College London and will combine the expertise of a Working Group that includes:

- Professor Gwyn Bevan, Director of the MSc in Public Management and Governance, London School of Economics
- Professor Rona Campbell, Centre for Public Health Research, University of Bristol
- Professor Joanna Coast, Professor in the Economics of Health and Care, University of Bristol
- Dr Simon Christmas, independent social researcher
• Professor Kevin Fenton, National Director for Health and Wellbeing, Public Health England
• Professor Robbie Foy, Professor of Primary Care, Leeds Institute of Health Science
• Professor Jon Glasby, Head of the School of Social Policy, University of Birmingham
• Dr Ann Hoskins, former Director of Children, Young People and Families, Public Health England
• Professor Marie Johnston, Professor of Health Psychology, University of Aberdeen
• Professor Mike Kelly, Centre for Science and Technology, University of Cambridge
• Professor Lawrence King, Professor of Political Economy and Sociology, University of Cambridge
• Professor Theresa Marteau, Director, Behaviour and Health Research Unit, University of Cambridge
• Professor Matt Sutton, Professor of Health Economics, University of Manchester
• Professor Robert West, Director of Tobacco Studies at the Cancer Research UK Health Behaviour Research Centre, University College London
• Tim Whitaker, Director of Communications, Hanover Housing Association
• Professor Sally Wyke, Deputy Director, Institute of Health and Wellbeing, University of Glasgow
• Dr Dagmar Zeuner, Director of Public Health, London Borough of Merton

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION

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