



Northern Ireland
Assembly



Queen's University
Belfast



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University



Ulster
University

Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

2015-16 PROGRAMME

“Promoting evidence-led policy and law-making within Northern Ireland” – that is the underlying aim of the Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS). KESS is the **first** of its kind in the United Kingdom, formally partnering a legislative arm of government – the Assembly - with academia. Aiming to encourage debate and improve understanding, KESS provides a forum to present and disseminate academic research findings in a straightforward format, on issues that are relevant to the Programme for Government. It seeks to bring the findings to the attention of key participants and decision-makers in the policy and law-making processes in Northern Ireland, such as MLAs and Assembly committees, as well as the wider public sector.

Embedded in the KESS model are: the local universities *via* their academics; Assembly committees *via* their Chairpersons; the Assembly’s Research and Information Service (RaISe) *via* its Researchers; and, a broad spectrum of attendees. (Attendees include: MLAs and their staff; political party staff; Assembly and Departmental officials; others from the public and private sectors; academics; voluntary and community groups; and, members of the public.) For this reason, KESS creates unique engagement opportunities; and importantly provides a ‘pathway’ for more, in-depth discussion at a later date about findings presented at KESS.

The Series is jointly delivered by RaISe, in partnership with all three universities located in Northern Ireland (NI) – the Queen’s University of Belfast (QUB - co-founder in 2011), Ulster University (Ulster - in 2012) and The Open University (OU - in 2013).

Seminars are **free** and are held on **Wednesdays from October 2015 through June 2016**. Each seminar starts at **1.30pm in Parliament Buildings**, located on Stormont Estate. Most seminars cover a range of themes under one broad heading – see below for relevant dates and timings. On arrival, delegates receive a seminar pack that includes the academics’ policy briefings and power point presentations, including contact information.

Tea/coffee is provided following presentations and discussion. Free parking is available to all. Kindly allow time to pass through Assembly Security upon entry to Parliament Buildings; and ensure that you specify your special needs (for example, wheelchair accessibility) when registering. The Assembly is committed to fulfilling its equality-related roles and responsibilities and will take reasonable efforts to meet requests relating to them.

To reserve your place at a seminar, email raise@niassembly.gov.uk.

Thanks for supporting KESS.

7 October 2015

ADDRESSING SOCIAL CHALLENGES IN A DIVIDED SOCIETY

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Duncan Morrow (Ulster) - *Tackling Sectarianism and its consequences in Scotland: comparisons with approaches to sectarianism in NI*

Sectarian divisions from both the politics of church and state and mass immigration from Ireland have left their mark on Scottish as well as Irish society. In 2012, the Scottish Government established an Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism to investigate the modern legacy of sectarianism and to advise the government on the steps which could be taken to make changes. Following consultation and extensive quantitative and qualitative research over two and a half years, the Advisory Group reported in 2015. The group identified roles for government, local government and community leadership in making change. The seminar will present some of the research findings, the policy approach and make initial comparisons with approaches to sectarianism in Northern Ireland.

2.05pm - Dr Gavin Duffy and Prof Tony Gallagher (QUB) - *Shared Education and collaboration between schools in a contested space setting*

This presentation is based on a three year study by Duffy and Gallagher (2014) from the Sharing Education Programme at the School of Education, Queen's University Belfast. The study contextualised shared learning between pupils, and collaboration between teachers and leaders within a shared education partnership comprising of eight schools (5 primary and 3 post-primary), located in a contested space setting. The Foyle Contested Space Education Partnership was part of the first cohort of initiatives funded by the Office of First Minister and deputy First Minister and Atlantic Philanthropies Interface/Contested Spaces Programme between 2011 and 2014.

Collectively the schools identified a series of social need themes as their shared education focus. These themes (anti-social behaviour, community relations, substance misuse, health/sexual health and internet safety) were explored by 1,161 pupils aged between 8 and 15, at key stages 2 and 3, who visited each other schools and classrooms each week, over a period of three years. This was managed through the collaboration of 8 school leaders and 35 teachers.

Evidence will be presented which demonstrates both the social and educational impact of pupils learning together and educators collaborating. In particular the presentation will focus on relationship formation, the interconnections between schools and the community and evidence of school improvement.

2.25pm - Dr Jonny Byrne, Prof Cathy Gormley-Heenan and Dr Duncan Morrow (Ulster) - *Dismantling the peace walls by 2023: "rational" or "irrational" policy thinking?*

In May 2013, the Northern Ireland (NI) Executive published a new community relations strategy document, 'Together: Building a United Community', which set itself the ambitious target of removing ALL interface barriers (peace walls) by 2023. Peace walls and interface barriers designed to secure communities through physical separation have been a feature of the physical, political and psychological landscape of Northern Ireland since 1969. They have long been seen as symbols of division and polarisation with enormous social and economic impact at local, city and regional level. This presentation will draw on the findings from a recently completed (September, 2015) ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) funded research award that involved a partnership between Ulster University and the Department of Justice. The research looked at the policy challenges around meeting such a target. The independently funded research, titled 'Public Policy and Peace Walls' enabled the researchers to act as a 'critical friend', as formative evaluators of a current policy implementation process, and as a provider of evidence-based research. Drawing on this work, this presentation will consider the numerous policy approaches to framing the issue of peace walls, and present new and innovative methods of interpreting the political and community narratives around what the walls represent in a post-conflict society. Finally, drawing from up-to-date survey data, the research team will provide a current assessment of the NI Executive's attempts to meet the 2023 target.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

4 November 2015

SUBSTANCE MISUSE, SELF-HARM AND FOLLOW-ON CARE

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Karen Galway (QUB) - *Alcohol, Drugs and Suicide – interactions between misuse in the life course and at the time of death.*

While substance misuse is a recognised risk factor in suicide, relatively little is known about the relationship between lifetime misuse and misuse at the time of suicide. It is widely assumed that many cases of suicide, particularly in young people, are associated with illicit drug use. However an analysis of suicides in Northern Ireland over a two-year period indicates that prescription drugs and alcohol dominate the patterns of substance misuse in such deaths. The study analysed prescribed drug use and all forms of substance misuse at the time of death and cross matched this to any history of help seeking for pre-existing substance misuse problems. Based on research findings, this presentation argues that the relationship between substance misuse and suicide within the context of Northern Ireland may require better understanding, and that efforts to prevent suicide on this basis could be more accurately targeted. It further argues that the systems to monitor the incidence of substance misuse among those who die by suicide are currently inadequate. A review is urgently needed to develop evidence-based preventative policies that in addition to the relevant medical factors, incorporate the psychological issues and social contexts of vulnerable individuals.

2.05pm - Dr Denise O'Hagan, (QUB) - *Findings from the Registry of Self Harm for Northern Ireland*

A National Registry of Self-Harm has been operating in the Republic of Ireland since 2002. Under the Northern Ireland (NI) Suicide Strategy a Registry of Self Harm was piloted in the Western Health & Social Care (HSC) Trust area from 2007. The Registry was then implemented across all five HSC Trusts from April 2012. This work is led by the **Public Health Agency**, in partnership with Trusts and the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF), Cork.

The purpose of collecting data for the Registry is to: (i) assess the impact of self-harm and suicidal ideation on health and social care services; (ii) inform service design and provision in respect of self-harm and suicidal ideation; (iii) inform policy development in terms of mental health promotion and suicide prevention; and, (iv) inform local communities and other key stakeholders of incidence levels.

The presentation delivers key findings from the annual report for 2013-14, looking at NI-wide data and comparisons with other countries to highlight differences, such as high levels of alcohol involvement and high rates of drug over-dose in NI. It also presents key findings from the Western Trust area since its inception in 2007.

2.25pm - Dr Maggie Long, Dr Roger Manktelow, Dr Anne Tracey (Ulster) - *Self-harm and Help-seeking: Service-User and Practitioner Perspectives*

Self-harm is a significant public health issue and an important risk factor for suicide, about which there is a lack of Northern Ireland-based research. Self-harm is recognised to be considerably more prevalent than is suggested by reported figures based on hospital emergency department presentations. Self-harm is often a hidden behaviour, and thus the extent of the phenomenon is unknown. Help-seeking is a crucial factor in suicide intervention, yet it is a complex and difficult process for people who self-harm. This presentation reports on the findings from qualitative research, which aimed to understand experiences of self-harm and help-seeking from the perspectives of people with a history of self-harm and practitioners experienced in working with the behaviour. It focuses on data collected from one-to-one interviews with participants (n=30) recruited at a community level, independent of statutory services, to gain insight into hidden self-harm. It outlines key findings that provide understanding about the onset of self-harm, experiences of disclosure, help-seeking and treatment services, as well

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as suggestions for encouraging help-seeking and improving support for people who self-harm. The presentation concludes considering the findings' relevance for enhancing understanding of this under-researched issue and informing service provision and policy in Northern Ireland.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

2 December 2015

DELIVERING MORE FOR LESS: PROPOSALS FOR GOVERNMENT

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Muiris MacCarthaigh (QUB) - *Public service reform in a time of cutbacks: Collaboration and the role of parliament*

The financial crisis faced by political executives across Europe and the wider world has had a dramatic effect on public administration. In attempting to re-balance budgets, governments of varying political hues have adopted strategies to restructure the size and cost of the state bureaucracy. A common theme of such restructuring has been to economise by increasing the scale at which administrative functions are performed. This has been pursued by such means as centralisation, forging innovative partnership strategies, joint activities, consolidation of websites and using multiagency 'shared services'. This presentation aims to advance policy-makers' understanding of what makes for efficient collaboration in public service reform, and how the experience of cutbacks can be used to good effect to improve public services. New collaborative reform measures also raise questions about legislative capacity and the ability of legislators to scrutinise and ensure accountability for these new cross-organisational service delivery measures. Therefore, the presentation also addresses the role parliaments can play in overseeing and advancing reforms to achieve greater efficiency in government. In the context of ongoing budgetary cutbacks, it is timely for parliamentarians in Northern Ireland to consider the future shape and role of a smaller public service.

2.05pm – Peter O'Neill (Alliance for Useful Evidence) and Prof Sally Shortall (QUB) - *Making better use of evidence in public policy-making*

Making better use of evidence is essential if public services are to deliver more for less. Central to this challenge is the need for a clearer understanding about the standards of evidence that can be applied to research informing public policy. The Civil Service Reform Plan (HM Government, 2012) suggests that there may be a need for an improved infrastructure to trial and assess what works in major social policy areas. The aim is to ensure that the commissioners in central or local government have the evidence to support effective commissioning. There also may be a need to improve commissioning processes. A recent study of social care commissioning guides (Huxley et al 2010) found that they did not, in fact, pay much attention to research evidence (even when it was available); and relied instead on government documents or practice. In this presentation consideration is given to the nature of policy evidence and whether it is possible to reach a workable consensus on the best ways of identifying and labelling such evidence. The presentation also discusses how to increase the likelihood that this evidence actually informs decision making, as well as the crucial issue as to whether evidence ever really exists in isolation.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

13 January 2016

DEALING WITH THE PAST: COMMEMORATION AND VICTIMS

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Marie Coleman and Dr Dominic Bryan (QUB) - *Northern Ireland's 2016: Approaching the contested commemoration of the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme*

The centenaries of the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme will be commemorated in Northern Ireland in 2016. These two events have important historical and political resonance with the nationalist and unionist communities respectively. The significance of such anniversaries is recognised in the Northern Ireland Executive's community relations strategy document, 'Together: Building a United Community':

'The decade we have just entered will include a number of potentially sensitive anniversaries which we cannot ignore within the context of this Strategy. The events of our past will inevitably have economic and social impacts for us now and the way in which these events are marked will also have a significant influence on our continued journey towards a united community.'

This presentation draws on the work of an inter-disciplinary research network including academics, government representatives (from the Office of First Minister and deputy First Minister, the Northern Ireland Office and the Republic of Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade), local authority Good Relations Officers, as well as Healing Through Remembering and the Community Relations Council. The presentation delivers findings of the network's research about how the 2016 commemorations could be approached in Northern Ireland, focusing on three key research themes:

1. The nature and purpose of commemoration.
2. Comparative contested commemorations in an Irish and an international context.
3. Shared engagement with a contested past through education.

2.05pm - Dr Luke Moffett (QUB) - *A pension for those seriously injured during the Troubles: Repairing the past*

Victims who have been seriously injured during the Troubles/conflict in and around Northern Ireland have often been forgotten in redressing their daily suffering when dealing with the past. Many continue to live with debilitating injuries and chronic pain, facing financial insecurity and failing health as they enter old age. A pension for seriously injured victims has been suggested in the Stormont House Agreement, to alleviate their continuing suffering. To bring this into law, a current private member's bill aims to secure a pension for those seriously injured through the Northern Ireland Assembly. This presentation seeks to provide some context and possible legal options in addressing who is eligible to claim such reparations and how to deal with individuals with a criminal record who were seriously injured in Northern Ireland. The presentation draws upon the experience of other countries in how they have delivered reparations to seriously injured victims and dealt with seriously injured perpetrators, as well as legal requirements under European directives and case law from the European Court and Inter-American Court of Human Rights. This research is based on comparative legal analysis of reparation laws in different contexts, work on reparations with different victim groups in Northern Ireland, Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda, and the International Criminal Court.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

27 January 2016

UNDERSTANDING SUICIDE AND SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Prof Siobhan O'Neill (Ulster) - *Understanding suicide and suicidal behaviour in Northern Ireland*

This presentation delivers key findings from two studies of suicide in Northern Ireland about factors influencing suicide and suicidal behaviour. Included are the findings from data analysis of coronial files on 1,667 suicides and undetermined deaths from 2005-2011; which illustrate how theories relate to suicide prevention in Northern Ireland. Amongst the factors discussed are: characteristics of those who die by suicide; and, the factors associated with the deaths, including means of death, events prior to death and the role of mental and general health disorders. Whilst the links between suicidal behaviour and exposure to the violence associated with the Troubles are examined, the presentation also looks at the other risk factors for suicide, including the psychological and cognitive variables which influence deaths in particular subgroups, including media reporting of suicide, cognitive variables such as entrapment and social perfectionism and the role of alcohol and drugs. The presentation aims to help inform social, health, mental health and other policies that are relevant to suicide prevention.

2.05pm - Dr Sharon Mallon (OU) - *An exploration of the dynamics of suicide among women*

There has been a great deal of concern about the rising rates of suicide in Northern Ireland. To date, the discussion has tended to focus on suicide among men, with little consideration given to suicide among women. This lack of attention is concerning as studies suggest there are important gender differences in suicidal behaviour. The aim of this presentation is to address this gap in our understanding by placing the female gender as a central factor in our analysis.

The presentation delivers findings in three parts: (i) those from a literature review to provide a broad overview of what is currently known about the issue of women and suicide; (ii) those from an analysis of data relating to a cohort of 78 female suicides that took place in Northern Ireland over a two year period, to provide an overview of the help seeking undertaken by these women prior to their death and the type of issues implicated in their suicides. The data were drawn from GP and Coroner records; and, (iii) those from a qualitative analysis of 16 interviews with relatives of women who died, using their views to suggest how services might develop supportive interventions that are best suited to the local setting.

2.25pm - Dr Denise O'Hagan (QUB) - *Sleeping tablets and Anxiety pills – examining the risks.*

Rates of prescribing drugs for anxiety and sleep problems are higher in Northern Ireland (NI) than other parts of the United Kingdom. This may be related to the higher burden of mental ill health among the NI population. This presentation delivers research findings of systematic reviews that looked at prescribing rates in other countries. It also highlights data from the Self Harm Registry in NI and the Republic of Ireland regarding the use of such medications in acts of self harm presenting to Emergency Departments.

Also presented are findings of work undertaken by the Health and Social Care Board and the Public Health Agency that seeks to ensure there are a range of services available to people who need support with problems related to anxiety and sleeping problems. The presentation may be of interest to those in the health sector in relation to policies concerning prescribing, substance misuse and access to drug therapy alternatives such as self-help and psychological interventions. It also may be of interest to those in the criminal justice sector in relation to the issue of access to and misuse of prescribed medication.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

10 February 2016

RIGHTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND: CURRENT ISSUES

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Anne Smith and Prof Monica McWilliams (Ulster) - *Ensuring a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland remains on the Political Agenda*

This presentation focuses on the findings of a research report 'Political Capacity Building: Advancing a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland', September 2014. The report seeks to contribute to discussions regarding a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and sets out a series of recommendations. Drawing upon the report's evidence-based data from a series of interviews with representatives from the Irish and British governments and the local political parties, the presentation aims to help identify and raise issues that may help progress the Bill of Rights. The presentation is timely given a number of recent developments such as the British government's forthcoming consultation on a British Bill of Rights; the Irish government expressing its disappointment 'that a renewed commitment to a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland based on the European Convention of Human Rights, as provided for by the Good Friday Agreement, was not included in the Stormont House Agreement...'; and, the failure to secure an agreement on how to take forward a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland in both the Haas-O'Sullivan talks and the Stormont House Agreement.

2.05pm - Dr Fiona Bloomer (Ulster) and Dr Lesley Hoggart (OU) - *Abortion Policy - Challenges and Opportunities*

This presentation considers the development and implementation of abortion policy in Northern Ireland, setting it within all-Ireland, United Kingdom (UK) and international context. It explores policy development in this area since the commencement of the Northern Ireland Assembly and analyses the extent to which this has been informed by evidence. The presentation identifies evidence related to the demand for abortion services including an analysis of 10 year trends in the profile of those who travel to England and Wales for abortion services. It is noted that from this analysis there is no stereotypical profile of those who travel, either in terms of age, marital status or ethnic identity (white Irish/ white British). It also considers the data that is available on those who access abortion services in Northern Ireland and issues related to self-abortion at home. The presentation concludes by considering current debates on legislative reform within the UK and Ireland with a specific focus on the debate surrounding decriminalisation of abortion.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

24 February 2016

IMPROVING NORTHERN IRELAND'S COMPETITIVENESS: INNOVATION, SKILLS AND MARKETING

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Prof Rob Gilles (QUB) - *How can the NI economy become more competitive in the 21st century global economy?*

The Northern Ireland (NI) economy competes in an increasingly complex global setting. Since 2007 the global economy seems to be in a perpetual state of volatility. This presentation addresses how recent developments in economics can help understand how businesses and economies compete in this global setting and how these insights can inform policy decisions to promote competitiveness of the NI economy.

Recent research has shown that the global economy can best be understood as a complex of networks. Businesses and governments interact through relationships that make up supply-chains, social networks and interactive platforms. Competitiveness thus aims to control, regulate and enhance the networks one participates in. Business practices consequently focus on strategic mergers and institutional innovation, which are observed widely in our contemporary global economy. From this perspective, the presentation assesses issues related to attracting businesses to NI and the question whether lowering corporation tax would be beneficial.

2.05pm - Prof Rodney McAdam (Ulster) - *Developing new products using Innovation Clusters: Overcoming NI's peripheral location limitations*

This presentation outlines research findings demonstrating the need to examine how Northern Ireland (NI) and its constituent SME (small to medium-sized enterprises) base can overcome peripherality problems in effectively developing new innovative products to drive business growth. Based on innovation cluster research at the Ulster University over the past 5 years, findings suggest that effective clustering policy and practice can help to make up for peripheral problems such as lack of indigenous resources. Based on this work, with international comparisons, findings show how clusters are an effective way of leveraging scarce resources leading to successful joint product development. This presentation explains that cluster policy and practice need to be aligned with the NI Regional Innovation Strategy (RIS) and European Union Smart Specialisation strategies, both to ensure that clusters are formed in technology areas that are best suited to NI's strengths and to avoid dilution of effort. The presentation delivers findings that highlight innovation clusters in key technologies, which have been systematically developed over the past 5 years, including aligning cluster policy with the RIS and cluster policy and practice development, leading to new product development.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.45pm - Comfort Break

3.00pm - Mr Mark Magill (Ulster) - *NI Skills barometer: Developing skills for tomorrow's economy*

This presentation addresses the widespread consensus on the value of skills both to the individual as well as the wider economy. It highlights how qualitative evidence from employers identifies skills shortages in a number of key sectors and occupations across the Northern Ireland (NI) economy. However, it notes the gap in long-term quantitative forecasts to assist policy making. The presentation explains how this gap may be addressed, setting out the development of a comprehensive NI skills model, which is integrated within the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (UUEPC) NI macroeconomic model. The model forecasts the number of jobs which will be created over the coming decade, and identifies the level of qualifications required for each type of job created, which helps to guide key questions relating to skills planning, such as 'are we producing enough graduates to meet expected demand?'. The research also highlights which subjects are in greatest demand at NQF level 4 and above and identifies the demand-supply imbalances across all subject areas. This research identifies a number of policy issues for consideration, with choices required to ensure that NI's skills provision meets economic needs. This presentation explains how the project aims to provide detailed labour market information that can be accessed by all relevant stakeholders, which takes the form of a Skills Barometer designed to assist young people in making well informed career decisions, employers to raise awareness about their skills needs, Government to prioritise limited funding and education institutions to tailor their courses and curricula.

3.20pm - Miss Rachel Malcolmson (Ulster) - *Exploring Consumers' Quality Perceptions of Local NI Food & Drink Produce*

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The Northern Ireland (NI) agri-food industry faces significant challenges in re-building consumer confidence in the quality and authenticity of food/drink products. However, increasing demand for authentic, high quality produce, paired with a renewed sense of food patriotism, presents new growth opportunities for local and artisan food/drink products to be promoted for their unique quality and provenance credentials. This presentation focuses on how to effectively raise the profile of local NI food/drink produce. Specifically it provides evidence-based recommendations for policy makers arising from research regarding the use of quality to market local produce. The recommendations for policy arise from a robust three stage, mixed methods, Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) funded PhD study. Preliminary findings indicate that packaging has a significant effect on consumer food quality perceptions and purchase decisions while shopping. The presentation therefore discusses how this evidence can be implemented by local producers as marketing strategy to engage the consumer. This research could importantly contribute to understanding about consumer perceptions regarding the marketing cues used to promote product quality, and to assist the NI agri-food industry in its promotion of local food/drink products. This presentation also has particular relevance to the implementation of the Executive's 'Going for Growth Strategy' and the development of the Agri-food Strategy Board's emerging marketing body for the creation of a single NI brand.

3.40pm – Discussion

4.00pm – RalSe - Closing Remarks

4.05pm – Networking and Refreshments

2 March 2016

ACCESS TO NURSING EDUCATION

1.30pm – RalSe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Prof Jan Draper, Donna Gallagher (OU) and Paul Carlin (SET) - *Engagement and Empowerment: Emancipating Health Care Support Workers to become Registered Professionals in Northern Ireland*

Creating and enhancing career development opportunities for the healthcare support workforce and widening access to higher education are currently key priorities across the United Kingdom. The high academic attainment at GCSE and A Level required by universities challenges these two key priorities.

Francis (2013) said;

“Entrants to the nursing profession should be assessed for their aptitude to deliver and lead proper care, and their ability to commit themselves to the welfare of patients.”

This is enabled in the context of access and entry to The Open University (OU) pre-registration nurse education programme, as the primary driver for selection is the experience of the candidate in actual clinical practice. Since 2004, the OU in Northern Ireland, with the support of the five Trusts, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, has been delivering a widening access pre-registration nursing programme aimed at healthcare support workers without traditional academic entry requirements, enabling all organisations to grow their own registered nursing workforce.

This presentation will draw on an evaluation carried out by the OU and South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust on the levels of entry, academic achievement and registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council, post-registration career progression and satisfaction of both students and clinical supervisors to date. Initial findings suggest that such an approach to widening access to nurse education in Northern Ireland has the potential to address issues in relation to social cohesion (Cohesion Policy, 2014-2020), educational standards and attainment (Graduating to Success, 2012), social mobility, career pathway genesis and public sector resourcing (A Partnership for Care, 2012) and support workforce planning across the whole of Northern Ireland.

2.05pm – Discussion

2.20pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

2.25pm – Networking and Refreshments

9 March 2016

PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE: CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT AND FEMALE REPRESENTATION

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr John Garry (QUB) - *Deliberative Democracy in Northern Ireland: Enhancing the quality of governance by involving citizens in decision making*

How can the quality of governance in Northern Ireland be enhanced? This presentation addresses this broad question by focusing on the extent to which the quality of democratic decision making in Northern Ireland may be increased by facilitating a role for the considered views of citizens. Specifically, it suggests a feasible and cost-effective way of putting deliberative democracy into effect at either the local government level or Northern Ireland government level: citizens are provided with balanced information and arguments on a particular issue, reflect upon the range of views on the issue and indicate a preference on how to resolve the issue. The presentation reports the results of our Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded project – Transforming Democracy in the Post Conflict Setting. The evidence is based on original surveys of citizens, a survey of MLAs (of all parties) and a pilot test of citizen deliberation on a contention issue (flag display) that will be of crucial importance to local government and NI-wide governance. The presentation elaborates evidence-based suggestions as to how the voice of citizens can most effectively be brought into decision making (on any issue) and it specifies the advantages and disadvantages of so doing.

2.05pm - Dr Victoria Durrer with Kevin Murphy (Voluntary arts Ireland) and Rosalind Lowry (Arts & Events Development Officer, Mid and East Antrim Council) - *The Creative Citizens Programme: Local Government involving citizens in arts development*

The 'Creative Citizens Programme' is a partnership between Voluntary Arts Ireland (VAI) and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council. 'Creative Citizens' is an action research project that brings local people together with local and regional organisations, services and networks together through active engagement in a programme of 150 arts and culture-related events and activities. It is part of a wider investigation, called 'Our Cultural Commons', that VAI and its partner agencies in Scotland, Wales and England are conducting with local citizens and organisations, to explore methods for creating a local infrastructure that sustains the creative and cultural lives of local communities, based on what assets exist rather than those that have been lost. Jointly presented by Voluntary Arts Ireland, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and Queen's University, this presentation shares initial findings from the Creative Citizens Programme, which provide insight into the potential involvement of citizens in local arts development. The concept of the 'Creative Citizen' will be explored. Key findings from the Programme are highlighted, followed by an assessment of the challenges and opportunities that result from this type of engagement between local government and citizens.

2.25pm - Dr Neil Matthews (QUB) - *Candidate Selection in Northern Ireland: a cold house for women?*

This presentation outlines key findings from research on party candidate selection procedures and their impact on the number of women selected to contest elections in Northern Ireland. Relatively little is known of both the nature of the selection methods adopted by Northern Ireland's main political parties and their role in producing existing levels of political gender inequality. This presentation addresses both these gaps in our understanding. Firstly, an overview of the current procedures adopted by the

political parties is provided. This overview also accounts for recent changes to the parties' selection methods and consider the implications such reform might have for female representation. Secondly, using testimony from party representatives, the presentation argues that political gender inequality in Northern Ireland is better explained by 'supply-side' factors (the number of women seeking selection) than 'demand-side' factors (the nature of the parties' selection methods). It highlights those factors which serve to produce the weak supply of women candidates. Linking the analysis to the Assembly and Executive Review Committee's recent report on 'Women in Politics and the Northern Ireland Assembly' (2015), the presentation concludes, outlining some feasible strategies to address political gender inequality in Northern Ireland.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

16 March 2016

ENABLING ACCESS TO JUSTICE: IMPEDIMENTS AND SOLUTIONS

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Grainne McKeever (Ulster) - *The role of University Law Clinics in delivering access to justice*

The Access to Justice Review (2) is intended to address the challenges faced in ensuring access to justice for citizens at a time of reduced public expenditure, and part of the remit of the Review is to identify additional or alternative forms of legal support for citizens. The Review's Agenda identifies the potential for university law clinics to provide support to citizens to enhance their legal capability, noting in particular the development of the Ulster University Law Clinic through which graduate law students provide members of the public with free legal advice and representation on social security and employment law problems. Given that citizens often lack awareness of traditional advice sources, it is unclear what awareness citizens have of university law clinics, or of the value that clinics might offer in enhancing legal capability. An externally-funded study by Ulster University's Law School is examining the role of United Kingdom (UK) university law clinics, to understand their access to justice function and where clinics sit within the existing access to justice landscape. This presentation delivers findings on the research that completed in October 2015, including those of a survey of 64 UK university law clinics, in order to establish the extent to which clinics deliver access to justice, their relationship with existing legal support systems, and whether there is potential to develop a university law clinic model to create an alternative or additional form of legal support in line with the findings of the Access to Justice Review (2).

2.05pm - Dr Orla Drummond (Ulster) - *The access to justice barriers for tribunal users: a comparative case study on Special Educational Needs Tribunals*

The Access to Justice Review (2) identified the difficulties faced by tribunal users in securing access to justice, and poses questions about how tribunal users might be best supported. Recent research from Ulster University's Law School provides an in-depth examination of the barriers faced by users of Special Educational Needs Tribunals, and, particularly, how the tribunal could be made more accessible for children in light of the international obligation to include children in decision making under Article 12 (2) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This presentation delivers research findings regarding the experiences of tribunal users in Northern Ireland with those in Wales, where the UNCRC has been incorporated into domestic law and where tribunal procedures seek to implement UNCRC obligations. Through qualitative research with parents, children with special educational needs, tribunal staff and judiciary, local authorities/education and library boards, and policy makers, the research findings identify barriers to justice, including: the exclusion from the process of those from poorer backgrounds, with lower confidence, and/or communication skills; a pervasive inequality of legal arms; and difficulty in identifying and accessing support and advice. In relation to children's participation, findings highlight resistance to their voice being heard

within the process, compounded by attitudinal and procedural barriers. In particular, the tribunal process, as experienced by parents, has exacerbated notions of protectionism and the need to shield the child from the process in both Northern Ireland and Wales. This presentation outlines recommendations based on the research findings that concern increasing access to justice and enabling child participation in the future.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

18 May 2016

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT: AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Prof Ian Montgomery (QUB) - *Maximising Production and Biodiversity in NI Agriculture*

Agriculture in Northern Ireland (NI) has changed little from 1970 with its emphasis on grass production and livestock sectors. It is dependent on a narrow range of enterprises and subsidies, and beset by production, waste, financial and social issues. NI agriculture lacks a strategic plan that addresses its problems holistically, or prepares to meet global threats, in particular climate change, and priorities, most notably food security. The NI countryside also has experienced a loss of biodiversity and decline in environmental quality and, hence, provision of ecosystem services, e.g. water quality and pollination. The future of agriculture and environment are intertwined: if agriculture is to continue to absorb substantial public funds, it must deliver wider benefits to society but environmental interests must also revise their policies, if they are to promote conservation outside limited, and increasingly unmanaged, designated areas. This presentation delivers an analysis of the issues facing NI agriculture and environment, which indicate a common basis underlying their multiple problems. It addresses key results from recent research on grass production and variability in farmland biodiversity, which suggest a series of prescriptions that could benefit both agriculture and environment, and a means of bringing this about. The presentation explains that we need to change the way we farm as well as the landscape in which we farm.

2.05pm - Dr Alastair Ruffell (QUB) - *Waste management and disposal: locating illegal buried waste using remote sensing (satellites, aircraft, drones and geophysics)*

Buried illegal waste and uncontrolled legal waste dumps are a major problem in Northern Ireland, as well as in Scotland, Ireland, Italy, Canada. The mention of the words 'Moubouy Road' are enough to demonstrate to anyone the politically-charged nature of this problem. Yet the environmental (loss of habitat, pollution of groundwater) and economic (landfill tax, loss of recycling profit) costs are equally significant as the political background as to why waste is buried in the first place. Both applied crime fighting as well as pure science are being brought together to better understand how to locate buried illegal waste. When a case is brought to the courts, a number of facts must be presented such as the volume of waste, its makeup (toxic, domestic, demolition) and whether it has polluted areas outside of the owner's land. Geophysics and remote sensing assist in answering these court questions, and have been used successfully in over 15 cases brought by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Northern Ireland Environmental Agency (NIEA), which are outlined in this presentation. Pure science has recently involved the application of the Tellus and TellusBorder data to assessing whether buried waste, and the pollution plumes it can generate, can be located from the air. The results of this work are outlined in this presentation as a model of how focussed and cost-effective means maybe deployed to locate and assess waste, and thus assist in protecting our natural environment, especially surface and ground water.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RalSe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

25 May 2016

PROVISION OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE: DIVERSE NEEDS

1.30pm – RalSe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Jacinta Miller (Ulster) - *Dignity and the Right to Health*

Policy makers in Northern Ireland have already demonstrated an acceptance of the 'right to health' and dignity as values that ought to underpin health and social care provision (for example in the DHSSPNI 'Making Life Better' 2013 – 2023). However the recent Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Report on Emergency Care in Northern Ireland (2015), which used a right to health methodology, highlighted the need to develop a greater 'operational meaning' of the concept of dignity. This suggests that there is more to be done on understanding and embedding the value of dignity within health care. This presentation questions the current understanding of dignity as a standard within the right to health, and asks how it can be used to develop greater clarity in operationalising dignity in health care policy and practice in Northern Ireland.

2.05pm - Dr Lisa Hanna-Trainor and Dr Laurence Taggart (Ulster) - *Adults with Intellectual Disabilities (ID): Transitioning into Older Years*

People with intellectual disabilities are living longer and many are living with ageing family carers: this presents challenges surrounding how services respond to the needs of both cohorts. This is a fundamental issue for policy makers, commissioners and Trusts in organising how services are planned, funded and delivered in the future. Ageing in people with intellectual disabilities commences earlier at 50 years and 40 years for those with Down Syndrome; and as they age they will develop more chronic health conditions. According to the NI Learning Disability Service Framework (2015) all individuals with intellectual disabilities 'should have the impact of ageing taken into account in having their future needs assessed and proactively managed'. This presentation discusses the findings of a three-year study that has explored the needs of older adults with intellectual disabilities and their ageing family carers across Northern Ireland. The most effective family support models during the transition of adults with intellectual disabilities into old age will be shared with the participants.

2.25pm - Prof Kevin Brazil (QUB) - *Supporting General Practitioners in Northern Ireland in the care of dementia patients as they near the end of life*

The general practitioner (GP) is in a pivotal position to initiate and adapt end of life care for their patients living with dementia. A postal survey was conducted to gauge GPs' perceptions of the provision of good quality palliative care in dementia in Northern Ireland. The survey was also conducted in the Netherlands, where specialist elderly care physicians oversee palliative care in dementia. Barriers to palliative care in dementia were perceived to be a dementia knowledge deficit for healthcare staff and the public; a resource shortfall within the GP practice and community; poor team coordination alongside inappropriate dementia care provision, and disagreements from and within families. This presentation discusses these findings and how they have significant implications for educators and clinicians as enhanced dementia education and training were highlighted as a strong agenda for GPs, with the suggestions of dementia awareness programs for the public. It further explains that the findings also promote enhanced training in dementia management for GPs; and that the international comparison provides confirmation that there is a better way to deliver end of life care for people with dementia. The presentation aims to offer some insight into how to move towards a model of best practice in Northern Ireland.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

1 June 2016

BREXIT: KEY CONSIDERATIONS

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Prof David Phinnemore (QUB) - *Avoiding Brexit? The Renegotiated Terms of the United Kingdom's EU Membership*

The presentation reviews the nature and content of the outcome to the United Kingdom (UK) government's attempt to renegotiate the terms of UK membership of the European Union (EU). The presentation reviews the agreement reached and assess its significance for the nature of the UK's membership of the EU. Particular attention is paid to the specific political, economic and social implications for Northern Ireland. The presentation also assesses the extent to which the outcome of the negotiations addresses key political concerns and considers its implications for the 'EU referendum' and the likelihood of Brexit.

2.05pm - Dr Lee McGowan (QUB) - *Does Europe matter? The implications of a Brexit for Northern Ireland*

Ahead of a now imminent referendum on the United Kingdom's (UK) membership of the European Union (EU) this presentation addresses the specific issue of how much the EU dimension matters to Northern Ireland and considers the implications of a Brexit for this region of the UK. It is divided into two main parts. The first provides an overview considering the regional context and how the possibility of a Brexit raises particular issues for Northern Ireland, not least given it is the only part of the UK that shares a land border with an EU member state. The second, and main, section explores a series of salient issues for Northern Ireland, including the potential impact of Brexit on business, trade and investment, the financing of agricultural and fisheries, university research funding and student mobility exchanges.

2.25pm - Dr Cathal McCall (QUB) - *Brexit and Britain's Borders*

The Brexit campaign for the United Kingdom's (UK) exit from the European Union (EU) poses significant questions for the UK's borders, the most pertinent of which is: where would a Brexit hard border run? The goal of the Brexit campaign is to re-border Britain through re-creating borders as security barriers in order to halt the influx of 'outsiders'. However, it is unclear where the Brexit border would run. Three Brexit bordering options present themselves: Border the UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, with implications for the Irish national community, and peacebuilding in Northern Ireland, across the island of Ireland, and between Britain and Ireland; Border Britain, with implications for the unionist community in Northern Ireland; Border the 'British Isles', with implications for Ireland's continued EU membership. This presentation addresses each of these options.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

15 June 2016

UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Piotr Blumczyński (QUB) and Prof John Gillespie (Ulster) - *Translating Values: Insights from Multilingual and Multiethnic Focus Groups in Northern Ireland*

Culture revolves around values: they hold the cultural community together and underpin the mutual interests. A cultural group whose members hold opposite or otherwise incompatible values is hardly conceivable, which demonstrates that the concept of culture is predicated on shared values. However, values are often “invisible” (Hofstede 2001: 11), i.e. wrapped in thick layers of cultural material inseparable from ethnic and linguistic considerations. Changing a language (e.g. when moving to a foreign country) will affect a range of attitudes and perceptions, including a sense of belonging (or displacement), fulfillment (or frustration), inclusion (or exclusion), dignity (or humiliation), etc., all translating into social integration, cohesion, and respectful co-existence. This presentation reports on a recent collaborative research project “Translating values” (funded by Arts and Humanities Research Council) whose findings were consulted broadly with a range of multi-ethnic and multilingual communities across Northern Ireland (Belfast, Cookstown, Londonderry) through a series of focus groups held in 2015. It provides insights into the complex interactions between linguistic, cultural and religious communities by exploring shared and conflicting systems of values and evaluative concepts, with a view to improving translation and interpreting practice and informing cross-community relations as well as relevant elements of public policy.

2.05pm - Dr Caroline Linse (QUB) - *Formal and informal translation and interpretation for immigrants and asylum seekers*

As of 2011 there were over 50,000 migrants, who speak a language other than English or Irish at home, residing in Northern Ireland. Many of these individuals do not possess adequate levels of English language proficiency in order to access services. Research funded by the Northern Ireland Inclusion and Diversity Service was conducted to determine the home-school connections of culturally and linguistically diverse families in Northern Ireland. It revealed that there are a wide variety of ways that translation and interpretation services are offered for families not fluent in English within the school settings. Drawing upon the findings from the research in Northern Ireland, this presentation provides an overview of the types of translation and interpretation taking place in Northern Ireland; the advantages and disadvantages of each; and recommendations for agencies utilizing both formal and informal translation and interpretation. The presentation also includes references to work in this area in other contexts, as well as specific guidelines for agencies using both formal and informal translation and interpretation. These guidelines help ensure that the translations are conducted in a professional manner for all agencies providing services.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

22 June 2016

HOUSING ISSUES: GOVERNANCE AND RIGHTS

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series 2015-16

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Mr Peter Shanks and Prof David Mullins (Ulster) - *Paradox and Performance: A Review of Housing Association Corporate Governance Arrangements in Northern Ireland*

This presentation reports on the findings of an 18 month independent study of housing association (HA) corporate governance arrangements in Northern Ireland. The presentation will address the question 'Who Governs', informing policy-makers of the current composition of HA boards, recruitment methods, tenure, remuneration and training and development. It also focuses on how HAs are governed, highlighting key findings on board performance and strategy, executive and non-executive roles and relationships, and managing accountability to key stakeholders. The third part of the presentation highlights what HA boards govern including financial management, housing management, property development, asset management and corporate governance; and concludes offering a set of policy and practice recommendations on how HA boards can improve their corporate governance. This presentation is timely given the Department for Social Development's (DSD) review of social housing (SHRP). Its findings and recommendations aim to help inform policy-makers on how HAs are governed and on the DSD's Social Housing Reform Programme (SHRP), which includes a number of reviews and strategies relating to governance, (e.g. regulation, tenant participation, and engagement between the housing sector and local government).

2.05pm - Dr Alice Diver (Ulster) - *Putting dignity to bed? The taxing question of the UK's housing rights relapse*

The recent statutory cap on Housing Benefit in England and Wales is commonly known as the 'bedroom tax' or the 'spare room subsidy', depending upon whether one is a critic or a proponent of it. It has given rise to a small, but significant spate of domestic legal cases that examine issues such as legally justified discrimination and the impact of public purse decision-making on socio-economic rights (e.g. housing, health care). This presentation examines 'bedroom tax' case law. It examines whether some form of baseline, adequate housing rights standard can ever be identified (i.e. in respect of preventing indignity, squalor or homelessness), or whether instances of inequity, unequal treatment and discrimination will be inevitably framed as both lawful and justified, on the basis of finite state resources. The findings of such an examination are highly relevant within the context of Northern Ireland, given the 'welfare reform' controversy, budgetary challenges and the apparent need for a 'fairness agenda'. They serve to highlight the inherent link between rights and public expenditure, in particular how a failure to ring-fence funding for fundamental rights can easily serve to nullify the concept of a right to adequate housing or health care.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

29 June 2016

NORTHERN IRELAND'S PLANNING SYSTEM: PROMOTING POSITIVE OUTCOMES

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Stephen McKay (QUB) - *Enhancing the effectiveness of planning enforcement in Northern Ireland*

The Northern Ireland planning system has witnessed major reform in 2015, with key responsibilities being transferred to new local authorities. There are far-reaching consequences of this relating to the future management of development and the production of a new generation of area plans. This will also have an impact on arrangements and capabilities for how

unauthorised development is monitored and controlled through the process of planning enforcement. This presentation reflects on past performance of planning enforcement in Northern Ireland and assesses the robustness of this in relation to the new arrangements for planning. The presentation explores the prospects for developing of alternative ways of managing unauthorised development, developing a more co-ordinated approach to enforcement practice, delivering training programmes for key stakeholders and securing the implementation of key legislative duties

2.05pm - Prof Geraint Ellis (QUB) - *Using the planning system to secure health and well-being benefits*

The Northern Ireland planning system is now primarily seen as a mechanism for coordinating and facilitating development, with the aim of delivering opportunities for economic growth. However, in managing our built environment, it also plays a major - but often unseen - role in shaping peoples' lives by creating (or constraining) a wide range of issues that can influence health, well-being, poverty and inequality. This includes a powerful influence over access to local services, work and housing, while having a very direct impact on the form of local environments and housing standards that can affect air quality, physical activity, mental health and opportunities for healthy diets. In the context of major reform of the Northern Ireland planning system, this session explores how the planning system can be used to enhance these social outcomes and contribute more broadly to securing wider benefits to health and well-being.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments