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# PRACTICE LINKS

**Practice Links** is a free publication of the School of Applied Social Studies (social work), UCC. *Practice Links* supports practitioners to keep up-to-date with new publications, online resources, conferences and continuing professional development opportunities.

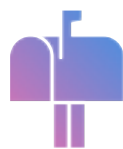


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**Editor: Dr Kenneth Burns, UCC**



*PL Mailing List*

Register here to receive a free copy of *Practice Links* to your email account five times a year. You can also use this link to leave the PL list.



*Submissions*

Submissions for publication should be received two weeks prior to the next publication date. Please forward submissions by email to the editor.



## CONFERENCES AND CPD



**CALL FOR PAPERS. CLOSING DATE: 11TH APRIL**

### 10TH NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE SOCIAL WORK CONFERENCE

University College Cork, 23-24 October 2025.

The conference and call for papers is open to all disciplines and services.

Updates and submit your abstract on [our website](#)

Follow us on our new BlueSky account: @swconfucc.bsky.social

Supported by: the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; Tusla; IASW, and UCC.

Organised by: @UCCsocialwork, Tusla, Child and Family Agency and the Irish Association of Social Workers.



#### School of Applied Social Studies Research Dialogue Seminars

#### SAVE THE DATES

##### Conor Cashman

*Normalising Exceptional Housing Market Interventions: The Treatment, Re-categorisation, and Repackaging of Problem Debt and Credit within Ireland's Housing System, 2 April 2025, 12 – 2, Aras na Laoi, ALG18*

##### Ndemazia Asonglefack Jingwa

*Childhood Disability, Migrant Parent Identities, and Intersectionality, 1 May 2025, 12 – 2, The Compass Room*

##### Calvin Swords

*Personal or Social Recovery? Do we need both? Deconstructing and considering ways forward for experiences of personal recovery in mental health services, 7 May 2025, 11.30 – 1, CACSSS Seminar Room*

##### Siddhesh Mukerji

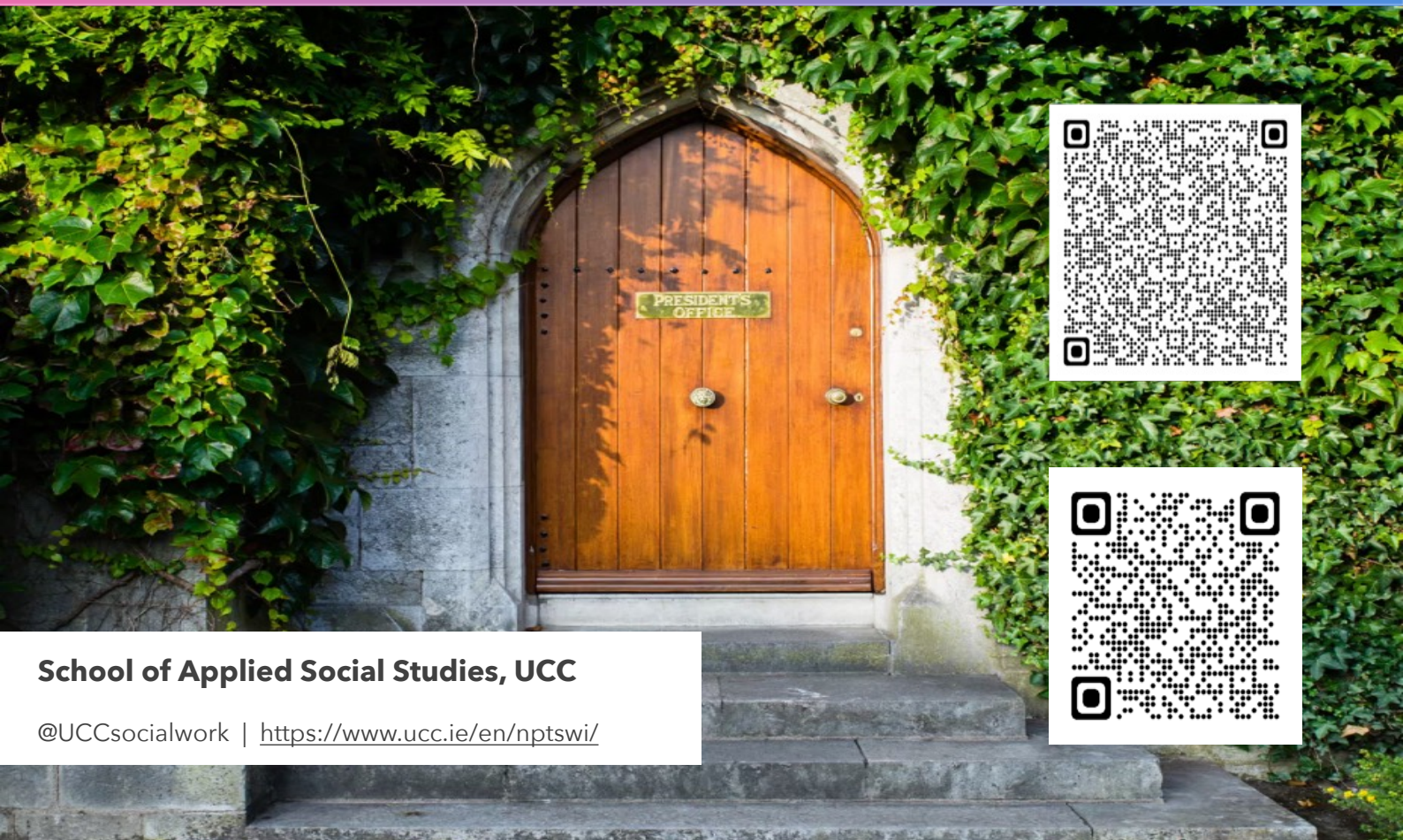
*Zen Buddhism, Buddhist Social Work, and Zen Social Action, 20 May 2025, 11 – 1, CACSSS Seminar Room*







# SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE TEACHING @UCC



**School of Applied Social Studies, UCC**

@UCCsocialwork | <https://www.ucc.ie/en/nptswi/>

## SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE TEACHING

Practice Teaching is a dynamic CPD learning experience hear what practice teachers have to say about their experiences supervising UCC social work students on placement...

*"Student was open and engaging, unafraid of the many challenges".*

*"Quickly became a valued and productive member of the MDT".*

Social workers who engage in practice teaching have continually informed us of the benefits in terms of their own continuing professional development and we have lots to offer [What is Practice Teaching?](#)

UCC would like to hear from CORU registered social workers who are interested in supervising a student on placement during 2025 - placement cycles are usually from January - April, Summer, and September - April.



**@UCCsocialwork**  
School of Applied Social Studies

UCC pays a placement fee, for further information please contact [swfieldwork@ucc.ie](mailto:swfieldwork@ucc.ie) or you can register your interest [Practice Teaching Expression of Interest](#)



## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Register here: [https://tcd-ie.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_G247js9ITSSx41PUDpR2dQ](https://tcd-ie.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_G247js9ITSSx41PUDpR2dQ)

Trinity College Dublin  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

Trinity Research in Childhood Centre (TRiCC)

**Children and childhood research: advancing knowledge and understanding  
Seminar Series 2024 – 2025**

**Lived experiences of foster care: messages from research for practice**

**Sinéad Tobin: Assistant Professor, TCD School of Social Work and Social Policy / TUSLA**  
**Dr Sinéad Whiting: Assistant Professor, TCD School of Social Work and Social Policy**

 **Monday 28 April 2025, 13.00-14.00 online via Zoom**

## 12TH ANNUAL SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL CARE RESEARCH CONFERENCE IS THE LARGEST TO DATE

The Social Work and Social Care Research Conference took place in Belfast recently, hosted by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council at Riddel Hall, Queen's University Belfast. The venue which is steeped in history and academic learning was a fitting location for the conference.

Now in its 12th year, the conference brings together experts, academics, service users and practitioners in both social work and social care sectors in Northern Ireland to discuss the most recent research and innovations in the fields.

The biggest conference yet attended by over 160 participants, the theme this year was 'Making connections in research and evidence, collective leadership, workforce, planning change and service user involvement'.

The conference included five-minute lightning presentations, twenty-seven oral presentations and thirteen poster presentations and showcased the vast array of creative and innovative research and evidence being generated.

You can view the full details of the conference and download the event programme [here](#).

Northern Ireland

**Social**

**Care**

**Council**



## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### AGEING IN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY TRAINING

Ageing with an Intellectual Disability is often a more difficult process than ageing in the general population due to premature ageing and secondary conditions. One of the greatest challenges is ensuring that adults ageing with an intellectual disability have equal access to health, social participation, inclusion, and all the factors which enhance the positive ageing experience.

I have 24 years' experience supporting adults with an Intellectual Disability both as social care worker and PIC. I have completed an MSc in Ageing, Health and wellbeing in Intellectual Disability and have a Certificate in Training and Development. I have also had a role with IDSTILDA as a Field Researcher for the latest Wave 5 Report published November 2023.

If your organisation would like in person training for staff, please feel free to email me. These workshops will discuss what is Positive Ageing? the challenges that those we support encounter and indicators that should be present to allow for healthy happy years. Findings from the latest IDSTILDA report will also be reflected on.

If you feel supported individuals would benefit from two workshops in positive ageing, retirement and future care planning in day services please feel free to contact me also.

The first workshop will be on how we can live well as we get older, and discuss retirement and future plans. The second workshop will be a recap on how participants are progressing with their plans. (6 to 8 weeks Later)

There is a risk that without planning, the everyday life of an older person with intellectual disability is diminished after retirement (Johansson 2017)

For further details of the content of these workshops, registration, fee etc. please contact Michelle Carter at [info@agewithid.ie](mailto:info@agewithid.ie)



### 16TH NORTH-SOUTH CRIMINOLOGY CONFERENCE 2025

The sixteenth North-South Criminology Conference will be held in Maynooth University, Co. Kildare from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025. The conference theme this year is: *Criminology in Polarised Times: Navigating the Future*. For more information and to **register click here**.







## IASW CPD UPDATES

Irish Association of Social Workers and Barnardos: Clayton Silver Springs in Cork on 7<sup>th</sup> May - Childhood Domestic Violence & Abuse (CDVA) - What Children Say. Further details and registration: [click here](#)

IASW lunchtime webinar on 9<sup>th</sup> May on Anti-Racism Workshop: Developing and Promoting Anti Racism Practices: Further details and registration: [click here](#)

CORU CPD cycle on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025, when a number of social workers will be called for audit, Clíona Murphy from the IASW will be delivering a webinar on CPD & the requirements of registration - an update on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May. Further details and registration: [click here](#)

IASW AGM: 29<sup>th</sup> May, on zoom, 4.30 pm. Register: [click here](#)

"Safeguarding Ethnic Minorities Against Racial Profiling and Targeting" (4<sup>th</sup> April - in person): [click here](#)

Anti Racism Workshop (9<sup>th</sup> May - online): [click here](#) for further details and registration

**Call for papers.** All Ireland IASW and BASW NI Conference: Social Work and Migration: Promoting Social Justice, Sustainability & Human Rights, Closing date 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Click here for more details. Conference will take place on the 20<sup>th</sup> November, Fairways hotel, Dundalk. [Click here](#)

The poster features the IASW logo at the top left, which includes a stylized green hand icon. The main title 'JOIN THE IASW'S BOARD!' is centered in large, bold, black letters. Below this, the text 'As a Board member you:' is followed by a bulleted list of three points: 'SHAPE IASW'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION', 'ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL WORK', and 'STRENGTHEN OUR IMPACT'. Further down, it states 'We are seeking four passionate people for:' followed by another bulleted list: 'Board Director role x 3' and 'Chair of the Board'. A dark blue box contains the text 'Apply now!' and 'Contact [officemanager@iasw.ie](mailto:officemanager@iasw.ie) for Chairperson role description and/or the Board Nom Form'. At the bottom, there is an illustration of four diverse people (three women and one man) sitting around a table, looking at a laptop. A red banner at the very bottom reads 'APPLICATION DEADLINE: WED 9 APRIL'.

 **JOIN THE IASW'S BOARD!**

**As a Board member you:**

- **SHAPE IASW'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION**
- **ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL WORK**
- **STRENGTHEN OUR IMPACT**

We are seeking four passionate people for:

- Board Director role x 3
- Chair of the Board

**Apply now!**  
Contact [officemanager@iasw.ie](mailto:officemanager@iasw.ie) for Chairperson role description and/or the Board Nom Form

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: WED 9 APRIL**



# IASW - FITNESS TO PRACTICE INSURANCE



## Fitness to Practise Insurance

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Fitness to Practise **is not** provided by your employer
- Fitness to Practise is needed even if you aren't practising
- 76% of CORU complaints are against social workers\*

Fitness to Practise Insurance is included with IASW's working membership types: Full, Part-Time, and First Year Post Qualify



\*cited in a presentation by CORU in Sept. 2022



### UP TO €250,000 COVERAGE

Fitness to Practise complaints are expensive and time consuming. Representation can cost up to €5k for a preliminary hearing. IASW insurers have extensive knowledge and experience in this area both here in Ireland and in the UK.

The IASW policy is per member on an individual basis. Each member has a ring fenced legal expenses limit of €250,000 that is unique to them and is not being provided on a discretionary basis.

### JOIN THE IASW & BE COVERED TODAY!

Our insurance policy ensures you are covered for the legal expenses incurred as a result of Fitness to Practise complaint. As per your CORU Code of Professional Conduct you must maintain adequate professional indemnity cover.



Register online at [iasw.ie](https://iasw.ie) or contact us  
086 024 1055 & [administrator@iasw.ie](mailto:administrator@iasw.ie)

### CORU REGISTRATION OBLIGATIONS

- You must practise in the name(s) under which you are registered.
- Always use your CORU registration when representing yourself as a registered Social Worker and identify yourself to service users before you provide any professional service to them.
- You must include your CORU registration number in all certificates, reports or other formal documents.
- If you change your name, address or employment, notify the Social Work Registration Board, as soon as is practicable.





## CONFERENCE REPORT AND COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

### UCD/ HSE CONFERENCE ON 'ADVANCE HEALTHCARE DIRECTIVES FOR MENTAL HEALTH - FROM LAW TO PRACTICE' & COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The multi-perspective conference on 'Advance Healthcare Directives for Mental Health – from Law to Practice' was held in the UCD University Club on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January. The conference was co-convened by Dr Nuala Kane, Consultant Psychiatrist and Dr Jennifer Allen, Senior Social Worker, and funded by the HSE Spark Innovation Fund. There were three sessions, 'Law and Ethics', 'Irish Experience' and 'Implementation and Practice', with speakers from legal, ethical, psychiatry, social work and lived experience perspectives on advance care planning in mental health. The final session culminated in a panel discussion focusing on 'How AHDs can be implemented in Irish mental health services'.

Speakers : Prof. Mary Donnelly (UCC), Dr Cornelia Carey (NMH), Alex Ruck Keene (Hon S.C.), Dr Tania Gergel (Bipolar UK), Dr Matthe Scholten (Ruhr University), Dr Jennifer Allen (HSE / UCD), Dr Nuala Kane (HSE / UCD), Dr Maria Redahan (TCD), Michael John Norton, Prof. Gavin Davidson (Queens), Dr Brendan Kelly (TCD).

#### Resources for Advance Care Planning:

- Advance Choice, Thinking Ahead in Mental Health - <https://www.advancechoice.org/>
- Advance Healthcare Directives - [Advance healthcare directives | Decision Support Service](#)
- Think Ahead Planning Pack - [Advance Care Planning - Irish Hospice Foundation](#)
- Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) - [What Is WRAP? - Wellness Recovery Action Plan](#)

#### Community of Practice:

Following the conference, we are convening a 'community of practice' for those interested in advance care planning in mental health, which will initially involve quarterly online seminars with guest speakers to share learning. The first seminar (date TBA) will have a practical focus on how to create mental health AHD documents. The network is open to all and interested parties can sign up by emailing [nuala.kane@ucd.ie](mailto:nuala.kane@ucd.ie)







## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### GETTING GOING: AN INTRODUCTION TO BEHAVIOURAL ACTIVATION & APPLICATION

Friday 20 June 2025, 9.30am – 4.30pm, Online

Join Stephen Herron, a highly experienced CBT Therapist with over 30 years of clinical practice, for a full-day skills-based

Workshop on Behavioural Activation. Stephen has taught on the BABCP accredited course in Cognitive Behavioural

Psychotherapy at Queen's University Belfast for over 20 years and is the former Chairperson of the IABCP.

The training will cover both the theory and application of BA, effective for treating depression and related conditions

By the end of the workshop you will have:

- Gained a solid understanding of the BA principles and procedures
- Practical experience with key BA techniques
- Resources and tools to implement BA immediately in your practice
- Skills to adapt BA for different clinical populations

Register at [\*\*Eventbrite here\*\*](#). £65 standard / £35 student rate Early Bird Discounts Available





## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR SCREENING AND BRIEF INTERVENTIONS (SBI) FOR PROBLEM ALCOHOL & DRUG USE ONE DAY COURSE

This course aims to prepare nurses, midwives, health and social care professionals to implement Screening and Brief Interventions (SBI) for problem substance misuse.

On completion of this course, participants should be able to:

- Apply the theory from the SAOR online module to their practice
- Identify opportunities to conduct a brief intervention
- Demonstrate appropriate brief intervention skills using the SAOR model
- Identify appropriate alcohol and other drugs care pathways

The key course content which emerges from the course learning outcomes is outlined below:

- Evidence for the effectiveness of SBI.
- Alcohol and drug related presentations to health and social care settings.
- Contemporary models of SBI for problem alcohol and drug use.
- Overview of the SAOR model of intervention for problem alcohol and drug use.
- Establishing a supportive working relationship with the service users.
- Asking about alcohol and drug use and screening for alcohol and drug related problems.
- Delivering a structured brief intervention based upon the SAOR model.
- Developing appropriate care pathways for service users and arranging appropriate follow up.
- Accessing useful links and reference materials for further reading and research.

The primary target audience is nurses, midwives and allied health and social care professionals who are in a position to offer Screening and Brief Interventions to service users presenting with problem alcohol and drug use.

Contact Amy Roche for Training Dates in Cork and Kerry [Amy.Roche@hse.ie](mailto:Amy.Roche@hse.ie)

Contact Nicola Corrigan for other locations nationally [nicola.corrigan@hse.ie](mailto:nicola.corrigan@hse.ie)



## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### FOUNDATIONS IN AUTISM: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

THE AUTISM PROGRAMME IS A COMPREHENSIVE, CUTTING-EDGE TRAINING SERIES DESIGNED TO EQUIP LEARNERS WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NEEDED TO EFFECTIVELY UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS. GROUNDED IN A NEUROLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE, THE PROGRAMME CONNECTS THEORY AND PRACTICE TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES TAILORED TO THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF THIS POPULATION. HERE'S HOW THE PROGRAMME STANDS OUT FROM A MARKETING PERSPECTIVE:

#### View Our 7 Modules

##### INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAMME

- PRE- AND POST-QUIZZES
- CASE STUDIES
- PRACTICAL EXERCISES
- VIDEOS
- REFLECTION
- PROBLEM SOLVING

  
National Institute  
of Intellectual  
Disability Studies

[www.niids.ie](http://www.niids.ie)

##### UNIQUE SELLING POINTS (USPs)

NEUROLOGICAL FRAMEWORK  
COMPREHENSIVE CONTENT  
PRACTICAL, ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS  
TARGETED FOR DIVERSE AUDIENCES

**Accreditations** - Endorsed by Social Care Ireland & has been awarded 28 CPD by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI), reflecting its high standard and relevance for professional development in healthcare.

#### Overview: Autism Programme

The Autism Programme is a comprehensive, cutting-edge training series designed to equip learners with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively understand and support autistic individuals. Grounded in a **neurological perspective**, the programme connects theory and practice to provide evidence-based strategies tailored to the unique needs of this population. Here's how the programme stands out from a marketing perspective:

#### Aim of Programme

The aim of this programme is to provide learners with a comprehensive understanding of autism, its core characteristics, and associated challenges, framed within a neurological and practical context. By exploring evidence-based strategies, learners will be equipped to support individuals with autism effectively, foster inclusive environments, and promote lifelong development and well-being.

Each Module is €39.99 or Purchase the Bundle of all 7 for €159.99

#### Interactive elements of the programme

This programme incorporates various interactive components designed to engage learners actively and facilitate the application of knowledge to practice. These elements ensure that learners not only acquire theoretical insights but also develop practical skills to support individuals with autism effectively. **Click here** for further information.





# ALCOHOL ACTION IRELAND

## END THE SILENCE RESOURCES

End the Silence is Alcohol Action Ireland's annual week of activities to raise awareness of the issues around parental problem alcohol use. In 2024 End the Silence held a series of three events on November 5th, 6th and 8th. The events form part of Alcohol Action Ireland's initiative, Silent Voices, which seeks to raise awareness of the issues arising from growing up with alcohol harm in the home and put forward policy solutions to address these issues.

Webinar recording: A recording of the event is now available [here](#).

Podcast: Marion Rackard & Aisling Creegan - latest podcast on this issue, Silent Voices, is **available here**.

Richard Hogan Psychologist - Lived Experience - **[click here](#)**

Trauma's Ripples through Time - **[click here](#)**

Voices of Hope and Courage: Mansion House Event - **[click here](#)**

Breaking the Domino Effect - **[click here](#)**

### Other resources

During the event there was mention of some other resources:

A short video on Adverse Childhood Experiences from Public Health Wales which is available [here](#).

Trauma informed education website which is available [here](#).

For other events and bookings please check out our [campaign page](#).

Alcohol Ireland podcasts: **[click here](#)**



**Campbell  
Collaboration**

*The effectiveness of psychosocial interventions for reducing problematic substance use, mental ill health, and housing instability in people experiencing homelessness in high income countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis*

**CHRIS O'LEARY,  
ESTHER COREN,  
SANDOR GELLEN,  
ANTON ROBERTS,  
HARRY ARMITAGE**

Psychosocial interventions can be helpful for adults experiencing homelessness.

Many people experiencing homelessness also face issues with problematic substance use and mental ill health, in addition to housing instability. Psychosocial interventions are a group of different approaches that are often used to reduce these issues. This review includes some evidence of whether these interventions work, as well as practice and policy recommendations. It also highlights the need for research to be conducted outside of the United States.

### **1.1 The review in brief**

Psychosocial interventions work to reduce problematic substance use and mental ill health for adults experiencing homelessness. There is currently insufficient evidence to confirm that they are effective in decreasing housing instability. Individual psychosocial interventions can also be effective: cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) reduces problematic substance use and motivational interviewing reduces mental ill health. It is unclear whether other psychosocial interventions work or not.

### **1.2 What is this review about?**

Homelessness is often traumatic, with devastating consequences for those experiencing it. People experiencing homelessness face significant barriers such as stigma and discrimination when they try to access services, and often 'fall through the cracks' between different services. Homelessness is often associated with problematic substance use, mental ill health, offending behaviour, and being

victims of crime. It is important to understand which interventions work best to reduce these issues and improve the lives of people experiencing homelessness. Psychosocial interventions are increasingly used to address some of these issues for people experiencing homelessness. This is a broad group of different interventions, which use psychological approaches to enable positive changes in thoughts, motivations, and behaviours. This review looked at whether these interventions worked to reduce problematic substance use (alcohol and/or drugs), mental ill health, and housing instability.

### **1.3 What is the aim of this review**

This Campbell systematic review examines existing evidence of the effects of psychosocial interventions on at least one of three outcomes (reducing problematic substance use, mental ill health, and/or housing instability). The review compares psychosocial interventions and other ways of delivering services. The review summarises results from 26 papers, all of which cover studies that were conducted in the United States and almost all of which were randomised controlled trials (RCTs). The authors of this review did not conduct any of the studies presented in the 26 included papers.

### **1.4 What are the main findings of this review?**

We examined 898 individual papers to see if they evaluated psychosocial interventions, used with adults experiencing homelessness, in relation to at least one of the three outcomes of interest to us. From these 898 papers, we included 26 papers that covered 23 studies that met our criteria.



Campbell  
Collaboration

*The effectiveness of psychosocial interventions for reducing problematic substance use, mental ill health, and housing instability in people experiencing homelessness in high income countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis*

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This process was undertaken by two researchers independently, with a third researcher making final decisions. All of the included papers were from the United States and all but one were RCTs (a type of evaluation where people are randomly assigned to receive either the intervention of interest or a comparison service). The papers covered a number of different psychosocial interventions. We were able to find evidence about six interventions, including Brief Interventions, Brief Motivational Interventions, CBT, Contingency Management, Dialectical Behavioural Therapy, and Motivational Interviewing. We were not able to find evidence about other types of psychosocial interventions.

**1.4.1 Do psychosocial interventions work for adults experiencing homelessness?**

Yes, overall, psychosocial interventions do work better when compared to other services for adults experiencing homelessness.

Psychosocial interventions work overall in reducing problematic substance use when compared to other services. They also work in reducing mental ill health when compared to other services. But the evidence is less than clear about whether they work in reducing housing instability. This might be because there were only two studies, presented in three papers and all by the same lead author, that looked at the effect of these interventions on housing outcomes.

**1.4.2 Which individual psychosocial interventions work, and for what outcomes?**

Contingency Management works better than other services in reducing

problematic substance use for adults experiencing homelessness. Motivational Interviewing works better than other services in reducing mental ill health for adults experiencing homelessness.

Other results were less encouraging, as it is unclear whether the interventions work for other outcomes. There were non-significant effects (i.e., they could work better than other services, but there is also a chance that they work equally or less well) in relation to CBT and reducing mental ill health, motivational interviewing and reducing problematic substance use, and brief motivational interventions and reducing problematic substance use. There were no results about whether these six interventions reduced housing instability. There were no results about other types of psychosocial interventions on any of the three outcomes of interest to us.

**1.5 What do the findings of this review mean?**

Psychosocial interventions can help adults experiencing homelessness reduce problematic substance use and reduce mental ill health. Individual interventions including CBT and Motivational Interviewing can also work. But more research is needed about psychosocial interventions, particularly from outside of the United States.

**1.6 How up-to-date is this review?**

This review includes papers and studies published before August 2022.

A link to the full review can be found [here](#).





# *Music-based therapeutic interventions for people with dementia*

**JENNY T VAN DER STEEN, JOHANNES C VAN DER Wouden, ABIGAIL M METHLEY, HANNEKE J A SMALING, ANNEMIEKE C VINK, MANON S BRUINSMA**

Does music-based therapy help people with dementia?

## **Key messages**

- Compared to usual care (i.e. without specific activities), providing people with dementia with music-based therapy sessions probably improves depression, and may improve overall behavioural problems.
- Compared to other activities, music-based therapy may improve social behaviour, but we are unsure if it improves anxiety.
- These effects may not last beyond the end of treatment.
- There is no evidence that music-based therapy makes a difference to the emotional well-being, agitation or cognition (e.g. thinking and remembering) of people with dementia, although there is uncertainty about this.
- There is uncertainty in the evidence for long-term effects, but no long-term effects were observed in the studies.
- Adverse effects (unwanted side effects) may be rare, but the studies were inconsistent in their reporting, so we need more evidence before we can reach reliable conclusions.

Why offer music-based therapy to people with dementia?

People with dementia gradually develop increasing difficulty with thinking and daily activities. Dementia is often associated with emotional and behavioural problems and may decrease a person's quality of life. In the later stages of dementia, it may be difficult for people to communicate

with words, but even when they can no longer speak, they may still be able to hum or play along with music. Therapy involving music may therefore be especially suitable for people with dementia to improve their lives.

Who provides music-based therapy?

Music therapists are certified to work with individuals or groups of people, using music to try to help meet their physical, psychological and social needs. Other professionals may also be trained to provide similar therapies.

## **Who provides music-based therapy?**

What did we want to find out?

We wanted to find out if, for people with dementia, music-based therapy works better than usual care or other activities, such as painting. We were interested in whether the therapy changed these outcomes at the end of treatment:

## **What did we want to find out?**

- emotional well-being including quality of life;
- depression and anxiety;
- agitation or aggression and overall behavioural problems;
- social behaviour; and
- cognition (e.g. thinking and remembering).

We also wanted to find out if there were any long-term effects after therapy ended or any unwanted effects.

What did we do?

We searched for studies in which people with dementia were randomly allocated to receive

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# *Music-based therapeutic interventions for people with dementia*

**JENNY T VAN DER STEEN, JOHANNES C VAN DER Wouden, ABIGAIL M METHLEY, HANNEKE J A SMALING, ANNEMIEKE C VINK, MANON S BRUINSMA**

music-based therapy (of at least five sessions) or to a comparison group with no activities or different activities. We combined the results of the studies to estimate the effects of music-based therapy as accurately as possible. We also rated our level of confidence in the findings.

## **What did we find?**

We found 30 studies performed in 15 countries. The studies involved 1720 people with dementia of varying severity. In most of the studies, the participants lived in nursing homes. Seven studies delivered the music-based therapy to individuals; the other studies delivered the intervention to groups. We were able to use results from 28 studies involving 1366 people with dementia for one or more outcomes at the end of treatment. Ten studies contributed information about long-term results.

## **Main results**

### **At the end of treatment**

Music-based therapy probably improves depression and may improve overall behavioural problems, compared with providing usual care.

Music-based therapy may improve social behaviour compared to other activities. We were less confident about the effects of music-based therapy on anxiety compared to other activities.

The available evidence does not suggest any benefit of music-based therapy for emotional well-being (including quality of life), agitation and aggression, or cognition, but

the evidence is limited and there is uncertainty about this.

## **In the longer term**

Some studies measured outcomes four weeks or more after treatment ended. We did not find any lasting effects, but there were fewer results measured in the longer term, and we are uncertain about this evidence. Further studies are likely to have a significant impact on what we know about the effects of music-based therapy for people with dementia, so it is important that research continues.

## **What are the limitations of the evidence?**

There was variation in the quality of the studies and how well they were reported. In all studies, participants and personnel might have known which treatment participants were getting, and in some, the assessors might have known this as well. This could have affected the results. Regarding effects at the end of music-based therapy, we are moderately confident in the evidence for the beneficial effect on depression compared to usual care. We have little confidence in the effects or lack of effects on any of the other outcomes. Adverse effects were rarely reported.

## **How up to date is this evidence?**

This review updates our previous review. We added eight new studies and reached new conclusions. The evidence is current to 30 November 2023.

The link to the full review can be found [\*\*here\*\*](#).



## PODCASTS

**The Social Care Podcast,** Sharing Stories is in its 4<sup>th</sup> series and has just released new episodes. Audrey and Baggie chat with interesting people from the world of social care.

[Tune in here.](#)



**ACAMH podcasts** are an invaluable resource for anyone interested in child and adolescent mental health. They bridge the gap between rigorous research and practical application, featuring expert discussions on mental health. Each episode highlights cutting-edge studies offering insights into findings, and implications for practice. The series caters to clinicians, researchers, and those interested in mental health. Visit our website ([www.acamh.org](http://www.acamh.org)) for a host of free evidence-based mental health resources. [ACAMH Podcast](#)

## VIDEO

### 'Myth-busting around attachment theory'

Professor Pasco Fearon, Chair in Developmental Psychopathology, UCL, gives a talk on 'Myth-busting around attachment theory' at the Emanuel Miller Memorial Lecture & National Conference 'Attachment & early intervention: Improving emotional wellbeing and relationships in the family, and at school' in 2019.



**Health and Social Care Workforce Research Unit**



[@hscwru.bsky.social](#)

HSCWRU, at King's College London, conducts research into the workforce. Follow for news of our findings and upcoming free events. Director:

[@annetteboaz.bsky.social](#)

Visit: [www.kcl.ac.uk/hscwru](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/hscwru)



**Health and Social Care Northern Ireland**

[@hscni.bsky.social](#)

We plan and oversee the delivery of health and social care services for the people of Northern Ireland. Monitored 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.



**Children's School Lives**

[@cslstudyucd.bsky.social](#)

First longitudinal cohort study of children's school lives in Ireland funded by NCCA and led by researchers at UCD School of Education. Contact [csl@ucd.ie](mailto:csl@ucd.ie) for more information.

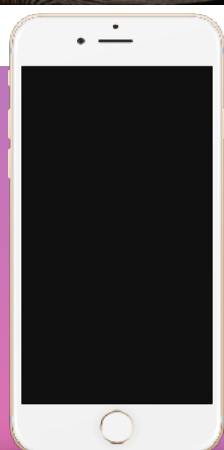
[www.cslstudy.ie](http://www.cslstudy.ie)

## AI App

The Copilot app answers questions and transforms ideas into stunning visuals, professional reports etc.



[MS Copilot app for iOS and Android](#)



# APPS & SOCIAL





# NEW PUBLICATIONS & REPORTS



Full report [here](#).

Full report [here](#)



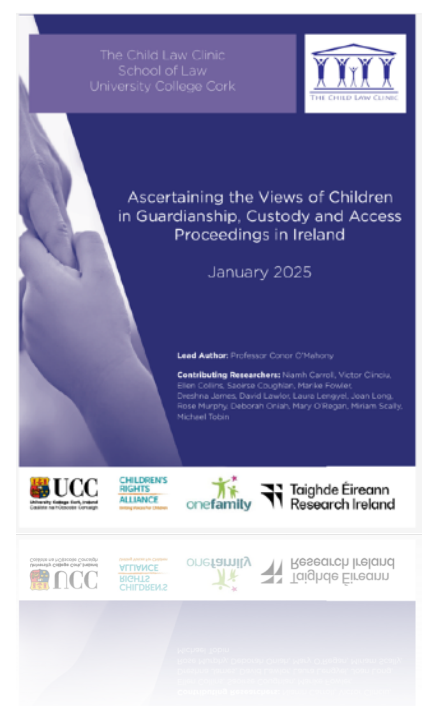
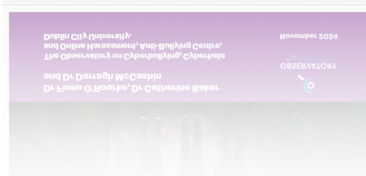
Full report [here](#).

Full report [here](#).



Full report [here](#)

Full report [here](#)





## Children in large families, in lone parent households, and in households where someone has a disability face a higher risk of income poverty and deprivation in both Ireland and Northern Ireland

*The report was commissioned under the joint research partnership of the Shared Island Unit in the Department of the Taoiseach and the Economic and Social Research Institute on The Economic and Social Opportunities from Increased Cooperation on the Shared Island. The programme produces research outputs which add to understanding of current and potential linkages across the island of Ireland in a range of economic, social and environmental domains.*

A new study by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), published today as part of the Institute's joint research programme with the Department of the Taoiseach's Shared Island Unit, compares child poverty and related factors and policy measures in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

## New ESRI research shows the crucial role of the School Completion Programme in supporting student attendance and engagement but highlights staffing and funding challenges

The School Completion Programme (SCP) was established to provide support for children and young people at risk of early school leaving and is part of the DEIS programme. An ESRI report, published today (Tuesday, 4 March 2025), funded by Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) finds that the SCP helps make attending school a more positive experience for children and young people. Its key strength lies in the skills of SCP staff in developing strong and supportive relationships with children and young people, thus enhancing their school engagement. However, around half of coordinators are dissatisfied with staffing and funding. Funding for the programme has increased since 2016 but does not yet match the funding levels in place before the 2008 recession.





### Key components of high-quality child-centred casework in youth justice

This *Academic Insight*, produced by Andrew Day and Catia Malvaso who have been working in partnership with Youth Justice in South Australia to develop case management processes and practices that are more trauma-informed and child-centred, has been published by HM Inspectorate of Probation and is [available here](#).



### Hospitalisations for physical abuse in infants and children less than 5 years, 2013-2021: a multinational cohort study using administrative data from five European countries

Child physical abuse (CPA) is a global public health problem associated with lifelong negative consequences, yet reliable epidemiologic data are lacking. This paper reports on the first large-scale analysis examining trends in hospitalisations for child physical abuse (CPA) in more than two European countries. Using nationwide administrative hospital data from five countries (Denmark, England, France, Ireland, and Wales) over an eight-year period (2013-2021), authors examined the annual incidence rate of CPA hospitalisations amongst infants <1 year and children <5 years, by country. In addition, they examined hospitalisations attributed to CPA as a proportion of the total number of hospitalisations and assessed the distribution of International Classification of Diseases-10 codes used to identify CPA in each country.

#### Main Findings

- The pooled incidence rates of CPA remained stable over time, highlighting that CPA in Europe is a pressing and ongoing public health issue.
- The proportion of hospitalisations for CPA increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. This may be due to the reduction in overall hospital admissions during COVID-19, but it may indicate that additional children were put at risk during the pandemic.
- There were differences between countries in the distribution of ICD-10 codes used to record CPA and differences in year-on-year trends.
- This study demonstrates that comparing temporal trends in CPA hospitalisations between countries is feasible.
- Hospital data are one of several valuable sources for CPA surveillance and can be used to inform the public health response to CPA and assist policymakers in developing and implementing targeted prevention strategies, in line with the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Open access version of paper - [click here](#)





*Practice signposts provide links to high-quality, research-informed databases and publications. Some of the databases at a quick glance may seem too medical/health orientated, but contain great resources to support social work and allied professionals' practice.*

## OPEN ACCESS RESEARCH DATABASES:

RIAN - Irish Open Access Research Archive - [click here](#)

Trinity Access Research Archive (TARA) - [click here](#)

Cork Open Research Archive (CORA) - [click here](#)

Galway Open Access Research Archive (ARAN) - [click here](#)

TU open access (Arrow) - [click here](#).

## RESEARCH DATA ARCHIVES:

Irish Qualitative Data Archive - [click here](#)

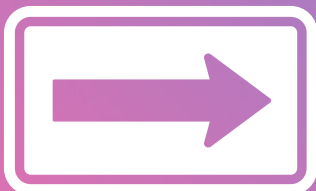
Irish Social Science Data Archive (ISSDA) - [click here](#)

Irish Social Sciences Platform - [click here](#)

## OPEN ACCESS (FREE) JOURNALS

Journal of Early and Intensive Behaviour Intervention; International Journal of Child and Adolescent Resilience (IJCAR; Journal of Global Social Work Practice; International Journal of High Risk Behaviours and Addictions; Journal of Indigenous Social Development; Critical Social Work; International Journal of Child, Youth & Family Studies; The Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies; Comparative Migration Studies; Irish Social Worker.

## SYSTEMATIC REVIEW



***Practice signposts: data sources to support your practice***

## PRACTICE GUIDANCE, DATABASES & PUBLICATIONS:

Addiction Technology Transfer Centre Network (USA) - [click here](#)

CES - Centre for Effective Services - [click here](#)

Child and Family Agency Publications and Reports - [click here](#)

Drug and Alcohol Information and Support (drugs.ie) - [click here](#)

Growing Up in Ireland - national longitudinal study of children. [Click here](#)

HSE Health Promotion Publications - [click here](#)

HSE Publications and Reports - [click here](#)

HRB National Drugs Library - [click here](#)

HUB na nÓg Young: Voices in Decision-Making - [click here](#)

NICE - National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (UK) - [click here](#)

Mindfulness Based Relapse Prevention Resources (free audio tracks) - [click here](#)

North South Child Protection Hub - [click here](#)

Probation Service Publications - [click here](#)

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) - [click here](#)



# PRACTICE LINKS



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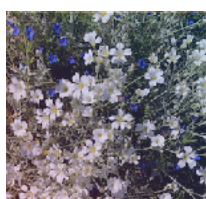
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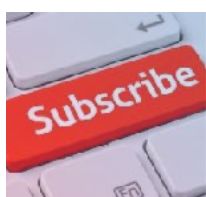
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