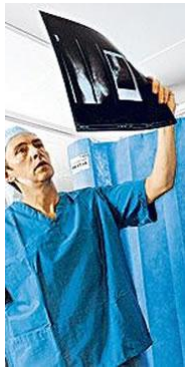


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The programme of research addresses three aspects of social and health care systems:

- how services can be financed in a fair and efficient way,
- the best ways of organising the whole care and support system,
- how we can measure whether the services provided are high quality and make the best use of public funds.

We aim to improve the evidence for national and local policy makers who make decisions about financing and organising services which in turn will affect patients and tax payers. As there are always competing demands on resources, it is essential to ensure that the best possible care is provided at lowest cost. Our research is designed to improve the health and well-being of the population, reflecting distributional concerns and population diversity.

Our work is based on the discipline of economics and mainly uses quantitative methods and existing data. The research is organised under three work-streams:

Funding and resource flows

The first theme looks at arrangements for raising funds for social and health care and how the funds are used to provide services. For example, we explore how the costs of providing long-term care will be met in future as population needs grow; the way in which better co-ordination of health and social care services may improve outcomes for patients, as well as reducing costs; the relationship between informal and formal care; and the determinants of health care expenditure.

Market analysis

The second theme concerns the way in which the overall health and social care systems are organised. For example we assess the impact on quality and costs of services of having care providers from both the public and private sectors. Our research covers the potential for use of competition to improve overall performance; the impact that different configurations of markets can make on prices, outputs, quality and outcomes; and how the best configurations could be implemented in practice.

Quality and productivity

The third theme considers how we measure what is being delivered for the money spent on health and social care. In the current economic climate it is particularly important that we are able to identify and monitor changes in quality, efficiency and productivity. Our work will inform efficiency improvements and outcome-based commissioning and will guide service provision within and across the health and social care sectors.

Governance arrangements

ESHCRU is a joint collaboration between the Centre for Health Economics (CHE) at the University of York and the Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) at the London School of Economics and the University of Kent.

The Department of Health has a Stakeholder Group for ESHCRU consisting of around 12 members, chaired by Richard Murray and including DH representatives, academics, and representatives of external health and social care organisations.

Our own Advisory Group meets on a six monthly basis. Members are listed below. The Advisory Group helps shape ESHCRU's research agenda, review proposals of work, contribute to project design, assess research outputs, and participate in dissemination.



ESHCRU Advisory Group

Dr Martin Bardsley, The Nuffield Trust
Professor David Bell, University of Stirling
Guy Collis, UNISON
Alan Glanz, Department of Health
Jeff Jerome, formerly Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
Hazel Qureshi, Lay member
Wendy Milborrow, Lay member
David Walden, independent consultant (formerly Social Care Institute for Excellence)

Publications <http://www.eshcru.ac.uk/publications/index.htm>

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