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Editorial

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Editorial

From the outgoing editors

Six years ago we had the privilege of taking over as the editors of this journal. How do we capture what this experience has been like and taught us? Below are our points of reflection, our thanks, and our thoughts about the wider context.

The Journal's relevance remains unequivocal

Perhaps the contribution of the Journal to professional debate is more critical now than at any other point during our period of office. With its focus on the promotion of inclusive, psychodynamic and systemic thinking that avoids defensive, split-off positions it resists the pernicious and pervasive dynamics of othering and intolerance. Thank you to our contributors for keeping generative ideas and discourses alive.

Distributed leadership benefits everyone

We have been deeply appreciative of the support that the Journal's editorial board has given us. Through the work of these colleagues we have, for example, established a JSWP Twitter presence, introduced a Voices from Practice section in the journal and increased the number of Special Issues edited by Board members. Thank you Board members.

Editorial assistants are essential

The smooth running of a journal requires an editorial assistant and an efficient and dependable one is a bonus. From the outset Hannah Linford, the journal's long-standing editorial assistant, steered us through the mysteries of ScholarOne (the online submission portal) and much more. We are delighted Hannah is remaining in post and know our successors will soon be as grateful to her as we have been. Thank you Hannah.

Punctuality is important

The volume of papers we receive enables us to publish in a timely fashion but without fear of running out of copy. Indeed we have prided ourselves over the years of maintaining a consistently swift timeline from submission to publication and are grateful to the publishing system processes of Taylor and Francis for enabling us to achieve this reputation. Thank you Taylor and Francis.

The wider context

As we go to press, the UK election has been won with a Conservative landslide, promising to heal divisions, and making no promises about the climate crisis. Meanwhile the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP25) has ended by postponing decisions on the 2015 Paris climate deal for another 12 months. We do not yet know the consequences of these two events, but we know that many people, especially those with fewer resources, will be harmed by failure to act on climate science. Social work and this publication often attend to the forgotten, the marginalised, those whose lives are most profoundly affected by those with money and power, even though high level policy and politics is not our immediate remit. Yet we feel these events in our very being, and one way of surviving is to keep building humane relational systems with one other.

In this light, it is good to hand the journal over to new editors for whom we have the utmost respect. We wish them well in the endeavour.

From the incoming editors

As the incoming co-editors, we take on this role with a deep sense of gratitude to Gillian Ruch and Juliet Koprowska for their enormous contribution to the journal and we know we speak on behalf of all the journal's readers when we express our thanks to them for their dedication, commitment and leadership over many years. The journal is an important publication in the field of social work, attracting high quality submissions from across the world. As the incoming editors our focus will be on ensuring that the journal remains vibrant and relevant in its focus and that it continues to provide a discursive space for the complex and critical debates so important in contemporary practice. In the very first editorial in 1983, the founding editor Mannie Sher stated that the journal should focus on meeting the needs of practitioners, rather than just academics. He felt that practitioners should find articles that speak to their experience and help them to make sense of the complex and messy realities of practice. We hope to continue this tradition and, although new in the editor role, have both been involved in supporting the work of the journal as members of the editorial board. We hope this previous experience will have prepared us for the work ahead.

We thought it might be of interest to readers if we introduced ourselves. Gloria Kirwan is based in the National University of Ireland, Maynooth where she is currently setting up a new social work masters degree. For the previous 19 years, Gloria was based in Trinity College Dublin also in a social work academic role. However, her work in practice prior to these appointments, which stretches back into the 1980s, remains a strong influence on her teaching and research. Although varied, her research interests share a concern to amplify the views of those who are silenced or marginalised in society.

Andrew Whittaker is based at London South Bank University and his research focuses around risk and decision making in children's services, including trauma and serious youth violence. Before academia, Andrew spent 17 years in practice as a senior social worker in a child protection service, a child and adolescent mental health service and as the director of a mental health voluntary organisation.

In our first task as the new editors, it is our pleasure to present the contributors to this issue. The first article by Rosemary Vito, 'Social work leadership revisited: participatory

versus directive approaches during service system transformation', presents a detailed study of leadership approaches found in three children's services agencies in Canada. The study identified different leadership approaches including participatory, situational and directive decision-making, and how these interacted with the work contexts within which the different styles were adopted by social work leaders. While participatory approaches to leadership have many benefits, Rosemary Vito reveals that other leadership styles may be useful under certain circumstances. Her study advances our knowledge on the factors that lead to the adoption of one style or another in children's services and, indeed, her article provides a broader illumination of the many issues, which provide the context for the provision of such services.

Beth Archer-Kuhn and Patricia Samson's article is entitled 'Enhancing supervision in children's mental health through Bowen's Family of Origin supervisory training'. Similar to the previous article, this article reports on research in Canada, this time in a Western Canadian children's mental health setting and it again explores the topic of leadership albeit through a different lens. In their study, Beth Archer-Kuhn and Patricia Samson examine how the incorporation of Bowen's Family of Origin training into supervisory training with new team leaders facilitated exploration by the participants of the importance of self-awareness in the leadership role. The participants reported this training as helpful in deepening their self-awareness and developing their capacity to attend to and build positive peer and team relationships. The findings point to the relevance of the Bowen model in supervisory training and the wider agency benefits which can flow when this is incorporated into supervisors' skillsets.

Staying with the theme of social work supervision, Jenni Elizabeth Burton examines the views of social work practice educators regarding their role in supporting and assessing social work students during placement. Her study is conducted with particular reference to the period surrounding the implementation of the Professional Capabilities Framework in the United Kingdom. Her article, 'Reframing social work practice education: practice educators' perceptions of the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) and the support provided during implementation' highlights the importance of relationship building between the supervisor and student and the centrality of that relationship in providing a supportive developmental context for student learning. This research study illuminates the intersection between wider social work reform and the practice educator role in the context of increasing complexity and responsibilities for social workers in general.

H. Özden Bademci, Nasir Warfa, Narin Bağdatlı-Vural, E. Figen Karadayı, Seher Yurt and Şahin Karasar's article, 'Teachers' perceptions of an attachment-informed psychosocial programme for schoolchildren with social and emotional problems in Istanbul, Turkey: theory & practice', is based on research in Turkey which investigated the impact of a school-based, attachment-informed psychosocial support programme offered to children attending school in a disadvantaged neighbourhood in Istanbul. Undergraduate and postgraduate university students and their mentors were involved in delivering the programme over an 8-month period which involved creating a weekly safe, supervised environment in small groups or individually for the participating children. The programme incorporated a range of activities including games, art, reading, library visits and other activities. The study reports findings of enhanced self-worth, feelings of safety, reductions in anxiety and disruptive behaviour and fewer emotional

problems among the group of child participants. In addition to the delivery of the programme in the school setting, wider changes in teacher responses to children were also observed including raised empathy and better understanding of the children's social and emotional needs.

Suzie Weng and Lisa Grey's article, 'Racial microaggressions within social work: perceptions of providers', locates experiences of racism, hate crimes and microaggressions within the 'uncomfortable truths' context of racial prejudice in America. Adopting Sue et al.'s (2007, p. 273) definition of racial microaggression as 'brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a racial minority group', their qualitative study captures the views and experiences of social workers on this issue. The findings indicate that in policy and practice, different forms of microaggressions could be discerned, including lack of cultural understanding, dismissal of the relevance of clients' cultural identities and the use of stereotypes. The authors offer important recommendations regarding training and education, organisational policies and awareness raising as elements of a strategy to develop awareness and skills regarding this issue.

The complex nature of social work practice is also highlighted in the article, 'Women who use alcohol and other drugs during pregnancy: exploring the complexity of client engagement and their compliance with human service expectations' by Jennette McGrory, Jan Breckenridge and Jane Mowll. Drawing on a case exemplar derived from two different data sources and an in-depth literature review, the article provides important insights on the challenges for this population and the layers of expectations they encounter in their contacts with multiple service providers. The article highlights the need for service providers to better understand the complexities experienced by this group of women when engaging and complying with multiple agencies, as well as a need for services to aim for integrated responses to this group. Achieving greater levels of understanding on the part of service providers has the potential to achieve better outcomes for this group of women and their children, and this article offers valuable insights into these processes.

Staying with a health theme, Elaine Wilson's article addresses the social work role in assisting women through the transition from cancer patient to cancer survivor. The article, titled 'Social work, cancer survivorship and liminality: meeting the needs of young women diagnosed with early stage breast cancer', explores the use of a narrative therapeutic approach when working with people as they navigate this particular transitional stage in their experience of cancer. As outlined by Elaine Wilson, experiencing cancer is often entwined with feelings of loss, fear and change. Her article outlines the usefulness of the narrative approach as a means of helping women make sense of their lives and manage the profound changes which a cancer diagnosis can bring. This article sets out a detailed account of the application of this approach, including its usefulness in the liminal space post diagnosis and treatment.

The final article in this issue is in the 'Voices from Practice' category. Dominic Regan's paper is titled 'How the challenging behaviour of a traumatised child tells their trauma story and is a vital part of their recovery' and is based on his experience working in London as a psychodynamic psychotherapist in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Based on his experience, Dominic Regan highlights how children tell us their story of trauma through their words and/or behaviour and, therefore, a child's behaviour

provides adults with vital information regarding their experiences and feelings. Dominic Regan outlines ways through which the adult world can translate the messages contained within the child's behaviour and he identifies many skills that can be used to facilitate this process. His paper makes clear that when a child communicates trauma through words or behaviour it is vital for the child's recovery that we are able to understand their message and respond to it effectively.

We would like to thank all the contributors for sharing their work, ideas and expertise in this issue.

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