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## Editorial

We are delighted to introduce this, the first newsletter of the recently relaunched Scottish School of Primary Care (SSPC). SSPC has been in existence since 2000, but was reinvigorated and given a new direction by renewed funding from the Primary Care Division of Scottish Government in October last year. The purpose of the funding is to contribute to the evidence base for an integrated sustainable and equitable primary care system in Scotland.

There is no shortage of challenges at the moment. Primary care is being extensively redesigned, health and social care integration is in progress, resources are constrained and there are significant workforce shortages, including for GPs. However, Scotland has some of the best primary care researchers in the world. We now have a great opportunity to use their skills, as well as their past and future academic work, to ensure that where there is evidence available, it is used to best effect. Evaluation of new projects will be a major part of our work. Our wider remit, very important for the future, also includes building academic capacity in primary care in Scotland and promoting international collaboration and exchange.

The scale of Scotland—5.4 million people, with close professional and lay networks, means that we can work collaboratively with Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland, RCGP Scotland, Scottish GPs Committee, HIS and NES and others to address these challenges constructively. We welcome ideas; please contact us on [info@sspc.ac.uk](mailto:info@sspc.ac.uk) Alternatively, come and meet us at our **first annual conference on September 9th**, see page 3 for details.

*Professor  
Stewart Mercer  
SSPC Director*

*Professor  
John Gillies OBE  
SSPC Deputy Director*



## A New Direction

In 2014, **Stewart Mercer** took over as Director of SSPC from Frank Sullivan. Since then, he has been joined by other members of its Operational Team; John Gillies (Deputy Director), Bridie Fitzpatrick (Research Programme Developer/Manager), and Alise Middleton (Administrator).

SSPC is managed by an **Executive Management Group**, which has professorial representation from its member universities; Sir Lewis Ritchie (Aberdeen), Bruce Guthrie (Dundee), John Gillies (Edinburgh), Stewart Mercer (Glasgow), and Margaret Maxwell (Stirling).

The School is responsive to an **Advisory Group** with representation from senior academics in primary care and key stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of integrated health and social care service policy. The first meeting of our Advisory Board is to be held on **9<sup>th</sup> September 2016**.

## Renewed Government Funding

Until March 2018, the Scottish Government has **committed £500,000 per annum** of the Primary Care Transformation Fund (PCTF) to the SSPC. The major role of the School is to **work collaboratively** with its member universities to evaluate projects funded by the PCTF in order to provide evidence to support different models of primary care.

## New Models of Care Projects

Since 2014 the Government has funded a small number of projects through **different funding streams** to trial new models of care. These include:

- **Govan** Social and Health Integration Partnership (SHIP), Glasgow
- Headroom, **Edinburgh**
- Modernising Primary Care, **Grampian**
- Ravenswood Programme, **Tayside**

## Primary Care Transformation Funds (PCTF) Projects

The PCTF has **£20 million** designated to new models of care in primary care, which is part of a £60 million fund covering additional aspects of care such as mental health, community pharmacy, and out-of-hours care.

In addition to the above, PCTF are currently funding two further initiatives:

- **Inverclyde** GP Quality Clusters
- The **Lanarkshire** Primary Care Transformation Programme

They are soon to be complemented **by a new raft of projects** from all NHS Health Boards that have submitted formal expressions of interest to the Scottish Government for PCTF support.

## National Evaluation Framework

SSPC is currently working with colleagues in the Scottish Government to develop a **national Evaluation Framework** to inform the evaluation of the diverse range of projects that will ultimately be supported by PCTF.

The framework proposed by SSPC consists of **two phases** comprising the identification of:

1. The **new models of primary care** being funded by the Scottish Government across Scotland: what their components are; how they are expected to work (theory of change); and what the expected short, medium and long-term impacts or outcomes are.
2. The **impacts**, learning, spread and sustainability.

It is anticipated that the evaluation will be carried out at two levels, national and local.



## Scottish School of Primary Care Events

In February 2016, the **Evaluability Assessment Workshop**, led by Dr Peter Craig of Glasgow University. This gave a helpful insight into how to work with key stakeholders to articulate intended project outcomes and map these to the project inputs in order to assess whether or not an evaluation is possible and feasible.



Feedback was extremely positive:

*"I really enjoyed the meeting. It was a nice blend of talk and then group discussion which underlined the scope and difficulties surrounding this area. I will definitely use the slides for our own team."*

In March 2016, the **Quality After QOF Workshop** provided an important forum for participants from different health care systems, including several from across Europe, to review the

lessons learnt from Quality Outcome Framework (QOF) and consider the future direction of quality in primary care, particularly in relation to GP Practice Quality Clusters (see report at [www.sspc.ac.uk/reports](http://www.sspc.ac.uk/reports)).



The **2016 SSPC Annual Conference 'Developing evidence for integration and improvement'** will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> September at the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh. This re-launch of the SSPC will be an important forum for those involved in developing and implementing quality improvement. If you are interested in attending or would like more information, please email: [info@sspc.ac.uk](mailto:info@sspc.ac.uk)

## Publications

SSPC has commissioned a series of briefing papers designed to inform the activities of the new **Quality Clusters**. These summarise guidelines and research and other evidence on areas of care which can be improved, including improvement methods and interventions.

Topics covered include:

- Prescribing Safety
- Managing multimorbidity
- The role of telehealth care
- Treatment Burden



In addition, **Professor Bruce Guthrie** has produced a literature review of the 12 years of the Quality Outcome Framework (QOF). This summarises the pros and cons of QOF, including those that were unintended, and should be helpful in informing the future activities of GP Practice Quality Clusters.

Once finalised, these publications will be available SOON on [www.sspc.ac.uk/reports/](http://www.sspc.ac.uk/reports/)

## Academic Training Opportunities

This year's **NHS Education for Scotland GP Academic Fellowships** interviews were co-ordinated by the SSPC for its member universities. Congratulations to the successful candidates and host institutions!

- Sarah Mills (University of Dundee)
- Luke Daines (University of Edinburgh)
- Ulna Chetty (University of Glasgow)
- Hamish Foster (University of Glasgow)
- John Kyle (University of Glasgow)
- Lynsey Yeoman (University of Glasgow)

Other current primary care academic training opportunities can be found on [www.sspc.ac.uk/](http://www.sspc.ac.uk/)

**Is there anything you would like to ask us?**

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