



Wider Reference Group Meeting, November 2010

A second meeting of the College Wider Reference Group was held in November 2010.

The purpose of the Wider Reference Group is to:

- provide advice on areas of expertise of members and
- support wider stakeholder engagement and consultation through member networks.

The group is informal, and the range of people invited and attending is growing as interest in the College develops. A list of attendees is provided at Appendix 1.

The second meeting heard a presentation from Prof Corinne May-Chahal and Maurice Bates, the Interim Co-Chairs of the College, on progress to date. This presentation is provided at Appendix 2.

1. Recommendations from the meeting

Those present spent time considering key issues for social workers in order to offer advice to the College. Participants worked in four groups:

- support for social workers in the statutory sector
- support for social workers in integrated multi-agency teams
- support for social workers outside local authority employment
- support for service user and carer groups working with the College to enable ongoing participation

Each Group considered

1. What needs to improve?
2. What should the College do to support improvements?
3. Who should the College involve to do this?

The key recommendations from each group are:

1.1 Statutory settings

What needs to improve?

Separation of the profession from the employer:

- advocacy

- responsibility for own learning
- creating a learning environment
- media image and public profile (is it worse for statutory services?)

What could the College do?

- The College as a secure base
- standards for the profession that have clout

Who should the College involve?

- local Government
- the voluntary sector
- service users
- higher Education
- trades Unions

1.2 Integrated Multi-Agency Teams

Potential areas for important roles and development/impact for the College and the Social Work Contribution document include:

Keep the long term view:

- college has an important role in CPD
- don't forget managers too
- need to connect with social workers in different organizations/different service user groups

Work with the SWRB on the Employer Standards and Supervision framework :

- endorse where it can; Share messages; College holds the gold standard v the regulator's minimum standard
- clarify the role of the College in the use of language in the Contribution document: Avoid regulatory language. "Education" not "training": "Promote", "enhance" = College; "regulate" = regulator

Develop the virtual capacity of the College

- set up professional specialist parts of the College (which can be virtual), i.e. Communities of practice; Access to networks outside worktime (problems for LAS for access in worktime); Create horizontal relationships between SWs not just vertical ones with the College; cf Virtual Staff College that works with Directors of Schools

Develop a learning culture

- role in developing a learning culture, informing policy contribution, providing leading edge, influence, consider the principles of promoting a learning profession AND learning individuals.
- link with other Colleges, perhaps who share the same regulator, for economies and for greater understanding of the triangular relationship (registrant, regulator, college)
- develop the continuum of learning from the HEI to the workplace into cpd alongside HEIs- accreditation/endorsement of HEI programmes is quick way to ensure consistency of cpd opportunities across the country. Income generating?
- information role for college: provide exemplars and advice re career pathways (cf College of Occupational Therapists)
- portfolio for CPD: HPC require a compulsory portfolio: why could the College not endorse this? Work with regulator to make membership of the college a plus for registration/re-registration. Could College hold the portfolios? Income generating?
- college should be the endorser of CPD, NOT the provider

Media Voice:

- college needs to be the authority, but also have a system for governance to manage who speaks for the College: Chairs? Senior people? Board?

Role of College in developing national Leaders in social work:

- assigning mentors (from retired social workers)
- offering peer support (brokered by College cf C4EO)
- designating accredited specialists – network of support
- register of Experts (for media and advice), eg Mental Health, Child Protection, safeguarding adults, end of life care, etc

1.3 Non local authority settings

What needs to improve?

- increased engagement of smaller employers and social workers within them
- increased recognition that social work practice will take place increasingly outside statutory settings
- the profile and understanding of the range of social work practice with the public and other sectors

What should the College do?

- champion a broad and inclusive view of social work (it's so much more than protection from abuse)
- strong defender of social work standards in non statutory settings at a time of reduced resources and inspection

- broker access to qualifications and CPD for small employers and their social workers

Who should the College involve?

- sector Skills Councils
- full range of unions and membership bodies
- increased involvement of health bodies: key to commissioning and public health

1.4 Support for service user and carer groups

The College is of social work rather than social workers, so it needs to live up to its name and have a broader remit to represent and reform the profession.

Voluntary organisations and service users should have both governance and advisory roles and the involvement of service users should be integral to the governing documents/constitution of the College.

There should be an information helpline/service for people working with service users.

There needs to be a transparent strategy from the start about how service user involvement will be embedded into the College. This should include

- clarity over the benefits of joining the College
- clarity over the mechanisms for involving service users
- how the involvement of user groups will be used to promote the development of the social work profession
- ensuring service users contribute to training

The College should involve service users directly and work with organisations that represent service users – and in the case of organisations, the College should check that they involve service users at every level and that they are truly representative.

The College has the opportunity to get it right from the start, rather than making structural adjustments later on, which is much harder.

What needs to improve?

Social workers listening to, empathising with and understanding the perspective of the service users (clients) they are working with.

The College should meet with other professional colleges to learn from them what they are getting right and wrong.

2. Next steps


A further meeting of the Wider Reference Group will be arranged for Spring 2011. In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments, please contact the College Development Team: CollegelInfo@scie.org.uk or 020 7089 6840

Appendix 1: Meeting attendees 16.11.10

Aidan Melling	National College
Audie Miller	Children England
Daniel Hutt	User Voice
Dara de Burca	Clic Sargent
Hazel Halle	The Fostering Network
Hilary Tompsett	JUC SWEC
Jackie Rafferty	SWAP
Jan Fry	Grandparents Association
Jean Stogdon	Grandparents Plus
Jenny Clifton	Office of the Children's Commissioner
John Chowcat	Aspect
John Grounds	NSPCC
John Simmonds	British Association for Adoption and Fostering
Julia Scott	College of Occupational Therapists
Maggie Jones	Children England
Natasha Finlayson	The Who Cares Trust
Owen Davies	GSCC
Richard Banks	SCA
Sharon Allen	Skills for Care
Simon Chapman	The National Council for Palliative Care
Sue Bott	NCIL
Tony Shield	ARC UK
Vivienne Evans	Adfam
Yehudit Amias	Jewish Care

Appendix 2: Presentation from Prof Corinne May-Chahal and Maurice Bates, the Interim Co-Chairs of the College.

**THE COLLEGE OF
SOCIAL WORK**



Wider Reference Group College progress to date

16 November 2010
Professor Corinne May – Chahal
Interim Co-Chair
The College of Social Work

**THE COLLEGE OF
SOCIAL WORK**



Appointment of the Interim Board

- 170 applications for a place on the interim board received

The Interim Board
Maurice Bates and Professor Corinne May – Chahal
Interim Co-Chairs

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Board Members
Kate Arnett, Graham Brittan, Jo Cleary, Suzy Croft, Patricia Higham, Dave Hill
Joe Mairuria, Jamie Middleton, Andy O'Beirne, Angus Skinner, Alison Tasker

THE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK



Consultation with social workers

The College consulted with Social Workers between May and September 2010

Purpose of the consultation;

- to define the purpose and function of The College
- to guide development of the vision and mission for The college going forward

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Response rate:

- 730 completed online consultation
- 238 attended regional consultation events

THE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK



Headline findings

- Almost 100% said that it was very important or important that The College is led by the profession.
- 99% agreed that The College should influence the development of national policies that impact Social Work and social workers, acting as an advocate for the profession.
- 98% agreed that The College should represent the Social Work profession in discussions with policy makers, the public, the media and other professions.
- 98% said that it was essential or valuable for The College to improve media coverage of social workers and Social Work.
- 98% said it was very important or important that The College will enable and guard excellence in the profession.
- 98% agreed that The College should provide up-to-date information and guidance on issues affecting the profession.
- 97% agreed that The College should agree, establish and promote standards for the quality of training.

Wider Reference Group College progress to date

16 November 2010
Maurice Bates
Interim Co-Chair
The College of Social Work

Consultation with people who use services

Consultation events and activities were delivered in partnership with:

- User Voice
- Action for Children
- University of Sussex
- National Centre for Independent Living (NCIL)
- Innovations in Dementia

Recommendations are currently being analysed and will be published shortly.



Some snapshots

'A perfect social worker would be friendly, listen, discuss problems, look at the young person's views, be smiley, love kids, spend time with the children, attend the meetings and remember important things about us like our birthdays.' (looked after young person Greater Manchester)

"I do hold back but obviously like when I speak to my social worker, I tell her things, I ask her things and I think she just ... she doesn't understand why I want these things. She just thinks well that's not going to be good for you."

(Young male offender)

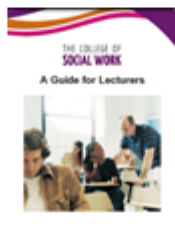
Social workers should "be there to help and get things going" without "patronising".
(NCIL consultation participant)



College materials produced to date

A series of documents to highlight the work of the college have been produced

- Contribution of Social Work
- The College of Social Work generic leaflet
- The College of Social Work guide for students
- The College of Social Work – guide for lecturers





Work in progress

- Defining Social Work
- Social Work Reform Board work on standards
- BASW
- Unison