Work together with the WCEC core team, evidence review collaborating partners, and other stakeholders to support all our processes from start to finish.
Evidence reviews completed:

- **Vaccination uptake** (barriers/facilitators and interventions) in adults from underserved or hard-to-reach communities (June 2021)

- The effectiveness of **infection prevention and control measures** in education and childcare settings for children (August 2021)

- Barriers and facilitators to the **uptake of personal protective behaviours** in public settings (January 2022)

- **Innovations to address the orthopaedic surgery backlog** (November 2021)
Reports completed:

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the **mental health** of **health and social care workers** within the UK: a rapid review

The impact of **educational** and other **restrictions** during the COVID-19 pandemic on **children**: a rapid review

Evidence of direct harm from COVID-19 **infection** and COVID-19 **vaccine** in **pregnant/post-partum women** and the **unborn child**: a rapid evidence summary

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on **disabled people**: a rapid evidence map

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on **health** and **access to care** of **disabled people**: a rapid review

Date: 23 March 2022
Rapid reviews and evidence summaries completed:

- The effectiveness of alternative education delivery strategies for undergraduate and postgraduate medical, dental, nursing and pharmacy education during the pandemic
- The efficacy, effectiveness and safety of COVID-19 disinfection methods (including ozone machines) in educational settings for children and young people
- Strategies to support learning and wellbeing among 16-19 year old learners who have experienced significant disruption in their education as a result of the pandemic
- What innovations help to attract, recruit and retain social care workers within the UK context?

Wales Centre for Evidence Based Care
Team: Judith Carrier, Judit Csontos, Deborah Edwards, Elizabeth Gillen

23 March 2022
Rapid Reviews:

- Are there any innovations and interventions to address the backlog in endoscopy for patients with potential gastrointestinal cancer symptoms?

- Have infection control and prevention measures resulted in any adverse outcomes for care home and domiciliary care residents and staff?

- What innovations can address gender inequalities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Rapid Evidence Summaries:

- What evidence is there of the inverse care law in social care in Wales and has this been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Date: 23 March 2022
Current work

- Evaluating the impact of **COVID-19** on diagnoses, outcomes and care of patients with **long term conditions**, within the Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) databank.

- The effectiveness of **anti-viral treatment** for vulnerable patients
What impact have changes in working practice had on *green house gas emissions*?

Including effects of energy consumption and commuting behaviour changes

The Team:
Morwenna Spear, Graham Ormondroyd, Athanasios Dimitriou, Simon Willcock, Ceri Loxton, George Roberts
The Team:
Susan Myles, David Jarrom, Jenni Washington, Tom Winfield, Elise Hasler, Sasha Barrate, Jessica Williams, Diana Milne

Reviews completed:

- Transmission of COVID-19 in closed, semi-enclosed and outdoor environments
- Oximetry machines: Use for people to monitor oxygen levels at home
- Face coverings to reduce transmission of COVID-19
- COVID-19 transmission in vaccinated populations
- Modelling studies to evaluate non-pharmaceutical interventions on COVID-19 R-number
What innovations help to attract, recruit and retain social care workers within the UK context?

RDD-00026
(December 2021)

Lay Summary

The social care sector has suffered staff shortages and been under pressure for several years now. The COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions on overnment recruitment have made the situation worse recently. This rapid review aims to identify new ways to attract, recruit and retain social care workers in the UK and to understand what barriers still remain.

Evidence from 2013-2021 involving social workers and the social care workforce were studied. Key areas for recruiting and retaining staff were:

Social workers

- Opportunities for work placement prior to employment
- Recruiting graduates on fast-track programmes
- Apprenticeships

Social care workers

- Changing care workers' views: job satisfaction and retention;
- National recruitment campaigns;
- Recruiting staff from the areas of their origin and background rather than just on their qualifications and experience;
- Poor terms and conditions, low pay, unsocial hours, and insecurity of both employment and management all make it difficult to keep social care staff in post. High turnover levels make it difficult to keep social care workers;
- Pay and benefits, good working conditions and having achievements recognized, all encouraged staff to stay.

Although there have been many new ideas tried in the UK, the evidence about which ones have been successful is often lacking. The results also came from a time before COVID and COVID which may affect their relevance to the current situation.

We need to plan how new ideas will be evaluated in the future so that we can confidently showcase successful ones. Further research is needed so that they can be done.

Evidence from this rapid review suggests that there has been little activity in recruiting and retaining the social care workforce. Social Care Wales, who are currently drawing up a new social care workforce for Wales, is recommended to look into the following:

- Campaigns to promote care work are needed to address negative views and the low status of the work.
- More support for retaining staff is needed.
- The importance of retaining staff is emphasized.

Although this is ongoing, it has been made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Evidence from 2013-2021 involving social workers

- 13 UK articles involving social workers;
- 20 UK articles involving the social care workforce.

Effectiveness for Social Workers

- Nine innovations were described across the evidence base to attract, recruit and retain social workers; of these only nine were evaluated
- Pre-employment initiatives including practice-based training programmes may contribute to retention (mixed methods evidence)
- Graduates of fast-tracking programmes may be more likely to remain in employment, thus contributing to increased retention (mixed methods evidence)
- Apprenticeships are a potentially impactful way to train (paid) and train new social workers (mixed methods evidence)
- Frequently cited factors causing social workers to leave were identified: high caseload and excessive workload, combined with organisational stress.
- No evidence identified that explored increasing diversity or good working conditions for social workers.

Implications for policy and practice

- 11 innovations were described to attract, recruit and retain the wider social care workforce across the evidence base; only 4 were evaluated
- Care workers as ambassadors to promote career opportunities can positively impact attraction and recruitment for new staff and the absence of these issues more varied and likely to stay with their current employer (selection) (mixed methods evidence)
- Post-employment training initiatives such as the Care First Career Pathways are important in building basic care skills, interview preparation and confidence and can enhance recruitment (mixed methods evidence)
- National recruitment campaigns: specifically, every day in different campaigns saw an increase in enquiries and applications (ad hoc) and interviews and vacancies filled (recruitment) (organisational report evidence)
- Values-based recruitment has resulted in lower recruitment costs, positive return on investment; lower staff turnover and better staff performance (mixed methods and quantitative descriptive evidence)
- Negative factors affecting turnover were identified as poor terms and conditions, low pay, unsociable working hours, and insecurities of both employees and managers
- Positive factors include pay and retention bonuses, good working environment and celebrating achievements

The rapid review was produced in December 2021, and is available at:
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of health and social care workers
COVID-19 has dramatically changed the health and social care needs of the people in Wales and the way health and care is delivered to meet these needs. Those who make decisions about policy and practice in this area need to use research and evidence to guide their decision making, manage the pandemic and understand the impact of the pandemic on the health and social care delivery systems in Wales. This will ensure that the health and wider needs of communities and people in Wales are met.

There has been a huge volume of COVID-19 research relating to distribution of the disease, risk-factors, characterisation of the condition, treatments, vaccination, and increasingly about the consequences of COVID-19 both for individuals and communities.

However, while the importance and value of research is clear, the research evidence is often not readily available to the people who need this to support decision making (including policy-makers, the public, directors in NHS Wales, social care and third sector organisations and clinicians). It is also challenging to ensure the research evidence base is up-to-date and relevant to Wales. This is the driver for establishing the Wales COVID-19 Evidence Centre and stands to improve the quality and safety of health and social care delivery in Wales.
WCEC e-mail: WC19EC@cardiff.ac.uk

WCEC Website: Wales COVID-19 Evidence Centre | Health Care Research Wales (healthandcareresearchwales.org)