Exploring the Implications of Evidence Informed Practice (EIP) and Professionalization for the Care of Social Care Professionals in Ireland.

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Introduction

• Professionalization and substantial reform (CORU, 2017a; 2017b)

• New questions are prompted

• Complex repercussions of professionalization (Finnerty, 2012; Power & Darcy, 2017; Williams & Lalor, 2001)

• Evidence Informed Practice (EIP) and professionalization
Starting points

• Beyond polemic terms
• Beyond an uncritical stance where changes become embedded and naturalised
• A passive engagement with professionalization is simply insufficient
Social Constructionist Framework

• 1. Historical and Cultural Specificity
• 2. Knowledge is Sustained by Social Processes
• 3. Knowledge and Social Action Go Together
• 4. A Critical Stance Towards Taken for Granted Knowledge

(Burr, 2015; Flynn, forthcoming; Gergen, 1985)
Problems with existing knowledge

• Greater specificity is required (Stevens, Liabo and Roberts, 2007)

• Altering knowledge requirements

• Multiplicity of job titles (Byrne, 2016; Hutchinson, 2017; Power & Darcy, 2017; Williams & Lalor, 2001)

• Social work and social care (Byrne, 2016; Christ et al., 2011; Gambrill, 2007; Gibbs, 2003; Gibbs & Gambrill, 2002; Gray, Joy, Plath, & Webb, 2013)
Evidence

• Evidence-Informed Practice (EIP) versus Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) (Farrelly, 2013; Nevo & Slonim-Nevo, 2011)

• Beyond scientific research findings (Buckley & Whelen, 2009; Nevo & Slonim-Nevo, 2011; Nutley et al., 2007; Research in Practice, 2006; Lewig, Arney, & Scott, 2006; Moule & Hek, 2011)

• Defining EBP and EIP (Austin and Classon, 2008; Aveyard and Sharp, 2009; Cairney, 2016)

• “The conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of” patients, and later within social care, service users. (Sackett et al., 1997, p.2)
Four Themes for Review

1. The potentially causal relationship between EIP and professionalization.

2. The broad implications for caring for social care professionals in this transitory period of reform and regulation.

3. The specific challenges and significant concerns raised by professionalization and EIP with regard to the care of social care professionals.

4. The benefits of EIP and professionalization for the care of social care professionals in Ireland, including the specific implications for self-care.
The potentially causal relationship between EIP and Professionalization

• Compelled by and embedded within processes of professionalization

• The established requirement for EIP (CORU, 2017b; Fisher, 2016; HIQA, 2012; Minister for Children, 2007)

• Yet Social Care Practice lacks application of research findings (Barnardo’s, 2000)
Implications for caring for social care professionals in this transitory period of reform and regulation

- Re-acquaint within moments of adversity with practitioner’s own vulnerability
- Adverse emotional, physical and mental impacts of professionalization
- Conditions of possibility for care and support (Lichner et al., 2018)
Concerns and Challenges to Achieving EIP on the Road to Professionalization

• Practical impediments (Buckley & Whelan, 2009; Barnardo’s 2000; Farrelly, 2013; Marsh & Fisher, 2005; Walter, Nutley, Percy-Smith, McNeish, & Frost, 2004).

• Becoming an evidence-based professional (Gambrill, 2006; Gambrill & Gibbs, 2002, p. 452)

• Little doubt as to practitioner’s obligation to do so (McSweeney et al., 2016; Power, & Darcy, 2017)
Benefits of EIP for Professionalization in Social Care in Ireland

• Improve effectiveness and accountability

• Benefits for service users (Marsh & Fisher, 2005; Mosson et al., 2017; Nevo & Slonim-Nevo, 2011)

• Improved resource efficiency; improved analytical practice; raising of the status of social care professionals, and improved public confidence. (Marsh & Fisher, 2005; Mosson et al., 2017; Moule & Hek, 2011; Nevo & Slonim-Nevo, 2011)
Looking to the Future: Strategies for Social Care Practice

• Historical and Cultural Specificity
• Knowledge is Sustained by Social Processes
• Knowledge and Social Action Go Together
• Critical Stance Towards Taken for Granted Knowledge

(Burr, 2015; Flynn, forthcoming; Gergen, 1985)
THANK YOU

Questions?
References


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