



**James  
Lind  
Alliance**

Priority Setting Partnerships

## **Adult Social Work Priority Setting Partnership**

### **Steering Group – background and Terms of Reference**

#### **Introduction to the James Lind Alliance and priority setting**

The James Lind Alliance (JLA) is non-profit making initiative which was started in 2004 with the aim of helping groups of service users, carers and professionals to work together to agree priorities for health research. The JLA traditionally facilitates Priority Setting Partnerships (PSPs) in particular health areas.

A JLA PSP is made up of service users, carers and their representatives, and professionals, and is led by a Steering Group. It is rare for service users, carers and professionals to work together to set the most important questions for future research in this way, but this work is important in making sure that researchers and research funders hear about those issues that might not otherwise be suggested or prioritised. While the Adult Social Work PSP will use the JLA's methods, its definitions, scope and groups of people involved will be different. In this PSP, the key groups of people involved are registered social workers, adults and those approaching adulthood who use or are in contact with Adult social work services, and their carers.

The role of the PSP is to identify questions that have not been answered by research yet, and to put these in order of priority. The first stage is to ask all of the groups of people involved to suggest their unanswered questions about Adult Social Work. This is likely to be done by a survey but other methods may be used as well if necessary. The Steering Group will publish its definition of an unanswered question, and the type of evidence that will show it to be unanswered, in its Protocol. The PSP will check the questions received to make sure they are in scope for the project and are true uncertainties. An exercise then takes place to shortlist the uncertainties. Finally, a priority setting workshop will happen, where those taking part use their experience to discuss the shortlisted questions and jointly choose the Top 10 list of unanswered questions or uncertainties that are most important to them.

The aim is then to turn these uncertainties into research questions and for members of the Steering Group to work with researchers and research funders to help to get research done.

The JLA will show all of the uncertainties on its website. Further details about the JLA and PSPs are at <http://www.jla.nihr.ac.uk/>

#### **The Adult Social Work Priority Setting Partnership**

The background and aims and responsibilities of the Adult Social Work PSP are set out in the JLA Adult Social Work PSP Protocol.

#### **About the Steering Group**

The Steering Group is responsible for managing and guiding the activity of the PSP. Using their expertise and networks of contacts, the Steering Group will help encourage people to take part in the PSP surveys and, where possible, will carry out the practical work needed to do the interim and final priority setting exercises. The Steering Group is also responsible for helping raise awareness of the final Top 10 uncertainties, including among research funders.

Membership of the Steering Group includes individuals and representatives of organisations that can reach and advocate for the people that the PSP wants to hear from, as well as the JLA Adviser. Steering Group members with direct relevant experience are invited to take part in the priority setting exercise.

### Role of Steering Group members

Steering Group members are asked to contribute, as a minimum, their expertise and their time. Steering Group members are asked to stick to the following principles:

- an interest in the initiative and aims of the project
- a broad understanding of how the project will be done and the issues involved
- commitment to working with other members respectfully and constructively
- advocacy for the project's outcomes.

Specifically, Steering Group members will:

take part in monthly telephone conference calls. It is agreed that for this Adult Social Work PSP, at least 1 service user, 1 carer and 2 practitioners will need to be present in order for Steering Group meetings to go ahead and for decisions to be made. If these numbers of people are not at the meeting due to last-minute apologies, the meeting will go ahead but decisions will be noted as recommendations in the minutes, and will not be made final until enough people have agreed them

- take part in face-to-face meetings, or if not able to do this, submit comments before the meeting. Where a Steering Group member is unable to attend a meeting, decisions made at the meeting will be respected
- respond quickly with feedback on project materials
- share networks and contacts for membership of the PSP
- publicise the project to potential partners to encourage them to join the PSP. This includes advising on membership of the PSP (to ensure a wide and representative group of stakeholders) and emailing contacts to invite them to participate
- have oversight of the collection of research uncertainties from stakeholders and existing literature
- oversee and lend expertise to the data management process, including agreeing the scope and process for data-checking
- have oversight of the interim priority setting stage
- check the shortlisted questions to be taken to the final priority setting workshop
- have oversight of and potentially take part in the final priority setting exercise (if job role qualifies them to represent the views of stakeholders). This is the one-day workshop which brings an equal balance of stakeholder groups together to debate, rank and agree a final Top 10. It is only attended by service users and carers and the practitioners who actively work with them
- be involved in the development of the Top 10 Adult Social Work research uncertainties into research questions for funders
- work with research funders to develop the priorities into research questions

Table 1: Schedule of proposed SG meetings

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Expected time commitment</i>	<i>Main purpose</i>
Initial SG meeting	Face-to-face	30 March 2017	5 hours	Review and agree the draft Steering Group Terms of Reference and the

				draft PSP protocol (circulated at least one week in advance of meeting)
2 <sup>nd</sup> SG meeting	Face-to-face	May 2017	4 hours	To review the draft survey and discussion dissemination plans
Monthly	Teleconference		1.5 hours per month	Manage ongoing business of the PSP
Pre-interim priority setting	Face-to-face	March 2018	5 hours	To finalise the list of questions to be included in the interim priority setting survey
Workshop follow-up meeting for SG	Face-to-face		1 day meeting	To review and comment on PSP progress, to agree how to formulate the priorities into research questions for going forward and to decide on dissemination activities.

### Declaring interests

Steering Group members should declare any interests relevant to the Adult Social Work PSP. The JLA provides an example form, and the interests of each member will be listed and shared among the group. This is to encourage openness and transparency. Relevant interests may be professional, personal or related to an interest in or involvement in social work research.

### PSP Coordination

The PSP will be chaired by Katherine Cowan, Senior JLA Adviser. Katie Weeks (DH) and Caroline Whiting (JLA) are responsible for the coordination and administration of the PSP. This includes making arrangements for all meetings and workshops, and ensuring that:

- requests for agenda items are discussed with the group
- papers are available at least a week before meetings
- meeting notes are circulated within two weeks.

### Timescales

The Adult Social Work PSP first Steering Group meeting will be in March 2017. We propose that the final meeting prioritisation takes place in July 2018.

### Key contacts

PSP Chair: Katherine Cowan, Senior JLA adviser

PSP Lead: Lyn Romeo, Chief Social Worker for Adults, Department of Health

James Lind Alliance Coordinator: Caroline Whiting

Department of Health Coordinator: Katie Weeks

### Proposed Steering Group Members

Name	Affiliation	Role in Steering Group
Lyn Romeo	Department of Health	PSP Leader
Katie Weeks	Department of Health	PSP Coordinator
Katherine Cowan	James Lind Alliance	PSP Chair
Caroline Whiting	James Lind Alliance	PSP Coordinator

Pam Abbott	Framework Housing Association	Steering Group member
Suzanne Barnett	British Association of Social Workers and West Midlands Social Work Teaching Partnership	Steering Group member
Sam Baron	Joint University Council Social Work Education Committee	Steering Group member
John Bridle	Carer representative	Steering Group member
Mike Clark	NIHR School for Social Care Research	Steering Group member
Karen Cook	Adult Principal Social Workers Network	Steering Group member
Richard Currie	Independent service user	Steering Group member
Peter Feldon	British Association of Social Workers	Steering Group member
Sally Ferguson-Wormley	Speakup Self Advocacy	Steering Group member
Elaine James	Bradford City Council	Steering Group member
Ally Khodabocus	Carer representative	Steering Group member
Jill Manthorpe	Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College London	Steering Group member
Alison Owen	Think Local Act Personal	Steering Group member
Avital Petel-Tzuck	Jewish Care	Steering Group member
Lisa Smith	Research in Practice for Adults	Steering Group member