

# Adult Social Work in England

**Have your say in improving the future of Social Work for Adults in England. What are the most important questions for future research to answer?**

## What is this survey for?

We recently asked people to tell us their comments and questions about adult social work in a survey. We did this because we want to find out what research needs to happen to help improve social work. Thank you to everyone who sent comments and questions. We have taken all of them into account. The ones that can be answered by research were summarised and are listed in this new survey. Others will be used in different ways and will not be lost. We are working with researchers to provide access to the other questions and will include information about this on the website when the project is finished.

You can see more about the project here [www.bit.ly/ASWresearch](http://www.bit.ly/ASWresearch)

## Please take part in this survey if:

- You or someone you care for has received advice or help from a social worker for adults in England
- You are a registered social worker or a social work student
- You work with or alongside social workers in England, in any settings, for example in health, criminal justice, housing or long-term care.

## What are we asking you to do?

We have made a list of questions where people have suggested that more research on adult social work is needed.

Please read the list and tick **up to 10** questions that you think it is most important for researchers to answer based on your own experiences.

If you need help filling in this survey, it's fine to talk to someone about it and ask them to help you.

Please ask others to complete this survey too. We want to make researchers aware of the issues that matter to lots of people.

## Is it confidential?

This is a confidential survey. We will ask for a little information about you. This is so that we can understand who is completing the survey and whether we are hearing from a wide range of people. You do not have to put your name and address or email address on this form unless you want to hear from us again. You will not be identified in any of the survey results and we will keep the information you give us secure. If you do give us your name and address or email address we will destroy our records of these after the end of the project.

## What will happen next?

After this survey has closed, we will use the survey responses to work out which are the most popular questions. We will then hold a workshop for people with care and support needs and their carers, as well as social workers themselves. At the workshop they will discuss the most popular questions in more detail and agree the Top 10 questions that need researching.

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**We would like you to tick up to 10 questions on this list that you think are the most important for researchers to answer. Please do this based on your own experience. You don't need to know about research and we don't need you to try to answer them. That's for researchers to do later.**

**Please tick up to 10 of the following questions for future research:**

### Current national context

How is availability of funding impacting on (a) adult social workers' practice and (b) the decisions made? <sup>(1)</sup>

What impact is the Care Act having on (a) adult social work practice and (b) the outcomes for people using services and their carers, particularly their wellbeing and safety? <sup>(2)</sup>

Has the Mental Capacity Act 2005 been embedded into practice and what are the impacts on people using services and their carers? <sup>(3)</sup>

### Working with others

What factors promote effective working partnerships between adult social workers and other organisations / professionals? What are the barriers and how can these be overcome? <sup>(4)</sup>

When adult social workers work with other professionals, how are their decisions influenced by other professional cultures and values? <sup>(5)</sup>

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How do other organisations / professionals understand the role and responsibilities of adult social workers and how could this be improved? <sup>(6)</sup>

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How can communication and information sharing between individual adult social workers and between agencies / organisations be improved? <sup>(7)</sup>

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What is the unique contribution of adult social workers to decision-making? What is their unique contribution when working with other professionals to provide support to people using services and their carers? <sup>(8)</sup>

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What is the role of adult social workers in safeguarding children and the role of children's social workers in adult safeguarding? How can they work together? <sup>(9)</sup>

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### **Knowledge and skills**

Would adult social work practice be improved by social workers developing specialist knowledge (e.g. in working with people with complex needs or in a specific area of practice such as safeguarding)? <sup>(10)</sup>

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Would the use of therapy-based skills (e.g. counselling) benefit adult social workers' practice? <sup>(11)</sup>

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How could communication between adult social workers and people using services be improved, especially with those people who have difficulty with communication (e.g. use of new media, better communication skills, working with other professionals)? <sup>(12)</sup>

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What are the most effective approaches to building relationships with people using services and their families? What working conditions enable adult social workers to use such approaches? <sup>(13)</sup>

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How do adult social workers contribute to safeguarding adult reviews and how do the lessons learned influence practice? <sup>(14)</sup>

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### **Management**

What model of management and supervision provides the best support for adult

social workers and ensures quality control of their work? <sup>(15)</sup>

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How can the health and wellbeing of adult social workers best be maintained (e.g. through working conditions, support and supervision)? <sup>(16)</sup>

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What is the best way to allocate caseloads to maximise the benefits to people using services and carers, and minimise the stress for adult social workers? <sup>(17)</sup>

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What are the advantages and disadvantages of an adult social worker being an independent professional versus being part of local authority services? <sup>(18)</sup>

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### Decision-making

On what basis do adult social workers make their decisions (including the law, evidence, accepted practice, social work theories)? <sup>(19)</sup>

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How well are asset and strength-based decision making working in practice when used by adult social workers? What factors promote or prevent their use? <sup>(20)</sup>

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### Safeguarding

Is safety and minimising risk prioritised over the preferences of people using services? What impact does this have on people using services, particularly in terms of their health and wellbeing? <sup>(21)</sup>

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How effective are adult social workers in safeguarding vulnerable people? How could they better empower people using services and their carers to protect themselves? <sup>(22)</sup>

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What has been the impact of 'Making Safeguarding Personal', particularly in the longer term, on adult social work practice? <sup>(23)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to intervene when adults are being abused, including cases of domestic violence? <sup>(24)</sup>

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### Professional accountability and development

How can the quality and impact of social work be routinely assessed, particularly in ways that matter to people using services and their carers? How could this evidence be

used to improve adult social work? <sup>(25)</sup>

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## Outcomes for service users

How well do adult social workers support person-centred decisions and ensure holistic support? How well do they take into account a person's physical and mental health problems? <sup>(26)</sup>

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Does regular contact with an adult social worker and / or a long-term professional relationship with an adult social worker improve outcomes for people using services? <sup>(27)</sup>

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Does partnership working between adult social workers and other health and social care professionals result in better outcomes for people using services? <sup>(28)</sup>

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How can adult social workers help to prevent, reduce and delay needs and what difference does this make to people using services and their carers in the long-term? <sup>(29)</sup>

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How is 'wellbeing' understood and incorporated into adult social work practice? How can we assess whether adult social workers impact on the wellbeing of people using services? <sup>(30)</sup>

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How are adult social workers working with communities to develop community-led and asset-based support? What difference does this make and what are the barriers to success? <sup>(31)</sup>

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How can adult social workers work more effectively with people using services to involve them in decisions about their own care? <sup>(32)</sup>

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How can adult social workers develop whole family approaches that enable all family members to be involved in decision-making? Which models work best (e.g. family group conferencing or open dialogue models)? <sup>(33)</sup>

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How can adult social workers use their professional judgement to produce flexible and creative care plans that (a) meet individual's needs, and (b) anticipate and respond to changes in people's circumstances? <sup>(34)</sup>

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What is the role of adult social workers in reviewing the suitability and quality of services provided as part of a care plan? <sup>(35)</sup>

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## Social work interventions

What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with people with dementia and their families? <sup>(36)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with people with learning disabilities and their families? <sup>(37)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with people who self-neglect? <sup>(38)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with people who need long-term care and their carers, either living in care homes or with their families? <sup>(39)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with people with acquired brain injury? What knowledge and skills do adult social workers need to work with this group? <sup>(40)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with people with mental health problems, including personality disorders? <sup>(41)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with people with chaotic lifestyles (e.g. problematic gambling)? <sup>(42)</sup>

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What difference do adult social workers make to people who are terminally ill and their families and how can they do this effectively? <sup>(43)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with people setting up direct payments? <sup>(44)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to help people using services who are socially isolated and / or lonely? <sup>(45)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with individuals who are transitioning between child and adult services? <sup>(46)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to help people using services during discharge from hospital? <sup>(47)</sup>

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What are the most effective ways for adult social workers to work with older people

with care and support needs? <sup>(48)</sup>

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## Assessment

What are the best methods of making an assessment of care and support needs and risks? How well are current approaches working? <sup>(49)</sup>

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How can assessments be more holistic and focused on improving wellbeing? <sup>(50)</sup>

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How are eligibility criteria applied to people with different types of needs and are the thresholds appropriate? What impact does this have on the care and support offered and / or early prevention? <sup>(51)</sup>

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## Other

How do adult social workers respond when service users have different political beliefs? How well do adult social workers support service users to take part in political processes like voting? <sup>(52)</sup>

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How could adult social workers influence the types of services being developed and commissioned? <sup>(53)</sup>

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Do practice frameworks for adult social workers make any difference to the lives of service users? <sup>(54)</sup>

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How should adult social workers engage with people's spiritual or faith belief? <sup>(55)</sup>

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Are there differences in the professional practice of adult social workers with lived / worked experience of having a caring role, to those who haven't? <sup>(56)</sup>

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Can adult social workers help to improve the wellbeing, mental and physical health of refugees? <sup>(57)</sup>

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If adult social workers set their own budget levels, does this achieve innovation in services and good outcomes for people using services? <sup>(58)</sup>

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What difference does it make if social workers are the first point of contact, rather than receiving referrals via a triage system? <sup>(59)</sup>

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What is the impact of private sector care / support agencies on the relationship between adult social workers and people using services? <sup>(60)</sup>

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Does the commissioning of adult social care from the private sector affect adult social work practice? <sup>(61)</sup>

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How do changing definitions in gender, religion and race affect adult social work practice? <sup>(62)</sup>

**We would like to know a little about you to make sure that we are hearing from a wide range of people. Your answers are confidential. Some of the questions are only for people who have been in contact with a social worker. Some of the questions are only for social work practitioners. Some are for everyone to complete.**

**These questions are for everyone to complete:**

**Which of the following best describes you? (Please tick one answer) \*Required**

- I am a person with care and support needs who is in contact with adult social work services or has been in the past
- I am a carer or family member of someone who has been in contact with adult social work services
- I am a frontline registered social worker who provides adult social work services
- I am a manager or supervisor of adult social work services
- I am a social work student
- I am a volunteer
- I am a children's social worker
- I am a social work educator
- Other (please describe below)

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**Where do you usually live or work? (Please tick one answer)**

- North East England
  - North West England
  - Yorkshire and Humber
  - East Midlands
  - West Midlands
  - East of England
  - London
  - South East of England
  - South West of England
  - I am a social work practitioner with a national remit
  - Other (please describe on the line below)
- 

**Which best describes your gender? (Please tick one box)**

- Male
- Female
- I prefer to use my own term
- I prefer not to say

**Which best describes your ethnic group? (Please tick one box)**

- White
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups
- Asian/Asian British
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British
- Other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

**This question is only for people with care and support needs, or their carers, who have been in contact with adult social work services:**

**How old are you? (Please tick one box)**

- 13 or under
- 14 – 17
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 – 74
- 75 – 84
- 85+
- Prefer not to say

If it is easier for you, please just write your age in here:

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**These questions are only for social workers or other practitioners who work alongside them:**

**Do you work or volunteer in one of the following settings? (Please tick one answer)**

- Voluntary/not for profit sector
- Local authority
- NHS
- Other (please describe below)

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### Are you? (Please tick one box)

- Employed?
  - Self-employed/independent
  - A volunteer
  - A student
  - Other (please describe below)
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## What will we do with the information about you?

The information that you have given us (for example your ethnic group or the area of the country you live in) is only used to help us understand the types of people that have responded to this survey (eg, how many responses we have from men vs. women or from different age groups).

At the end of this project we will write a report about our work and make the results available on the project website. We hope that this will help future research. It will not be possible to identify you or anyone else when we do this.

Do you agree to the information that you have given us (for example your ethnic group or the area of the country you live in) being used to help us understand the types of people who are responding? It will not be possible to identify you or anyone else in any of the reports at the end of the project.

- Yes
- No

## Would you like to hear more from us and / or help with the workshop?

A full-day workshop will be held to discuss the most popular questions from this survey. If you would be interested in taking part in this workshop, please tick the box below. It will be in central London on Friday July 20<sup>th</sup> 2018. Spaces at the workshop are limited and unfortunately we won't be able to invite everyone who says that they would like to come so please accept our apologies if you don't hear from us with an invitation.

- Yes I would be interested in being invited to the workshop and I have given my

contact details below

No I would not be interested in being invited to the workshop

Would you like to hear about the results of this project?

Yes I would like to hear about the results of this project and I have given my contact details below

No I would not like to hear about the results of this project

If you have agreed above that you would be interested in being invited to the workshop of that you would just like to hear about the results of this project, please write your contact details below. These contact details will be kept confidentially and securely and will be removed from our records after the end of the project.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post address if you would prefer us to contact you by post:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. When you have finished please post it to (you won't need a stamp):**

Caroline Whiting  
James Lind Alliance  
NETSCC, Alpha House  
FREEPOST RTHT-TBHY-ZJJR  
Highfield  
Southampton SO16 7NS

**Please help us by passing details of the survey and the project website [www.bit.ly/ASWresearch](http://www.bit.ly/ASWresearch) to anyone else who might be interested.**

**For any further information about this Priority Setting Partnership, please see [www.bit.ly/ASWresearch](http://www.bit.ly/ASWresearch), call 023 80 595489 or email [jla@southampton.ac.uk](mailto:jla@southampton.ac.uk)**