



The University of
Nottingham

A comparative evaluation of Children's Services networks

SDO Networks and Governance Research Workshop

4-5th Sept 2007

Professor Graeme Currie and Dr. Tina Howell
Nottingham University Business School (NUBS), and
Institute for Science and Society (ISS),
University of Nottingham



The University of
Nottingham

Project Background & Context

3-year project comprising three comparative Nottingham-based children's services networks...

- Case study 1 - paediatric nephrology (voluntary)
- Case study 2 - child protection (mandated cross-agency)
- Case study 3 - cleft lip & palate (mandated)



The University of
Nottingham

Research aims & focus on networks –

- Comparing mandated and non-mandated networks
e.g. similarities/differences in terms of ‘boundary-crossing’,
collaborative working, knowledge sharing
- Exploring how professional, organisational and sector
boundaries impact on the network development, operations
and outcomes
- Identifying and addressing key challenges to the management
of networks – e.g. HRM-related problems, organisation and to
what extent they ‘work’, are successful or deemed effective



The University of
Nottingham

Conceptual Framework – twofold

1. Institutional Theory – examine knowledge-sharing problems in networks i.e. institutional influences or forces :
 - (a) Govt policy encouraging markets (competition) & imposing targets that hinder network forms of delivery
 - (b) Hierarchical professional forms of organisation i.e. some professions higher status than others – limited knowledge sharing

2. Drawing from Business & Management field....

To help understand how we might mediate institutional problems, this might include:

- better HRM practice
- better knowledge sharing (e.g. through IT)
- organisational learning
- culture management
- effective leadership



The University of
Nottingham

Data Collection/ Methods

Ethnographic Analysis - interviews, observations (meetings) and Documentary analysis – Graeme Currie (Professor of Public Services Management) and Dr. Tina Howell (Phd, Discourse, Business & Management)

Historical dimension of project (Case 2) -Revisiting Wellcome Trust Data historical context, documentary analysis – longitudinal study/comparison relative to Child Protection

Robert Dingwall (Professor and & ISS Director, Sociologist)

Social Network Analysis –
Leroy White, Consultant, University of Bristol

Health Economics Analysis –
Dr. Tracey Sach, Consultant, Community Health Sciences, UEA



The University of
Nottingham

Research ethics committee approval gained..

But not without a number of ethics issues raised and responded to...some examples include...

1. Observations at meetings – i.e. individual consent secured before attending
2. Social network mapping – i.e. email confidentiality, content, consent
3. Site specific assessment (SSA) not required - only R & D approval from each site



The University of
Nottingham

R & D approved sites....

Nottinghamshire PCT

Nottingham City PCT

Nottingham University Hospitals

United Lincolnshire Hospitals

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

University Hospitals of Leicester

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust (still waiting)



The University of
Nottingham

“informal’ interviews & meeting attendance to date (6 months into project)...

- **Advisory Board meeting (16/04/07) – network project overview inc. case study leads, project researchers, open discussion/issues/concerns**
- **Foundation SSI Interviews with each of the 3 case study Leads**
- **Interviews with representatives from NCH, NSPCC, and Nottingham City safeguarding coordinator**
- **Meetings attended: 2 nephrology and 1 safeguarding board**

Pending R & D / REC interview schedule approval: 2-stage interview process with from each case study network:

- * **1st round ‘formal’ interviews (approx 60) commencing Sept/Oct – Spring ‘08**
- * **2nd round ‘follow-up’ interviews approx. 6-12 mos. later – key themes/issues**



The University of
Nottingham

- *Questions*
- *Comments*
- *Feedback*

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.win2pdf.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.
This page will not be added after purchasing Win2PDF.