scie
social care institute for excellence
corporate plan 2003 – 2006

SCIE

Social Care Institute for Excellence

Better Knowledge for Better Practice

Contents

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foreword

Jane Campbell
Chair

Social care is changing. And the Social Care Institute for Excellence is at the heart of ensuring that change is for the better.

SCIE has started as it means to go on: by ensuring that those with an interest in social care – and especially service users and their supporters – are given a say.

Early on, SCIE ran a 'listening exercise', consulting on our future work via the web and through workshops. We took on board many diverse views during that process, and we are now setting up a Partners' Council that will allow stakeholders to comment on our work programmes, priorities and performance. We are also establishing advisory groups to make sure that we hear different and expert voices, and consider new ways of working.

These are not quick, easy solutions. But, as chair, I share SCIE's philosophy that involving people is the only way to get it right.

SCIE is building networks – for example, with leading academics and with service-user groups – and working in partnerships with the statutory and voluntary sectors. SCIE's website now offers Research in Practice's extensive database on children and family research free of charge.

We are also helping to create high-quality social care leadership, by overseeing the top managers' programme for the Department of Health. We have developed NHS partnerships with the National Institute for Clinical Excellence and with the Modernisation Agency.

We are sponsoring two fellowships with the National Institute for Mental Health in England, to make sure that social perspectives inform mental health services.

Using and adapting new technologies to spread good practice is part and parcel of SCIE's methods. SCIE's web-based electronic library for social care (eLSC) is a vast, free resource for service users, researchers and practitioners across the globe. And we are looking at ways of making it more accessible, for example, to people with learning disabilities.

SCIE's work is now extending to cover not only England and Wales but also Northern Ireland.

This corporate plan lays down SCIE's path for the next three years. It outlines our priorities for the coming month, and the themes influencing our work:

- effective services for adults
- effective services for children and families
- stakeholder participation
- human resource development
- social work education
- understanding how knowledge works in social care
- development of the electronic library for social care (eLSC)

The job ahead is ambitious. It is first to gather together knowledge about how best to provide social care – whether that knowledge takes the form of a team's existing service, or a research paper, or in someone's expertise from years of dealing with a problem, or using a service. It is

then to present that knowledge as user-friendly advice, so that policy makers and service providers and their staff can make real changes.

Our task, then, is to spread knowledge about what works– and help others to act on it. Our goal is the transformation of social care.

Jane Campbell
Chair
Social Care Institute for Excellence
September 2003

executive summary

SCIE is a new independent organisation set up to improve the quality of social care by helping all those involved in social care in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to develop good practices and effective services.

The Corporate Plan 2003-6 sets out how SCIE will focus its work in the following areas:

- effective services
- stakeholder participation
- human resource development
- social work education
- understanding how knowledge works in social care

Effective services

People want quality social care, which is responsive, integrated and tailored to their needs.

SCIE will work with service providers and carers to improve the effectiveness of all social care services.

Services for adults

SCIE's work in this area will concentrate on:

- a programme of work on learning disability, including person-centred planning and community-based day activities
- home care services
- discharge, rehabilitation and intermediate care for older people
- direct payments
- developing a social perspective on mental health

Services for children and families

SCIE's work on child and family services will focus on:

- good outcomes in fostering
- parenting programmes
- young people with mental health needs
- the interface between children's services and adult services
- the forthcoming National Service Framework on children

Participation

Social care only works if everyone with a stake in it is involved. Partnerships – with service users and carers, with academics, and with those providing services – are the essence of SCIE.

To enable participation and cement partnerships, SCIE will:

- establish a Partners' Council to provide an effective structure for service users, carers, stakeholders and interest groups to influence SCIE's work
- enable service users, their supporters and carers to participate fully in SCIE's work programme
- establish a variety of links with other networks in social care and allied fields

Human resource development

SCIE will gather together good practice in human resource development across social care and make this information available in usable and relevant ways. It will also promote leadership development.

Social work education

Good practice on teaching and learning in social work will address:

- assessment
- communication skills
- human growth and development
- legal issues in social care
- partnership working
- inter-professional education.

Knowledge

What counts as knowledge in social care?
How do we collect it all together?
How do we communicate that knowledge to the right people, in the right way, at the right time?

To promote knowledge, SCIE will:

- create an inclusive, rigorous and constructive consensus on what counts as knowledge
- develop methods to seek out knowledge from the whole social care arena, including hidden and unrecognised knowledge
- capture and update that knowledge
- enable users, carers and all in social care to access the knowledge easily
- help staff, managers and service agencies put the knowledge into practice
- continue the development and expansion of the electronic library for social care (eLSC)

quality and innovation

SCIE will only start to make a difference if it is accountable. We will only continue to make a difference if we innovate.

To maintain quality and support innovation, SCIE will:

- build a robust and transparent system of testing and quality control for all its products
- build and maintain a well trained and committed staff team
- work with the Partners' Council, service user networks and others involved in social care to develop new ideas for the future of social care
- become a forum for discussing and testing out new ideas in social care.

why scie?

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) was launched in October 2001 in response to the government's drive to improve quality in social care services across Britain. It is an independent organisation – a registered charity and limited company.

SCIE recognises that good quality social care is vital to a healthy community; it enables people to live independent, fulfilled lives and protects those who may be at risk of harm.

Knowledge is key

Knowledge about what works in social care is essential for developing positive, durable practice, and policy improvement and change. Currently, such knowledge is often localised, patchy and seldom widely shared.

A large part of SCIE's role will be to develop a knowledge base that the public and professionals can trust and to make that knowledge base readily accessible to anyone who wants to use it. To do this, SCIE will:

- create a consensus on what counts as knowledge
- review knowledge about social care
- develop practice guides based on that knowledge
- promote the use of knowledge in policy and practice.

Creating consensus

SCIE will create an inclusive, rigorous and constructive consensus on what counts as knowledge. It will encourage a coherent research and development agenda reflecting national needs and will develop sophisticated and sustained approaches to generating knowledge that are seen to be relevant by those receiving and providing social care.

Reviewing knowledge

SCIE will draw together and review a wide range of knowledge about social care from diverse sources, including the expertise of service users and their carers, formal research and practice knowledge built up by staff.

Developing practice guides

SCIE will produce accessible, practical guides based on that knowledge in a variety of formats for those working in and using social care. These guides will be 'road-tested' by groups of real practitioners to make sure that they are relevant and user-friendly.

Promoting the use of knowledge

SCIE has a unique opportunity to gather and share knowledge about what works in social care by:

- feeding into the work of teams who inspect and evaluate social care services
- working closely with education and training organisations, managers and practitioners in the field
- establishing partnerships with service user-controlled organisations, other organisations representing service user interests and with agencies in other sectors
- extending the electronic Library for Social Care (eLSC) – a free and directly accessible

database of the latest and best knowledge on what works in social care:

- improving and constantly updating CareData – a part of eLSC containing more than 60,000 indexed abstracts of published work about social care
- working in an international context – a coordinated approach with the global research and development community will make sure that knowledge-building is complementary and cumulative.

Improving quality

The establishment of SCIE was a key recommendation of the government's 'Quality Strategy for Social Care' www.scie.org.uk/links/scqleaflet.pdf
The Quality Strategy identified the need for a knowledge base for social care that is accessible for people who use and work in social care services.

The strategy recognised the key role of knowledge in improving and changing management and practice in social care, and the part that SCIE could play in improving quality and standards, alongside the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) and Topss (the organisation responsible for the overall coherence of training and education in the social care sector). It identified a crucial role for SCIE in involving service users, their supporters and carers in the development of practice.

Change and challenge

SCIE has been created at a time of considerable change and challenge to social care and to public services in general. Reform of public services is high on the government's agenda, with an emphasis on effective delivery, flexibility and increased choice.

Social care must develop a response to newly emerging structures and methods of work. In particular:

- it must take account of the increasing expectations of service users, their supporters and carers, as well as the current framework of human rights
- 2004/2006 will see the expansion of direct payments and new arrangements for regulation, inspection and performance management
- new structures for the delivery of social care will emerge with the development of care trusts in England and with the implementation of 'Supporting People' – a government funded programme to enable greater independence for service users
- social care staff will increasingly work alongside other professional and vocational staff, and across organisational and professional boundaries
- social care must formulate a robust response to the current challenges to the ability of inter-agency collaboration and professional practice to safeguard children. Workforce capacity – in particular recruitment and retention difficulties – is affecting the sector's ability to deliver to this agenda.

United Kingdom diversity

SCIE also needs to be aware of differences between the countries of the UK in which it operates. For example, in the case of the Welsh Assembly:

- the improvement agenda is delivered through a partnership approach between the Assembly and local government
- there are specific inspection and regulation arrangements, and
- health service reorganisation will result in 22 coterminous local health boards.

what we are aiming to do

SCIE's purpose is to:
- collect and synthesise up-to-date knowledge about what works in social care
- make that knowledge available and accessible to people working in and using social care services.

Fulfilling this purpose depends on continuing commitment from our principal funders, the Department of Health, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Health, Social Services and Personal Safety in Northern Ireland.

SCIE's stakeholders include
- **service users, carers and their organisations**
- **staff, employers and managers in the voluntary, private and statutory sectors**
- **researchers**
- **those involved in education and training**
- **policy-makers and planners**
- **regulatory bodies and government departments in England, Wales and Northern Ireland**

Our objectives

SCIE's objectives fall into four key areas:
- promoting knowledge and best practice
- monitoring and evaluating
- communicating effectively
- working in partnership

Promoting knowledge and best practice

SCIE will:
- develop and debate with others its approach to the nature of knowledge in social care, and develop an agreed methodology for high-quality review in social care

SCIE's values
- **service user focus**
- **independence in our research and findings**
- **promotion of empowerment and change**
- **partnership working**
- **accessibility**
- **diversity**
- **transparency**
- **accountability**

- develop both internal and external capacity to progress this through efficient commissioning and the creation of external relationships
- consult on and then publish its approach to knowledge and its methodology for high-quality review in social care
- develop usable, accessible, authoritative practice guides for social care
- consult on and then publish the methodology used in preparing practice guides, including method, content and format
- create internal information systems and sufficient flexibility in the work programme to be able to respond to requests for a swift analysis of knowledge relating to a particular policy issue.

Monitoring and evaluating

SCIE will:
- field-test and adjust the practice guides, and experiment with the format of the guides, producing electronic and other versions to ensure accessibility

- develop a method for evaluating practice guides and a programme for updating them by the end of 2004
- use feedback from the Partners' Council and existing networks and other organisations with whom SCIE is collaborating.

Communicating effectively

SCIE will:

- seek to establish eLSC as the gateway to up-to-date knowledge in social care by 2006. This will involve substantial investment in a programme to improve its accessibility, design and functionality, and to attract new users
- consult and then publish a paper on the development of eLSC, and establish an eLSC user group
- maintain and regularly update eLSC, including
  - CareData – an extensive database of social care literature
  - reSearchWeb – a knowledge base funded by the Scottish Executive to provide information for social care practice and policy in Scotland
- improve accessibility of its web-based services and products
- implement its external communications strategy to ensure higher awareness of SCIE and effective dissemination of SCIE's products amongst people who use social care services and the social care workforce
- implement its internal communications strategy through a range of measures, including an intranet project to be completed by 2003/2004
- work with others to ensure that its output is accessible to all who use and work with social care services.

Working in partnership

SCIE will:

- establish a Partners' Council, following consultation
- create partnerships with other social care organisations to ensure input from all stakeholders and to maximise the impact of its output
- collaborate with existing networks to actively disseminate its guides and other work into practice. SCIE will explore such collaborations through the development of knowledge pools (electronic communities of interest built around a particular subject or function) and create new strategies based on the experience in social care and other fields
- create with its partners a forum for the exchange and development of new ideas on practice and knowledge.

Organisational development

To further develop the organisation, SCIE will:

- establish and maintain a robust system of quality assurance that fits its purpose as a new, knowledge-based organisation
- ensure that its employment practices, working methods and products address its commitment to quality, and seek, in the first instance, to achieve this through building relationships with a number of key organisations
- ensure good management both as a charity and company limited by guarantee through the establishment of corporate governance measures, including the establishment of an audit committee, a quality assurance committee and a business planning committee
- identify the major risks to which the organisation and its work may be exposed and put in place risk management procedures
- finalise its financial control procedures within 2003
- explore income generation from sources other than its core finance
- complete the development of an HR and reward strategy for its staff within 2003/2004, ensuring a well-trained, committed and creative workforce for the fulfilment of its objectives.

As a result of SCIE's work

- **people who use social care services will be better informed about, and more directly involved in, good practice and the most effective ways of providing social care services**
- **social care workers, knowing that practice is founded in the best available knowledge, will become increasingly confident in their ability to work in genuine partnership with well-informed users and, increasingly, with other professional and occupational groups**

what we have done so far

Projects

The 'listening exercise'

Through a series of regional workshops and an interactive website, people who use and deliver social care services told SCIE how it could help to improve and develop social care practice. The results, published in November 2002 have shaped SCIE's work programme and objectives. www.scie.org.uk/howwework/listeningexercise/listeningexercise.pdf

The Partners' Council

The Partners' Council will provide an effective structure for service users, carers, stakeholders and interest groups to contribute to, share ownership of and help promote SCIE's work.

In November 2002, SCIE published a consultation paper inviting views on the remit of the Partners' Council and who its members should be. In conjunction with this consultation, groups met in England, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Wales to pool their responses. www.scie.org.uk/howwework/partnerscouncil/partnerscouncil.pdf

The response rate to the consultation was very high, and out of this process the Partners' Council was born.

SCIE's products

SCIE's first practice guide, First Line Managers, and our first electronic practice guide, Assessing the Mental Health Needs of Older People, were both published in 2002, as was the first test report, eLearning and Best Practice

In January 2003, to coincide with the publication of the Laming Report into the circumstances surrounding the death of Victoria Climbié, SCIE published its first position paper, Effectiveness of Childminding Registration and its Implications for Private Fostering.

SCIE has already awarded a number of commissions. These include research reviews and practice reviews on:

- aspects of teaching and learning in the new social work degree
- types and quality of knowledge in social care
- mapping service user networks
- service user involvement
- fostering
- electronic access for people with learning disabilities
- developing research literacy.

Fellowships

SCIE, in partnership with the National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE), has awarded two fellowships to promote the development of a social perspective in mental health. The fellows, who have an advisory role as well as undertaking specific projects, will be working with NIMHE's regional development centres and setting up a social care research network. They will develop relationships with the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and contribute to the work of the Social Perspectives Network and other user-led organisations.

Partnerships

SCIE has developed a partnership link with over 30 leading research and development (R&D) staff in 20 UK universities – a key resource in building the social care knowledge base.

Communication

A communications strategy has been developed by SCIE to ensure effective dissemination of its products.

Conferences and exhibitions

In December 2002, SCIE held its first national conference. Over 200 people, including many service users, participated in a series of workshops and discussion forums. In July 2003 SCIE held a similar event in Wales. It has had stands at the major social care conferences and exhibitions, and staff and board members have chaired and spoken at a variety of events.

Electronic information

SCIE has established and is continually upgrading its website (www.scie.org.uk), which is seen as an important tool for conveying its messages about what works in social care.

SCIE has extended and improved eLSC, the electronic Library for Social Care aimed at social care professionals and service users and carers. eLSC contains practice guides, a best practice database, CareData (a freely accessible social care knowledge base, with over 60,000 abstracts), e-journals and teaching and learning aids.

Infrastructure

Corporate governance measures have been put in place with the creation of an audit committee, a business planning committee and a quality assurance committee.

Internal financial regulations have also been put in place.

SCIE and its staff have been equipped with suitable information and communication technology resources to enable remote working with user groups, researchers and other key stakeholders.

SCIE's chair and chief executive have been in regular contact with partner organisations, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A single human resources and reward framework is being created for SCIE, in consultation with staff and the union.

who we are working with

Partnerships are crucial to the success of SCIE's work. It is only through partners that SCIE's work will have an impact on the quality of services.

SCIE will work with others in a variety of ways:
- in partnership where it is to develop a common product
- jointly with those with whom it shares a commonality of interest
- in consultation with those who can provide specialist expertise on a project.

SCIE will work with its partners not only on good practice and knowledge dissemination but also in the development of new ideas for the future of social care.

SCIE's principal stakeholders and partners
- **service users, their supporters and carers**
- **social care practitioners, including user practitioners, in the voluntary, statutory and independent sectors**
- **social care managers in the voluntary, statutory and independent sectors**
- **national social care organisations**
- **voluntary organisations**
- **Department of Health, Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland**
- **those working in social work and social care training, research and education**
- **national bodies in other sectors**
- **the Partners' Council**

Service users, their supporters and carers

SCIE places service users, carers and their supporters at the heart of its work. Careful thought and purposeful activity are needed to ensure that they are able to contribute successfully to the improvement of social care practice and management. In particular, SCIE needs to make sure that it is inclusive and promotes equal involvement for all groups.

SCIE is working with and seeking to establish partnerships with a number of service user organisations and will be establishing and implementing its own participation strategy.

Social care practitioners

Credibility with practitioners and their support for SCIE's work is essential. Practitioners, including user practitioners, provide important reality testing and can act as advocates for SCIE. Collaboration with representative bodies such as the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) and the Social Care Association (SCA) will help to ensure that practitioners are involved in development and testing.

Social care managers

Social care managers help develop and implement SCIE's work. They contribute a particular expertise, informed by their responsibility to organise the delivery of services in what is recognised to be a complex environment.

SCIE needs to engage with managers in all sectors of social care and will be looking at ways of achieving this. It will also work in partnership with the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) in England and Wales and establish links with similar organisations in the independent sector.

National social care organisations

A coordinated approach to quality in social care will require SCIE to work closely with the national social care bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland that regulate the workforce and service provision, and provide training.

There is an expectation that these bodies will work together with the government to identify the quality agenda, set priorities, and coordinate the use of their individual powers and influence to achieve improvements in service, practice, conduct and training. SCIE's role in developing knowledge and practice in social care will be crucial to this joint agenda.

In addition, in England this period will see the creation of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), the new body overseeing standards in social care.

SCIE's partnerships with social care organisations need to focus on:

- the flow of information about good practice and how practice needs improving
- the incorporation of SCIE's work to inform and support the inspection, regulation and standard-setting tasks of the other bodies
- dissemination of SCIE's work to the field
- the shared agenda of continuing professional development.

Voluntary organisations

Voluntary organisations have for many years been significant providers of social care and a source of innovative practices.

SCIE will work with voluntary organisations on the development of good practice. The voluntary sector can contribute expertise and knowledge in specialist areas, combined with the experience of working in new ways and the ability to experiment with new approaches.

Government sponsors

SCIE is an independent organisation funded largely by government. The Department of Health, Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland monitor SCIE's performance against the objectives set out in the annual business plan, including the work programme. They expect high standards of business conduct and require SCIE to operate efficiently and responsively.

Those working in social work and social care training, research and education (nationally and internationally)

SCIE will build a relationship with the research and higher education community as creators and disseminators of knowledge.

Through links with Topss and with representative organisations involved in the training of social workers and social care workers, SCIE can promote the use of its practice guides.

There are already organisations working to promote the use of research in practice, and SCIE will be working in partnership with them to achieve common goals.

As systematic reviews of knowledge are an international activity, and much of the material in SCIE reviews originates outside the UK, SCIE will collaborate with international centres in building its knowledge base. SCIE is already participating in the Campbell and Cochrane Collaborations, and in international networks of social work and social care research centres such as the National Board of Health and Welfare in Sweden.

National bodies in other sectors

The need for social care to collaborate with other sectors, including health, housing, education and youth justice, is a central theme of government policy and is manifest in local joint work.

SCIE needs to make sure that its work is appropriate in this environment by extending its relationships with the relevant national bodies,

as well as with human and civil rights organisations.

SCIE is already working with the NHS through partnerships with NICE, NIMHE and the Modernisation Agency.

The Partners' Council

The Partners' Council was born of an extensive consultation process with a wide range of stakeholders, including:

- users, carers and their organisations
- those commissioning services, staff, employers and service providers in all sectors
- researchers, educators and trainers
- policy-makers and planners
- regulatory bodies and government departments.

The Council is made up of representatives from all these groups, and meets regularly to inform SCIE's work programme.

scie's work themes

SCIE's recognises that its work must be relevant and independent of organisational structure. It must address the quality of management and practice in the variety of settings in which social care staff work. Good management is a necessary condition for good practice. SCIE aims, through its work, to strengthen the practice of managers and practitioners.

The themes in SCIE's work programme have been developed collaboratively by SCIE, its sponsors and some key stakeholders, and through the messages from the 'listening exercise'. These themes are described in detail in SCIE's Business Plans.

SCIE's key themes

- **effective services for adults**
- **effective services for children and families**
- **stakeholder participation**
- **human resources development**
- **social work education**
- **understanding how knowledge works in social care**
- **development of the electronic library for social care**

Effective services for adults

Learning disabilities

A programme of work in learning disabilities includes practice guides on person-centred planning and on community-based day activities. This will support the implementation of the white paper 'Valuing People' and address the issues of communication identified in the 'listening exercise'.

Home-care services

Work on outcome-based home care services will build on the Department of Health Outcomes of Social Care for Adults (OSCA) programme.

Older people

Specific work on older people will include discharge issues, elder abuse, rehabilitation and intermediate care.

Direct payments

A practice review in partnership with the National Centre for Independent Living will aim to capture emerging good practice and draw lessons from implementation.

Mental health

The NIMHE fellows role will be to develop the social perspective in mental health. They will work on a practice guide and build relationships with NICE in relation to their programme of mental health guidelines (depression, eating disorders, deliberate self-harm). Their work will also pick up on the 'listening exercise' themes of social inclusion and assertive outreach.

Effective services for children and families

Fostering

SCIE's existing work on fostering will be actively disseminated. There is a significant body of work on fostering that can be used to underpin a series of practice guides or to develop other methods of practice change.

SCIE will build on its current project on the working arrangements that facilitate good outcomes in fostering, with the possibility of extending this to other aspects of children's services.

Parenting programmes

SCIE will work in partnership with NICE on parenting programmes.

Methodologies

SCIE will explore methodologies used in health and other sectors to help in everyday decision-making and in learning lessons from mistakes.

'Listening exercise' topics

SCIE will work on two topics that arose out of the 'listening exercise': good practice in 'out-of-organisation' placements; and children and young people with mental health needs.

The children/adult interface

SCIE will build on current work on the interface between children's and adults' services and the development of good models of practice at points of transition, such as from children's to adults' services or adults' services to community care.

National Service Frameworks

Over the next three years SCIE must anticipate work to support the implementation of forthcoming National Service Frameworks (NSFs) on children and long-term conditions.

Stakeholder participation

This builds on current work (knowledge reviews on the effectiveness of user involvement, mapping user networks, user participation in governance) and expands into some new subject areas. It emerged as a clear priority from the 'listening exercise'. It has the following components:

- practice guide(s) on user participation making use of the knowledge reviews already undertaken
- participation of parents, carers, marginalised and excluded groups
- a participation strategy and action plan for SCIE
- access to services (for the Welsh Assembly)
- a review of advocacy services.

Human resources development

SCIE will gather and review good practice, develop tools for improvement, set up implementation networks and web based resources. It will provide tools to develop and support management competencies. And it will promote leadership development.

Social work education

Practice guides

A series of practice guides on teaching and learning in social work will build on the work in 2002/2003 on assessment and communications skills and will cover human growth and development, law and partnership working and inter-professional education.

How knowledge works

This will include:

- the evaluation of practice guides
- formulating SCIE's approach to systematic review in social care
- research utilisation in the wider social care workforce
- dissemination and support for implementation.

Development of eLSC

Projects to improve eLSC include:

- a review and assessment of the current infrastructure
- redevelopment of the user interface and enhancement of functionality
- content development, collation and accessibility for all user groups
- development of promotional activities and user education and training
- work with the National electronic Library for Health (NeLH) to develop a joint information resource for leaning disabilities, long-term care and disabilities.

what we produce, and how

Products

Practice guides and resource guides

Practice guides make recommendations and establish key points for practice using the best available knowledge. They provide a framework for the user (practitioner, manager, trainer) to question their practice. They also bring together research messages, case studies, key texts and links to other documents so that users can explore the knowledge to the level they require.

Resource guides are built on the same principles as practice guides and point to knowledge and information about particular areas of practice.

Knowledge reviews

Knowledge reviews take a systematic approach to the analysis of knowledge on a particular topic. The reviews describe the material available, the evidence that emerges and the findings drawn from the evidence. SCIE commissions others to conduct the reviews and then publishes the findings.

eLSC

eLSC, SCIE's primary web-based resource, is being developed as the gateway to knowledge in social care.

Position papers

Position papers present a swift analysis, drawing on available knowledge, of a particular policy question.

Working methods

SCIE has adopted a transparent, project-based approach to its work. Themes are developed collaboratively with staff and the board, stakeholders and sponsors. And each project contributes to the development of a product relevant to that theme.

Service users, their carers and supporters, and end-users of the product (social workers, social care workers, managers) are involved at every stage of the project and product development.

SCIE follows a similar process in developing its practice guides, knowledge reviews, resource guides and position papers. The process for a practice guide is as follows:

Defining the scope

In the initial stages, SCIE:

- defines the areas that the guide is to address and the service and practice questions to be answered
- agrees on the scope as a collaboration between expertise within SCIE, stakeholders in the relevant field and SCIE's sponsors, ensuring that SCIE's work does not duplicate but complements the work of others
- appoints a reference group to advise on the development of the guide through all its stages.

Reviewing, writing and publishing

To develop the guide through the next stages, SCIE:

- reviews the literature and seeks out practice knowledge, involving stakeholders and other experts in the field
- synthesises, using clear criteria to substantiate, the findings of the review
- working closely with users, practitioners and researchers, develops the content and format of the guide
- publishes the guide in a variety of appropriate, accessible formats.

Disseminating, implementing and evaluating

Once the practice guide is published, SCIE:

- actively disseminates it through workshops/conferences, web-based and other electronic resources and publicity
- supports implementation through the use of networks, electronic communities of practice and in collaboration with other organisations working to improve the quality of social care
- field-tests and evaluates the guide.

Quality assurance

SCIE's reputation depends on the quality of its products. This is ensured by:

- open processes and transparency of methodology
- value for money
- rigour
- accessibility of products.

Open processes

SCIE will consult on and publish by 2005 an approach to knowledge in social care, the method, content and format for practice guides, and the development of eLSC.

SCIE will also establish standing advisory groups – including advisory groups on the development of practice guides and systematic review, and a user group for eLSC – as part of SCIE's formal quality assurance system.

The advisory groups will be independently chaired and will build on existing expertise. Their membership will be drawn from SCIE's main constituencies (users, practitioners managers and researchers). They will challenge the way SCIE does its work, and advise on, for example, methodology, relevance, usefulness and presentation.

SCIE recognises that there is not always consensus about what works, and will be open and transparent about conflicting findings.

Value for money

SCIE has established ground rules for commissioning based on the value of the commission. It has clear procedures for invitations to tender and advertising, and commissions are put on the SCIE website. Tender boards are convened for all invited and openly advertised proposals, which scrutinise the value for money of each proposal.

Initial scoping identifies any similar pieces of work. In this way, project briefs and commissions avoid duplication and complement any recent work or work in progress. This can represent significant added value.

Rigour

SCIE will obtain independent assessments of proposals above £30,000 or when the subject or complexity warrants it.

Once completed, reviews of research and other related literature will be independently peer reviewed. A more interactive, developmental approach, based around the advisory groups and user groups, is appropriate to ensure the quality of SCIE's practice guides and of eLSC. The advisory groups will be responsible for quality-assuring practice guides. Independent assessment of future commissions for eLSC redevelopment by members of the user groups will also be helpful.

Accessibility

Clear publications standards will be applied to all SCIE's published work, both electronic and print. These standards will take account of language, design and technical accessibility issues. SCIE will also be looking at ways of carrying out an equalities impact appraisal.

communicating and assessing our work

Effective communication of its work, working methods and objectives to all stakeholders is critical to SCIE contributing successfully to positive practice and policy change in social care.

SCIE's communications aims

- **to disseminate its knowledge, best practice and other products as widely as possible so that they are easily accessible to all stakeholders in social care**
- **to establish SCIE's profile as a credible, impartial knowledge hub, serving the interests of stakeholders in the social care community**

Stakeholder participation

SCIE's working methods provide opportunities for stakeholders to be involved in its outputs at every stage of its development. In this way SCIE's products will be owned and trusted.

The communications team – in particular through the recruitment of a senior advisor on participation – will encourage the active involvement of stakeholders in projects, strategy and performance measurement. Systems will be established to ensure their active participation. SCIE will also improve opportunities for structured participation via the website.

Accessibility

Practice guides, reports and other key outputs are already being produced in easyread format, Braille, tape and large print. SCIE will be constantly looking to improve the accessibility of its products for all service users, including those with learning difficulties.

Translation

SCIE will continue its practice of translating practice guides, reports and other key documents into Welsh, and will begin to translate relevant documents into the other languages spoken by minority groups in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Using technology

SCIE will make best use of existing and emerging technology for communication and dissemination.

Disseminating to social care networks

During 2002, SCIE established initial links with certain social care networks, including the National Association of Training Officers in the Personal Social Services (NATOPSS), Research in Practice and others, for dissemination of its products. SCIE will continue with this practice, identifying new networks to link with, piloting approaches to ensure that its work is reaching target audiences and exploring with them ways of supporting the implementation of knowledge into practice.

Dissemination will

- be focused so that materials are tailored to the target audience, with an active engagement between SCIE and the field
- use a variety of methods, including the publication and presentation of SCIE's work in workshops and conferences, to raise awareness. The incorporation of SCIE's work

into training, inspection and regulation will reinforce its messages about practice and management.

Regional consultation groups

In response to the 'listening exercise', SCIE will set up regional consultation groups focused on users and practitioners.

Regulation and continuing professional development

SCIE will work closely with the national bodies for social care workforce regulation to ensure that its work is being implemented through training and development and is integral to the regulatory process and continuing professional development.

Conferences

Through its annual conference and its presence at major national and international social care conferences, SCIE will ensure that it is meeting and bringing together service users and their carers, policy-makers and planners, researchers, trainers and educators, staff, managers and employers from the voluntary, statutory and independent sectors, both in the UK and abroad.

Visitors' programme

During 2002, SCIE conducted an active programme of national and international visitors to SCIE, including lecturers, researchers and user groups. SCIE will expand this programme up to 2006 to create more national and international links.

Branding

As a first step in establishing its profile, SCIE has begun branding all its products, including project outputs, corporate literature and internal and external communications. During 2003/2004, a SCIE style guide will be produced to ensure that all SCIE's products are recognisable. SCIE will start to measure its recognition.

Databases

SCIE will continue to develop its database of social care contacts to assist in disseminating both corporate and project-specific materials. SCIE will subscribe to an extensive media database to ensure that its key messages are reaching the relevant media.

Media

SCIE will develop an appropriate media plan for each of its products to ensure effective dissemination. SCIE will also develop its media contacts and train staff in media relations.

How will we measure success?

In order to assess the impact of its work, the achievement of its objectives and the value for money that SCIE represents, the organisation needs to measure external awareness of its work, reputation and influence.

The tools that SCIE will use to measure external awareness include:

- the Partners' Council
- surveys of the views of partners, service users, employers, managers and practitioners
- evaluations of the impact of SCIE's practice guides
- views of independent assessors of SCIE's work – an integral part of SCIE's quality assurance strategy.

appendix 1: resources

The three-year annual projections (see Appendix 3) are based on an income increase of approximately £1,000,000 in 2003/2004. The Department of Health has committed to this increase for 2003/2004. Amounts for 2004/2006 are subject to confirmation, but for planning purposes SCIE has assumed that a similar level of funding will be made available.

SCIE has assumed that the Welsh Assembly will grant a similar percentage increase and that it will receive additional funds from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland from 2004/2005 (although in reality SCIE may conclude a service level agreement with them earlier than this).

What are the additional funds for?

Projects

The additional funding will be used largely to increase the number and/or complexity of projects carried out. A smaller increase in funding will inevitably prevent some of the important theme-based projects from going ahead or will compromise their quality.

Staff

A small increase in numbers of staff will be necessary to support this greater workload and additional dissemination. SCIE currently has a staff of 30 full-time equivalents and expects this to grow by approximately 10 to 20 per cent per year until 2006.

SCIE needs a committed, trained, innovative and unified workforce. At present, a proportion of staff are working on the terms and conditions that they worked at the National Institute of Social Work, prior to being transferred to SCIE. SCIE is establishing a single HR strategy covering reward, recruitment, equal opportunities and training and development. And SCIE aims to provide an attractive and supportive working environment.

Dissemination

It is essential that SCIE's output is effectively disseminated in order to have maximum impact on policies and practices. Dissemination costs are assumed to rise substantially each year as SCIE's profile is raised, its messages become more embedded in social care practice and its dissemination networks widen.

Rapid response

The financial projections include a rapid response and development fund. This is to enable SCIE to respond quickly to issues of importance that were not foreseen when the annual work programmes were put together. Requests for a rapid response may come from our sponsors, other stakeholders, the Partners' Council or the board.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

ICT resources are assumed to need upgrading each year.

Electronic resources

Costs for continuous enhancement and accessibility of eLSC and the SCIE website are assumed to be substantial in 2003/2004, with

smaller but continuing increases in 2004/2006. SCIE is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. It was incorporated on 19 September 2001 and registered as a charity on 3 July 2002.

SCIE is governed by an independent board made up of 12 trustees with diverse backgrounds and experience. The board includes a nominee from Wales and a nominee from Northern Ireland

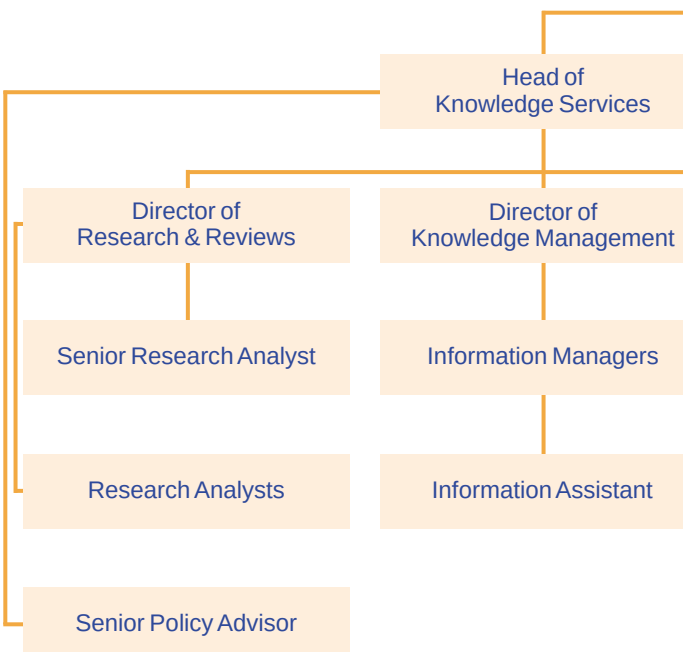
Board members (1 August 2003)

Jane Campbell Chair
Shokat Babul
Ratna Dutt
Geraldine Macdonald
Diana McNeish
Paul Martin
Terry Philpot
Gail Tucker
Roy Taylor
Susannah Walker

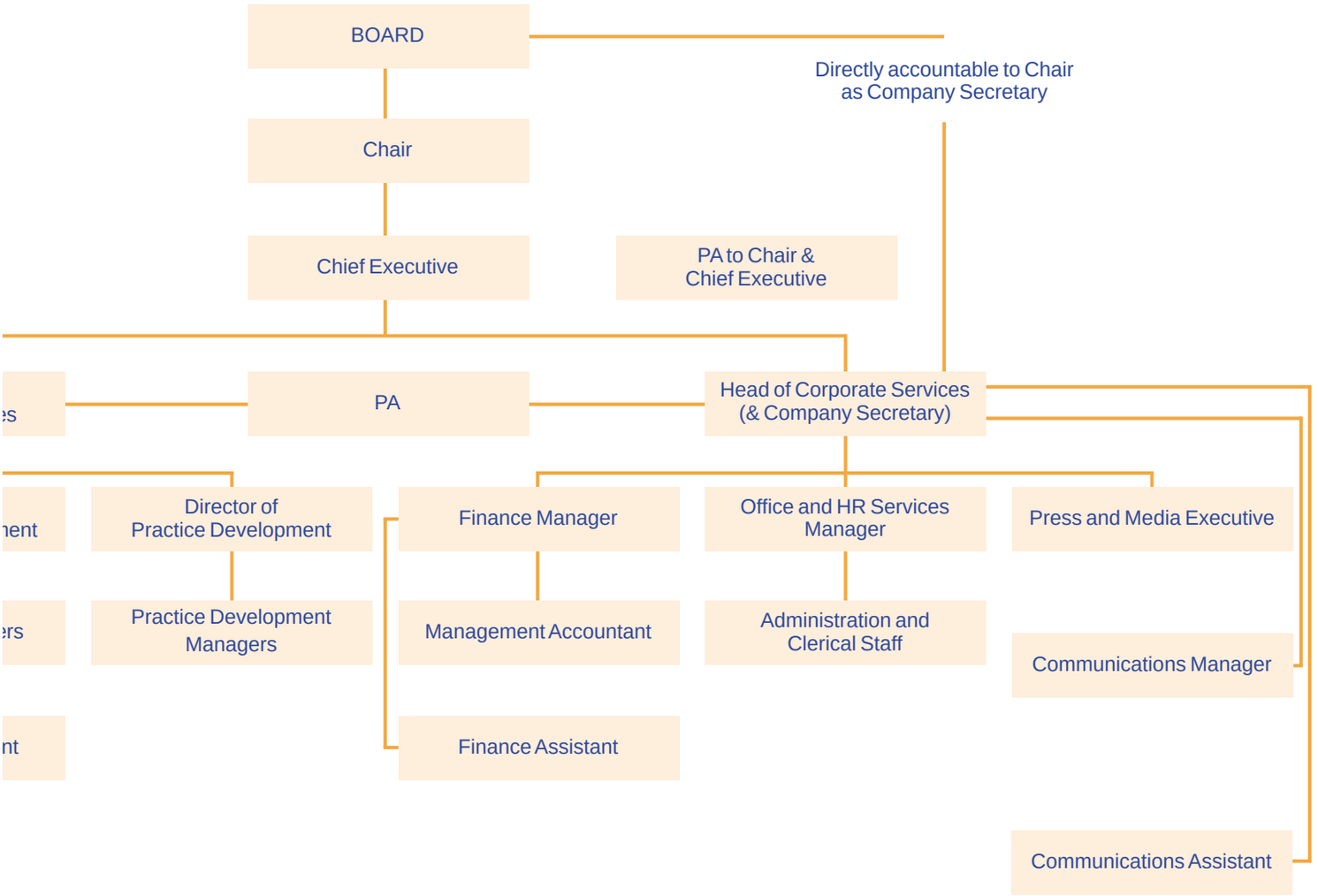
Executive management (1 August 2003)

Bill Kilgallon Chief Executive
Amanda Edwards Head of Knowledge Services
Victoria McNeill Head of Corporate Services

Organisational structure (1 August 2003)



appendix 2: structure and staffing



appendix 3: financial information

1 April 2003 to 31 March 2006

Direct costs of work programme activities	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Salaries and other staff related costs	1,176,673	1,217,857	1,260,482
Electronic access and publication costs	104,500	108,158	111,943
Commissions, publicity and dissemination	1,649,218	1,633,916	1,526,603
Infrastructure costs	277,587	287,303	297,358
Indirect costs of work programme activities			
Salaries and other staff-related costs	680,631	704,453	729,109
Governance and management	79,330	82,107	84,980
Publicity and dissemination	209,837	217,181	224,783
Premises and office costs	439,792	455,185	471,116
Legal and professional costs	31,850	32,965	34,119
Provisions and reserves	400,000	400,000	400,000
	5,049,418	5,139,123	5,140,492
Funded by			
Government grants	4,650,000	5,100,000	5,100,000
Income brought forward for projects in progress	361,618		
Other income	37,800	39,123	40,492
	5,049,418	5,139,123	5,140,492

Assumed rate of inflation 3.5%

Government grants

Year 1	
Section 64 (DH)	4,430,000
Welsh Assembly Government	170,000
Scottish Executive	50,000
	4,650,000

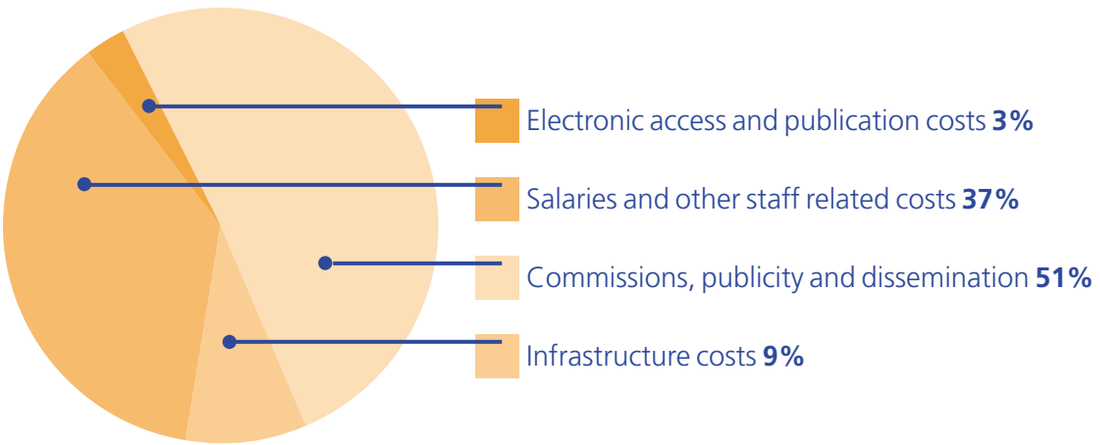
Year 2	
Section 64 (DH)	4,430,000
Welsh Assembly Government	170,000
Scottish Executive	50,000
Leadership programme for social care	250,000
Northern Ireland*	200,000
	5,100,000

Year 3	
Section 64 (DH)	4,430,000
Welsh Assembly Government	170,000
Scottish Executive	50,000
Leadership programme for social care	250,000
Northern Ireland*	200,000
	5,100,000

*Service level agreement scheduled to be agreed late 2003.

appendix 4: how we spend the money

Direct costs of work programme activities in 2003/2004



Indirect costs of work programme activities in 2003/2004

appendix 5: abbreviations and acronyms

ADSS Association of Directors of Social Services
www.adss.org.uk

BASW British Association of Social Workers
www.basw.co.uk

Campbell Collaboration Promoting access to systematic reviews of studies on the effects of social and educational policies and practices
www.campbellcollaboration.org

Cochrane Collaboration Promotes access to systematic review of studies on the effects of health care interventions
www.cochrane.org

CSCI Commission for Social Care Inspection
www.doh.gov.uk/csci

DH Department of Health
www.doh.gov.uk

eLSC electronic library for social care
www.elsc.org.uk

GSCC General Social Care Council
www.gscc.org.uk

JRF Joseph Rowntree Foundation
www.jrf.org.uk

JUCSWEC Joint University Council – Social Work Education Committee
www.swap.ac.uk/Quality/SWreform/jucswec1.asp

LTSN Learning and Teaching Support Network
www.ltsn.ac.uk

NATOPSS National Association of Training Officers in the Personal Social Services
www.natopss.info

NCIL National Centre for Independent Living
www.ncil.org.uk

NCSC National Care Standards Commission
www.carestandards.org.uk

NeLH National Electronic Library for Health
a digital library for NHS staff, patients and the public
www.nelh.nhs.uk

NICE National Institute for Clinical Excellence
www.nice.org.uk

NIMHE National Institute for Mental Health in England
www.nimhe.org.uk

OSCA Outcomes of Social Care for Adults

RIP Research in Practice initiative to improve the knowledge base for children and family services
www.rip.org.uk

SCA Social Care Association
www.socialcareassoc.com

SOLNUN Shaping Our Lives: National User Network
www.shapingourlives.org.uk

SSRG Social Services Research Group
www.ssrg.org.uk

SWAP Social Work and Policy centre of LTSN
www.swap.ac.uk

Topss the body responsible for the overall coherence of training and education in the social care sector
www.topss.org.uk

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