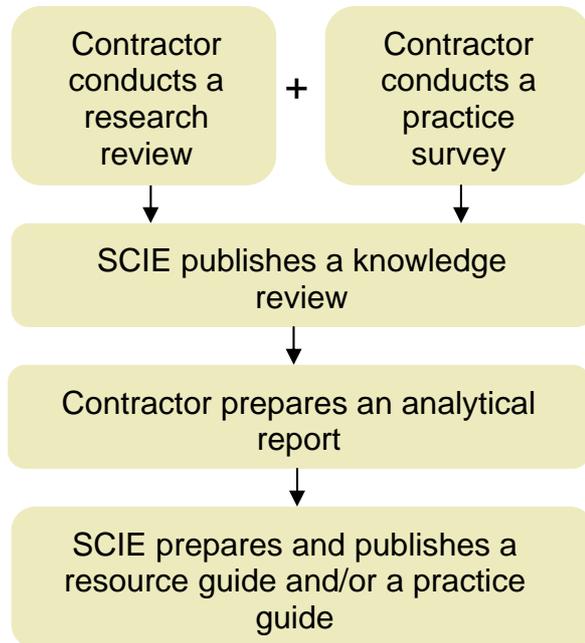


Understanding a SCIE knowledge review

What is a knowledge review?

SCIE's knowledge reviews focus on a particular area of social care. They are made up of a research review, which evaluates existing research and literature about an area of social care, and a practice survey, which evaluates current practice in that area. They are designed to develop understanding about a subject and identify areas for development. They also act as a basis for future SCIE resources on that area of social care.

There will normally be a dialogue between the research review and the practice survey. For example, the practice survey may reveal new interventions on which research evidence is required, and vice versa.



Who undertakes the work?

SCIE commissions outside organisations to conduct research reviews and practice surveys. The commissioning and development of each knowledge review is managed by a SCIE project leader.

The person or group commissioned (known as the contractor) to do the work prepares a knowledge review, bringing together the results of the research review and practice survey. The contractor should work with the SCIE project leader to agree the structure of the knowledge review.

As well as a knowledge review, the project team is also responsible for preparing an analytical report that describes the strength of the evidence from each element in the knowledge review. The analytical report elaborates the major messages for practice, with appropriate practice examples. SCIE or in some cases the contractor, then works this material into a resource guide and/or a practice guide.

You can take a look at some of SCIE's resources by visiting our website at www.scie.org.uk

More about research reviews

A research review will evaluate a wide range of materials and will identify the key messages for policy makers, service planners and providers so that they can be reflected in the design and delivery of social care services.

A research review should draw on a wide range of relevant material, including:

- research studies of the process and outcome of different models of service delivery
- descriptive/analytical accounts of service and policy developments and current ongoing evaluations
- descriptive/analytical accounts of good practice identified by inspection audit and inquiry activity accounts that may be unpublished, or written up primarily as internal planning and review documents.

The contractor will be expected to prepare a report written in non-technical language, suitable for a diverse range of audiences. The report must identify the key messages for service providers and commissioners of services at strategic and individual levels.

See Appendix 2 for guidelines for preparing a research review.

More about practice surveys

The practice survey will capture other development work, knowledge and examples of good practice, some of which may be only in the development stage in this rapidly-evolving sector. It will need to include services and initiatives provided by health, multi-agency and voluntary agencies as well as those provided by social care agencies. This will supplement the research review and enable comparison of findings from the two methodological perspectives.

The contractor will be expected to:

- draw together the resources from national and local organisations and services on good practice
- undertake practice surveys in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to identify services and settings that have progress on meeting the needs of children with complex health needs and their families. The survey methods are not fully prescribed but must be fit for the purpose of identifying examples of sound imaginative approaches and the conditions that promote them. Methods may include workshops, email or telephone surveys and case studies.
- prepare descriptions of initiatives, covering the background and aims, how they work, what has been learnt, what made them work and their general ability to fit other settings or localities.

The project team will be expected to prepare a report written in non-technical language and presenting key messages in ways appropriate to service providers, practitioners and service users. It should include practice examples illustrating the range of good practice.

See Appendix 3 for guidelines for preparing a practice survey.

More about analytical reports

The findings of the analytical report will be provided under headings agreed with SCIE in no more than 2,500 words. The analytical report should indicate the strength of key messages i.e. do they appear in the research review, the practice survey or practice examples or perhaps in multiples of the three (the strongest message being one which is reported in all three areas, and the weakest where it appears in only one)?

This text will form the basis of a resource or practice guide, to be developed by SCIE, or in some cases the project team. The guide, once developed, will help service providers decide how to offer the breadth and appropriate levels of service required.

Contractors will present the analytical report and outline the implications for guide development at a SCIE workshop. This workshop will shape the next stage of guide development whether undertaken by SCIE or the project team.