

About SCIE

How we can help you



Better knowledge for better practice

www.scie.org.uk

social care
institute for excellence



“I have SCIE’s website on my favourites list and visit it first for information about social care.”

Commissioner at a local authority in England

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) was established by Government in 2001 to improve social care services for adults and children in the United Kingdom.

We achieve this by identifying good practice and helping to embed it in everyday social care provision.

SCIE works to:

- disseminate knowledge-based good practice guidance
- involve service users, carers, practitioners, providers and policy makers in advancing and promoting good practice in social care
- enhance the skills and professionalism of social care workers through our tailored, targeted and user-friendly resources.

Who do we help?

We help the 1.6 million people providing or planning social care, and ultimately the 2.8 million people using social care services in the UK.

This includes managers and workers of social care providers of all sizes within the statutory, voluntary and private sectors.

It also includes planners, funders and inspectors of social care services; those responsible for educating and developing social care workers; social care students; researchers and academics.

And of course it includes people who use social care services, the family members and friends who care for them, and the organisations that support them.

Our work supports the whole range of social care services for both children and adults. It covers physical, sensory and learning disabilities, older people's services, fostering and adoption, substance misuse, residential care and mental health.

How do we help?

Whatever your role, you want to ensure that your work is based on good practice and the best available knowledge.

SCIE provides you with reliable, up-to-date and thoroughly-researched guidance and practical tools on the main issues in social care. And they're all free!

“SCIE’s practice guides are the ideal resources for professionals, allowing us to dip into information where and when needed – they are clear and accessible and most importantly very informative. The outcomes in our region have been very clear – we have secured increased investment.”

Director of a fostering service in Northern Ireland

Frontline workers and managers of social care services will find our online practice guides particularly valuable as they provide detailed guidance on how to deliver and manage good care services. They also include examples of existing practice and related legislation.

Managers of services can use our people management resources to establish or improve their existing policies and practice.

Commissioners can use our guides and research reviews to help set priorities and assess whether their contractors are acting in accordance with good practice.

Social care educators and trainers can use our education and research resources, such as Social Care Online, to develop their education and training programmes.

Policy makers can find up-to-date, reliable and evidence-based research on which to formulate policy, and use our discussion and position papers to stimulate debate.

Social care students can use all our resources to ensure that their projects, practice reports and case studies are up to date with current practice and policy.

Service users, carers and their representative bodies can use all our resources to become informed partners in their care. All of our resources refer to the importance of service user and carer participation.

Social care inspectors can use our guidance and good practice knowledge to underpin inspections and advice.

What do we provide?

We publish a wide range of resources which are all available on our website at www.scie.org.uk

These resources include:

- online practice guides for social care managers and workers
- practical tools to improve the way organisations manage and support their staff
- e-learning resources on key subjects for practitioners, managers, educators and students
- a comprehensive online database of social care information (Social Care Online)
- discussion papers and position papers outlining the opinions of SCIE or other partners
- brief summaries of existing research
- guides to existing resources or information
- detailed reviews of existing knowledge.

“SCIE creates a bridge between the theoretical and the practical because the website offers real examples of practice from people experienced in social work.”

Social work student in England

What's different about SCIE?

Some other organisations also publish research and good practice guidance. But SCIE is different.

We were set up by Government to be the official producer of good practice guidance for the whole of social care. Our work is supported by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills and the devolved authorities in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. Our work also informs inspections.

People who use social care services play a major role in the development and quality of our guidance. They contribute at all

stages – from setting the questions at the beginning, to commenting on final versions of our resources.

We're independent. Although we are supported by Government, we're an independent charity – so our guidance is not controlled by the priorities of Government. We are governed by an independent board of trustees, which includes representatives from across social care. Also, we don't run any social care services, so our guidance is based on a broad knowledge base – not just on what we do or think.

We work across children's and families' and adults' services. All of our guidance considers how children's and adults' services must work together. After all, today's children are tomorrow's adults.

Our guidance is based on a thorough review of research and on manager, practitioner and service user views about what works well in practice. It includes the relevant policy and legislative background. We sound out our guidance with experienced social care workers and service users, as well as researchers, before we publish it.

“SCIE’s resources have helped to ground our participation strategy in best practice.”

Service user participation worker in Wales

How do we involve our stakeholders?

We involve our stakeholders at every stage of our work – from strategic decision-making and setting our work plan, to sharing good practice and ensuring our guidance is useful and accessible.

SCIE's board of trustees, project development groups and workforce include representatives from all of our stakeholder groups including users of social care services, carers, social care practitioners, policy makers and researchers.

We also run two key networks that support and guide our work:

The Partners' Council advises us on our priorities, programmes and performance. Its purpose is to ensure that SCIE's work reflects the needs of people in the social

care sector, especially those of service users and carers. It is made up of representatives from more than 40 organisations including service user and carer organisations, service providers, professional bodies, universities, trainers and inspectors.

The Practice Partners' Network is made up of representatives from statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations that run social care services. It helps us to identify, develop, share and support good practice.

SCIE knows that participation and involvement are key to ensuring better outcomes for those who use social care services. We work to promote a culture of participation within all social care organisations.

“We need research to back up any good practice that we promote and SCIE is helping us to achieve this.”

Chief executive of a national social care association

“For me, SCIE’s report on service user involvement and the benefits system is... probably the best one-stop guide, pulling together all the real issues relating to payment for service users. I’ve lost track of how many times I’ve used it.”

Board member of a user support service

Where can you find out more?

For more information and to view, download or order our resources free of charge, visit www.scie.org.uk

If you want to keep up to date about new developments and resources from SCIE, register online for our email updates.

This leaflet can be produced in alternative formats upon request.

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