



## **Consultation on the draft Social Work and Social Care Research, Evidence, Innovation and Improvement Strategy 2026 – 2031**

### **Participant Information Sheet**

29 April 2026

**Advice for those participating in the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (Social Care Council) consultation on the draft Social Work and Social Care Research, Evidence, Innovation and Improvement Strategy 2026 – 2031 (the research strategy).**

You are being invited to complete an online survey to share your views on the Social Care Council's draft research strategy for social work and social care in NI. This consultation is open to all of those who have an interest in social work and social care research, innovation and service improvement. Your feedback will help us ensure we get our research priorities right.

Before you decide if you would like to take part, it is important for you to understand why we are consulting on this strategy and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information sheet carefully and take your time to consider if you would like to take part.

If you would like to take part in the consultation, but are unable to complete the online survey, please email: [BusinessSupport@niscc.hscni.net](mailto:BusinessSupport@niscc.hscni.net) to discuss the additional support you need to access and complete the survey. It is also possible to request a copy of the document in a word format.

If you have any questions or concerns about the management of this survey, please contact Andre McKeown (Social Care Council Evaluation Manager) via e-mail ([Andre.McKeown@niscc.hscni.net](mailto:Andre.McKeown@niscc.hscni.net)).

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet.



## **Why is the Social Care Council consulting on a research strategy for social work and social care in NI?**

The Social Care Council has, since 2023, been responsible for leading the strategic social work and social care research agenda in NI. To deliver on this work, the Council has established a partnership of people with interests and experience of social work, social care and research for this area of practice. The Social Care Council Research and Evidence Partnership (the Research Partnership) is responsible to the Social Care Council Board for the work that they do.

One of the core tasks of the research partnership is to oversee development and implementation of a draft research strategy for social work and social care in NI. The Social Care Council is now encouraging the public, social workers and social care practitioners, and stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft strategy, to help guide future social work and social care research priorities in Northern Ireland.

## **What is the purpose of this survey?**

The strategy has been co designed in partnership with social workers and social care practitioners from across a range of organisations and sectors, other related professions, academics, people with lived experience and carers.

The aims of the research strategy are to:

- Build research capacity across the wider social care workforce which includes social workers and social care practitioners .
- Embed evidence-informed practice in social work and social care.
- Foster a collaborative research culture that puts people and relationships at the centre.

The purpose of this consultation is to gather stakeholders' views on the draft strategy, its aim, vision and proposed strategic priorities. We also want to ensure that it is accessible to all our stakeholders.

### **Why have I been chosen?**

Social workers and social care practitioners are a diverse group of professionals. They are part of the wider health and social care family concerned with the wellbeing of society and are also employed in a range of justice, education and community and voluntary sectors. The consultation will be available to anyone with an interest in any of these areas.

### **Do I have to take part in this survey?**

This survey is completely optional. You do not have to complete the survey, and it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part.

### **What will happen to my responses if I take part?**

If you choose to take part, you will be asked to tick a box which indicates that you consent to your answers being held securely until the final strategy is published. All responses will be entirely anonymous. Please note that as your responses are anonymous, we will not be able to remove your responses once they have been submitted. Once you have read the draft research strategy, the survey will take roughly 30 minutes to complete.

### **Will my participation in the study be kept confidential?**

The Social Care Council has a duty of confidentiality to you as a survey respondent and all data will be managed under the provisions of the UK GDPR legislation. All responses collected will remain anonymous and individual participants will not be identifiable in the analysis of the final research strategy. All responses will be held securely by the Social Care Council until the research strategy is published and then disposed in accordance with data protection best practice.

### **What if I have a question or concern about this survey?**

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact Andre McKeown (Social Care Council Evaluation Manager) via e-mail ([Andre.McKeown@niscc.hscni.net](mailto:Andre.McKeown@niscc.hscni.net)).