



About Iriss

Iriss is a charitable organisation that promotes positive outcomes for the people who use Scotland's social services, by enhancing the capacity and capability of the workforce. We bring together and bridge skills in evidence-informed practice, innovation and improvement and knowledge media.

We aim to:

- embed a culture of collaboration open to new ideas
- ensure people have the knowledge, tools and skills to effectively use evidence and to innovate and improve
- place people at the centre of the design of services and support.

Student/new worker conference

This is an opportunity to have a national conversation with an audience of final year students and newly-qualified staff to:

- Facilitate peer support and dialogue
- Grow our knowledge of their experiences of transition
- Help them shape the future / shape the future together.

Approach

- Partnership approach to planning and delivering workshops, including input from students/newly qualified
- Some key speakers but focus on interactive workshops.

History

Iriss has been involved as instigator and partner in a Student Social Worker/NQSW Conference for two years, with a third conference planned for 2017 at RGU. The conference has been supported by OCSWA, SSSC, SASW, SWS and HE Heads of Social Work Group. Previously this event has received financial support from OCSWA and SSSC, with the venue provided free of charge by the host university and attendees travel costs met by HEIs/employers.

Iriss offer

Iriss would like to explore with college partners, whether there is appetite to run a similar conference for students/newly-qualified workers beginning their social services careers in Scotland's colleges.

Last year's [programme](#) and [storify](#) for the Student Social Worker/NQSW are provided as inspiration and food for thought:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/4xmf1xnpf5r76vj/nqsw16.pdf?dl=0>
<https://storify.com/iriss/shaping-our-future-making-a-difference>



Personal Learning Networks (PLN)

In 2016/17 Iriss is piloting a six-week course with a minimum of two Social work student cohorts to promote the use of social media and free online apps to support improved use of evidence, innovation and continuous learning

Personal Network Learning is different to traditional learning and offers the following benefits:

1. Autonomous and self-directed, with learner controlling how, when and 'who' they connect with
2. Learning is social and adaptable to individuals' needs rather than static / prescriptive course content.
3. Continuous part of individuals' workflow and not an onerous add on.
4. Bite-sized 'habit'
5. Inclusive, supporting connections across sector, professional and non-professional boundaries and hierarchies as well as inclusive of traditional research reports, practitioner wisdom, lived experience and co-creation of new knowledge through interaction.

See this [short video](https://vimeo.com/93625291) (<https://vimeo.com/93625291>) by Iriss and NES about PLN.



Iriss offer

We will share our learning from these pilots to inform others at a local and national level. We would also welcome feedback from college colleagues about interest and scope for development moving forward.

Ongoing relationships and links

Iriss would be keen to establish closer strategic links with the colleges sector as a means of supporting new/emergent workers in the social services. It would be helpful to identify key individuals and groups to support this ambition.

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