ispa
Irish Social Policy Association

POSTGRADUATE &
EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER CONFERENCE
Friday, 27 July 2018
Carmelite Community Centre, 56 Aungier Street, Dublin 2

in partnership with

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

UCD DUBLIN

***The School of Social Work and Social Policy
at Trinity College Dublin,
the University of Dublin***

***UCD School of Social Policy, Social Work, and
Social Justice** | Scoil an Pholasaí Shóisialta
na hOibre Sóisialta agus na Córa Sóisialta UCD*

Conference WiFi
Network: CCC   Password: openthedoor50

Full conference programme (with presentation abstracts)
will be available at:
www.ispa.ie

Follow us on Twitter: @IE_socialpolicy
Conference hashtag: **#ISPA2018**

_____
About ISPA:
The Irish Social Policy Association (ISPA) was founded in 1997 to provide a forum for the analysis, discussion and development of social policy in Ireland, North and South. We endeavour to broaden the debate on social policy by providing a forum for discussion that embraces the views and opinion of a wide range of relevant actors. ISPA brings together professionals and non-professionals with an interest in social policy, including: academics, policy makers, officials in the civil service and public service bodies, employer and trade union organisations as well as organisations and groups in the not-for-profit sector.
www.ispa.ie.

Questions/Comments: Contact ISPA Postgraduate Officer, Megan Curran, at events@ispa.ie.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE
Friday, 27 July 2018

8:00-8:45am   **Registration/Tea & Coffee** *(large hall, ground floor)*

8:45-9:00am   **WELCOME** *(large hall, ground floor)*

9:00-9:25am   **'Thesis in 3' Presentations** *(large hall, ground floor)*

9:30-10:30am   **Plenary: "Research into Practice"** *with **Bernie McNally, Assistant Secretary, Department of Children and Youth Affairs** (large hall, ground floor)*

10:30am-10:55am   **TEA/COFFEE BREAK** *(lobby)*

11:00am-12:15pm   **Breakout Sessions I & II**
   I.   ***Contemporary Family Forms*** *(Carmel Room, 1st floor)*
   II. ***Supporting Children and Families*** *(large hall, ground floor)*

12:15-1:00pm   **LUNCH** *(lobby)*

1:00-2:15pm   **Breakout Sessions III & IV**
   III. ***Experiences of Exclusion*** *(large hall, ground floor)*
   IV. ***Gender, Health, and Violence*** *(Carmel Room, 1st floor)*

2:20-3:10pm   **Social Policy Research Roundtable Panel:**
   Postgraduate Supports & Future Careers
   (with tea/coffee refreshments) (large hall, ground floor)

3:15-4:30pm   **Breakout Sessions V & VI**
   V. ***Social Policy in Practice:***
       The Perspective of Practitioners *(large hall, ground floor)*
   VI. ***Social Policy Systems Frameworks:***
       Rights, Regulations, and Resources *(Carmel Room, 1st floor)*

4:35-4:45pm   **CLOSING** *(large hall, ground floor)*

'THESIS IN 3': 3-MIN. SUMMARY PRESENTATIONS
(Large Hall, Ground Floor – 9:00-9:25am)

"Technology for Well being: Internet Use and e-Mental Health : A Qualitative study of Staff Views within a Mental Health Hospital in the East of Ireland"
Niamh Chambers, NUI Galway

"Creative Ireland? The narrative construction of creativity as an object of higher education policy in Ireland"
Eileen Gillen, NUI Galway

"Examining the implications of adopting Universal Basic Income in Ireland"
David Kerley, Dublin City University

"Making Food Education an Educational Priority: Exploring children's experiences of food to influence the development of criteria for a holistic Irish Food Literacy Well-Being programme that gives children the foundation to build their future food culture"
Caroline McGowan, DIT

"Global and national governance of the practice of traditional medicine with particular reference to Kenya"
Ciara Smyth, Trinity College Dublin

"Youth cafes in Ireland: performance of masculinities and gendered inequalities"
Robert Bolton, University College Cork

_____

SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE: POSTGRADUATE SUPPORTS & FUTURE CAREERS
(Large Hall, Ground Floor – 2:20pm-3:10pm)

Featuring:
Madhav Bhargav, *Trinity College Dublin Postgraduate Students' Union*
- on postgraduate student stress/mental health and supports

Dr. Lorna Roe, *Trinity College Dublin Centre for Health Policy and Management*
- on moving from postgraduate policy study into academia

Dr. Patricia Keilthy, *Society of St Vincent DePaul*
- on moving from postgraduate policy study into policy and advocacy

CONFERENCE BREAKOUT SESSIONS
Friday, 27 July 2018

<u>Breakout Sessions I & II</u> (11:00am-12:15pm)

I.   *Contemporary Family Forms*
(Carmel Room, 1st Floor)
Chair: Dr. Tony Fahey, University College Dublin

- "Decision-making regarding motherhood – changing family formations in Ireland"
Margaret O'Connor, University of Limerick

- "The Aspirational Shortcomings of Irish Legislation in Assisted Human Reproduction"
Claire O'Connell, University College Cork

- "Miscarriage Within the Irish Maternity System: Equal Among Women or Discrimination Continued"
Pauline Gannon, NUI Galway

- "New Family Forms: The Re-Positioning of Adoption within the Irish Care System"
Angela Palmer, University College Dublin

Session I Abstracts

"Decision making regarding motherhood – changing family formations in Ireland"
Margaret O'Connor, University of Limerick

It is now theoretically possible to purposively pursue or avoid motherhood with medical technology. However, powerful discourses about motherhood still prevail and the idea of choice is quite new. My paper draws on a qualitative study with the aim of exploring women's view of motherhood and their experience of deciding to become a mother or not. I wanted to examine what influences their thoughts about this, particularly what discourses and narratives may play a role. While technology has advanced, has the social view of Irish women also changed? Motherhood can be a taken for granted concept but it exercises practical influence in our everyday lives, both by its presence and absence. I believe it is very important for women to know that they are not alone in navigating this decision, to raise awareness about the options available and help to create a supportive environment for discussion. This is especially relevant in a social policy setting as family formations continue to change, each with their own unique needs and contributions to society.

"The Aspirational Shortcomings of Irish Legislation in Assisted Human Reproduction"
Claire O'Connell, University College Cork

The law in relation to assisted human reproduction (AHR) in Ireland was long awaited and finally realised in 2015 with the *Children and Family Relationships Act 2015* (the CFRA). Parts 2 and 3 deal with donor assisted human reproduction and parentage; however, three years later, these parts have yet to commence. In October 2017, the Department of Health published the *General Scheme of the Assisted Human Reproduction Bill* (the AHRB) which focuses on surrogacy and is currently in pre-legislative scrutiny stage. Being mindful of the Scottish, and England and Wales Law Commission's inclusion of surrogacy on their next programmes of law

reform, this paper seeks to provide an analysis of the current legislative proposals of Ireland with reference to the UK and the European Court of Human Rights in terms of awards of parentage and the child's right to identity. It argues that the overly restrictive definitions and the commercialisation of donation will encourage non-regulated self-insemination or reproductive tourism, resulting in the law on natural conception remaining the default position in terms of parental rights. This generally means that biological reality shall prevail over the social reality; causing the best interests of the child to be at risk, sacrificing either identity or parental responsibility. It is argued that the new provisions in the CFRA and *Civil Registration Act 2004* muddy the waters between care-giving and biological truth and this should be addressed before the relevant provisions of the CFRA are commenced and the AHRB is enacted.

"Miscarriage Within the Irish Maternity System: Equal Among Women or Discrimination Continued"
Pauline Gannon, NUI Galway, Human Rights

Background: Historically in Ireland, women who experienced a miscarriage were isolated within our maternity system and were dealt with through an air of hushed tones and silence. We are currently seeing welcomed attempts to bring about prominent change within our maternity system to provide adequate care to all pregnant women ensuring their protection, wellbeing and safety. Taking into account legal obligations both nationally and internationally, along with proposed policy reform under the National Maternity Strategy Implementation Plan, this paper will explore and compare whether these advancements and future plans are adequate enough to ensure that women who experience a miscarriage have equal access to care, ensuring equal protection for their wellbeing and safety, as those women who experience a stillbirth or live birth.
Aim/Objective: The primary aim of this paper is to bring miscarriage from the shadows of social policy to the fore, and to highlight any discrepancies and inequality of care, under existing and future policy and policy reform.
Methods: Secondary data research, evaluating, analysing and comparing national and international law and policy.
Results/Conclusions: Although women centred care is a key focus of intended policy change in the area of maternity care, the primary focus of reform has been in relation to women who have a birth classified as a stillbirth or live birth. Advancements proposed in the area of miscarriage are lacking in their provisions, creating discrimination of care towards this category of women.

"New Family Forms: The Re-Positioning of Adoption within the Irish Care System"
Angela Palmer, University College Dublin, Social Policy

In Ireland, foster care is the most prominent form of out-of-home state care for children, the majority remaining in long-term foster care for up to five years or longer. The legal restriction to children of marriage being adopted and the high legal threshold set for birth parent abandonment has meant only a small number of adoptions have taken place. These were often driven by the child's desire for permanency; happening just prior to the foster child aging out of care at eighteen. The constitutional amendment (2012) on the rights of the child and the subsequent Adoption (Amendment) Act, 2017 re-positioned adoption from a periphery position in the private domain to a more central one within the public domain; permitting all children (including those based in marriage) to be adopted within a shorter timeline and, where applicable, without parental consent. Adoption policy can thus be seen as somewhat indicative of wider individual, family and state relationships, policy and changes over time. The paper discusses the changing landscape of adoption practices in Ireland against a backdrop of changing family structures, and broad child protection and welfare trends leading up the 2017 Act. It will then report on a PhD study being carried out by the author, which examines the legal extension of adoption as a permanence option in Ireland through qualitative interviews with adults who were adopted from the Irish foster care system. The findings suggest how this legislative reform will impact modern family structures for future children coming into the care of the Irish state.

II. Supporting Children and Families
(Large Hall, Ground Floor)
Chair: Dr. Geoffrey Cook, NUI Maynooth

- "An Examination of Factors Influencing Emotional and Social Wellbeing in Irish Junior-Cycle Students"
  David Byrne, IT Blanchardstown

- "Different Doors, Different Responses: Child Protection Mediation"
  Rebecca Murphy, NUI Maynooth

- "Large Family, Poor Family? A Comparative Profile of Children's Material Resources in the Modern Large Family and Implications for Social Policy"
  Megan Curran, University College Dublin

Session II Abstracts

"An Examination of Factors influencing Emotional and Social Wellbeing in Irish Junior-Cycle Students"
David Byrne, IT Blanchardstown

A review of the literature identifies that Irish second-level students are at significant risk of experiencing negative affect in their academic lives. Previous research has demonstrated that initiatives aimed at promoting the development of emotional and social wellbeing in such students can produce positive outcomes such as higher academic achievement, improved self-efficacy and reduced attrition. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) have recently published wellbeing guidelines which will mandate all Irish secondary schools to allocate 300 hours of junior-cycle instruction to the promotion of students' social and emotional wellbeing from September 2018. While much is understood globally about the potential benefits of such programmes, little is known about the attitudes and views of educators in this regard. The purpose of this study is to address this gap in knowledge by analysing the attitudes and opinions of second-level educators as to how best to promote students' wellbeing. This research will be conducted in two phases using a sequential mixed-methods design. Phase one will be quantitative in nature and will consist of a large-scale survey of second-level educators. For phase two, participants will be stratified into focus groups according to their respective school-type. The information garnered from this study can be utilised to assist in possible refinements of the NCCA wellbeing guidelines and ultimately facilitate educators in the delivery of the developing wellbeing curriculum. As such, in addition to a possible positive impact on educational standards, there is the potential for a holistic positive impact on student wellbeing.

"Different Doors, Different Responses: Child Protection Mediation"
Rebecca Murphy, NUI Maynooth, School of Law

Children often find themselves at the centre of a variety of legal disputes and, as a result, they may enter the court system through a number of possible doors. Some of these disputes involve disagreements between parents, while others involve the possibility of state intervention due to child protection and safety concerns. What must be remembered is that children's futures are significantly impacted by the door through which their family enters the legal system. In Ireland, there are many instances where parents recognise that they are unable to care for their children and these children are received into care through a voluntary care agreement. However, the details of the parenting plan are often left vague, with the potential for future disagreement. In many

instances, such voluntary care agreements result in applications to court leading to high tensions and a breakdown of trust between the parents and the child welfare agencies (section 4 of the Child Care Act, 1991). This process of reaching "agreements" may, in some circumstances, more appropriately be managed through alternative dispute resolution, such as mediation. Unfortunately, the use of mediation within child protection cases is not current practice in Ireland. Building on this existing research regarding alternative dispute resolution processes, this paper will examine child protection mediation programs operating in the USA and explore the largely uncharted potential of child protection mediation in an Irish context. This will inform policy and state actors as to the potential benefits/disadvantages of developing child-inclusive mediation at a national level.

"Large Family, Poor Family? A Comparative Profile of Children's Material Resources in the Modern Large Family and Implications for Social Policy"
Megan Curran, University College Dublin, Social Policy

Historically, large family size was a significant risk factor for child poverty. Countries with similar welfare state approaches, such as Ireland, the UK, and the US, targeted assistance accordingly, establishing cash programmes like child allowances to support families with multiple children. But as demographics changed, perceived poverty risks – and public policy – shifted away from larger, two-parent households to smaller, lone-parent ones. But large families did not disappear. While policymakers understand today's average women's family size to be 2 children, large family size remains a prominent aspect of children's lives in countries with high rates of post-tax and –transfer child poverty; roughly one-quarter of children in the US (27%) and UK (25%) grow up in families with 4 or more siblings, and in Ireland, over one-third (37%) do. By revisiting country-specific household datasets using a child-centered (rather than women's fertility) measure of family size, this paper demonstrates that the proportion of children who live in large families has been long undercounted – and is misunderstood in terms of how they currently fare. Missing the continued presence of large family size, and its effect on family income, means researchers and policymakers alike may be missing a key influence on child well-being outcomes. This presentation is part of doctoral research examining the effect of contemporary children's family size on child poverty and economic security. Employing a distinctive approach that examines data from the perspective of children themselves, it identifies family and social policy implications that follow a shift in how we measure family size.

Breakout Sessions III & IV (1:00pm-2:15pm)

III.   *Experiences of Exclusion*
(Large Hall, Ground Floor)
Chair: Dr. Nessa Winston, University College Dublin

- "Unemployment and Health During the Great Recession: A longitudinal panel study of Irish mothers 2001-2013"
  Jonathan Briody, University College Dublin

- "Solidarity or Stigma? An exploration of the lived experiences of working age welfare recipients in Ireland: a discussion of preliminary findings"
  Joseph Whelan, University College Cork

- "Food Poverty: The Re-Emergence of Hunger in Ireland?"
  Michael Drew, University College Dublin

- "Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Prisoners in Ireland. Lives, Experiences, and Policy: A Qualitative Exploration"
  Danielle O'Sullivan, Trinity College Dublin

Session III Abstracts

"Unemployment and Health During the Great Recession: A longitudinal panel study of Irish mothers 2001-2013"
Jonathan Briody, University College Dublin, Economics

More than half a century of economic research has advocated that increases in unemployment result in increased levels of ill health. Yet, emerging evidence indicates that levels of mortality and morbidity may decrease when employment falls. Using longitudinal panel data spanning the periods before, during and after the Irish financial crisis of 2008, this paper examines the impact of changes in employment on individuals' physical and mental health, self-reported health, health behaviours, and risk factors such as exercise, tobacco and alcohol consumption. Three waves of data from the Irish Lifeways Survey for the period 2001-2013 are used to capture changes in health and health behaviours over the course of an economic expansion and contraction. Small Area Population Statistics from the Irish Census provide employment statistics at the local level to capture exogenous changes in employment. In this panel data, random effects models are estimated to determine the impact of the local area unemployment rate on health outcomes and behaviours. Results suggest an increased probability of poor health and health compromising behaviours due to increased levels of unemployment. Particularly, increases in the unemployment rate are associated with significant increases in the probability of being overweight and obese, decreased physical activity and a decreased probability and quantity of tobacco consumption. Contrary to expectation, the association between unemployment and mental well-being is negative, with higher unemployment reducing the probability of poor mental well-being. These results are mainly in line with the previous literature.

"Solidarity or Stigma? An exploration of the lived experiences of working age welfare recipients in Ireland: a discussion of preliminary findings"
Joseph Whelan, University College Cork, Applied Social Sciences

Figures released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in Ireland for 2015 show that were social transfers to be removed as a form of income, the overall at risk of poverty rate would jump from 16.9% to over 46% (CSO, 2017). This statistic demonstrates with clarity that social welfare is important and it highlights the role that social transfers play in keeping people from falling below the poverty line in Ireland. Research from the UK, whose welfare state model is still reasonably closely aligned with the Irish model in the comparative literature, strongly suggests that an overt negativity and stigma surrounding welfare recipients there is ubiquitous, despite the obvious benefit of having a functioning welfare system. However, in Ireland, very little is known about the day to day experiences of welfare recipients. The research presented here has set out to examine the situation on the ground in an Irish context by engaging directly with working age welfare recipients in order to gain a much needed insight into their lived experiences. Fieldwork has been completed and this has consisted of approximately twenty interviews, conducted with participants across a variety of payment groups, allowing an understanding of these experiences to begin to emerge. This paper will outline the context of the study before exploring the preliminary findings that have emerged from the fieldwork.

"Food Poverty: The Re-Emergence of Hunger in Ireland?"
Michael Drew, University College Dublin, Social Policy

This presentation examines food poverty in Ireland, given the recent expansion of charitable initiatives to provide people in need with food parcels or meals. The topic has attracted very limited research interest or media coverage, in contrast to other countries, such as the US or UK. The talk will focus on the results of interviews undertaken with food bank users in Dublin, which investigated their pathways in to and through food poverty. Respondents raised a wide range of issues and multiple difficulties affecting their lives, that resulted in them seeking food aid. These included issues with social welfare payments, structural barriers to employment, in-work poverty, illness/disability and the impact of caring responsibilities. The presentation also examines pathways through food poverty for users of food banks in this research. The key themes which emerge include the emotional experience of living in food poverty, coupled with the stigma and embarrassment of resorting to help from a food bank. The impact of living through food poverty can also be significant, including hunger, not being able to maintain an appropriate diet and experiencing social isolation. The presentation reveals how respondents cope with these challenges, including how spending is prioritised and the role of network and support mechanisms.

"Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Prisoners in Ireland. Lives, Experiences, and Policy: A Qualitative Exploration"
Danielle O'Sullivan, Trinity College Dublin, Social Work and Social Policy

In recent years, Ireland has seen a significant social movement towards granting full participative rights to lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) citizens. The decriminalisation of homosexuality in Ireland in 1993 instigated a social movement that propelled rights-based issues, specifically relating to the LGB community, to the forefront of national attention. However, there is a paucity of research on the experiences of incarcerated LGB people. This proposed research, which is qualitative and exploratory in nature, aims to examine the experiences of LGB prisoners and policy responses to LGB prisoners in Ireland. Thirty interviews will be conducted with the following participants: currently incarcerated LGB prisoners (n=10); formerly incarcerated LGB prisoners (n=10); key stakeholders (n=10). This research aims to bridge a clear gap in knowledge and understanding of the situations and experiences of LGB prisoners, with a particular focus on their physical and mental healthcare needs, placement procedures, and how the prison system responds to their needs. It is anticipated that the findings of this research will help to inform the development of policy and procedure that will in turn lead to better practice in responding to the needs of LGB prisoners.

IV. *Gender, Health, and Violence*
(Carmel Room, 1st Floor)
Chair: Dr. Niamh Flanagan, NUI Maynooth

- "Non-heterosexual women's experiences of intimate partner abuse from their female partners: an Irish qualitative study"
  Lynne Cahill, Trinity College Dublin

- "Domestic Violence and Pregnancy in Ireland: Implications for health and other social services arising from preliminary findings of a qualitative research study"
  Siobán O'Brien Green, Trinity College Dublin

- "Evaluation of a Pilot, Bystander Intervention Programme for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence"
  Siobhán O'Neill, University College Cork

Session IV Abstracts

"Non-heterosexual women's experiences of intimate partner abuse from their female partners: an Irish qualitative study"
Dr. Lynne Cahill, Trinity College Dublin, Social Work & Social Policy

This study presents an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of intimate partner abuse (IPA) between an adult sample of non-heterosexual women living in Ireland. With a principal aim of capturing and representing the women's own unique views and subjective experiences of IPA, this study is also concerned with presenting an understanding of the broader societal contexts that ultimately shape and influence the subjective experiences of those women. An in-depth understanding of IPA is achieved by engaging adult women, utilising a qualitative methodological approach. Situated within an interpretative phenomenological perspective, the research draws on qualitative data generated via semi-structured, in depth interviews with nine women who self-identified as having experienced IPA in a previous same sex relationship. Key findings emerging from this study suggest that non-heterosexual women are experiencing diverse forms of abuse involving emotional/psychological, physical, financial, sexual, and identity abuse, and incurring impacts during and post-relationships and longer-term impacts that affect mental and physical well-being. Help-seeking is principally directed toward informal support options (friends), counselling services are the most sought formal support option while domestic violence services are the least sought option. Key findings further indicate that constructions of femininity, lesbian relationships, and violence influence the familial and professional response to lesbian IPA. Specifically, two discourses, the heteronormative heterosexual public story of 'domestic violence' and the non-heterosexual story of a 'lesbian utopia', have contributed to the invisibility of same sex IPA. Discourses that construct 'domestic violence' as predominantly physical in nature, involving primarily a male abuser and a female victim, and discourses that construct women, and female same sex relationships, as non-violent, passive, and egalitarian, serve to silence and marginalise non-heterosexual victims of IPA, and render their experiences invisible. This study asserts that a continued understanding of IPA as a predominantly heterosexual phenomenon at the policy, research, and practice level, creates direct inequalities for non-heterosexual women and their access to appropriate service provision. Finally, this research advocates for a re-assessment of the current approach to the phenomenon of IPA, and challenges academics, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to return to the guiding principles and values of the anti-abuse, discrimination, and equal rights movements, to procure a service response that is inclusive of the male and female same sex experience, and the heterosexual male victim experience of IPA.

"Domestic Violence and Pregnancy in Ireland: Implications for health and other social services arising from preliminary findings of a qualitative research study"
Siobán O'Brien Green, Trinity College Dublin, Childhood Centre

This is a qualitative research study that explores when women chose to disclose and seek support having experienced domestic violence during their pregnancy(ies) in Ireland. The study has interviewed women to

understand and identify what helped them, and what did not, to seek support, safety, help and other appropriate services as a result of the violence (housing, health, income support, etc.). The national and European policy context and implications for the study research findings will be outlined in the presentation. This includes the Irish Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual Gender-based Violence 2016–2021, which identifies pregnant women as a specific target group and the first Irish National Maternity Strategy 2016-2026 which highlights violence during pregnancy as an area requiring support from staff engaged in the provision of maternity service and care. The 2016 National Standards for Safer Better Maternity Services by Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) and Ireland's obligations under the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (referred to as the Istanbul Convention) will also form part of the presentation. Recommendations for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and training for relevant professionals/sectors will also be discussed.

"Evaluation of a Pilot, Bystander Intervention Programme for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence"
Siobhán O'Neill, University College Cork, School of Law

Background: The Bystander Intervention module in University College Cork was adapted from the Intervention Initiative (Fenton, Mott, McCartan & Rumney) in response to the identified need for a range of complimentary responses to issues of sexual respect and sexual assault on our campus. Research has indicated that bystander intervention programmes are an effective way of increasing knowledge and understanding of issues of sexual and domestic violence and also in reducing prevalence rates (Coker et al, 2011). As such, a 5 credit Bystander Intervention module was developed and piloted with First Year students in UCC.
Aim: The aim of the preliminary evaluation was to investigate the efficacy of the programme in enhancing knowledge of sexual and domestic violence, bystander intervention, and the social normalisation of sexual misconduct, as well as encouraging behavioural change across the University.
Results: First Year students (N =615) completed the 6-week module and completed an evaluation form at the end of each 1-hour workshop. Students were asked to provide both quantitative and qualitative feedback. Preliminary analysis of the programme indicates that it was effective in encouraging a greater understanding and awareness of the current normalisation of sexual misconduct, empowering students to challenge unacceptable behavioural norms, and encouraging students to recognise their role as contributors to a safer campus and safer society, as well as providing the students with the necessary skills to intervene safely. Many students indicated that the programme should be implemented across the university and felt that the skills and knowledge they acquired were beneficial to them not only as students but as individuals in the wider community.
Conclusion: The preliminary evaluation of the Bystander Intervention programme suggests that it is an effective programme in providing students with a knowledge and understanding of sexual and domestic violence and also in providing students with the necessary skills and training to intervene effectively. In depth research evaluating the programme is ongoing.

Breakout Sessions V & VI (3:15pm-4:30pm)

V. Social Policy in Practice: The Perspective of Practitioners
(Large Hall, Ground Floor)
Chair: Nuala Doherty, Centre for Effective Services

- "Resigned Indifference: Where is the Second National Intercultural Health Strategy?"
  Kathleen Markey, University of Limerick

- "Trade Unionisation of Ireland's Early Years Workforce"
  Colette Saunders, IT Sligo

- "Meeting Gender Targets: Gender in the Early Childhood Workforce"
  Joanne McHale, IT Blanchardstown

- "Evidence-Based Parenting Programmes, What Happens in the Real World?"
  Lorraine O'Donovan, University College Cork

Session V Abstracts

"Resigned Indifference: Where is the second National Intercultural Health Strategy?"
Dr. Kathleen Markey, University of Limerick, School of Nursing and Midwifery

With the complexity of changing migration patterns in Ireland, timely integration legislation and policies have become a necessity. Although, awaiting developments on the 2nd National Intercultural Health Strategy, the 2007- 2012 strategy provided a useful framework for guiding health care services in responding to the growth of cultural and ethnic diversity of the patient population. However, reports of culturally insensitive and discriminatory care continue, illuminating that policy alone is insufficient to effect change. This presentation aims to share the findings of a study that explored the attitudes and behaviors of nurses when caring for patients from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Using the principles of a classic grounded theory methodology, focus groups (n-10) and individual interviews (n-30) were conducted with student and qualified nurses, in one region of Ireland. The theory of resigned indifference emerged which explains how nurses used a raft of disengagement strategies as a means of dealing with their uncertainties. Disengagement was allowed and sometimes even facilitated within clinical practice and as a result nurses became indifferent to people they knew little about and appeared resigned that this was acceptable. Resigned indifference offers a rich understanding into the issues that enable and hinder culturally sensitive care, which has implications for policy makers, healthcare practice and nurse education. Developing ways of operationalising a truly intercultural, inclusive and culturally competent healthcare organization should now be a priority and this requires effective leadership and more explicit accountability at all levels.

"Trade Unionisation of Ireland's Early Years Workforce"
Colette Saunders, IT Sligo, Department of Social Sciences

This presentation is part of ongoing research in a larger action research methods project entitled: 'How do I improve my practice as a volunteer activist supporting Trade Unionisation of Irelands Early Years workforce. The corpus of data will be gathered using qualitative research methods which will be informed by a feminist perspective. Feminist-inspired research asks questions such as how power differentials may be unsettled, how

can a space be created for all voices to be heard (Maguire, 2001, p64)? I would argue this space should take the form of a trade union which would also have the potential to shake up the power differentials, so that the realities of low pay and precarious working conditions as experienced by those working in the sector are expertly addressed:"the linkage of gaining voice to the recognition of knowledge as it is socially constructed in the context of human relations is central to feminist-grounded action research"(Maguire, p.63 cited in Bradbury and Reason, 2001.). The research will be undertaken within an abductive research strategy with due consideration given to this project's theoretical underpinnings and its idealist and social constructivist foundations. Representation and empowerment are the values base informing this piece of action research. It is anticipated that the in-depth exploration as permitted by this research will not only provide data for analysis but will also make a contribution towards the stronger organisation of Ireland's early years workforce.

"Meeting Gender Targets: Gender in the Early Childhood Workforce"
Joanne McHale, IT Blanchardstown, Department of Early Childhood

In 1996, the European Commission Network on Childcare suggested a target of 20% male participation in the early childhood workforce (Peeters, 2007). A more conservative target of 10% was suggested in the CoRe Report, citing expert consensus (Urban et al, 2011). The CoRe report has provided the backdrop for much of the recent development in the Irish early childhood sector (Department of Education and Skills, 2014; Urban, 2016). Despite this, the proportion of men in the Irish early childhood workforce remains low at 2% (Pobal, 2017). This is not a unique phenomenon and broadly reflects international figures (Brody, 2014; Peeters et al, 2015) and male participation in other caring occupations (Cameron and Moss, 2007). Using qualitative interviews to explore the influences and experiences of male and female early childhood workers, this research considers how they might inform policy development to support increased participation in the changing social context in Ireland (Connelly, 2011). Effectiveness of strategies employed internationally to increase male participation will be explored and the impact of gender balance on children's experiences considered.

"Evidence-Based Parenting Programmes, What Happens in the Real World?"
Lorraine O'Donovan, University College Cork, School of Social Work

Neoliberalism, as a theory has significantly impacted on policy and practice, particularly affecting the way in which social work and family support are delivered by the public and third sector/ community and voluntary sector.   The neoliberal direction has led to a flourishing of programmes of manualised work, such as evidence-based parenting programmes. A large volume of scientific investigation supports the effectiveness of such evidence- based parenting programmes, however there is little evidence available on the perspectives of, on implementing or delivering such programmes. The role of the practitioner is significant in the delivery these programmes, but arguably, the role has been overlooked, beyond fidelity checks. This research project intends to address the gap in the literature and bridge the gap between research and real-world settings. This research project explores the factors that influence practitioner's delivery of one evidence- based programme, the Strengthening Families Programme. This research project is using an innovative approach to data collection using online reflective journals with practitioners followed by one to one interviews. The information collected will be analysed using the constructivist grounded theory method. This research project will contribute to understanding the unique context of the delivery of the Strengthening Families Programme, by practitioners. It will enhance the knowledge of what support practitioners receive in relation to their delivery of such programmes and It will add to the knowledge base on the delivery of how evidence-based programmes are delivered in the 'real world' and identify implications for practice for management and practitioners.

VI. Social Policy Systems Frameworks: Rights, Regulations, and Resources
(Carmel Room, 1st Floor)
Chair: Eithne Fitzgerald, ISPA

- "Regulatory Policy and Protecting Consumers After the Financial Crisis: An analysis of recent financial services and consumer protection regulatory policy formation in Ireland"
  Conor Cashman, University College Cork

- "Ireland's Urban Renewal Scheme and American Empowerment Zones – A Comparative Perspective"
  Joel Arnold, University College Dublin

- "What's Atlantic's Role Represented to Be? A critical analysis of the role of philanthropy in Ireland"
  Naomi Feely, University College Cork

- "Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights for People with Disabilities: A Case for Enforcement?"
  Maura Twomey, University College Cork

Session VI Abstracts

"Regulatory Policy and Protecting Consumers After the Financial Crisis: An analysis of recent financial services and consumer protection regulatory policy formation in Ireland"
Conor Cashman, University College Cork, Applied Social Studies

The financial crisis of 2008 exposed deep flaws in the regulation of financial services. In Ireland, as well as enhanced solvency obligations, government and regulatory policy responses to the crisis included additional "consumer protection" regulations governing how financial institutions treat their consumers. However, following recent commentary on the financial industry's treatment of consumers, questions persist as to the effectiveness of such policy responses. Using a social systems theory approach (conceptualised by Niklas Luhmann developing on the work of Talcott Parsons), the presentation analyses recent Irish financial consumer protection policy. It begins with a brief overview of systems theory, in which social systems such as politics, economics and law etc. are presented as separate and operationally "closed" from other systems. It places the financial regulatory system in this theoretical context. It then sets out consumer protection policy and regulations regarding financial services generally. In this context, using a content analysis method, it moves to a specific focus on regulatory policy regarding protection of consumers using moneylending services (i.e. credit at high interest rates). It considers if such policy and the ensuing regulations are: (1) effective and take account of wider social and economic contexts; or (2) represent a "closed" operation of the regulatory system, simply mirroring the adoption of previously-enacted financial regulations and policy. By analysing the current Irish regulatory policy formation within a social systems theory context, the presentation highlights the importance of avoiding a narrow-focused regulatory policy and ensuring previously identified regulatory flaws are not repeated.

"Ireland's Urban Renewal Scheme and American Empowerment Zone – A Comparative Perspective"
Joel Arnold, University College Dublin, Public Policy

Did the Urban Renewal Scheme (URS) and Empowerment Zone (EZ) programs improve the living conditions

of their targeted neighborhoods and if success was present, did one program display a greater improvement in its targeted neighborhoods than the other? Additionally, were changes brought by these programs impacted by the Great Recession? In this work I am seeking to measure the impact on specific quality of life indicators as displayed by census variables (local unemployment rates, number of resident individuals, number of residents with a third level education or greater, owner occupation rates, and home values) of the Irish Urban Renewal Scheme (1986-2006) and the American Empowerment Zone program (1993-2014), two tax-incentive based geographically targeted urban redevelopment programs. Specifically, I am comparing these two programs across consistent variables in a manner not done before, and my research includes new data from the 2016 Irish Census and 2016 American Community Survey which will account for the impact of the Great Recession on the neighborhoods affected by these programs. For the Irish Urban Renewal Scheme, my work builds on work completed by Dr. Michelle Norris (UCD) in earlier publications, and my work on the Empowerment Zone program builds on previous work completed by American researchers. This research focuses in Ireland on census data measured at the Electoral Division (ED) level in the 1991, 1996, 2006, 2011, and 2016 censes to track longitudinal changes on the given variables described above. For the United States, this research focuses on census tracts designated as Empowerment Zones in the 1990 and 2000 census, as well as the 2016 American Community Survey, all three of which are formal documents prepared by the US Census Bureau.

"What's Atlantic's Role Represented to Be? A critical analysis of the role of philanthropy in Ireland"
Naomi Feely, University College Cork, Applied Social Studies

In 2017 Oxfam identified eight individuals who possessed half the world's wealth. A cross reference of these eight individuals indicates that five of them have publicly promised, through an initiative called *The Giving Pledge*, to donate over half of their wealth to good causes within their own lifetime. This new golden era of philanthropy is characterised by, amongst other things, a rise in high tech wealth, the adoption of business methods to solve social problems and a scaling back of government resources. In this context, what philanthropists set out to achieve becomes increasingly relevant for society as a whole but also highly contested and contentious. In Ireland, while philanthropic activity operates at a comparatively low level, *The Atlantic Philanthropies* has provided $1.2 billion in funding to a wide range of public and not-for-profit organisations over the course of three decades. A lack of critical research on the operation of philanthropy in general, and the work of Atlantic is a distinct gap in the Irish literature. Adapting Bacchi's (2009) *What's the Problem Represented to be?* (WPR) methodology I undertake a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of how Atlantic represents its role in texts it has produced about its prevention and early intervention initiative. In particular, I explore whether the foundation adopts 'philanthropic governing capacity' through its independent funding choices. This paper will present some preliminary findings from my research and discuss these in reference to the broader literature on philanthropy.

"Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights for People with Disabilities: A Case for Enforcement?"
Maura Twomey, University College Cork, School of Law

The title of my proposed presentation for the Irish Social Policy Association Conference to be held in July 2018 is *Economic, Social and Cultural Rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.* I would begin the presentation with an introduction to economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights in general terms. These rights require expenditure by the State and can include rights for people with disabilities. I would consider their current position under Irish law. While early attempts to establish educational rights for children with disabilities achieved some success in the Irish courts, court enforcement of such rights along with ESC rights in general have now been severely curtailed. I would then examine the various reform proposals. In 2014, a majority of the Convention on the Constitution decided that ESC rights, including disability rights, should be included in the Constitution. I would then move on to introduce the United Nations Convention on

the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). This was adopted in December 2006 and is the first human rights treaty to be adopted in the twenty-first century and the first legally enforceable United Nations instrument specifically directed at persons with disabilities. The Presentation would then consider specific ESC rights in detail including the rights to health and education. Finally, the current moves to ratify the Convention in Ireland will also be focused on before conclusions are reached.