

Social Work Research and Development Unit
Department of Social Policy and Social Work
University of York
Heslington, York YO1 5DD

RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

Ways in which organisations and university-based facilitators/researchers may work together in partnerships to carry out research, facilitate programme- and staff development and improve quality of work and of work life

Lesley Archer
Leslie Hicks
Dorothy Whitaker
Galvin Whitaker

September 1994

Contents

	Page
I. Context and History	1
II. Four kinds of partnership arrangements	
A. Focus Groups	5
B. Partnership Research Projects	8
C. Action Research Projects	11
D. A Learning Programme for Managers, Senior Practitioners and Trainers in the helping professions	15
III. Future Developments	17
IV. Publications and Research Reports	18

Context and History

The partnership arrangements described here are between facilitators/researchers based in a university, and managers and members of staff working in service-providing or other organisations. These arrangements have evolved over the past thirteen or fourteen years. Those originally involved were Dorothy Whitaker and Lesley Archer, both of the University of York, UK. They have more recently been joined by Galvin Whitaker, an independent organisation and management consultant, and Leslie Hicks, research fellow, University of York.

Dorothy Whitaker and Lesley Archer began, in about 1981, with an interest in encouraging social workers to engage in research. In the years since then they have moved to a programme of partnership research projects which makes use of various forms of investigation and enquiry. 'Partnership research' involves facilitators/researchers based in a university working closely with managers and members of staffs of organisations, at all stages of the work. It is both research and a means for supporting programme and staff development, and for team-building.

There are some important differences between where we started and where we now are.

Early work - the forerunners of research partnership structures - consisted of courses for practitioners from one or another of the helping professions. These came, in groups of six or eight, into the university for one half-day per week over a twelve week period. During this time each course member was helped to devise a research plan on an issue arising from his or her own practice. Then, for a further year, each was supported in conducting the research and writing-up the results. The group continued to meet, but somewhat less frequently.

These courses worked well in that all of those who attended devised viable research plans and learned about research methods through working within a small cohort of peers. Some course members carried out their research plans, but some did not. It became clear that when research was not carried out, it was mainly because of the worker's position in his or her employing organisation. Sometimes the worker changed jobs and the research topic was no longer seen as relevant, by either the worker or his or her new manager. Sometimes staff shortages meant that allowing a worker to go on pursuing research was seen by management as an unaffordable luxury. Both course members and their managers tended to see these research efforts as extra to their regular duties, and somehow, a personal self-indulgence. Course members felt a commitment to and a sense of ownership of their own research. However, managers usually did not and could not really be expected to, since their role was restricted to allowing staff members a modest amount of time off for attendance at our early-evening sessions.

This led us to see that if we wanted research efforts to count in the workplace we needed a structure which avoided isolating course members from their own

organisations. Any framework for carrying out research had to make sense to the organisation and its management as well as to the practitioner. If not, research became an empty exercise, often aborted.

We abandoned the idea of courses of this kind and decided to begin differently. Instead of trying to attract individual practitioners and leaving it to them to negotiate support from their managers, we began by discussing with managers, usually at a middle level of the organisation, their current interests and concerns. By this means we identified an overall purpose for a potential piece of research which made sense both to managers and to ourselves. Interested practitioners were then brought in.

A three-phase framework was devised for undertaking research. **Phase 1** made use of the considerable experience of on-the-ground workers to identify detailed purposes within the general area of interest identified by management. **Phase 2** was devoted to planning and conducting the research itself. **Phase 3** was a programme of dissemination and research-utilisation which took place both within the organisation and beyond it. Department or agency staff joined in the work throughout, in different ways and to a different extent. Communication and consultation with management was an integral part of the plan.

Our first opportunity to pursue this framework was with Humberside Social Services Department (UK), on a project entitled 'The Quality of Life in Residential Homes for Elderly People'. The three-phase framework proved to be effective in that research partners, staff and managers in different parts and at different levels of the organisation developed a sense of ownership of the work, and what was learned was taken up and used by the organisation. This kind of partnership arrangement has remained viable and is described in Section B of this document.

We soon found that although we were calling this kind of work a 'research partnership' (and it was), we were in fact engaged in something more than research. The ways in which we worked together through the three phases amounted also to programme and staff development. Team-building, too, occurred through members of staff exchanging with one another and working together in new ways. In our first project, for example, the staffs looked very closely at the old people in their care and at the nature and consequences of their efforts. They thought out for themselves just what it is that makes for a good home or a bad home. They were cheered by the interest which management was showing in them. In the words of one manager, they became 'advocates for good practice'.

The kind of work exemplified by this first project warranted it being called both 'research' and a 'research partnership'. We find, however, that we have to explain when this really means, in order to make clear that in addition to getting research done, outcomes include programme and staff development, and team-building, and the encouragement of quality-assurance at the point of service-delivery.

Since that first project, we have conducted a number of others. In several instances the work stopped after Phase 1 because further funding could not be found. We came to realise that Phase 1 had contributions of its own to make to those who participated

in it and to their organisations. It could stand on its own as a valuable activity. We have renamed Phase 1 'Focus Groups'. These are described in section A.

In three projects, Phase 2 was conducted as a series of action-research cycles. This is different from the kind of research which defines all of its purposes before data-collection begins, and can be regarded as a separate kind of activity. This way of undertaking partnership projects is described in section C: 'Action Research Projects'.

One of these action research projects, on 'Re-settling adults with learning disabilities in the community' involved otherwise independent organisations, from both the statutory and the voluntary sectors, working together in an alliance. We saw that in addition to looking at what went on at the interface between workers and clients, we needed to examine this form of organisation. Galvin Whitaker, who had been functioning as an informal consultant to Dorothy Whitaker and Lesley Archer all along, was brought in to work with the managers involved in the alliance, with the intention of understanding alliance operations better, and those factors which assist or hinder the work. Now a core member of the facilitator/researcher group, Galvin Whitaker was formerly the Director of Organisation Research at the University of Leeds, and is now an independent consultant to managers and organisations.

He brought new thinking and a new dimension to the work. Previously we had been concentrating on the interface between workers and clients - what those directly responsible for service-delivery and care did and thought and wanted to achieve. We now could see that this was one of a number of important interfaces. Others were the interface between those workers and their line managers; line managers with higher management in their own organisation; the organisation and its 'marketplace'; organisation-to-organisation interfaces; and all of these interacting within a superordinate system.

Our work had already been showing us that quality of work life was crucial for quality of service-delivery. Now we could see that this depended, always, on what happened at more than one interface. For example, for those who provided direct care, quality of work life depended both on experiences at the interface with those they were caring for, and experiences at the interface with management. The same point could be made for any level of the organisation. Our ideas about action research also expanded, for we could see that the principles of action research can be adapted to different levels of an organisation, and to the implementation of major policy.

These developments fit with thinking that Galvin Whitaker was already engaged in and testing out in the context of manufacturing organisations and public service agencies abroad. He was working with others on management structures and processes to replace the old 'Taylorian' hierarchical structures which involve adversarial relationships within a firm or organisation. His thinking is leading to a formulation of interactive, goal-led, non-adversarial management. It is very relevant to partnership research projects.

Partnership research projects continue to evolve and to take different forms. Where the basic three-phase framework is used, it is adapted to every new circumstance and

every new set of purposes.

Having gained experience of a number of research partnerships, we felt ready to re-try assisting individual practitioners and managers to plan and carry out research of their own. We have developed a framework quite different from the earlier courses. We think of it as a learning programme rather than a course, and have called it 'Understanding and Managing Practice in the Helping Professions'. The two-year programme is for managers and senior practitioners in SSDs, health, and other helping professions who wish to pursue their own research interests in the workplace. This differs from the earlier course in that senior managers are involved from the beginning in helping to define the area of research in partnership with those who are seconded to the programme and the university staff. They are also invited to regular meetings throughout the two-year period so that they can hear results and add in a management perspective, for example, to the ways that results may be disseminated and utilised within their organisations.

There are still more possibilities not yet tried. Some of these are described in the final section of this account of our work.

A. Focus Groups

General description:

People who are jointly responsible for or concerned with the same task or interconnected tasks become members of a 'Focus Group'. A series of workshop meetings is planned, with the purpose of assisting participants to make explicit and express in succinct, concrete terms, their collective wisdom about the task and related issues.

Participants in a Focus Group might be: (1) the members of a staff who work together on an ongoing basis; (2) coalitions and alliances of people who share responsibility for some task or form of service-delivery and whose home base is in different parts of the organisation or in different organisations; or (3) people who do not work together on a day to day basis and who do not form a staff or a coalition but nevertheless have a shared interest because they face the same task in different units within an organisation or in different organisations.

The workshops characteristically seek to explore all facets of a task or issue and set down in explicit terms the information, body of understandings, and 'practice wisdom' represented in the group. Attention is put to that which is already known to participants as shared information or knowledge. Beyond this, an important part of the work of the group typically is to make explicit those understandings, assumptions, bits of practice-wisdom and of received wisdom which may heretofore have been held implicitly by individuals or by the group as a whole. The group may address how members of staff individually and collectively go about working on a task; factors which help and hinder effective work; and the like. The series of workshop meetings is likely to conclude by identifying next necessary steps to improve understanding and effectiveness. This will include who should be told about the results of the workshops and who should be brought into any further work.

Outcomes for those participating and for the organisation:

Those participating in the focus groups increase their understanding of an issue or task through making use of their own accumulated experience. That which may not have been previously articulated, because it was held implicitly or 'locked-up' as part of some individual's understanding, is made available to the group. Understandings become more accessible to participants as a basis for their work, and attention is directed to what further needs to be explored, evaluated, understood, or changed. Thus, focus groups are a form of learning and of staff development.

Where the focus group is composed of members of a team or made up of key people in an alliance, functioning of the team or alliance is likely to improve

because focus group members have shared views, have got in touch with one another's thinking, and developed a shared picture of the task. Thus, focus groups can be a team-building activity.

Where the members of a focus group are people who undertake the same task but are ordinarily isolated from one another within the organisation, a support group will have been established. Efficiency and morale are likely to increase.

Communication up, down, and across the organisation or alliance improves. Managers, and members of other work units, gain access to information and/or experience-based knowledge hitherto locked up in those directly concerned with a particular task, and can then make use of that information in adjusting their own efforts and/or developing policy.

Detailed information:

Step-by-step procedure:

- (1) A focus for the work is agreed, usually with a relevant manager. This is commonly an issue or a task.
- (2) Potential participants in the focus group are identified. These will be people who have on-the-ground experience of the issue or task.
- (3) The idea is described to these potential participants and their interest is tested.
- (4) Three to five workshops sessions are carefully planned, with the aim of eliciting already-existing understandings and identifying useful next steps.
- (5) The workshops are conducted.
- (6) That which has emerged is summarised in written form and checked back with participants.
- (7) A collective decision is made, by the participants, the consultants, and the managers initially contacted, as to further steps, including who should be informed of the outcomes of the focus group meetings.

Roles of those concerned:

Members of management identify the issue or task they would like to see worked on, assist the outside facilitators to identify people who might usefully be brought into a Focus Group, sanction the use of staff time for Focus Group activity, and receive and discuss verbal and written reports. **Focus Group**

members participate in the Workshops and receive and discuss interim and final written reports. **Outside facilitators** assist in the formulation of the issue or task, plan the workshops, prepare a written report and participate in feedback sessions to Focus Group members and others.

Some examples of Focus Groups:

- all staff members in each of ten residential homes for the elderly (ie. officers-in-charge, care staff, cooks, domestics, gardeners), where the task was to understand better what contributes to quality of life for both residents and staff;
- coalitions of people concerned with planning for children in care, including staff of residential homes, field staff, members of management, and foster parents, where the task was to understand the workings of a particular planning procedure devised by the organisation and to think toward ways of evaluating it;
- specialist social workers on child abuse who worked in different regional offices in the same organisation and did not ordinarily come into contact became members of a focus group whose task was to examine the nature of the work and special sources of stress.
- all staff in each of six Children's Home in three areas of the country. Their tasks were to reflect on what it is like to work and live in a Children's Home and on the ups and downs in residential care, prior to identifying goals for an action research partnership [see Section C 'Action Research Projects', pg.12 under **Detailed information** (4)].

Duration:

Three to four months

B. Partnership Research Projects

General description:

Partnership research projects are systematic investigations directed toward understanding and/or evaluating. An organisation might be interested in evaluating some aspect of its operations; seeking to improve the delivery of a product or service; understanding better some complex situation, event, service-delivering or production system; monitoring and evaluating some innovative procedure; or monitoring the impact of a new policy set up by management or a piece of legislation bearing on the organisation's work.

Such investigations go beyond that which is already known. They require new data to be collected, organised, analysed and interpreted, according to defined purposes.

Work proceeds in three phases:

- (1) one or more Focus Groups to establish a base line for the work and to identify detailed purposes within a general area of interest;
- (2) the investigation itself; and
- (3) a programme of dissemination and utilisation-of-findings.

University staff and managers and workers from the organisation work together closely through all of these phases. From one to four members of staff may be seconded (usually one day per week) to work as research associates alongside the University staff.

Outcomes for the organisation and for those participating:

One or more Focus Groups constitute the first phase of a research partnership; therefore, see Outcomes listed under A: Focus Groups. In addition:

Members of management get systematic investigations done on issues of current interest and concern to them. They will have new information and new knowledge and understandings of the issue, expressed in concrete form in interim reports, a final written report which will include implications for action, and a dissemination and utilisation-of-findings programme tailored to the needs of specified target groups within their own organisation or those outside their organisation with whom they are interdependent. Management's interest in staff development and team-building are facilitated through staff's participation in Focus Groups and as research associates.

Staff who function as research associates develop an investigative attitude toward their work and develop skills of defining purposes, thinking out procedures which will serve their purposes, monitoring their work as it

proceeds, extracting meaning from data, and the like. Those involved in providing data or assisting in analysing it develop a greater appreciation of the usefulness of monitoring and evaluating own activity, and, often, a greater valuing of own activity.

All concerned develop and maintain a sense of 'ownership' of the research. The whole process helps to develop a culture marked by reflection on and evaluation of work efforts in a rigorous and systematic way.

Detailed information:

Step-by-step procedure:

- (1) Discussions between relevant managers and the University researchers lead to the identification of an overall purpose for the project.
- (2) A detailed proposal, with timing and costings, is prepared by the University researchers.
- (3) A series of Focus Groups is planned and conducted, to provide a baseline of already-existing information and knowledge, and to 'unpack' the overall purpose into a set of sub-purposes.
- (4) Feedback is provided to management at this stage, and may lead to amplification of the sub-purposes to be pursued.
- (5) The investigation is carried out, with feedback to the organisation provided at intervals.
- (6) A full written report is prepared by the University researchers.
- (7) This report is reviewed by the organisation and its implications are discussed.
- (8) A programme of dissemination and findings-utilisation is planned and carried out.

Temporary groups set up to carry out the work and monitor it:

In order to pursue the work in a partnership way, two groups are established - a Project Workers Team and a Project Coordination Group.

The Project Workers Team consists of the University researchers and the staff of the service-delivering organisation who have been seconded to assist in carrying out the investigation. This group meets frequently during the life of the project.

The Project Coordination Group consists of all members of the Project Workers

Team plus managers and others with an interest in the issue. This group meets at four or five month intervals to hear how the work is progressing, ensure that a management perspective is heard, offer suggestions, and consider how the work can be communicated upwards and sideways in the organisation.

Roles of those concerned:

Members of management identify the issue they would like to have systematically investigated and agree the overall structure for the work with the University researchers. Certain of them participate in the Project Coordination Group, and in that capacity receive and discuss verbal interim reports and a final written report, and identify target groups for dissemination and ways of utilising findings for the benefit of the organisation. **Members of staff seconded to work as associates** participate, together with the University researchers, in the ongoing work of conducting the investigation, are members of the Project Coordination Group, and, later on, participate in dissemination and research-utilization activities. **The University researchers** take overall responsibility for the work within the agreements laid down, devise necessary data-collection and data-analysis procedures, are members of the PWT and the PCG, take responsibility for producing agendas for the minutes of all necessary meetings, prepare a written report, and participate in dissemination and utilization activities.

An example of a partnership research project:

A partnership research project with Humberside Social Services Department in the UK, 'The Quality of Life in Residential Homes for the Elderly' focused on the quality of life of both residents and staffs of three Homes. Research questions focused on what constitutes and what contributes to a satisfactory quality of life for residents, and quality of work life for members of staff. Relevant data were collected by means of a Sentence Completion Device and observations.

Outcomes included a fuller understanding of the components of a satisfactory quality of life (or work life), methods for assessing quality of life in depth, a procedure for devising individualised 'prescriptions' for improving quality of life for specific residents, and an understanding of what contributes to or interferes with establishing and maintaining a satisfactory quality of life or work life.

Duration of partnership research projects:

Eighteen months to three years.

C. Action Research Projects

General Description

Action research projects are carried out with on-the-ground staffs engaged in day to day work on practical tasks with some specified group of people in a particular setting. Those concerned might be a team of community workers seeking to develop services cooperatively with the residents of a housing estate; a teaching staff seeking to develop new skills in pupils; a staff of a day centre, hostel, or residential facility working with clients or patients; etc. Usually the staff group has some general goal in mind on behalf of those with whom they are working. Within that general goal, there will be more specific, concrete sub-goals which can be identified.

The specification of goals and sub or instrumental goals is essential to the action research approach. The action research process consists in a group of staff moving through successive action research cycles, each involving identifying a concrete goal, working out a plan of action, and assessing the consequences of carrying out the plan. One cycle leads to another, in that working toward a particular goal either achieves the goal, in which case another specific goal (also related to the overall goal or task) can be selected as the focus for the next cycle, or else does not achieve the goal, suggesting that a new plan is required or that the goal itself needs revising because it was not an altogether realistic one.

Action research can be a preferred approach under two circumstances: (1) where an organisation or a sub-unit is faced with a new task and unfamiliar structures and procedures and where the best ways of working are not yet known; and (2) where it is felt that an established way of working could be improved in efficiency or effectiveness.

As with research partnerships, work proceeds in three phases: (1) Focus Groups, consisting of each of the staffs to be worked with, whose purpose is to establish a base line for the work and identify a start-point for the work (the first goal or set of goals); (2) a series of action-research cycles, followed by a period devoted to summarising achievements and learnings; and (3) a programme of dissemination and utilization-of-learning.

Outcomes for the organisation and for those participating:

As one or more Focus Groups constitute the first phase of any partnership, see Outcomes listed under A: Focus Groups. In addition:

Members of management are provided with findings which typically include lists of step-by-step goals, strategies tried, factors which assisted or interfered with the achievement of goals, and indications of what makes a goal achievable or

unachievable. Concrete products include interim reports, a final written report, and dissemination procedures for use elsewhere in the organisation. As with the research partnerships described in B, both staff development and team building are facilitated.

Staff involved in action-research projects are placed in a proactive position with respect to their task or mission. They are assisted to assess their own situation, identify 'stepping-stone' goals, think out strategies and procedures and evaluate the consequences of their own actions. They acquire or further develop attitudes and skills which become internalised and outlive the project itself.

Both managers and staffs achieve the satisfactions associated with taking an active stance toward a task, developing new understandings, and improving efficiency and effectiveness. Action-research methods encourage 'on-the-ground' quality control and provide avenues of communication from front-line workers upwards through the organisation.

Detailed information:

Successive steps:

- (1) Discussions between one or more managers of an organisation and the outside University researchers led to the identification of an overall purpose and agreement that an action-research approach is appropriate.
- (2) A detailed proposal, with timing and costings, is prepared by the University researchers.
- (3) A Focus Group is planned and conducted with one (and often, more than one) staff group.
- (4) A series of action-research cycles is then undertaken. Each such cycle consists in identifying a concrete, short-run goal important to the staff, devising a plan for working toward the goal, carrying out the plan, monitoring and recording the consequences of their effort, and then moving on from there. If the first goal has been achieved, another is identified for the next stage of the work. If the goal has not been achieved, the staff group may try another plan or decide to modify their goal, on grounds that the first goal has been unrealistic. Functional work groups are assisted to move through four or five action research cycles important to them. All work is recorded on forms devised by the consultants and checked with staffs.
- (5) Feedback to the organisation is provided at intervals.

- (6) A full written report is prepared by the University researchers on the basis of records kept while the work has been going on.
- (7) This report is reviewed by the organisation and its implications are discussed.
- (8) Decisions are made as to how to disseminate what has been learned and to carry the work forward.

Temporary groups set up to carry out the work and monitor it:

Action research cycles are carried out collaboratively by the University researchers and staff members belonging to the organisation. These, together, constitute a Project Workers Team which meets frequently during the life of the project. In addition, a Project Coordination Group is set up which consists of managers, representatives of the staffs, project workers from the organisation, and the University researchers. This group meets at approximately five month intervals to hear how the work is progressing, ensure that a management perspective is heard, offer suggestions, and consider how the work can be communicated upwards and sideways in the organisation.

Roles of those concerned:

Members of management identify the task they would like to have worked on and agree the overall structure for the work. Certain of them participate in the Project Coordination Group and in that capacity receive and discuss verbal interim reports and a final written report, and discuss how best to follow up for the benefit of the organisation after the action-research cycles have been completed. **Members of the Project Workers Team** work with groups of staff to facilitate moving through successive action research cycles and to monitor the process. **Staff groups carrying out the on-the-ground practical work** participate actively in all stages of the action-research cycles. A representative of each staff group is invited to be a member of the Project Coordination Group. **The University researchers** take overall responsibility for the work, devise necessary record sheets, undertake or supervise the collation of data, are members of the PWT and the PCG, take responsibility for producing agendas for the minutes of all necessary meetings, prepare a written report, and participate in planning and conducting follow-up activities.

An example of an action research project:

As part of the partnership, an action-research project was carried out with Humberside Social Services Department, UK. The partnership concerned 'Supporting Adults with Learning Disabilities in the Community' is complete except for the dissemination phase. Action research was carried out in three

Centres in the county, all engaged in supporting adults with varying degrees of disability in small group homes with the aim of improving quality of life, integrating them into the community, assisting them to improve skills of living, and, where feasible, preparing them for independent life in the community. Previous to moving into the group homes, these adults were either in long-term institutional care or living at home and being cared for by parents.

Duration:

Eighteen months to three years.

D. A Learning Programme for Managers, Senior Practitioners and Trainers in the helping professions

General Description:

This learning programme goes back to the idea of a 'course' but is planned in ways which take into account our experiences with the several forms of partnership arrangements described in A, B and C above. In other words it is not a course in the conventional sense, with taught units, etc. We have begun (with support from the University of York, UK) by developing, piloting and evaluating a learning programme for managers, and senior practitioners responsible for the care of vulnerable populations.

The programme began with members of management identifying current concerns, for example changes in policy or legislation which demanded changes in role, task knowledge or skill-levels for staff groups and teams within the organisation. Then a group of managers, and senior practitioners interested in understanding more about some aspect of their work were identified. Two cohorts of 6 and 7 participants was brought together in the first year of this programme.

The programme has involved participants in assessing the current state of their own organisation, and that part of it in which they wish to conduct their research. Examples include violence in the children's homes in an SSD, the character and special uses of brief psychotherapy, the communication routes between policy makers and home care operatives, the network of those who may need to be involved in changing provision from hostel accommodation to small group living for learning disabled adults, and the ways that choices can be offered to those clients of an SSD who have difficulty in communicating. Each course participant devises a full research plan and carries out a pilot study in his or her own setting in the first year of the programme. Their work includes setting goals, making plans judged to be likely to assist in working towards them, and monitoring and evaluating the progress and the outcomes of the work. In Part II, the work that individuals conducted in Part I is extended and further developed within the organisation of which they are a part, a full research report is written, and a dissemination and set of research utilisation activities is planned and carried out.

The first such programme is about to enter its second year.

It is hoped and anticipated that the package will constitute a learning experience for those who participate in the programme and for staffs and consumers inside the organisations in which the work is undertaken.

As course members move through their programmes of work, the University researchers responsible for the learning package are undertaking an over-arching evaluation study of the whole process, and will use this, to modify the

programme for future cohorts. Those who successfully complete the programme will be eligible for awards at the Advanced level in Social Work and for Continuing Professional Development. Some may also choose to continue to work towards a research degree.

Detailed Information

Design of the learning package:

The whole programme take two years to complete on a one day per week basis. In Part I members spend more time with University staff for the first term and then meet on a less frequent basis for the rest of the first year whilst field work and associated written work is undertaken. Part II comprises individual supervision and regular group meetings alongside work conducted in the agency.

A Programme Coordination Group:

A Programme Coordination Group is set up which consists of representatives of the participating organisations, all programme participants, the course facilitators, and a representative from the Department of Social Policy and Social Work, from the University of York.

Duration:

Part I - one year

Part II - one year

Future Developments

We expect this programme of work to continue to evolve. Each new project undertaken requires variations or extensions of the frameworks devised so far, and suggests new possibilities for the management of the effort.

On the basis of one of our current projects, we believe that alliance-focused work could stand on its own as another application area for partnership research.

It would be possible to conduct parallel projects in different organisations, where comparable tasks or activities are being undertaken within different organisational structures. This would make it possible to compare findings emerging from different community and organisational contexts.

Another possibility for the future is to form a consortium of a number of organisations engaged in partnership research, either of a similar or of different sorts, and to devise a means of sharing learnings across the participating organisations. That which was learned in one organisation could be communicated to all consortium members, perhaps through conferences and workshops, and a regular newsletter.

We wish also to find a means for inducting others into this form of work. The best ways of doing this have yet to be thought through. Perhaps some combination of written guidelines, consultation/supervision and internship arrangements will prove workable.

Not all possible future developments can be anticipated since they necessarily evolve on the basis of ongoing experience. The possibilities mentioned above are on this side of the horizon. What lies 'on the other side of the hill' will become evident as the work proceeds.

Publications, reports and conference presentations

Dissemination which describes the processes:

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (1985) *An experiment in helping social work practitioners to design and conduct research*, **Social Work Education**, 4, 2 pp.3-8

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (1986) *Helping social work practitioners to design and conduct research* In P Wedge (ed) **Social Work - Research into Practice** Proceedings of the First Annual JUC/BASW Conference, London, September 1985

Whitaker, D.S. (1987) *Research partnerships between the University of York and Social Services Departments and Agencies* In R. Hugman and P. Huxley (eds) **Working Together: research, practice and education in social work** University of Lancaster: Department of Social Administration.

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (10th-11th April 1989) **Developing research Purposes from a 'burning interest' in some aspect of one's own practice**: a workshop given to members of the Society for Psychotherapy Research (SPR)

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (12th April 1989) **A Partnership Structure for Conducting Research: Two examples** a paper given to SPR

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (April 1989) **Research by Social Workers: capitalizing on experience** CCETSW Study 9 (128 pages).

Whitaker, D.S. (25th April 1989) '*An Orientation to Study 9*' in **Research, Practice and Service Delivery** a joint CCETSW and University of York Seminar to mark the publication of CCETSW Study 9.

Archer, J.L. (25th April 1989) '*Research and Practice as Related Activities*' in **Research, Practice and Service Delivery** a joint CCETSW and University of York Seminar to mark the publication of CCETSW Study 9

Whitaker, D.S., Archer, J.L. and Whitaker, G. (19th May 1989) **Partnership Research and Co-operative Inquiry**: a seminar with staff and graduate students at the University of Bath

Archer, J.L. and Whitaker, D.S., **Research and Practice: Capitalising on Experience** - a distance learning seminar, 26th July 1989; and **Using Learnings from Project Work to Assist Future Practice**, 17th October 1989: both with Dundee University PQ students on the Child Protection Course

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (17th November 1989) **Using Practice Research for Change** Plenary session JUC/SWEC meeting

Archer, J.L. and Whitaker, D.S. (1989) *Engaging practitioners in Formulating Research Purposes* **Journal of Social Work Education**, 8, 2 pp.29-37.

Whitaker, D.S., Archer, L. and Greve, S. (eds) (1990) **Research, Practice and Service Delivery: the contribution of research by practitioners** CCETSW Regional Publication (86 pages).

Whitaker, D.S. (April 1990) *Types of practitioner research and frameworks for planning and conducting research* in Whitaker, D.S., Archer, L. and Greve, S. (eds) (1990) **Research, Practice and Service Delivery: the contribution of research by practitioners** CCETSW Regional Publication.

Archer, J.L. (April 1990) *Research and practice as related activities* in Whitaker, D.S., Archer, L. and Greve, S. (eds) **Research, Practice and Service Delivery: the Contributions of Research by Practitioners** CCETSW Regional Publication

Whitaker, D., Archer, L. and Greve, S. (April 1990) *Trends, opportunities and future possibilities for research by practitioners* in Whitaker, D.S., Archer, L. and Greve, S. (eds) **Research, Practice and Service Delivery: the Contribution of Research by Practitioners** CCETSW Regional Publication

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, L. (1990-91) *Using Practice Research for Change*, **Social Work and Social Sciences Review, Vol.2(1): RESEARCH AND CHANGE** London: Whiting and Birch Ltd, pp.9-21.

Archer, J.L. and Whitaker, D.S. (16-19th September 1991) *Turning questions arising from practice into reserchable questions in Child Abuse Work* A workshop given at the BASPCAN first national congress on the prevention of child abuse and neglect **Turning Research Into Practice**

Archer, J.L. and Dyson, P. (12th-13th November 1992) *The Impact of Partnership Research on Staff Groups and Teams* ADSS Autumn Research Conference: **Beyond Assessment and Care Management - Choice Participation and User Involvement**

Whitaker, D. and Archer, L. (26th November 1992) **The Competent Workplace/The Learning Organisation'** JRF/NISW Workshop

Archer, L. and Whitaker, D., (1994), *Developing a Culture of Learning in Service-Providing Teams through Research Partnerships: facilitating and hindering factors* in Reason P (Ed) **Participation in Human Inquiry** Sage Publications In press

Whitaker, D. and Archer, L. (1994) *Partnership Research and its contributions to learning and to team building* **Social Work Education** In press

Dissemination which describes the research done:

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (1987) **The quality of life in residential homes for the elderly** University of York (51 pages)

Archer, J.L., Marren, M., Whitaker, D.S. and Winkler, J. (1987) *The quality of life in residential homes for the elderly* Presented at the third annual JUC/BASW Conference, London, September 1987

Archer, J.L., Marren, M., Whitaker, D.S. and Winkler, J. (1987) *The quality of life in residential homes for the elderly* **Proceedings of the Third Annual JUC/BASW Conference, Research into Practice**

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (1987) **Child Abuse Project**, Report of Phase 1, submitted to CCETSW and to Leeds Social Services Department

Archer, J.L., Winkler, J. (1988) *The quality of life in residential homes for the elderly* **Certain Standards, the 1984 Registered Homes Act**

Archer, L. and Whitaker, D (1991) **Improving and Maintaining Quality of Life in Homes for Elderly People** Humberside Social Services Department, Pocklington Office, Burnby Lane, Pocklington, Humberside (101 pages)

Archer, J.L. and Whitaker, D.S. (22nd-23rd October 1991) *Quality of Life in Homes for Elderly People* A workshop given at the ADSS Research Conference Service Evaluation Research and Information Committee

Archer, J.L. and Whitaker, D.W. (Spring 1992) *Decisions, tasks and uncertainties in child protection work* **Journal of Social Work Practice, Vol. 6, No.1**, pp.63-75

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (1992) **The Impact of a serious fire on the Peper Harow community**, Final Report submitted to Peper Harow (115 pages)

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, J.L. (1992) **The Impact of a serious fire on the Peper Harow community** Short report submitted to Peper Harow

Archer, L. and Whitaker, D. (June 1992) **Phase I of a Research Evaluation into the Dundee Child Protection Programme** University of York (33 pages)

Whitaker, D., Archer, L. and Whitaker, G. (June 1993) **Supporting Learning-Disabled Adults in the Community: a research partnership between Humberside Social Services Department and the Social Work Research and Development Unit, University of York** University of York (100 pages)

Archer, L. (1st June 1994) *The Tasks of Unit Managers; Dealing with Mood Swings and Violence; and Relationships between Children's Homes and their Social Services Departments* Three presentations made at a Study 1 dissemination day on 'The Prevailing Cultures and Staff Dynamics in Children's Homes'

Hicks, L. (1st June 1994) *Spotlight on working with the networks surrounding each young person and each unit* A presentation made at a Study 1 dissemination day on **'The Prevailing Cultures and Staff Dynamics in Children's Homes'**

Whitaker, D. (1st June 1994) *Spotlight on managing the mix of young people in children's homes and changes in the mix* A presentation made at a Study 1 dissemination day on **'The Prevailing Cultures and Staff Dynamics in Children's Homes'**

Whitaker, D., Archer, L., and Hicks, L., (July 1994) **Some findings from Study 1 of the research project 'The Prevailing Cultures and Staff Dynamics in Children's Homes'** University of York (22 pages)

Archer, L., Whitaker, D. and Hicks, L. (16th September 1994) *Tasks of Unit Managers, residential Children's Homes* A workshop given at a Humberside University conference **Towards 2000: Future Directions for Residential Child Care**

Archer, L. (ed), (1994), **Research on Residential Care: Seminar on the DoH Current Research programme, 18.4.1994** University of York In Press

Archer, L. and Watson, J. (1994) *Understanding & Learning from a 'Failure' in Community Care* **Care In Place** In Press

Whitaker, D.S., Archer, L. and Marren, M. *The Quality of Life of Elderly People in Residential Care* Being prepared for publication

Whitaker, D.S. and Archer, L. *On the Concept Quality of Life* Being prepared for publication