

## Editorial

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Welcome to the third issue in Volume 18, and our final issue of 2019. If you were looking out for us in September, I should explain that we delayed publication because the CELCIS team was very busy supporting the [Global Implementation Conference](#) in Glasgow. The delay has allowed the editorial group to reassess our publication schedule; we have altered the publication dates, and we have three issues planned for 2020 – in February, June and November.

I want to draw readers' attention to the *SJRCC* article archive in the CELCIS Knowledge Bank. Whether you are a student wrestling with an essay title, or a practitioner planning a new service, you may find we have published an article relevant to your area of interest. Our articles should pop up in database searches, but you can also scroll through the journal [archive](#) in our web pages.

It has been a busy autumn in policy terms in Scotland. [The Scottish Government's Programme for Government in 2019-20](#) included a very large number of proposals and measures aimed at responding to the care and protection needs of children and young people, as well as upholding the rights of children and supporting families. I want to highlight just a few of these. The commitment to introduce legislation to establish a statutory redress scheme for anyone who has been a victim of historical child abuse whilst in care in Scotland is particularly welcome. There were two announcements that were undoubtedly influenced by campaigning by young care experienced adults. These are plans to extend the eligibility for free National Health Service dental care to care experienced people between the ages of 18 and 26, and the removal of the age

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limit (currently 26<sup>th</sup> birthday) for eligibility to receive a care experienced student bursary of £8,100 per year.

Meanwhile the Scottish Parliament passed into law the [Children \(Equal Protection from Assault\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) which brings Scotland in line with the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and with 57 other countries that have already given children legal protection from physical punishment. The Scottish Government abandoned plans to have a [Named Person](#) for every child in Scotland. Provisions for the scheme were contained in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The scheme was controversial and ran into legal difficulties in relation to transfer of information.

In July, the United Nations published a report by the independent expert leading the [United Nations global study on children deprived of liberty](#). The study, led by the distinguished human rights lawyer, judge and academic, Professor Manfred Nowac, found that a staggering number of between 1.3 and 1.5 million children in the world are deprived of liberty every year. The report gives three main reasons for children being deprived of their liberty: 'lack of adequate support for families, caregivers and communities to provide appropriate care to children and encourage their development'; "'tough-on-crime" policies, including the criminalization of status offences, drug offences, petty crimes and low minimum ages of criminal responsibility'; and 'restrictive migration and asylum policies and extensive counter-terrorism practices'. The report includes many general and specific recommendations, several of which relate to institutional care of children. One of these recommendations particularly caught my attention:

States are also urged to map all institutions within the country, whether private or public, whether presently registered or not, and regardless of how children arrived there, and conduct an independent review of each institution. States should operationalize a system of registration, licensing, regulation and inspection which ensures that providers of alternative care meet internationally recognized standards.

At first glance, this appeared to be a recommendation addressed to countries in turmoil because of armed conflict, or with limited resources, or with no

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developed system of children's services. And yet, BBC Newsnight has conducted an investigation, [Britain's Hidden Homes](#), on the use of unregistered homes affecting thousands of older adolescents in care in England and Wales. The films uncovered abuse of children, unsuitable accommodation, untrained staff, and lack of oversight by the responsible local authorities. The children's charity, Become, blamed increasing privatisation of children's services and called for an urgent review by government.

The UN independent expert, Professor Nowak, will give the next Kilbrandon Lecture in the University of Strathclyde in January 2020 and the full transcript of his lecture will be published in *SJRCC* in due course.

We have published several articles in *SJRCC* by researchers working at Udayan Care in India. In August 2019, Udayan published [reports](#) on youth leaving care, based on research conducted in five states of India (Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan), as well as an overall synthesis report. The research was supported by grants from UNICEF and Tata Trusts. The reports, detailed and very clearly presented, represent thorough analyses of the experiences of young people leaving care, including details of wellbeing, employment, financial independence and awareness of their rights.

In the current issue of *SJRCC* we publish four full-length original research articles, the transcript of the 2018 Kilbrandon Lecture and three shorter articles with accounts of current practice issues.

The issue opens with a paper on the association between traumatic event exposure, post-traumatic stress disorder and aggression in looked after young people by Rachel Webb and Dan Johnson. They say that their results 'make a strong case for implementing sensitive and validated assessment processes that can be used with all looked after young people'.

Adrian Graham and Campbell Killick report on their Northern Ireland-based study of team resilience to prevent burnout in residential care, based on interviews with managers. They conclude that: 'There is a very strong correlation between teams and their influence in creating positive change within the lives of young people in residential care. The make-up, nurturing and looking

after of teams is a complex and challenging experience that requires time, patience, and dedication’.

The third research paper is provided by a PhD candidate, Amira Abdel-Aziz, who has researched the assessment of alternative families in Egypt. The paper highlights several challenges, including: ‘the inability to track some of the children, the lack of competent and sufficient workforce, the negative stereotypes and stigma towards abandoned children who are one of the main target groups of the programme, and the inability of mothers to register their children in case of not having a marriage certificate’.

Alicia Brown, Raymond Chadwick, Lisa Caygill and Joyce Powell have contributed a paper on their research which used an interpretative phenomenological approach to explore the experiences of residential carers in relation to self-harm. They found that: ‘Managing self-harm was reported to be an emotionally demanding experience for care staff and they had learnt to manage using a variety of coping mechanisms. In the short term these were effective but had potential to incur longer-term damage to both themselves and the young people’.

Dame Elish Angiolini’s Kilbrandon Lecture posed the question, what has been learned (by interested parties in Scotland) about youth justice and welfare in the 50 years that have passed since the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 which established the Children’s Hearing System.

Our commentaries and reflections section includes articles contributed by: Cath Lowther, Jo Dunn and Juila Powell (about educational psychology support for staff in a children’s home following a critical incident); Norifumi Senga (on changes being made to the social foster care system in Japan); and Caroline Anderson (explaining how one Scottish local authority aims to meet the information rights of care experienced adults seeking access to their care records).

I hope you enjoy this rich compendium of analysis and reflection. The *SJRCC* will return in February 2020 with a special issue of articles by leading authors we asked to think creatively about residential care in the future.