

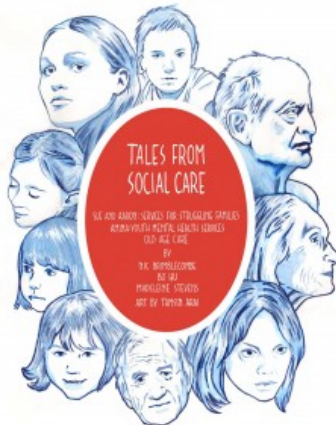
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Research findings ... in comic form

Blog Editor

Earlier this year we brought together research colleagues from within PSSRU at LSE (in which our project sits), presented a range of possible methods to them, and asked them to think about creative methods to communicate research messages and findings. We gave them space and time to get into groups, discuss their ideas and then come back and pitch them. One of those ideas was a comic ... drawing together research studies involving children and young people.

The pitch was great, well thought out and the method chosen worked really well with those involved in the studies. Madeleine Stevens, Nic Brimblecombe and Bo Hu went away with some funding and a deadline (we had to have one of those!), and later joined forces with Tamsin Arai, a young London artist. Tamsin took their scripts, discussed the research with them and brought the characters and settings to life to produce *Tales from Social Care*.



[Tales from Social Care](#) includes three stories, one each by Madeleine, Nic and Bo. Each is based on a different type of research project and with different types of data.

The research explained by Madeleine, Nic and Bo

“The first story, Sue and Aaron, is based on a qualitative study funded by the National Institute for Health Research (Doctoral Fellowship) about the service use experiences of struggling families with children with conduct disorders. The study used in-depth interviews and the words spoken in the comic represent the actual words of the interviewee, with only a couple of changes to prevent identifying individuals. This particular case study was chosen as it exemplified many of the issues arising across families in the study.

The second story, Amina, is based on an evaluation of a youth-specific mental health service funded by the NHS Confederation. The data on young people drawn on for the evaluation, and for the comic, included referral data, assessment interviews, user records and clinician-rated mental health symptom scales, collected over two to three years. Data covered the mental health, employment, education, and use of services of young people using the two year treatment that the service provides to those at high risk of developing severe mental illness. Amina is a composite of different participants, and her story represents a typical trajectory through the service.

The final story, Old Age Care, is based on an analysis of quantitative data from the Newcastle 85+ survey funded through the Department of Health Policy Research Unit Economics of Social and Health Care Research Unit. It illustrates the general trends of, and the factors found to be associated with, people’s use of social care services.”

Where next?

The comic has been to various conferences and has been presented in poster and comic formats, most recently at the [World Association of Social Psychiatry Jubilee Congress](#) and at our final conference yesterday.

And now we're after your thoughts and comments. Feedback so far has been positive with the format engaging readers and leading to further conversations. Tell us what you think by completing this [short survey](#) or post your comments below.

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