



Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Building connections and breaking down barriers!

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Local Authority Research Practitioner (LARP)

- Came to post in November 2024.
- Partly funded through W&F and the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR).



Slido- Research in our Local Authority



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USE CODE #1645433

Research in a Local Authority setting

- **Local authority research supports decision making** about practice, policies and interventions at a local, regional or national level
- **It helps us understand how people are impacted by the context** in which they live, work and go about their daily lives.

Research uses structured, organised and reproducible methods to:

- **produce new information or knowledge**, which may include testing an idea, theory or new intervention
- **provide a new interpretation of existing information**. This may include routinely collected data being using for a new purpose, as well as publicly available data (Definition of Research in Local Authorities Project Steering Committee, 2025)



Research works to support

Council employees



The wider WAF population



Applying existing data to make new interventions



Generating new data to make new interventions





Examples

Cumbria Water Safety Partnership

Born into Care

Data and insight portal



Cumbria Water Safety Partnership

- Partnership running for 12 months- prevent harm caused through water, measures to prevent drowning and how people use water as a means of self-harm.
- Water-related incidents were a key cause of suicide in Cumbria.
- Data revealed that individuals attempting suicide accounted for 40% of the water-related incidents attended by Cumbria Fire and Rescue over the past five years.
- Fire service showed data of 2 bridges where they are regularly called out to undertake search and rescue.
- Public Health guidance says we can address this by signposting.
- Signage that is relevant to that person- e.g., Contacts through whatsapp, NHS 111, Samaritan's and Mental Health support providers



Using existing knowledge to shape practice



Good example of stakeholders and partner's working together (Public health, Public protection, Signing standards).



Application of data gathered to tackle a prominent issue in Westmorland and Furness.



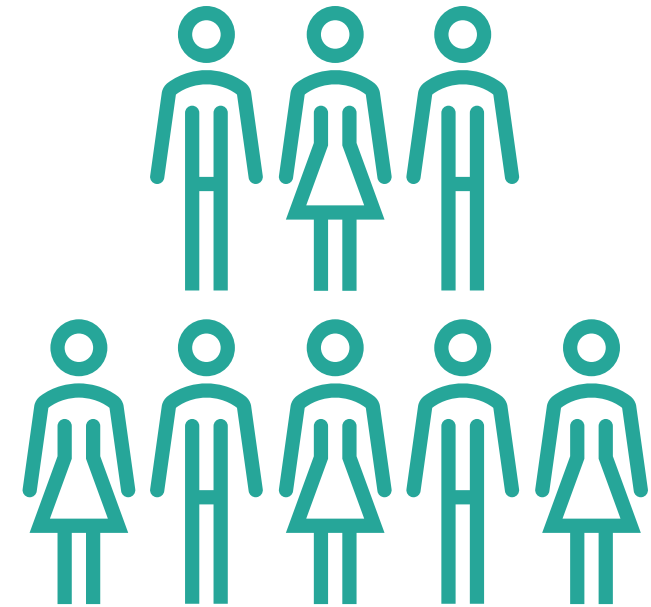
This uniform approach aims to ensure that the message is clear and consistent, enhancing the effectiveness of the preventive measures and fostering a safer environment for all residents.



Generating new data

A worked example: Born into care in Blackpool

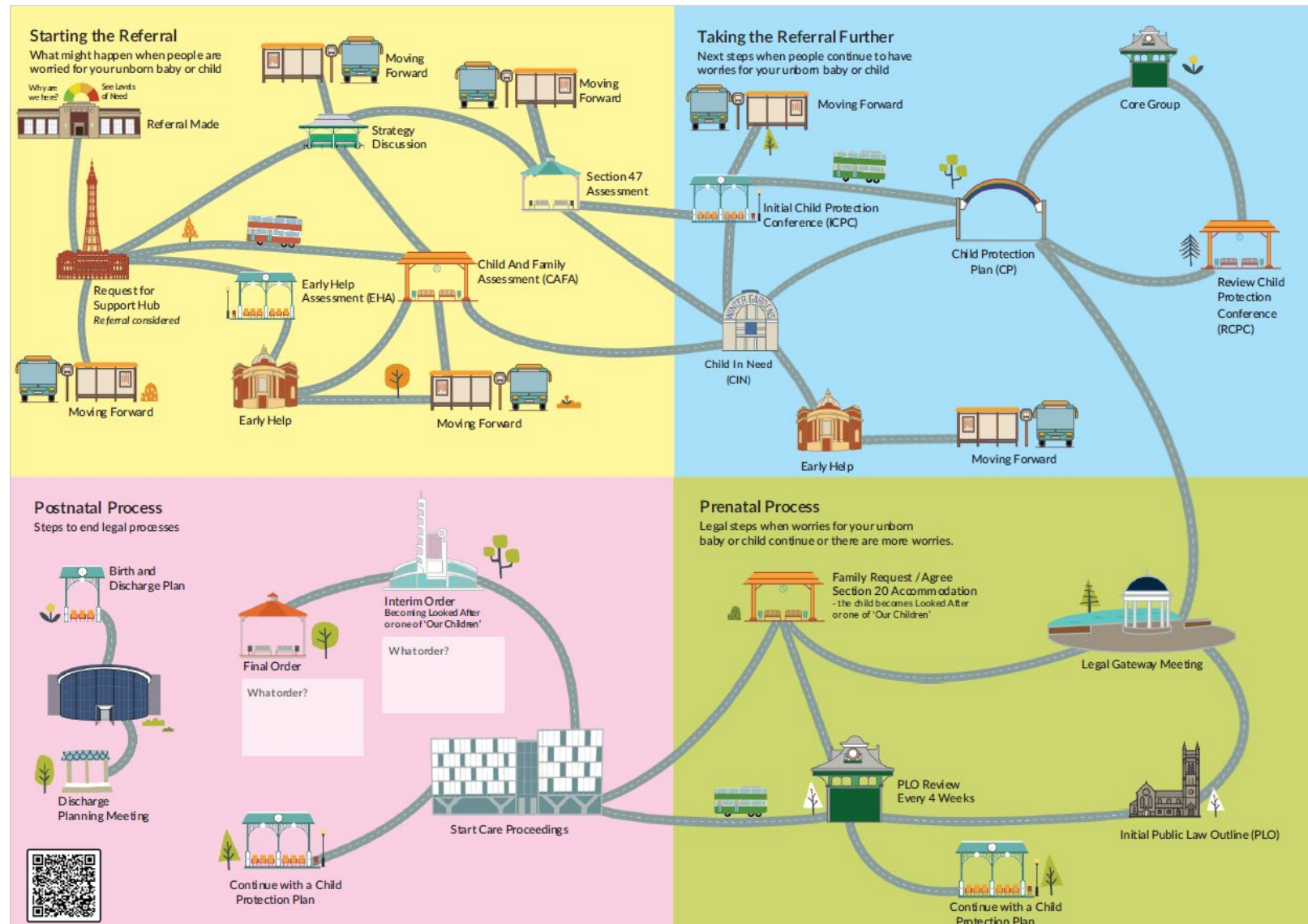
- Born into care refers to situations where a baby is removed from their parents' care at birth or shortly after. These are often very sensitive and emotional experiences for everyone involved.
- Blackpool Council are working to make sure families in these situations are treated with empathy, dignity, and respect and that their voices are heard throughout the process.
- Utilising **co-production**- a collaborative research approach that involves people who use health and care services, carers and communities in equal partnership; and which engages groups of people at the earliest stages of service design, development and evaluation.
- **Helping to shape services by bringing lived experience into the conversation.**



A worked example: **Born into care in Blackpool**



The MAP outcome



Why is this work important?

- Generating new data to develop new interventions and support populations
- The MAP means that
 - Families are treated with empathy and understanding
 - Services are coordinated and transparent
 - Parents feel listened to even in the most difficult circumstances
 - Support is shaped by those who truly understand what it feels like
- But this does not represent **all** local authority research activity.
- For example: **Quantitative** insights and other forms of **Qualitative** insights



Data and Insight portal

SharePoint Search this site Harper, Elizabeth

W&F Data and Insight Portal

Private group Not following 127 members

Data and Insight Portal -...

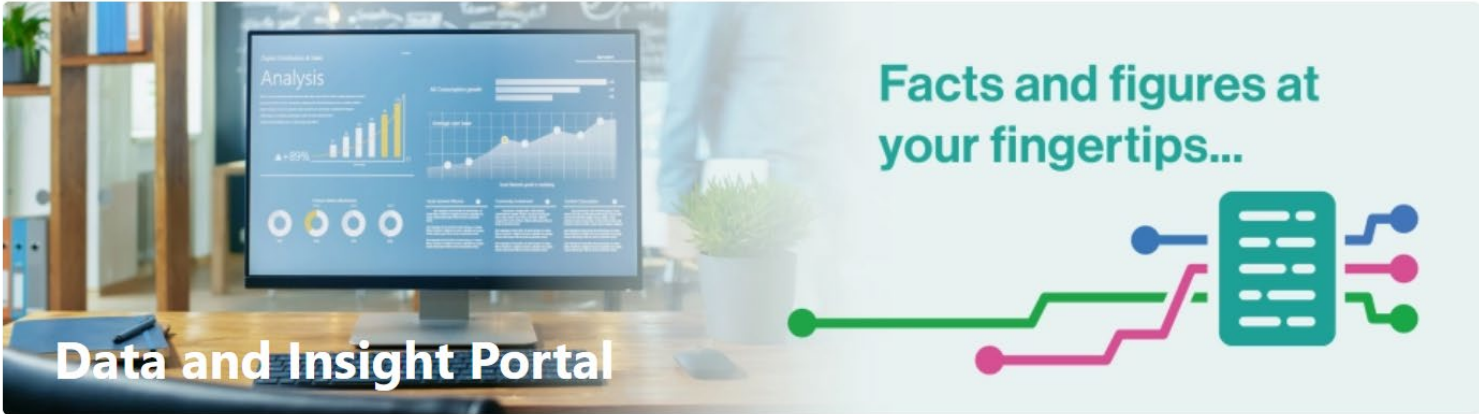
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Data and Insight Portal

Facts and figures at your fingertips...

!! JOIN US at the STAFF EXPO on 10TH June in The Georgian Room at 11.45-12.15 (bookable- 20 max) !!

The banner image shows a computer monitor displaying a data dashboard with various charts and graphs. To the right of the monitor, there is a stylized graphic of a document with lines and dots, suggesting data flow or analysis. The text 'Facts and figures at your fingertips...' is written in a bold, teal font. The overall theme is data-driven and professional.



The Ambition

- The Data and Insight Team provide performance, analysis and insight support for Westmorland and Furness Local Authority services.
- Drive forward evidence-based decision making to support teams in achieving their objectives and optimising their performance.
- This is an internal W&F SharePoint site (with managed access) providing portals containing information and support relating to data and intelligence across the organisation.



We need to map our own research activity

- **By hearing your voice, we can best map research activity across Westmorland and Furness.**
- Provide guidance and support for those looking to engage with research in the LA, sharing knowledge of best practice and current legislation/guidance.
- Liaise with Council colleagues, identifying barriers to research and working with them to create infrastructure at the Council which would enable hosting of studies and Council initiated research projects.
- Work closely with stakeholders to maximise potential for setting up relevant studies.
- To provide accurate and detailed advice to Council colleagues and academic partners on research governance processes.



Evaluation of knowledge, skills and use of evidence in Local Authorities - Westmorland & Furness Council Survey 2025

- Working in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University
- We would like to find out about the use of evidence or research among the employees of Westmorland and Furness Council.
- The information we gather will enable us to see how many people use evidence or research in their work and how they use it.
- Should take around 15 minutes to complete.
- Fine to put N/A or don't know



Information sheet summarised

- This is a summary of the information sheet, you can read in full by following the link on the survey.
- Local authorities and councils want to enhance evidence-informed decision making which will support them to better address health inequalities leading to an improvement in local health outcomes. This will be achieved by developing a culture of curiosity, evidence use, research and support.
- You have been identified as a potential participant because you are employed at Westmorland and Furness Council.
- You do not have to take part. You can ask questions about the project before deciding whether to take part. If you do not want to take part that is OK. Submitting the questionnaire implies your consent to participate in this project.
- The information you provide as part of the project is the project data. This project will not involve the collection of personal data by the investigator.
- The findings from the project will be written up in a report for Westmorland and Furness Council. They may also be disseminated in academic publications, conference presentations, and on websites.
- Liverpool John Moores University is the data controller with respect to your personal data and as such will determine how your personal data is used in the project. The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the project outlined above.
- This project is organised by Liverpool John Moores University. We have worked in collaboration with people from Westmorland and Furness.
- If you are concerned about any aspect of this project, please contact Prof. Gillian Hutcheon G.A.Hutcheon@LJMU.ac.uk. They will do their best to answer your query and a reply within 10 working days.





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Any questions?

westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk







Ways to get more research active

- Applied Research Collaboration Northwest Coast (ARC NWC)
- NIHR Research career funding programmes | NIHR
- Research Support Service Specialist Centre for Public Health Research Support Service Specialist Centre for Public Health | NIHR



Find me on the data and insight portal!

W&F Data and Insight Portal

 **W&F Data and Insight Portal** 

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
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Local Authority Research

 **Harper, Elizabeth**
Local Authority Research Practitioner

Connect | Share | Develop

This SharePoint site supports WFC's Local Authority Research Practitioner, providing information on the role, research activity, publications, surveys, links, lists and plans.

PLEASE HELP DEVELOP LOCAL RESEARCH AND TAKE PART IN THE LARP SURVEY BELOW!

What is a Local Authority Research Practitioner (LARP)?

Thank you for your engagement!

