



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH  
Edinburgh Law School



## **Witness to Harm, holding to account: Improving patient, family and colleague witnesses' experiences of Fitness to Practise proceedings: A mixed methods study.**

### **Briefing paper (3)**

#### **Introduction and background**

This is part of a wider programme of work, "Improving patient, family and colleague witnesses' experiences of Fitness to Practise proceedings: A mixed methods study". It is funded by the National Institute for Health Research. Ethical approval is provided by The Open University, Manchester Metropolitan University and the Universities of Glasgow and Oxford.

#### **Objective of Work Package 2**

Work Package 2 aims to explore and evaluate the experiences of participants throughout Fitness to Practice proceedings. This will include a combination of a retrospective, comparative process analysis of Fitness to Practice cases and primary data generation through ethnographic and interview methods.

#### **Methods**

In **WP2.1** Regulators will identify cases of different types of harm closing in the past 5 years. They will be analysed using a retrospective, comparative approach. This analysis will be supplemented with multi-stakeholder interviews. Memory reconstruction techniques will be used to produce participant-led event maps to identify key events and trigger points in the Fitness to Practice process.

In **WP2.2** an ethnographic study will be conducted of Fitness to Practice hearings. Participant-observation will involve immersion in the live hearing as an observer, and interviews in the period immediately after it has closed, with the aim of understanding the perspectives of key participants and how those participants interpret the hearings. Data analysis will draw upon modified grounded theory and data synthesis involving consideration of individual case narratives.

**WP2.3** will build on and triangulate insights generated in WP2.1 and 2.2 through in-depth interviews with people who have experienced Fitness to Practice hearings in the past five years. This data will be analysed using modified grounded theory in order to generate a thick description of the experiences of Fitness to Practice proceedings with an understanding of what is important to participants and how they respond to key events. Participants will be asked to have their story recorded for use in the outputs of the study.

#### **Timing**

We plan to undertake this work between November 2021 to February 2023, with some flexibility expected due to current pandemic uncertainties.

**The team (see Briefing (1) "Overview of the project" for full research team)**

### Work package lead

Prof. Sara Ryan (Professor of Social Care, Manchester Metropolitan University Oxford)

### WP2.1 lead

Prof. Rosalind Searle (Professor of Human Resource Management and Organisational Psychology, University of Glasgow).

### WP2.2

Dr. Gemma Hughes (Senior Researcher, The University of Oxford)

### WP2.3

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