



Deep End Project End of Year Report – 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

Introduction

The Deep End project was established in 2009. Scottish Government funding has been applied for and awarded in three-year cycles since this time. RCGP Scotland manages the budget for the Deep End and provides financial governance. The current three-year cycle runs from 2019 – 2022. This report refers to Deep End activity in year three of this cycle.

Deep End Steering Group Meetings

The Steering Group has met on four occasions over year three of the project. The discussions and outputs from these meetings are available at the end of this report as embedded links. The agenda, NEWS updates and minutes of previous meetings are sent out to the Steering Group and are used to forward plan and set the agenda for the next quarter.

Round Table Meetings

These are based on topical issues that merit further exploration, with the intention of capturing frontline clinician experience and the challenges faced by Deep End patients. The written reports are then hosted on the Deep End website and shared widely across networks to inform debate, advocate and influence policy development. There have been two virtual Round Table meetings over this time period, organised by the Deep End Chair and Academic Lead. The first was on the topic of [Climate Change and Health Inequalities](#) (Deep End Report 38, 2021). The intention was to explore the impact of climate change in the context of health inequalities that our patients face. Discussion centred on the various factors that influence Deep End patients and practices in particular, but also explored the urgent need for system-wide solutions to tackle this burden. The roundtable was attended by frontline Deep End GPs and the report and its recommendations (link above, available on our website) was shared widely with stakeholders in advance of, and in the aftermath of, the COP26 summit in Glasgow, including the Scottish Government head of NHS Facilities and Environmental Sustainability.

The second roundtable discussion was on the topic of Prison Healthcare (report in progress, will be hosted on website in due course). This brought together a range of stakeholders – frontline clinicians with experience of providing prison healthcare, and also policy makers from Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland. The meeting focused on the challenges faced by clinicians and patients in providing and receiving healthcare in secure environments where the inverse care law is acutely felt.

Deep End Conferences

In 2021, we hosted our [50 Years of the Inverse Care Law](#) conference. This was online due to the restriction posed by the ongoing Covid19 pandemic. It was well attended with excellent speakers and this [report](#) captures the main themes from the conference and makes six key recommendations.

The medical student conference was postponed in 2021 due to the pandemic but has been rescheduled for April 2022.

Participation in external conferences

Members of the Deep End have contributed to a number of external conferences to present the work and learning of the Scottish Deep End project. These include:

- Dr Carey Lunan at the Royal College of Physician's Conference 2022 (31 March); Addressing Health Inequalities in our everyday work: learning from the Scottish Deep End Project.
- Dr David Blane delivered a keynote address at the annual conference of the Association of University Departments of General Practice in Ireland (AUDGPI) and the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) on [Learning from the Scottish Deep End Project](#).
- Dr Carey Lunan was part of the debate for the Leaders in Healthcare Conference 2021 (11 Nov 2021): [The Great Debate Part 2: General Practice and the Public Pandemic Perception](#).
- Dr Carey Lunan at "Working together to address health inequalities" BMA Conference, October 2021 [Addressing inequalities in our everyday work: learning from the Scottish Deep End Project](#).
- Professor Graham Watt at the Annual Leaders Forum of the College of Family Physicians of Canada, May 2021 [The exceptional and equitable potential of family practice](#).
- Professor Graham Watt at a session on "Social Inequality and Health" at the annual meeting of the College of the Norwegian Medical Association, coordinated virtually from Oslo on 20 April 2021.
- [Learning from the Scottish Deep End Project](#); Dr David Blane at the Homeless and Inclusion Health Conference (March 2020); the European Forum for Primary Care annual conference (2019 and 2020); and the Tudor Hart Welsh National Health Inequalities Conference (January 2021).

Involvement in panel discussions

These include:

- Dr Carey Lunan was part of the panel for this year's Edinburgh Medical Debate (06 Dec 2021), presenting a primary care perspective on ["Surviving Covid-19: the future of the NHS"](#).
- Dr David Blane gave a presentation on 'Responses to the inverse care law in Scotland' and took part in a panel discussion at the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Health Inequalities (6th Dec 2021).

Recording of podcasts and webinars

These include:

- [Health inequalities in Scotland and how the Deep End Project aims to balance them](#) Scotland compares very poorly with other countries in Europe and even within the UK when it comes to health inequalities, but why? In S03E02 of the Royal Society of Edinburgh's Tea and Talk Podcast, RSE Chief Executive Rebekah Widdowfield talks to Professor Graham Watt CBE FRSE about the reasons and possible answers.
- [GPs and staff face abuse, workforce figures and health inequalities](#). GP Online speaks to Dr Carey Lunan and Dr David Blane about how they are trying to tackle health inequalities and what other practices can learn from their work.

Undergraduate Education

Many of the Deep End steering group are involved in delivering Undergraduate education.

There is too much to list individually, but this includes:

- Deep End steering group members contributed to new University of Edinburgh course on *The Challenges of Ageing and Care* with presentations on health inequalities and Govan SHIP.
- Deep End steering group members contributed to GP speciality training on Deep End General Practice and Inclusion Health; Deep End steering group members lead on the [COMET scheme](#) at Glasgow University; Deep End academic lead, Dr David Blane, contributes to the Glasgow Access Programme (GAP) students, with input from former GP Pioneer fellows.

Postgraduate Education

Members of the Deep End Steering group are regularly asked to participate in CPD events for doctors and other professional groups.

Again, there is too much to list individually but this has included:

- Dr Carey Lunan delivered a session on "[Addressing the Inverse Care Law in Scotland's most deprived communities](#)" at a farewell plenary for Dr Neil Hamlet, public health consultant in Fife (February 2022)
- Dr David Blane, Dr Maria Duffy and Dr Andrea Williamson contribute to a regular (twice yearly) NES teaching session on 'Health inequalities and healthcare for marginalised groups' for GP trainees in the West of Scotland.
- Dr Carey Lunan, Dr Lynsay Crawford and Ms Claire Stevens (Chief Executive, Voluntary Health Scotland) ran a joint evening learning event through University of Glasgow on Health Inequalities and Covid 19, hosted by Dr David Blane (January 2022):
 - [Deep End general practice during COVID-19](#) (Carey Lunan)
 - [Undergraduate teaching during COVID-19](#) (Lynsay Crawford)
 - [COVID-19 inequalities: the impact and response from Voluntary Health Scotland](#) (Claire Stevens).

Affiliated Groups

Members of the Deep End Steering Group are also actively involved in local Deprivation Interest Groups (DIGs), in both Glasgow and Lothian. Dr David Blane co-chairs the Glasgow Group, and Dr John Budd is the immediate past-Chair of the Lothian DIG, stepping down after 17 years (post currently unfilled).

Wider Engagement work

Over the last project year, we have prioritised updating our wider Deep End membership list and contact details, as we have been keen to 'reach out' beyond the immediate steering group to grow and support the Deep End community. Dr Blane coordinates the Deep End newsletter (which is sent out to all Deep End practices, latest version [here](#)). We also wrote out to all practices in 2021 to take the opportunity to introduce the new Chair (Dr Carey Lunan) and donate a copy of Professor Graham Watt's book 'The Exceptional Potential of General Practice', the inspiration for

the 2019 conference and an excellent resource for teaching, training and continuing professional development. Dr David Blane also manages the Deep End email account (deependgp@gmail.com) and Twitter account (@deependgp), which now has over 4000 followers.

Advocacy, and awareness raising

The Deep End group have been very active over the last year in highlighting the challenges of deep end patients through lobbying and influencing at local and national level. This has been particularly important in light of the disproportionate impact of Covid19 on deprived communities.

Key examples of this would include:

- **Meetings with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, Humza Yousaf**

We have met on two occasions with the Cabinet Secretary over the last year. The first meeting (October 2021) was to share the challenges faced by patients and practices in the Deep End (especially during the Covid pandemic) and suggest potential mechanisms for addressing the persisting inverse care law and maximising the role of general practice. The second meeting (February 2022), at which the Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport Maree Todd also joined us, was to discuss the recommendations from the Scottish Government Short Life Working Group on Health Inequalities, of which the Deep End played an active part.

- **Formal representation on various Scottish Government groups**

This, in turn has, helped to influence policy development at a national level:

These include:

- Short Life Working Group on Health Inequalities
- Drug Death Task Force (MAT standards group)
- Deputy First Minister Covid Recovery Group
- Flu Vaccine Covid Vaccine inclusion group
- Scottish ACEs Hub.

- **Formal representation on professional groups**

Dr Carey Lunan (Chair) holds the following seats:

- Co-opted membership to Scottish General Practitioner's Committee of BMA
- Elected national membership of RCGP Scottish Council.

Parliamentary Enquiries

The Deep End group have participated by invitation in relevant parliamentary enquiries (for example on health inequalities, inclusive vaccination).

Response to consultations

The Deep End group respond to Government consultations where there is felt to be a specific issue in relation to health inequalities. In the third year of the project, we have submitted written responses to consultations on:

- The proposed new National Care Service
- Climate sustainability
- Health Inequalities.

Media work

We have been increasingly asked to become involved in media work in recent years (and especially during the Covid-19 pandemic). Several members of the steering group have now completed media training, and have appeared on radio, television and in the printed press. Recent key topics include drug-related deaths, workload and workforce capacity, the value of face-to-face consulting, inclusive vaccination, digital poverty and inclusion, and the impact of the pandemic on GP services and on more deprived communities.

Deep End Projects

The Govan SHIP and Pioneer Scheme are no longer funded but there are plans to launch a 'Fairhealth Fellowship' scheme which will incorporate key elements of both projects and the Deep End are involved in the development of this. We continue to actively support the other Deep End projects, namely the attached mental health and addictions workers in practices, the Community Link Worker and Financial advice worker projects (now being rolled out across all practices in Scotland, with initial priority given to the most deprived areas).

Deep End International

The Deep End project in Scotland, established in 2009, has grown in influence over the years with duplicate Deep End initiatives forming in Ireland, England (Yorkshire/Humber, Manchester, North East and North Cumbria, Plymouth, Nottinghamshire, NW London, East of England), Australia (Canberra) and Denmark. Coordinated by Professor Graham Watt, the latest Deep End International Bulletin can be found [here](#).

Research projects and Publications

The Deep End steering group includes many GP academics in its membership and is frequently approached to support external research work. There has been a key focus over the years to better understand the specific issues affecting patients and practices in deprived communities and what measures are needed to address these, based on the established and growing evidence base of 'what works' to improve health outcomes in deprived communities. Holistic healthcare needs holistic research.

In addition to the Deep End projects and evaluations described above, key research topics areas that are being explored by Deep End steering group members include:

- 'Missingness' in healthcare
- Analysis of GP workload in areas of high socio-economic deprivation (secondary analysis of PHS data)
- Responses to the inverse care law in Scotland over the last 20 years
- Remote consulting and digital exclusion
- Drug related deaths and the role of primary care
- Health-equity-focused GP training
- Mental health in primary care
- Migrant health issues

Published papers include (hosted on our website):

- Ciftci, Y. and Blane, D. N. (2022) [Improving GP registration and access for migrant health](#). British Journal of General Practice, 72(715), pp. 56-57. (doi: 10.3399/bjgp22X718301)
- Albanese, A., Blane, D. N. and Williamson, A. E. (2021) [Mental health in context: structural vulnerability and support in primary care](#). British Journal of General Practice, 71(713), pp. 565-567. (doi: 10.3399/bjgp21X717965) (PMID:34824078)
- Patterson, D. and Blane, D. N. (2021) [Training for purpose – a blueprint for social accountability and health equity focused GP training](#). Education for Primary Care, 32(6), pp. 318-321. (doi: 10.1080/14739879.2021.1966652) (PMID:34486945)
- Williamson AE, McQueenie R, Ellis DA, McConnachie A, Wilson P (2021) [‘Missingness’ in health care: Associations between hospital utilization and missed appointments in general practice. A retrospective cohort study](#). PLoS ONE 16(6): e0253163
- McCallum, M. and Macdonald, S. (2021) [Exploring GP work in areas of high socioeconomic deprivation: a secondary analysis](#). BJGP Open, 5(6), BJGPO.2021.0117. (doi: 10.3399/BJGPO.2021.0117) (PMID:34465578)

Steering group members are also involved in several ongoing key research projects including:

- **Health Foundation**
Dr David Blane, Prof Stewart Mercer and Dr Carey Lunan – Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. Working with Becks Fisher, primary care policy lead for Health Foundation. *“Responses to the inverse care law in Scotland over the past 20 years”*. See [announcement](#). Underway.
- **University of Oxford**
Trish Greenhalgh research into digital inclusion / remote consulting. Dr Maria Duffy’s practice participating to ensure Deep End context.
- **Edinburgh University**
‘Preventing Drug Related Deaths: the role of primary care’ (Prof Stewart Mercer – lead researcher; Dr Carey Lunan – research advisory panel). Funded by Scottish Government Drug Deaths Task Force. Underway.
- Dr David Blane is on the advisory panel for three research projects which are relevant to Deep End practice:
 - “Game of Stones – weight management for men in deprived areas” This research, funded by NIHR, aims to help eligible men to lose weight and maintain it.
 - “‘Dying in the Margins’: Uncovering the Reasons for Unequal Access to Home Dying for the Socio-Economically Deprived” - This ESRC-funded research explores living at home with a serious advanced illness when you are also struggling to make ends meet.
 - “Women in multiple low-paid employment: pathways between work, care and health” - This mixed methods research, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, explores the intersections of in-work poverty, caring responsibilities, and health needs, for women in Glasgow.

Guideline publications

Dr Andrea Williamson was the primary care contributor to the recent [NICE guideline 214](#) on Integrated health and social care for people experiencing homelessness (March 2022).

Key Meetings

We have met extensively with stakeholders over the last year to raise awareness of the work of the Deep End project and challenges faced by patients and clinicians in the Deep End. These are too many to mention individually and are detailed in the quarterly NEWS updates, in the embedded links below.

They include:

- Meeting with Cabinet Secretary and Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport
- NHS24 (Dr Fiona Ogilvie)
- Dr Bola Owalabi (National Clinical Director for Health Inequalities in NHSE)
- Queen's Nursing Institute for Scotland (QNIS)
- Scottish General Practitioner's negotiating team
- Director of Primary Care, Scottish Government
- Health Creation Alliance
- National Director for sustainable development, Catherine Calderwood
- Previous Minister for Public Health, Mairi Gougeon MSP
- Existing and aspiring Deep End groups across the UK and beyond.

Reflections on how we have achieved this

These extensive outputs from the Scottish Deep End group have been possible due to several factors:

- Scottish Government funding which has enabled: clinical backfill for Deep End GPs to attend meetings or conferences that would not be included as a normal part of their working week; academic sessions to support analysis and writing up of roundtable discussions; running engagement events such as undergraduate and postgraduate conferences; funding specific sessions for the Deep End Chair and academic lead.
- Independent administration of the project funds by RCGP Scotland, enabling locum payments to be made, support with organising and planning conferences, support with annual reports, ensuring financial accountability.
- Carefully identifying important topics that provide solutions to cross sectoral Scottish Government policies that have a health inequality component, for example: Vaccine inclusion, Climate Change, Covid recovery, Digital Inclusion, Mental Health, ACEs.
- Providing communication, coordination and leadership through the Deep End steering group. This meets regularly, evolving its development programme according to priority and need. Topics benefiting from additional focus and discussion are chosen for round table discussions, and written up as Deep End reports.
- Academic leadership from Dr David Blane, Clinical Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow, with support from academic colleagues Professor Graham Watt, Professor Stewart Mercer, Dr Andrea Williamson, Dr Marianne McCallum and Dr Anthony McMahon. As well as writing/editing Deep End reports, the academic team have submitted applications for external recognition for Deep End projects (e.g. the Deep End Pioneer Scheme was a Finalist in two categories of the Herald Society Awards), and have nurtured the expansion of teaching and conference time for undergraduate students and early years career GPs who are interested in working in Deep End communities. This also includes local and international student elective placements with DE practices. Dr Blane also coordinates the Deep End newsletter (sent out to all DE practices, latest version [here](#)) and manages the Deep End Twitter account (@deependgp – over 4000 followers).
- We try, where possible, to support other clinicians interested in developing their experience and confidence in working in more deprived areas, for example through student electives, work shadowing opportunities and GPST 'swaps'.
- The dedication and commitment of GPs at the Deep End, who regularly go 'above and beyond', often in their own time, and despite rising workload pressures, to ensure that the voices of their patients are heard, in multiple arenas.

Challenges and Next Steps

Our current trench of three-year funding has now come to an end. We have submitted a proposal to extend the next phase of the project from three years to five years and are also hoping to extend the funded roles of the Scottish Deep End project to also include:

- a dedicated project management team to manage the implementation of a number of specified projects.
- a new role of 'research and education coordinator' to manage the growing numbers of requests to the steering group for involvement in research, projects, and work experience.
- a new role of 'network coordinator' to enable us to focus on building relationships with other key professional stakeholder groups, with common purpose in addressing health inequalities.
- clinical leads for the new specified projects.

The current bid is ambitious and for significantly more resource. The rationale for this higher amount is:

1. The Deep End project has grown significantly since its inception in 2009. Deep End projects have helped to develop an evidence base of 'what works' for improving health outcomes for patients in areas of socio-economic disadvantage, for recruiting and retaining doctors to work in more deprived areas, for enabling successful cross-sector integrated working (especially between health and social care) and allowing proactive care planning for the most vulnerable.
2. What we would like to do now is move away from 'pilotitis' to upscale and embed the evidence. We want to become more outward looking, taking the learning from Deep End practices of blanket deprivation to work alongside other stakeholder groups, and across care interfaces to apply that knowledge and learning for the benefit of 'deep end patients' more widely to improve patient pathways and experience.
3. The new proposed projects, which align with Scottish Government priorities, will need clinical leads to progress, and as the overall work of the Deep End becomes more ambitious and at scale, it will require an experienced project management team to maintain consistency, quality, data gathering and collaboration. This is the single biggest expense but is necessary if we want to develop further rather than maintain status quo. The work of the Chair and the Academic lead is also growing exponentially and does not currently have dedicated administrative support.
4. We are also keen to maintain active Deep End representation and advisory function to help inform policy development, especially post-pandemic (e.g., the short life working group on health inequalities in primary care).
5. The project bid is for five years rather than three years to allow longer-term planning for projects which need time to design, implement, and evaluate.
6. There are now nine other Deep End GP projects across the UK and internationally, demonstrating the wide-reaching impact that the Scottish Deep End GP Project is having. However, with this growing network comes increasing requests for advice and collaboration, which require time and resource.

The details of the funding bid are available in the embedded document below.



Deep End proposal
2022-2027 - Final.doc

Financial Update – April 2021 to March 2022. This will be forwarded on separately.

Appendix: Quarterly NEWS Updates and Steering Group Minutes



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