Editorial

In today’s society health and social care practitioners, educators and researcher’s are constantly challenged to address situations which incorporate diverse and sometimes seemingly competing factors. This calls evidence to inform our understanding of issues by considering a variety of opinions, viewpoints or perspectives that impact on complex situations. Health and social care research therefore requires us to develop skills and knowledge of the research process, in order that we are equipped to face such challenges.

In establishing The Journal of Health and Social care Improvement the School of Health, provides one vehicle through which staff, students and practice colleagues can add to the evidence base that underpins our decision making. It provides a great opportunity for those engaged in health and social care research to engage with theories, methodological approaches and research perspectives with a view to influencing improvements in practice.

The authors in this issue highlight many challenges and opportunities in health and social care. The papers presented here provide some insight into the wealth of studies, opinions and discussion topics that may inform health and social care improvement in the future. The accounts are enlightening and thought provoking. In this issue are also included abstracts of the poster competition finalists from the highly successful School of Health Research conference held in June 2008. You are invited to read the authors’ experiences and engage with the debates.

Finally I would like to introduce Dr Chris Barnes who will be taking over from me as editor from the next edition. I am moving onto pastures new but will remain as part of the editorial board for the journal. I wish everyone the best for a bright ‘research rich’ future!

Dr Laura Serrant-Green, Editor