The Sustainable Care Research Programme is a multi-disciplinary ESRC-funded programme (2017-2021) that explores how care arrangements, currently ‘in crisis’ in parts of the UK, can be made sustainable and deliver wellbeing outcomes; and aims to support policy and practice actors and scholars to conceptualise sustainability in care as an issue of rights, values, ethics and justice, as well as of resource distribution.

The programme’s overarching objective is to advance understanding of sources of economic and social sustainability in care, especially how wellbeing outcomes can be achieved for care users, their families, carers and paid care workers.
## CARE SYSTEMS

**Theorising the relationship between UK care systems and wellbeing**

### Comparing UK Care Systems

**Led by Catherine Needham**
- What are the key features of the four care systems in the UK?
- How do they deliver on ‘wellbeing’, ‘prevention’ and sustainable care? What changes are needed?
- How is each system responding to the care needs of culturally diverse ageing populations?
- How does each take account of the service and support needs of the (paid or unpaid) care workforce?
- What learning about sustainability could be applied from non-UK systems?

### Modelling Care System Costs and Contributions

**Led by Matthew Bennett and Janet Fast**
- What are the contributions and costs of care?
- How are these distributed between the state, individuals and employers?
- How sustainable are care costs and contributions under different change scenarios?
- How do funding changes affect the wellbeing of care users, carers, other stakeholders and the sustainability of the care system?
- What can be learned from other countries with experience of measuring, modelling and attempting to reconfigure caring costs and contributions?

### Achieving Sustainability in Care Systems

**Led by Kate Hamblin**
- Which needs of older people living at home pose the greatest challenge for the sustainability of care systems?
- Which challenges to care system sustainability can be addressed using technology?
- What can be learned from other countries about effective adoption of new care technologies in care systems?
- In the UK, which technologies have the potential to address challenges to the sustainability of care systems, especially those designed to support ageing in place?

### Migrant Care Workers in the UK

**Led by Shereen Hussein**
- How are UK policy changes in 2018-20 affecting the roles, recruitment and status of migrant home care workers? Which groups are most affected, and why?
- What are the implications of these changes for sustainability and wellbeing for care users, carers, home care providers and businesses, care workers (migrant or non-migrant) and care commissioners?
- In light of these developments, what changes are required in the support and organisation of home care?

## CARE WORK and RELATIONSHIPS

**Wellbeing in care relationships, and the co-ordination and work of care**

### Delivering Care at Home

**Led by Diane Burns**
- What innovative home care models are emerging in different local and national UK contexts?
- What capacity do innovative home care models in the UK have to support sustainable care and wellbeing, and through which mechanisms is this achieved?
- In planning home care, and its technology-enabled potential in the UK, what can be learned from other countries about how home care models affect the wellbeing of those using and providing care?

### Combining Work and Care: how do workplace support and technologies contribute to sustainable care arrangements?

**Led by Jason Heyes and Janet Fast**
- What support do WCs need to fulfil both their work and caring responsibilities?
- What constitutes good workplace support for carers in employment?
- What is the impact of this support on the wellbeing of carers, employers, care users and care workers?
- What do ‘workplace standard’, ‘employer recognition’ and ‘benchmarking’ schemes contribute to the sustainability of care arrangements?
- What are the characteristics and outcomes of UK employers’ voluntary care leave schemes, and statutory care leave schemes elsewhere?
- What aspects of worker and carer roles are amenable to improved co-ordination of care?
- Which technologies do working carers use; how do they modify these?
- Can technologies reduce working carers’ stress and overload?

### Care ‘In’ and ‘Out’ of Place

**Led by Majella Kilkey and Louise Ryan**
- How are migrants and non-migrant family members involved in transnational and multi-locational networks of care?
- How do migrant care workers reconcile paid work with familial care responsibilities, both locally and transnationally?
- How is distant care best mediated by new technologies?
- How does the intersectionality of gender, class, ethnicity, linguistic ability, religion and migrant status impact access to and experiences of care?
It is widely held that care systems in many countries around the world are in crisis and there is a need for innovative thinking to develop new ways of understanding the challenges that are driving these crises. The Sustainable Care research programme asks, ‘How can the care and support needs of adults living at home with chronic health problems or disabilities be sustainably met with positive wellbeing outcomes for care systems, care providers and care receivers?’ The programme is committed to working with the evolving concepts of wellbeing and sustainability to understand how the wellbeing of participants across care systems can be protected and promoted in sustainable ways. This overarching workpackage is charged with co-ordinating the conceptual and methodological efforts of all partners in the project. It works with the research teams, our PhD students, our Early Career Researchers and with our UK and international academic and policy partners to explore how the concepts of wellbeing and sustainability can be applied to our understanding of care, in ways that generate not only meaningful and relevant research findings but also provide a basis for innovation in policy and practice.

Sustainable Care Programme Objectives

To advance understanding of sources of economic and social sustainability in care, especially how wellbeing outcomes can be achieved for care users, their families, carers and paid care workers.

To improve the quality, availability and utility of UK data on care, using existing datasets innovatively to produce more useful and accurate evidence.
• Improve the established methodology for projecting future costs in adult social care, extending it to capture costs and contributions elsewhere in the evolving care system
• Use existing data, and develop new survey and qualitative techniques, to examine care needs and experiences in the context of diversity, intersectionality, mobility and migration
• Identify scope to enhance and harmonise data on the care systems of the UK nations, proposing new indicators to measure sustainability and wellbeing outcomes
• Work with Carers UK to enhance the reach, sample size and representativeness of its annual carers survey
• Develop new tools and techniques to measure the effectiveness and impact of workplace support for carers
• Use enhanced statistical techniques to model and forecast the effects of policy changes on the availability, geographical distribution and characteristics of migrant care workers.

To improve how care is planned, resourced, organised and delivered in ways that are sustainable, by providing evidence to inform the decisions, policies and actions of governments, employers, families, older people and care sector stakeholders.
• Examine the potential for emerging technologies to support more sustainable care arrangements
• Study emerging home care models to assess their potential contribution to sustainability through innovation, new care technologies and reconfigured social relations
• Study the role of migrant workers in homecare, examining how this varies across the UK and internationally
• Investigate the aspects of working carers’ roles, relationships and activities which enhanced use of technology could most effectively support
• Investigate the relevance and potential of paid care leave as a source of sustainability in the UK care system, and investigate why some countries and some employers already provide this
• Contrast the development and implementation strategies of recently introduced ‘employer standard’ schemes in Scotland and Canada.

To contribute a multi-disciplinary theorisation of sustainable care which is evidenced, useful to policymakers and stakeholders, and critically examines the relationship between care and diverse conceptions of wellbeing.
• Critically examine the relationship between care and wellbeing
• Produce a conceptual framework for understanding sustainability in the formal and family care sectors
• Explore the political economy of care, focusing on its social, political, economic and relational organisation and issues of fairness and equity
• Examine data on, and experiences of, care infrastructures and reorganisations in different countries.

To build capacity in research and scholarship on care systems, work and relationships.
Sustainable Care Leadership Team

**Senior Team**

*Principal Investigator* Professor Sue Yeandle, University of Sheffield  
*Co-Lead for Care Systems* Professor Jon Glasby, University of Birmingham  
*Co-Lead for Care Work and Relationships* Professor Jill Manthorpe, King's College London  
*Director of Impact* Madeleine Starr MBE, Carers UK  
*Director of Capacity Building* Professor Norah Keating, Swansea University  
*Lead for Sustainability and Wellbeing* Professor Allister McGregor, University of Sheffield

**Co-Investigators**

University of Sheffield: Dr Diane Burns, Dr Kate Hamblin, Professor Jason Heyes, Dr Majella Kilkey, Professor Louise Ryan  
University of Birmingham: Dr Matt Bennett, Professor Catherine Needham, Professor Jenny Phillimore  
University of Kent: Professor Shereen Hussein  
University of Alberta: Professor Janet Fast

**Research Support**

Dr Kelly Davidge, *Programme Manager*  
Dan Williamson, *Programme Administrator*

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Sustainable Care Advisory Board

Chair: Robert Anderson, *European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions*

Tim Anfilogoff, *Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group*  
Toni Antonucci, *International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics*  
Matt Dykes, *TUC*  
Malte Gerhold, *Care Quality Commission*  
Martin Green, *Care England*  
Alison Herrington, *Department for Work and Pensions*  
Richard Humphries, *King’s Fund*  
Laura Vickers, *Policy Press*  
Alan Walker, *University of Sheffield*  
Caroline Waters, *Equality & Human Rights Commission*  
Stecy Yghenomos, *Eurocarers*

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Sustainable Care Programme Information

**Policy & Practice partners**

United Kingdom and internationally

**International academic partners**

Europe, the Nordic countries, Japan, China, New Zealand, Australia and Canada

Funding: Economic & Social Research Council  
Dates: November 2017 to May 2021

**Lead University**: University of Sheffield  
**Impact Lead**: Carers UK  
**UKRI Innovation Fellowships**

Dr Karla Zimpel-Leal Advancing business innovation and skills development in the home care sector  
Dr Matthew Lariviere Accelerating implementation and uptake of new technologies to support ageing in place  
Dr Mandy Cook Enhancing organisational effectiveness by modernising support for working carers

The Sustainable Care research programme was developed with the support of a Worldwide Universities Network Research and Development Fund Award in 2015-2016

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