**Social Work England 00340 – Response to Clarification Questions**

**Q) In terms of the data you are interested in - By the looks of the focus, Social Work England want to hear from other professional than social workers, who may work for the NHS for example. In terms of the time scales, what are your thoughts around HRA ethics timescales, and the kind of questions we want to be asking? It seems like a very tight turnaround around for the project.**

**A) Social Work England take ethics very seriously, as we stipulate throughout our tender documents. What we are looking from bidders, is that they have reflected to us around how they intend to approach ethics considerations and dilemmas within the course of your work. This may also include any potential risks/challenges you see arising as a result of the timescales, and how you may wish to mitigate this. Or actually if you think these timescales are prohibitive. It is very much open, as to the groups you intend to engage with. If you have concerns around the timescales, please factor this into your tender submission and explain why you think they could be an issue.**

**Q) At the moment I find it difficult to see how a bidder can do what Social Work England require**

**within the timescales, given that to get the HRA/NHS information can typically take several months to obtain the required information. With regards to staff, it may be possible to speak to Social Workers that work for a local authority for example, but in our region a number of them work for NHS Trusts and in that case we may have to go through the HRA approval process. At best this can take several months from obtaining the approval, to being able to start. I feel that what would be possible given the timescales, is limited. Following on from this, in terms of practicality, a lot of the ethics committee will not be sitting over the December/January period. We would need to obtain ethical approval, for service users who lack capacity to consent. Part of the process is around being able to be clear around the purpose of the research, and why that cannot be done around people that have capacity to consent. Some of the research is around BIA’s and capacity, and it is hard to be able to talk that through when we are not exactly clear around the purpose and what Social Work England want to get from it. Although it is good that we have got scope to be creative around methodology, this makes it a little more difficult for us to get through ethics. I know that some ethics committees would want something more solid, around how we can evidence that it cannot be done via any other means.**

**A) First of all, around the question as to whether the timescales/ethics approvals that a bidder may need to go through in, order to meet the objectives of the research are even feasible in the time given. This is something that Social Work England may need to go away and reflect on. We would normally advise bidders to reflect on any concerns they may have around any reasonable or surmountable risks they have around a project. And advise bidders to thoroughly detail these in the risk assessment section of the tender submission. If Social Work England are given the confidence that all risks have been considered, and that they can be resourced/mitigated, then this is not something we would hold against a particular bidder. Regarding the purpose, we can support any bidder around this. If there are any particular questions that you need to ask as to why Social Work England need to have this research conducted and how it factors into our work, then we can join the dots. At its core, it is about Social Work England accrediting a regulated profession with AMHP, and soon to be MACP annotations which are a very specific and unique roll that we have. The way that Social Work England want to go about developing that framework of annotation, is with the feedback and input of the professionals themselves. That is paving the way very clearly to a public consultation that Social Work England will be holding next summer, so of which will be online as soon as April 2022. This is a very specific piece of work, feeding into a specific regulatory function for Social Work England. If bidders need to be able to draw a line of sight between this work/it’s purpose and ultimately public impact, then that would be it for Social Work England**

**Q) Can Social Work England please clarify, if you are confirming the bidders can propose timescales for the project? If bidders were to say for e.g. that these are the types of questions we could ask, if we want the research to come back to you without going through ethics in a time scale of 10 weeks - would Social Work England have an appetite for that please?**

**A) The limitations for our work are based around the financial year. Social Work England would suggest that bidders set out what they feel could be deliverable in the timescales given.**

**Q) How important is the issue of diversity of organisations from who interviewees are drawn? Is it hoped for that this piece of work will reach a more representative range of organisations?**

**A) Social work England are always hungry for diversity, but we are not oblivious to the fact there are time constraints associated with this project. If bidders can set out to us an approach where they have considered the question of diversity in relation to the restrictions associated with the project, and described this within your tender submission, then this has to rest with the researcher to propose how best to tackle the question.**

**Q) In terms of the sample - we know that that Social Work England have a list of Social Workers. Are bidders able to access that, in terms of sampling potential interviewees?**

**A) Bidders would need to use their own source, by reaching out to Social Workers. What Social Work England have done in the past is highlighted that we are partnering with a particular research organization and have signposted towards an email address/funneled people though our social media accounts towards our research partners. We have never had a problem with recruitment based on this approach, and we are confident we would be able to fulfil any sample that bidders feel is appropriate.**