



CASE STUDY: EMPOWERING SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH THROUGH ECONOMIC EVALUATIONS

Katy Cleece, Adult and Children's Social Worker & Research Lead, Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

KEY IMPACT

- Strengthened funding applications by integrating economic evaluations to justify costs.
- Improved research capacity in social work by helping practitioners engage with economic principles.
- Increased confidence in challenging and shaping social care policies.



"Social workers are out there doing brilliant work, managing high caseloads, and dealing with enormous time pressures. They rarely get the chance to stop and think: 'Why do we do what we do? What's the evidence behind it? Why are some interventions funded while others aren't?' This course gave me a framework to bring those questions into research discussions."

KATY CLEECE

BACKGROUND

As a social worker and research lead at Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, Katy Cleece has dedicated her career to improving social work practice through research. While she had previous experience with systematic reviews, economic evaluations represent a new area for her.

"I'd already undertaken systematic reviews in an area of interest, but I didn't have much knowledge about economic evaluations. When this opportunity came up, I thought it was worth giving it a shot."

Social work often involves evaluating the effectiveness of interventions, yet economic evaluations—assessing costs, benefits, and long-term sustainability—are not always integrated into practice. Katy recognized that a better understanding of these principles could strengthen decision-making in her field.

EXPERIENCE WITH THE COURSE

Since completing the Rapid Conversion of Economic Evaluations (RaCEEs) course, Katy has actively integrated her new knowledge into her role. As someone responsible for building research capacity within her trust, she now helps others consider economic factors in social work research.

Katy has also applied her learning to writing funding applications.

"When writing bids, I used to just include cost estimates without necessarily linking them to value-for-money arguments. Now, I can frame our proposals in a way that strengthens our case by justifying costs through economic evaluations."

By incorporating economic principles into social work research, Katy is helping practitioners challenge existing practices, advocate for more effective interventions, and make a stronger case for funding based on evidence.

HEAR KATY SHARE HER EXPERIENCE ON THE COURSE HERE;





RAPID CONVERSION OF ECONOMIC EVALUATIONS (RACEES) COURSE OUTLINE

SESSIONS

Here's an overview of the sessions and the workshop:

- Session #1: Research question and selection of economic evaluation
- Session #2: Key attributes of an economic evaluation
- Session #3: Costs
- Session #4: Outcomes
- Session #5: Analyses and results
- Session #6: Introduction section / Q&A / Workshop info
- Workshop: Critical appraisal of economic evaluation / Implications for practice / Future research

After the workshop, the team leads co-ordinate the writing up of the commentary which is then reviewed by the team members and submitted to a journal.

OVERVIEW

The Rapid Conversion of Economic Evaluations (RaCEEs) course consists of 6 online sessions of 1 hour every fortnight and 1 all-day face-to-face workshop.

The course is designed to equip you with the skills needed to understand and critically appraise an existing economic evaluation. The final output is the co-production of a commentary of an economic evaluation which is submitted to a journal for publication.

Before the course starts each participant is assigned to a team which focuses on a specific topic, based on the interests expressed by the participants in the registration form. Each team is led by a team lead with expertise in health economics. After each session some homework is assigned to help you identify the different elements of an economic evaluation.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) How much do I need to pay for the course?

Nothing - the course is free to anyone in the ARC NWC.

2) I don't know much about health economics: will I struggle to follow the course?

Don't worry, no previous knowledge is required. We will teach you things step-by-step and there will be plenty of time in each session to ask questions.

3) Is it a problem if I miss any of the sessions?

Not at all. You can always catch up with the recording of each session on a dedicated playlist on YouTube.

4) How will I access the material?

A Microsoft Teams space will be created and the material for each session will be uploaded there. You can also use the in-built chat to interact with your team lead and the other team members during the course.

5) How do I qualify to be a co-author of the final commentary?

You would need to show relevant contribution by trying to do the homework after each session (but we won't be strict!) and/or provide a critical review of the final manuscript.

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RACEES AND HOW TO
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