The role of emergency duty teams in contemporary social work: issues of practice management and culture

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The Role of Emergency Duty Teams in Contemporary Social Work: Issues of Practice, Management and Culture

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Abstract

Emergency Duty Teams have been introduced into social services and social work departments throughout the previous two decades and are now recognised as an appropriate means of providing a field social work service "out of hours".

This thesis explores the manner whereby EDTs became an established part of local authority social work organisations placing them in some historical context.

The thesis then explores contemporary issues of social work practice, supervision and training and attempts to weigh both the merits and potential difficulties of EDTs remaining as the last bastions of generic social work.

The thesis explores the relationship between EDTs and their wider organisation and uses the concept of organisational culture as a means of trying to understand some of the paradoxes and stresses to which EDT workers frequently refer.

The thesis then identifies and explores some of the contemporary issues which may well have influence upon the contemporary role and task of EDT, ranging from the macro issues of Europeanisation to micro issues of purchaser/provider split.

The thesis concludes by cautiously attempting to predict the manner in which an out of hours social work service is likely to be made available both to individual service users and to organisations.

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Introduction

The past two decades have seen the introduction and establishment of Emergency Duty Teams as being the organisational response whereby Social Services Departments (England and Wales) and Social Work Departments (Scotland) meet their obligation to provide social work services outside office hours. This thesis is an explorative attempt to identify, place in context and understand some of the contemporary issues of practice, management and culture which have particular relevance for this unusual branch of social work. The thesis will explore the early origins of out of hours social work teams and will unravel some of the complexities and conflicts which surrounded their introduction. There will be reflections upon the ways in which the culture of social work organisations has changed since the mid 1970s and an examination of how the interplay between professional practice and organisational control affects the current role and task of EDT social work. Underpinning the whole thesis will be the enquiry into why social work practice in EDT has, in many ways, remained unchanged over the years and continues to remain deeply rooted in traditional social work values and ethics. Genericism, both as a theoretical social work method for service provision and as an organisational arrangement will be critically examined

and their relevance to contemporary social work practice in EDTs will be evaluated.

Social work in EDTs is still largely based on the model of the generic social worker and the thesis will explore the training and supervision implications for professionals working in this team. These issues range from formal post-qualification training (such as ASW training) to the potential contribution which EDT workers are able to offer as practice teachers for DipSW training.

Some of the difficulties of providing professional support and supervision for EDT workers will be addressed whilst acknowledgements and suggestions will be made about the particular supervision/training needs of the many EDT workers who always work alone.

A re-examination of some of the conflicts and tensions of EDT workers whose practice is based on a model of professional autonomy but yet are employed in organisations dominated by the rise of managerialism and budgetary controls will illuminate some of the paradoxes facing EDT workers. A consideration of these dilemmas through the paradigm of organisation culture will provide insights into the origins of some of these difficulties and provide suggestions as to how these otherwise stifling tensions may best be

addressed.

This dissertation provides incidental commentary on some of the sociological/political changes which have occurred since the first EDTs were introduced some twenty years ago and how social policy has adapted (or in some cases not adapted) to the changing welfare needs meeting professionals in the field of personal social services. It is hoped that their emergence at a longitudinal perspective may add the additional dimension of an historical perspective to the understanding of some of the contemporary issues of practice management and culture. There may also be some significance in that the period 1970-1997 is also the era in which the writer has spent the majority of his professional working life.

It is however this exploration of those contemporary issues which is the main body of the thesis and will hopefully be of benefit to social work practitioners, social work students and managers within social service departments as they attempt to practice or manage social work in what is a unique and discreet setting. The dissertation concludes by an attempt to be predictive about some of the social work issues which both managers and practitioners in EDT will have to address as both society and the social work profession approach a new millennium. These issues

range to macro/political developments such as globalisation of social work problems and the 'European Factor' to the micro but very tangible concerns the surrounding furtherance of the purchaser/provider split within social services and the future recruitment of appropriately trained staff to Emergency Duty Teams. The final introductory remarks concern the nature of the research itself, which has been a determination for the work to be based on the researcher/practitioner model. It is hoped that the use of such a methodology and adherence to giving an account based upon the realism as experienced and narrated by practitioners themselves will have facilitated the emergence of a thesis which will have both a ring of familiarity and at the same time be thought provoking "new territory".

Chapter One

The Historical Development of Emergency Duty Teams

This opening chapter discusses the dearth of literature surrounding the historical background of social work in EDTs and postulates why this is the case. There then follows an account of arrangements for out of hours social work provision prior to the Seebhoom reforms (1991). The chapter then examines how two important developments of the immediate post Seebhoom era (genericism and intake teams) had albeit indirect influence upon the introduction of EDTs and concludes by considering how if at all the pattern of introduction was planned and rational. There is then a discussion on the increased demand for services and the contemporaneous rise in both the demand for services and the increasing unionisation of the professions, all of which had accumulative influence in the development of EDTs.

The Historical Development of Emergency Duty Teams

1.1 Existing information

Unlike many other disciplines of social work practice and social care provision (e.g. hospital social work and voluntarism), there is a dearth of writing to which the researcher can readily turn in order to gain an understanding of both the background to and the reasons why Emergency Duty Teams (EDTs) were introduced. There is a similar lack of literature covering the manner in which EDTs were introduced and how they were integrated (or in some cases not integrated) within both social services departments in England and Wales and Social Work Departments in Scotland. There is, furthermore, an absence of theoretical discussion accounting for EDTs as a model of social work practice.

There seems to be some significance in this lack of literature which may reflect the indifference which has been shown towards EDT both by researchers and the academic community as well as by social work managers and practitioners. I am not alone in discovering that this is so. In her research into users expectations of the EDT service, Mills (1995, P6) following a similar fruitless search, expresses her concern about "the lack of any serious debate of the purpose,

boundaries and activities of this (i.e. EDT) service is concerning". In addition to there being no historic account of EDT or dedicated texts, "out of hours social work is rarely mentioned within more central texts about social work service provision or practice". In her study of comparison of social work tasks undertaken during "office hours" and social work undertaken "out of hours" Clark 1991 was similarly unsuccessful in searching for texts which were of "direct relevance" to her study. (This void of written material not only refers to the history and development of EDTs but to contemporary issues of social work practice and organisational interplay).

This dearth of reference to social work taking place outside "office hours" is a feature of social work texts throughout the two decades of the introduction and establishment of EDTs. Gandy (1975) in a study of four area social work teams following the implementation of The Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 compared the administration, professional and interpersonal processes of each team, and discussed issues of decentralisation, accessibility and specialism versus genericism but made no reference to out of hours social work. Stevenson's (1981) study focused specifically on the generic/specialist debate and discussed at length the possible organisational arrangements within social service departments which

could lead to workers developing special skills (for example 'duty' workers). She does not, however, include in this framework a reference to the 'new' specialism - at least according to Skelt (1983) - of out of hours social work.

Walton (1982) in his panoramic and predictive work where he attempts to describe social work practice in 2002 AD continues to present social work as a '9-5' activity whilst Davies (1994) in The Essential Social Worker describes at length the interventions a social worker may engage in (for example, crisis intervention, post disaster counselling, short term or 'one-interview' work), as well as worksites of the social worker again without identifying or recognising the unique role of the out of hours social worker.

In his most recent work "Competences in Social Work Practice" O'Hagan K (1996) "explores a range of issues relevant to the improvement of practice competence and its evaluation" (Community Care August 1997). He discusses social work competences across no less than eleven disciplines of social work ranging from residential child care to mental health social work and including social work within both criminal justice and health care. However, it is disappointing that the work contains no mention of social work in Emergency Duty Teams, particularly as this author's

previous writings have frequently drawn from social work practice in this discipline.

In August 1996 following my presentation of a paper at the 2nd National Conference on "Social Work in Emergency Duty Teams" I received a letter from Parry (Cardiff) who whilst undertaking postgraduate research into aspects of EDT found similar problems.

During the writing of this chapter I shall make reference to primary as well as secondary historical sources, but it is important to remember that although the historical development of EDTs and the prevailing social work practices and organisational structures were fundamental in the movement towards EDTs, the socio-political factors and financial climate were also largely influential as EDTs were introduced. It is not the purpose of this research to examine these 'environmental' factors at the expense of trying to understand and explain the ways in which the historical development of EDTs are affecting their current practice and future development but any account of EDT needs to recognise the ways in which these external factors have affected their development.

There is, however, not a complete dearth of literature for researchers interested in the history and

development of EDTs. There are at least two primary sources "The Report of an Inspection of Out of Hours Services" (Yorkshire and Humberside, Unpublished, 1986) and "Social Services Department Out of Hours Team Review 1992" (Devon County Council Social Services Department), both of which give brief and very local account of the setting up of and current arrangements for EDTs in two separate authorities. In addition to these sources, I was very relieved to locate "Out of Hours Social Work" (Etherington and Parker 1984) which is a (then) contemporary account of some aspects of social work practice within EDT and observation as to the reasons for their introduction. Indicatively, "Out of Hours Social Work" is a BASW pamphlet which, upon ordering, I was informed that there was only one remaining copy and there were no plans to reprint the work.

1.2 Arrangements Prior to Seebohm

Other writers (Clarke 1991, Etherington and Parker and White 1989) describe arrangements which exist in Social Service Departments introduced by the Seebohm Reforms (1971). "The development of specialist out of hours duty teams has been one of the more significant innovations in Social Services organisation and practice in the late 1970s and early 1980s" (Etherington et al, 1989:2) and O'Hagan (1986) writing about the introduction of EDTs suggests that "EDTs are a pragmatic response to various aspects of post-Seebohm chaos", a view which is also supported by Etherington and Parker. I have had little success in ascertaining archive material which would inform this research as to arrangements for providing cover prior to the new Seebohm department as introduced in April 1971. However, it is important to record that prior to the Seebohm reforms, there was an existing provision of sorts. Social work was provided by the local authority welfare services department for older people with physical handicap and homeless people (National Assistance Act, 1948). These welfare services were led by a Director of Welfare Services. Social work to people with mental illness and/or learning difficulty was provided by the mental health department of local authority health departments led by a medical officer of health (Mental Health Act

1959) whilst the children's department, led by the local authority children officer provided services to children and their families. The 1969 Children and Young Person Act did not become operational until 1971 which meant social work services for "young offenders" was the responsibility of the Home Office. 'Approved' schools were outside the jurisdiction of local authorities, and the needs of young people in difficulties with the police and courts were met (or not met) within the paradigm of the criminal justice rather than that of the welfare model.

There were of course no requirements for "appropriate adults" to attend police interviews when either a young person or someone with learning difficulties was being detained or interviewed by the police about an alleged offence as is now the case due to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1992. It is also important to remember that social workers in hospitals (both general and psychiatric) were employed by the National Health Service and that it was the Local Government Reorganisation of 1974 (not the Seebohm reorganisation) which transferred the responsibility of providing hospital social work from the then Area Health Authorities to Local Government.

How was out of hours social work (i,.e. for 77% of the week) provided both to individuals requiring help

(then referred to as clients not service users) and to organisations? The provision of a 24 hour social work service to organisations such as the NHS and the police where a 24 hours service is part of the organisational culture has a special significance for EDT arrangements.

There is limited archival material but much of the information is oral and anecdotal. The Almoner, a professional journal published by the Institute of Medical Social Workers, advertised hospital social work posts and as late as 1970 adverts would clarify whether the advertised post was resident or non resident, the clear implication being that hospital social workers 'in residence' would provide "out of hours" social work service. The hospital, with its culture of round-the-clock provision, would of course see this social work provision as being part of organisational life. Throughout this dissertation, reference will be made to the potential conflicts between EDTs operating as a stand alone system in an organisation with a 9-5 culture (i.e. Social Services Departments) and those organisations (mainly the police and hospitals), which being operational round the clock, have a very different 'culture'. It is this culture which in many ways determines the perceptions and expectations of other professions towards social workers in EDTs.

Social work in both the fields of Mental Health and Welfare Service was provided by welfare officers and mental welfare officers being on call at home in the evenings and weekends and making a response as required. They would respond to need only within their own 'client group'. Whilst there is no empirical evidence for assessing the effectiveness of these arrangements, I remember that there was much disgruntlement amongst staff providing cover due partly to the paltry rate of pay (10% of salary for a one in four rota) and also because of the restrictions these arrangements imposed upon family life. This was well before modern telecommunications and the age of the bleep, the mobile phone and the fax. I can personally recollect spending every weekday night and a full weekend once a month at home, at the end of a phone for less than a hundred pounds a year in 1970.

Clark (1990, P11), in recalling her own pre-EDT days as an on-call child care officer, reminds us that "overall it (i.e. being on call) did not seem worth doing, especially for the money being paid - I received something like £4.75 for a fifteen-and-a-half hour session. Not a princely sum even in 1977". "In the early seventies, the increasingly influential union representatives amongst social workers were acutely aware of the impact of out of hours emergency work upon members, in terms of disruption to their

personal and family life and the inadequate amount they were paid for the job" (Kieran O'Hagan, 1986:2).

Access by the public to out of hours services was usually through the police or a local authority department providing a 24 hour service, e.g. the engineers (who also co-ordinated the dustbin services). It was not unusual, however, for welfare officers and mental welfare to have their home address and telephone number publicly available in the telephone directory, an arrangement which would be difficult to imagine 25 years later.

1.3 Initial Arrangements Following the Introduction of Seebohm reforms

In April 1971, social workers previously employed by the Children's Department, Health Department and Welfare Services Department found themselves merged together in the new Local Authority Social Services Departments. Whilst there is still debate about whether Seebohm envisaged generic social work teams or generic social workers, it is certainly the case that in the very early days of the new departments, social workers (now no longer referred to as mental welfare officers or child care officers) continued to practice in their previous disciplines. Arrangements for out of hours cover continued largely as before with separate social workers being on call for each of the main disciplines, i.e. child care, mental health and care of the elderly and physically disabled.

1.4 The Emergence of EDTs

Etherington and Parker (1984) cite the following factors as being largely influential in the growth of EDTs:

(1) There was growing dissatisfaction amongst social workers as to the rate of pay for "standby". Social workers were paid a fixed amount per

session (approximately £5) and there was no account taken of how often or for how long a social worker was called out during a session. Staff undertook these duties from home, following a day's work with the resultant domestic disturbance and frequent disruption to plans for the following day's work.

(2) Participation in the "standby" system was contractually obligatory and whilst informal arrangements were often made and staff could often "sell off" their sessions, the fear was always there that contractual obligations could be enforced and all staff be required to undertake standby. This constant threat of having to do standby was oppressive to social workers in certain domestic circumstances, i.e. single parents or carers of an elderly/ disabled relative as well as to those social workers reaching the ends of their careers who were daunted by the thought of having to work alone at night across all client groups. (By the mid/late '70s generic social work i.e. generic caseloads was 'de rigeur' during the day and was also becoming so out of hours.) It is still the case 20 years later that in those authorities where there is an element of 'standby' in supporting the EDT service (such as in Northumberland County

Social Service) the worry that the employers still have the discretion to enforce contractual requirements still rests uneasily with many social workers.

(3) The Unionisation of Social Work. During the 1970s and 1980s increasing staff discontent and industrial action became a feature of life in social service departments (e.g. the social work strike in several authorities such as Newcastle, as well as social workers refusing to do standby resulting in middle and senior management having to provide cover). This perhaps reflects not only the increasing militarism within social work but the increased power of the trade union movement at a socio-political level. Taylor R. The Trade Unions Position in British Politics, 1992, Blackwell. At both branch, regional and national level Nalgo became actively involved in the dispute and at the National Annual Conference in 1978 a resolution was carried that Nalgo policy re standby was to pursue the introduction of Emergency Duty Teams (Archive reference currently being sought). Social work was not an activity/profession which was unique in experiencing unionisation but such collective action needs to be seen in the context of the unionisation of both the professions and of local

government. At that time local authorities were actively encouraging their employees to join trade unions (at that time Nalgo and Nupe) and the trade union movement had yet to suffer from the repressive legislation and the anti-union movement of the 1980s and 1990s. Nurses, teachers and junior hospital doctors were also moving towards a trade union philosophy in their attempts to improve conditions of service. It is also the case that the trade union movement grew in influence and "acceptability" because at a macro-political level, Trade Unions were part of the then socio-economic political culture of collectivism, statism and 'big Government'. The state was very much the major player both strategically and operationally in welfare provision and it was during this last gasp of collectivism that the trade unions held influence upon both conditions of service issues for their members as well as in developing social policy. The voluntary sector was overshadowed by state welfare provision whilst the private sector in social work/social care/health and education was marginal in comparison to state provisions. At that time it would have been beyond belief that local authority social service departments would be directed by central government to spend at least 70% of their community care budget within

the private sector as is now the case with current community care arrangements.

(4) The increasing demand for services. This increase in demand, for social work intervention out of hours came not only from public but from other agencies as well, particularly the police and health authorities. This is not surprising as following the enquiry into the death of Maria Colwell recommended the introduction of Area Child Protection Committees where apart from Education the major players were health, police and social services. For the first time, interagency co-ordination was now formalised and links at both organisational and practice level were being rapidly forged by social services with health and police both of which are organisations providing fully operational 24 hour emergency service deploying professionals, e.g. nurses, casualty officers and police personnel who would be fully employed as shift workers rather than being 'on call' both after and before a full day's work. The closer working together with these agencies during the daytime must have had a cultural influence upon social services departments when reviewing their "on call" arrangements. During their research into Out of Hours Social Work, Etherington and Parker

(1984:11) draw attention to the fear which senior managers and councillors have that arrangements other than an EDT may be found wanting and that a child care tragedy could occur within their department. It was not only the tragic death of Maria Colwell which had such an impact upon managers of Social Services departments, but the hostile and aggressive media coverage to which social work was subject that encouraged serious consideration of out of hours arrangements. So, whilst Nalgo was plainly a factor in the emergence of EDTs, the real concern of a local authority having a care tragedy on its own doorstep did help overcome some of the initial hostility and objections in some quarters. Commenting on this at the time when being interviewed, a "senior manager of an out of hours team" commented that "we were protected by councillors and committees fears of bad publicity in child abuse and to a lesser extent in mental health and my feeling about it is while we continue to protect against bad publicity where we have never in the five or six years that we have been going, actually dropped the department in the cart in any way and while we can continue to do that I think we are safe. But should someone go out one day and make a decision that he is not going to receive this child into care

> and leave the kid at home and the next morning it is found that the kid has been battered such that the newspapers pick it up eventually, then I think we face the chop fairly quickly. Our protection to some extent is child abuse."
> (Etherington and Parker, 1984, P11.)

Burrell and Morgan (1984) make reference to the differences between power and influence and just as the power/influence factor was crucial at the introduction of EDTs it continues to be a salient feature of current arrangements within the organisation. These differences between power and influence will be explored in the course of this dissertation.

1.5 Introducing EDTs

Unlike other aspects of social services activities (such as the Mental Health Act 1983 and the Children Act 1989) EDTs were not introduced by a stroke of the parliamentary pen but emerged (or in some cases did not) at the discretion of each individual local authority. This piecemeal setting up of EDTs not only had an influence upon the timing of when they were introduced into different local authorities, but perhaps more importantly gave social service departments unfettered discretion in developing their

own models of EDTs. The major piece of research into the extent and rate in which local authorities were introducing EDTs was conducted by the Association of Directors of Social Services in 1977. They carried out a survey of local authorities (response rate of 80.8%). This survey illustrated that there was a relationship between out of hours provision and geography with particular reference to the urban/rural divide. There was certainly a strong link if not a direct correlation between the introduction of EDT or continuation of standby and geography. 46.96% of those authorities retaining rota systems identified geographical factors (e.g. distance, adverse weather, terrain and population distribution) as contributing to their decision to not introduce EDTs. Whilst 36% of those authorities which had introduced EDT mentioned (albeit different) geographical factors as influencing their decisions in a positive way. These positive geographical factors were common to urban environments with high population density, compact areas and efficient communication patterns. In commenting on this survey, Etherington and Parker (P4) remark, "It is interesting to note that the primary influence in determining the pattern of service appeared to be geographic."

In 1979 the DHSS carried out a survey of social work provision out of hours which supported the argument

that whilst the earliest EDTs were introduced in London Boroughs, followed by the Metropolitan Districts, it appeared that there was a noticeable growth in the counties int he late 70s. This argument is further supported by the BASW survey in 1980.

Table 1. Types of System by Types of Authority. DHSS 1979. Sample 108 (100%) - England only

Types of Authority	Rota	EDT	Other
County Councils	13.89%	10.19%	8.33%
London Boroughs	2.78%	28.70%	3.70%
Metropolitan Districts	7.41%	15.74%	9.26%
TOTALS	**24.08%**	**54.63%**	**21.29%**

Source: Etherington and Parker (1984, P6)

Table 2. Types of System by Types of Authority. BASW 1980

Sample 58 Authorities

% age

Types of Authority	Rota	EDT	Other
County Councils (inc Wales)	24.14	29.31	5.17
London Boroughs	no data gathered		
Metropolitan Districts	8.62	25.68	6.90
TOTALS	**32.76**	**55.17**	**12.07**

Source: Etherington and Parker (1984, P6)

It is interesting to note that even in the early days of EDT that five dual teams were introduced in London.

Twenty years later for very different reasons and in very different culture we are observing similar joint working arrangements in consortia of new unitary authorities. These new working arrangements will be commented upon in Chapter 6.

1.6 The effects of the improved rates of pay for standby

As a result of industrial action and withdrawal by social workers from the standby rota, very much improved rates of pay were introduced. As a consequence of this, local authorities discovered that the budget implications were minimal for setting aside 'standby' arrangements and introducing EDTs, whilst at the same time social work managers were attracted by the idea of having a specialist team for out of hours work which would coincidentally ensure that daytime staff were not arriving for a day's work having been out during the night on 'standby' visits. (There was still however resistance by some directors of social service to EDT as they considered that the ability to practice social work on 'standby' was part of a social worker's professional portfolio as well as the responsibility of and criteria of social work being credited with professional status. In 1984 the then Director of Devon County Social Services was categorical in saying that an EDT would never be

introduced in his department as it was ethically and theoretically unjustified. A year later, under a new director of social service, two full EDTs were introduced and have proved to be a bedrock of stability throughout the past decade. Unlike changes introduced by legislation or DHSS circulars the discretion exercised by individual Directors of Social Services in supporting (or not supporting) EDTs was very much a determinant factor in the type of provision of a social work service out of hours. In 1983 BASW conducted a survey asking those local authorities who had not introduced EDTs why that was so. It is significant that finance and geography rather than opposition to EDT as a social work method were the main reasons given.

1.7 The Contemporary Development of Intake Teams, Genericism and EDTs

Whilst conditions of service issues (i.e. dissatisfaction at low rates of pay for standby and social workers finding the rota unacceptable) were a driving force in the setting up of EDTs, a study of their history needs to set their introduction in the context of other organisational and practice developments which were occurring at that time. Two of the most important developments which were occurring at that time were the introduction of Intake Teams and the rise of genericism within social work.

(1) The Introduction of Intake Teams

Intake teams sprang up in the aftermath of Seebohm and have been described (Currie) as a significant post Seebohm social services development. The purpose of intake teams was to provide a service to all new referrals to the department, make an assessment of the problem and decisions about the future contact. Lowenstein (1974:136) suggested that

> "the process which occurs between the initial contact of a client with the social services department, whether by letter, telephone or personal application through the assessment of

> the problem, to the allocation of the case to a social worker. An intake team is therefore a special group of social workers responsible for all initial contact with, and assessment of, clients."

In addition to managing the initial contact between client and the department, intake teams also provided initial assessment and short term casework (usually up to 3 months). The organisational reasoning which led to their introduction was more pragmatic than theoretical and was based on the belief that a specialist group of social workers, freed from the burdens of a long term caseload would be in a position to offer a skilled and immediate response to situations. This ability to respond appropriately would enable intake workers to reach outcomes which would be more satisfactory from the clients point of view, whilst from an organisational perspective, the social work task would be carried out in a more effective manner. Social workers in these teams claimed that by being flexible and by using task centred and crisis orientated techniques, they could intervene therapeutically and prevent crisis "drifting" into long term situations. Critics of the intake team system suggest that it is both flawed and ill founded at a theoretical level and is merely an operational method whereby organisations can provide

uniform assessments and enforce departmental priorities. Research by Parsloe and Stevenson (1978) and by Sainsbury (1980) criticises social work undertaken by intake teams as having "little or no theoretical casework underpinning of any kind" whilst Gostick (1982:21) claims that their introduction was merely pragmatic and that

> "almost certainly (i.e. pragmatism) was the major reason for the establishment of the early intake groups for it was a direct response to the understandable confusion of the Seebohm reorganisation and the chaos of the duty room."

Banford (1982:100) commented that intake teams were where

> "considerations of practice and expediency came together to stimulate the development of intake work as specialism ... and (intake workers) operated from a different theoretical perspective from their colleagues in long term teams."

In addition, Coulshed (1988) urges caution where intake teams make claim to be basing models of intake work on crisis theory. She warns that "The word "crisis" is frequently misused by social workers." This signifies a lack of understanding of the concepts

and methods. This kind of inaccurate use of the term may have prevented a more thorough use of the model so that we cannot yet dignify the crisis approach with the status of "theory".

O'Hagan (1986), whilst himself an ardent advocate of crisis intervention as a social work method laments the failure of intake teams to "provide an effective and professional crisis intervention service". Buckle (1981) suggests that there were two main reasons for this. Firstly, it was never the object of intake teams to provide a high quality service at times of individual and family stress but the prime motivation was to protect the quality of long term social work". Intake teams would "allow long term workers to undertake planned and preventative work and to do intensive and experimental work without the demands of short term and crisis work". The second reason which Buckle claims that Intake Teams failed to meet their self-declared objectives was that "not surprisingly despite being in the 'front line' of crisis work, intake workers have had no crisis training either, nor that very few have any theoretical or conceptual underpinning at their response to crisis". O'Hagan (1986) is very clear about the reason for this lack of understanding of crisis theory and subsequent inability of intake social workers to practice this model of social work when he comments (P11) that

> "Generic social workers, intake and EDT members have all been subjected to the same inadequacy of crisis training and supervision in crisis work. A truly effective, tested and reputable crisis training programme does not exist anywhere in this country. The lack of knowledge and experience of crisis intervention in social services on the part of those principally responsible for training, is indicated by the fact that not a single text on the subject has been written in the last 20 years which have seen a deluge of social work publications."

McKitterick (1980) developed this point of organisational response by suggesting that intake teams seem usually to be discussed at times when an agency feels particularly busy.

Whilst debate continued about the theoretical base for the introduction of intake teams, what did become undisputed was their continued introduction and popularity both with organisations as well as with social workers. Their growth pattern very much mirrored that of EDTs, i.e. an innovative introduction expanding quickly in London but with other local authorities catching up. A survey by Scott/Gostick (1980) well illustrates the nature of this growth of Intake Teams.

Table 3. The Growth of Intake Teams within Local Authority Social Services Departments

Type of Authority	No of Area Teams	No of Areas with Intake Teams	%
County Councils (5)	56	24	42.9
Metropolitan Districts (5)	52	21	40.4
London Boroughs (5)	21	15	71.4
TOTALS	129	60	46.5

Source: Scott/Gostick Survey 1980

An interesting observation is that many county authorities who were opposed to the introduction of EDTs because of geography lost no time in introducing intake teams for daytime services.

It is difficult to imagine the introduction of EDTs had intake teams not already become well established within social services departments. By this time intake teams had made some movement towards developing theory and gained some considerable credence with management for their ability both to make quick responses to urgent situations and proved active gatekeepers.

(2) The Rise of Genericism

The Seebohm reforms not only introduced generically based social service departments and teams but generic social work, with social workers for the first time carrying caseloads which spanned all social work disciplines ranging from **A**doption to **Z**immer aid provision. The Seebohm report (page 172) envisaged that "in his daily work the social worker needs all these methods to enable him to respond appropriately to social problems". In the first few years of the new social service departments, there were separate standby rotas for child care, mental health and elderly. However, generic social work became the established model both for social work practice and social work education and thereby began to achieve one of the major preoccupations of the Seebohm report. This was to ensure that "one social worker would deal with the problems of one family instead of the fragmentation by age group and problem category which prevailed at the time of the report" (Bamford, 1992 :19). We then saw the emergence of the generic social worker who whilst perhaps having a bias towards a particular client group would be able and would be expected to be able to practise social work throughout the social work disciplines at a reasonable level of competency. Bamford (:19) also reminds us that whilst "the label given was a 'generic social worker', oddly, the description appears nowhere in the Seebohm report itself. It was genericism and the generic social

worker which, whilst not a driving force for the establishment of EDTs certainly facilitated and enabled them to be introduced. It is difficult to see how EDTs could have been introduced if social work had remained specialist during the 70s and 80s. There would have to be at least two and possibly three people on duty in the EDT at all times to cover all disciplines. This would clearly have prohibited any development of the EDT service. Again we shall find that a factor (i.e. genericism) which was pivotal to EDT's history has re-emerged 20 years later as being central to the debate surrounding their future.

Conclusion

The history of EDT has been both erratic and surrounded by conflict between social work practitioners and managers and has been introduced at different times by different local authorities in an ad hoc manner.

An exploration of current issues within EDT will frequently return us to the origins and development of EDT in trying to understand its current paradoxes and difficulties. The introduction of EDTs was not greeted with universal blessing and acclaim but was frequently begrudgingly consented to by management following adversarial negotiations and industrial

disputes. The history of their introduction continues to colour the relationship which the interviews show that many EDTs continue to have with senior managers in their organisation. It seems reasonable to suggest that this will continue to be so, especially as EDT social workers continue to practice in a professional operational and autonomous model whilst social work organisations are moving further towards the managerial model with its emphasis on control in matters both budgetary and professional decision making.

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Chapter 2

Research Methodology

(1) Introduction

The purpose of this research is to identify and understand the factors which have surrounded the introduction of EDTs, the contemporary issues which are currently central to them at both operational and strategic levels and to provide focus on those issues which are likely to affect the manner in which future developments will be shaped. The research also intends to recognise themes as well as linkages between theoretical concepts in EDT and to consider them in their wider context of social work practice, social work research, social policy and managerial theory. Utilising a range of qualitative and quantitative techniques and library sources, this research is exploratory and investigative and whilst the building of theory is central to the research, the process is not that of testing a hypothesis by using deductive thinking but is more concerned with becoming analytical through the inductive process.

This chapter is concerned with the origins of the study, including the motivation for its undertaking the initial planning and subsequent defining and

redefining of the methodology and the practicalities of actually carrying out the research process. Early in the chapter the appropriateness of quantitative/ qualitative research methods to this study will be explored as will some of the limitations of both positivism and naturalism as a method of social research. The attributes of grounded theory as an approach to an explorative piece of research will be weighed whilst issues of ethnography and their influence will be constant themes during the research process. This research has been carried out whilst I am still in full time practice as a social work practitioner in an EDT and the advantages as well as the potential pitfalls of the concept of the research practitioner researching his/her own area of practice will be central to the debate. As the chapter progresses and the difficulties, both epistemological and ontological, in constructing a research methodology are identified, the debate as to whether or not research into social work practice is still pre paradigmatic will be continually present.

The issue of access (both in terms of difficulties and the unexpected data which these difficulties present) will be a concern throughout the research process.

(2) Origins of Research

Prior to becoming a full time EDT social worker seven years ago, I had frequently acted as a locum EDT worker and had always been aware of how different social work in EDT was from either fieldwork or hospital teams. Whilst some of the differences were obvious, e.g. working with much more autonomy and in a generic setting, there was also a more intangible feeling about this difference seemed to be a difference that was peculiar to EDT rather than a difference with other social work settings. I began to ask myself if it was the 'culture' of an EDT which gives rise to this difference and if so what are the particular features of that culture? What have been the historical influences which have shaped both social work practice within EDT and what are the dynamics of interaction of the team both within social services departments as well as with the social work profession itself. The reasons and timing for carrying out this research into my chosen area of social work seemed to meet the criteria as outlined by Fletcher (1993:5)

> **"A Question of Timing**
>
> There is a right time for practitioner research. The right time is when, after initial training and qualification and some

years of experience, a profession feels ready for another substantial step. This professional can say:

- My profession is worthwhile and honourable.
- I am good at my job.
- I intend to stick at it.
- I have doubts and difficulties about the way things are going.
- I am ready for a fresh challenge which involves stepping back to reflect and stepping forward to find out more.
- I have courage and can write.
- I don't want to change jobs just yet.
- I could do with some variety and with career enhancement.
- In my personal life I have most, or all, of the support which I need.

The professional is ready to answer some questions and so make an initial research proposal."

I was also mindful that very little research had been carried out into social work in EDTs and there was a dearth of written material, particularly about contemporary issues and future developments. This concern was reinforced to me when at a pre-practice learning opportunity meeting with a DipSW student, I

experienced both difficulty and embarrassment in trying to answer his very appropriate question "What reading both background and contemporary can you advise prior to the placement?"

At a more personal level of motivation, I have always been impressed by the wealth of experience and ability which exists within the EDT service and it seemed right that somewhere with the written accounts of social work practice during the last quarter of the twentieth century that some mention be made of the contribution which EDTs had made to the social work profession. At a more personal and individual level I shall have completed 30 years post-qualification practice during the carrying out of this research and it seemed timely that I make an attempt to consider in some depth one aspect of social work from a historical as well as contemporary perspective, EDT was for me the obvious choice. With a view to investigating EDt for research purposes, I decided to do so in a qualitative and quantitative manner and this methodology chapter will discuss the need to consider methods of sampling.

Methods of sampling (at both quantitative and qualitative stages of the research) will be discussed. Issues of gender, ethnicity and age will also need careful thought whilst, in keeping with social work

values the research process will be based upon an anti-oppressive principle and practice.

(3) Literature Search

A literature search was carried out at the University of Durham using CD Rom Care as well as traditional cross referencing. A manual search was carried out on abstracts of thesis. In addition, there was a manual search of the index of the weekly social work journal Community Care and the quarterly publication British Journal of Social Work.

(4) Quantitative Research

Bryman (1988) suggests that social surveys and experimental investigation are typical illustrations of quantitative research. They are methods of data collection and analysis which are concerned with "hard" facts and are part of the "positivist" paradigm of social research. Quantitative research places high emphasis on being value free and "pure" in the sense that the researcher has striven hard to minimise any effect which (s)he may have had upon the collection and analysis of the data. Quantitative Research and positivism are scientific methods of knowledge which lends themselves to the objective measurement of

people and things. Bryman (1988) summarises the major aspects of positivism as

"(a) The belief that scientific method is applicable to the study of people; the uniqueness of a person is not an obstacle to this application.

(b) The belief that only those phenomena which are observable, can be called knowledge. Feelings and experience, because they cannot be observed, would thus have no place in a positivist approach.

(c) The notion of inductivism in scientific method, i.e. the scientific formulation of laws, based on theory proven by empirical testing, is crucial to positivist thinking. Scientific method can also be deductive, whereby empirical testing does not prove the theory or law, one deduces that the theory is wrong and revises it.

(d) The values of a positivist approach must of necessity credit the researcher with total objectivity."

Whilst being a valid research methodology for some areas of social research (e.g. population studies, social trends) its limitations within social research

are being increasingly recognised. Hughes (1990), in acknowledging that whilst positivism is the "philosophical epistemology that currently holds intellectual sway within the domain of social research these days suggests this hold is weakening sometimes significantly". However in his defense of positivism Hughes (1990, P16) reminds us that "even if in its simpler philosophical forms it is dead, the spirit of those earlier formulations continues to haunt sociology."

Much of the data for this research, (e.g. that from the postal questionnaire) has been analysed and presented in tabular form but it nevertheless has some if its basis in the feelings and experiences of the EDT workers who complete the questionnaire. Whilst this aspect of the research has a numerical, statistical and quantitative basis, it would not meet Bryman's criteria of positivism because unobservable feelings and experiences have no place in a positivist approach. This research is based upon the view that quantitative and qualitative research are not mutually exclusive but instead have different but complementary roles in obtaining data and developing theory.

(5) Qualitative Research

Any attempts to understand the current issues in EDT

needs to place considerable weight upon the views of social workers and team managers practising within EDTs. Whilst certain numerical data (e.g. size of teams, numbers of post qualification years in practice) can be collected by quantitative methods, there are other data (such as feelings about being in an EDT, attitudes towards training, feelings about management, concerns about the future of the service) where a quantitative approach to data collection would only give a very partial answer to the main theme of the research, i.e. current issues and future development. In order to have validity at the level of meaning and understanding the research needs to explore and captivate the view, hopes and fears of current practitioners and it is qualitative research methods which seem to most naturally recommend themselves to this task. Hakim, (1987:8), in outlining the advantages of qualitative research as a research design comments that:

> "From a research design perspective the fundamental difference between case studies and qualitative research (as the terms are used here) is that qualitative research is concerned with obtaining *people's own accounts* of situations and events, with reporting *their* perspectives and feelings, whereas case study research is concerned with obtaining a rounded picture of a

> situation or event from the perspectives of all the persons involved, usually by using a variety of methods."

Hakim (1988:9), also suggests that qualitative can deal "with causes at the level of the intentional self-directing and knowledgeable individual".

Even at the early stages of data collection, it became clear that a qualitative research methodology would provide rich data as only by listening to the views of practitioners would their feelings and creative ideas be articulated and captured. Again in commenting upon qualitative research Hakim (1987:9) comments that:

> "Qualitative research is concerned with individuals' own accounts of their attitudes, motivations and behaviour. It offers richly descriptive reports of individuals' perceptions and attitudes, beliefs, views and feelings, the meanings and interpretations given to events and things as well as their behaviour ..... It illuminates the motivations which connect attitudes and behaviour, the discontinuities or even contradictions between attitudes and behaviour or how conflicting attitudes and motivations are resolved and particular choices

made. Although qualitative research is about people as a central unit of account, it is not about particular individuals per se; reports focus rather on the various patterns or clusters of attitudes that emerge from the interviews."

(6) Triangulation

The triangulation which I have attempted to achieve within this study is amongst 'hard' quantitative statistical data from questionnaires, 'soft' qualitative data from semi structured interviews and albeit limited literature sources. This research project from the very outset of its methodological design placed heavy emphasis upon achieving triangulation as triangulation is in itself an important criteria in the achieving of scientific validation. This triangulation within the study was of particular importance as owing to the dearth of other studies into the research question, the triangulation between studies referred to by Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) is not available to me.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983, P198) describe triangulation as:

"checking inferences drawn from one set of data

sources by collecting data from others. More generally data source triangulation involves the comparison of data relating to the same phenomenon but deriving from different phases of the fieldwork, different points in the temporal cycles occurring in the setting or as in respondent validation the accounts of participants (including the ethnographer) involved in the setting".

(7) Combination of Quantitative and Qualitative Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used during the study. The initial stages involved qualitative research (open ended unstructured interviews) which led to the development of a quantitative research methodology (postal questionnaires) which in turn helped to develop qualitative research (semi structured interviews) as well as assisting in the selection of both groups and individuals for these data collecting interviews. Because I was researching my own area of activity (i.e. EDT) the combination of the 'insider' qualitative methods and the more objective quantitative method of the outsider perspective would hopefully combine and enhance the outcome of the study. It seemed more important to take a pragmatic

approach and use complementary methodologies rather than be ideologically restrained and probably arrive at a less complete overall picture. In taking this pragmatic eclectic approach I was encouraged by the views of Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:25) who after weighing the merits of naturalism and positivism concluded that:

> "We have examined two contrasting reconstructions of the logic of social research and their implications for ethnography. Neither positivism nor naturalism provides an adequate framework for social research. Both neglect its fundamental reflexivity, the fact that we are part of the social world we study, and that there is no escape from reliance on common-sense knowledge and on common-sense methods of investigation."

(8) Hypothetical/Deductive Thinking Method v. Inductive Thinking Method

Bynner and Stribley, (1986) in setting out the principal components of the scientific process and method of research, distinguishes between deductive and inductive thinking. Deductive thinking starts off with a hypothesis and the researcher then, through falsification methods, tests the hypothesis through observations. Inductive thinking begins with specific

observations and, via that process of data collection, builds towards general patterns. This study of social work in EDTs is very much based upon inductive logic and is guided, not by an existing hypothesis regarding the most effective organisational and practice base for social work in EDTs, but questions issues and is a search for patterns through data collection. The research did not start off with a hypothesis prior to the data collection but was rather guided by questions, issues and a search for patterns from the interviewees.

Patton, (1987:15) comments that qualitative research is the appropriate method of data collection when using the inductive thinking approach as these methods are:

> "Particularly orientated towards exploration, discovery and inductive logic."

He goes on to contrast the hypothetical deductive approach of experimental design which requires the statement of the specific research hypothesis before data collection begins with qualitative analysis which:

> "..... is guided not by hypotheses but by questions, issues and a search for patterns."

It is because this research is explorative and aimed at gathering information through the use of data collection and not by the testing of hypothesis that the induction thinking method has been chosen for this research.

(9) Method of Data Collection

(a) The focus of the research issue

Having had several years experience of social work practice in EDT prior to formally undertaking this research study, there were several phenomena of this social work specialism which seemed worthy of academic study. The reasons for this included their topicality, their apparent commonality amongst other EDT service, their complexity and the simple fact that they had never been previously rigorously addressed either in day to day practice, the social work press or academia.

In commenting on this real difficulty which presents itself at the very early stages of research, i.e. that of defining and redefining the research topic Kane (1983:15) advises that

> "The most difficult hurdle to overcome in doing research is not in learning the techniques or doing the actual work or even writing the report. The biggest obstacle, surprisingly, lies in figuring out what you want to know."

Kane (1983:15) also suggests that two additional problems are very common:

"Choosing a topic which is too broad. Most people start with an idea which is much too big" and

"'Dressing up' a topic. People often feel they have to 'dress' their subject to make it sound more scientific."

I finally chose the topic as it seemed that it was within my resources of time and budget and that the data required would probably be reasonably accessible, providing I selected an appropriate methodology. I also wanted the research to be practise based and to have relevance not only to those working within the EDT but to the social work professionally and to social work students, both of whom may well never experience social work other than in a 9-5 district office based context. The topic therefore had to be specific enough to interest EDT workers (and hopefully for them to give up their free time for questionnaires and interviews) but at the same time to have relevance and provoke interest and debate from practitioners and managers who would not initially see EDT issues having any relevance for themselves.

(b) Open Ended Interviews

The initial stage of data collection was to interview five social workers (previously unknown to me) in neighbouring EDTs and to ascertain in a very general way their views concerning current issues and future developments in EDTs. These initial unstructured interviews which were conducted in an atmosphere of very informal exchanges of views and not necessarily seeking the same information from each person are recommended by Kane (1983).

These interviews helped focus and refine the research topic and were successful in that as predicted they provided me with a more extensive 'list' and appreciation of issues central to the topic than had previously been the case. These initial unstructured interviews together with reading from the (albeit) limited literature research provided me with raw but very rich data from which I then built my questionnaire.

(c) Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was designed with two main features in mind

(1) to achieve as high a response rate as possible. Moses and Kalton (1986) in listing their seven disadvantages of mail questionnaires are clear that non response or low response are the main disadvantages of questionnaires. My concern was heightened by the fact that the social work profession (at practitioner level) has traditionally had comparatively little involvement with the research process when compared with other professions. How was I to achieve a high response rate from a group whose frequent lament is that they are deluged with paperwork?

(2) That the data received from completed questionnaires could be processed in a way which would make it valid as statistical information in its own right and at the same time enable me to develop the content of semi structured interviews which were planned as the next stage of enquiry in the research process.

Kane (1983:85) in commenting on the arrangements for the management of raw data from questionnaires comments that

> "it is important to stress that you must consider the method of analysis of your data at the *design stage* of your questionnaire."

Because of the number of questionnaires which I envisaged being used (approximately 100), together with the numbers of questions being asked (21), I had decided to use computer facilities for the purposes of recording and analysis and, bearing in mind Kane's advice, the questionnaire was designed in such a way that it would be compatible with SPSS (with which the University's computer staff were familiar).

The questions were purposefully designed with pre-coded answers with the exception of the last question which was open ended and gave the respondents the opportunity to state what in their opinion were the most important issues facing EDTs in the next two years. Upon receiving completed questionnaires the different answers to this open ended question were then coded and together with the 18 pre-coded questions were processed using the computer.

(d) Questionnaire Distribution

My original intention had been to distribute the questionnaire (together with covering letter, telephone call and perhaps a personal visit to EDTs) and that by follow up of non responses I would aim to achieve a response rate which would hold both validity and balance. Moses and Kalton (1989:265) in

commenting on methods of reducing the amount of non response in mail surveys caution the researcher about "the likelihood - repeatedly confirmed in practice - that people who do not return questionnaires differ from those who do." However, the response rate was improved by my making use of an opportunity to present a paper at the National Conference for Social Work in Emergency Duty Teams. I invited delegates to take a questionnaire, complete it and return it to me, and, although I was well aware of issues of bias, and that the data returned could not claim to be representative of EDTs nor the selection of respondents be random, I considered that it would be wiser to be opportunistic and recognise both the methodological flaws and limitations of this exercise rather than let this rare window of opportunity pass.

Upon completion of the questionnaire, respondents could return it to me either anonymously or identify themselves.

I had already reached the view that the dominant method of data collection would be by semi-structured interview and at the design stage of the questionnaire I built in an opportunity for respondents to indicate their preparedness to participate in an interview with myself. Whilst 80% of conference delegates collected a questionnaire, 70% of those delegates who did, took

the time and effort to complete the questionnaire and return them to me. Although I was mindful that my methodology of questionnaire could be criticised on grounds of bias and lack of representativeness, I also gained some reassurance concerning representatives as the conference delegates (approximately 150) were all either EDT social workers or EDT team managers. I was nevertheless encouraged by the high response rate which together with the rich data contained in the completed questionnaire encouraged me to feel more comfortable that the decision to maximise the opportunity which my conference attendance had presented had been correct.

(e) Initial Analysis of Data

The completed questionnaires continued to be returned for two months at which point I decided to process the data rather than wait for any further late returns. (It is interesting that the occasional completed questionnaire continued to arrive up to three months after my self imposed cut off data which was 5 months after the questionnaire distribution). Following the analysis of the data, I prepared a short report which, together with a covering letter, I sent to every respondent regardless of whether or not they had indicated their preparedness to be interviewed.

(f) Selection of Interviewees

The completed questionnaires indicated that 45 social workers and team managers of EDTs were willing to be interviewed for the purpose of this research. Whilst the interviewing of all volunteers would have been desirable and would have provided me with a wider and hopefully richer database, to carry out 45 interviews placed as far apart as Perth and Plymouth would have been beyond my resources of budget and time. I clearly needed to make a selection and decided not to do so on a basis of random sampling but to make the selection as representative as possible. In commenting upon random sampling in small studies Judith Bell (1987:73) states:

> "All researchers are dependent on the good will and availability of subjects, and it is likely to be difficult for an individual researcher working on a small-scale project to achieve a true random sample. If that proves to be the case, you may be forced to interview anyone from the total population who is available and willing at the time. Opportunity samples of this kind are generally acceptable as long as the make-up of the sample is clearly stated and the limitations of such data are realized."

The data from the questionnaires enabled me to select interviewees from different types of authorities ranging from inner cities to shire authorities including some authorities where local government reorganisation was planned to take place, those authorities where no change was envisaged and those authorities where future arrangements were still unclear. It was equally important that the interview group was as representative (i.e. of those colleagues offering to be interviewed) as practically possible in terms of gender, ethnicity, age and number of years' experience of working on an EDT. It was also important to interview workers in different 'types' of EDTs ranging from small teams (the smallest team consisted of three social workers and no administrative staff) in an inner city, to large teams (the largest team consisted of 26 staff) in a county authority containing a capital city. The questionnaire also enabled me to identify the different management arrangements for EDTs and I ensured that the EDT with the three different types of management arrangements were represented in the interviews. Whilst the majority of interviews took place in England, some of them were conducted in Scotland where of course legislation is different to that in England and Wales. To enquire into arrangements for out of hours social work provision in Northern Ireland where the institutional base for

social work is the joint Health and Social Services Boards, would have added considerable richness to the study but was outside available resources of time and budget.

Having selected my interviewees and recognised the limitations and bias of my methodology, I was encouraged by Bell (1987:73) who when commenting on the selection of interviewees writes:

> "Preliminary interviews.... This is the stage when you are trying to find out which areas or topics are important and when people directly concerned with the topic are encouraged to talk about what is of central significance to them. At this stage you are looking for clues as to which areas should be explored and which left out.... Most interviews carried out in the main data-collecting stage of the research will come somewhere between the completely structured and the completely unstructured point on the continuum."
>
> "All researchers are dependent on the good will and availability of subjects, and it is likely to be difficult for an individual researcher working on a small-scale project to achieve a true random sample. If that proves to be the case, you may be forced to interview anyone from the total

population who is available and willing at the time. Opportunity samples of this kind are generally acceptable as long as the make-up of the sample is clearly stated and the limitations of such data are realized."

(g) Access

Unlike other professions such as medicine and nursing, the social work profession does not have a standing committee or other mandatory body on research and ethics to which potential researchers are obliged to present their research projects and have them scrutinized in terms of ethics and validity. At an organisational level, there is no requirement that social work researchers need to seek the countenance of the relevant Director of Social Services prior to gaining access to departmental information. Hopefully these loose arrangements will change as the research element of professional social work training becomes increasingly recognised as a core competency (reference to follow). Whilst the lack of a formal protocol for access may be seen as one stage less in the research process, the consequences are that the research is then heavily dependent upon his interpersonal skills, informal networks and what Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) refer to as field relationships (P77).

(h) Preparation for Interview

Data from the literature search, the initial unstructured interviews and the completed questionnaires as well as from my own experiences as a social work practitioner, were the basis for the focused semi structured interviews. The interview format was piloted and minor adjustments made. I anticipated the interviews lasting between 1 and 1½ hrs. and was anticipating that most interviewees would be happy to discuss EDT issues at considerable length. I was mindful of Johnson's advice (1984:70) that "it is the responsibility of the interviewer, not the interviewee to end an interview." I decided that the most effective method of recording the interview was by the use of tape recorder and transcribing. As a professional group social workers, including of course myself, are not familiar with research interviews being a part of their professional activity and the consent of the interview to being tape recorded would require sensitive handling.

Arrangements for interview were usually made by telephone and confirmed in writing. All the interviews took place in the EDT office and at the convenience of the interviewee. When there was a time gap between interviewing social workers from the same team, I emphasised the importance of confidentiality

amongst interviews. Any prior discussion of interview control may well have influenced the interviews. In stressing the importance of preparation and planning for interviews as part of the overall research process, Cohen (1976, P82) comments

> "like fishing, interviewing is an activity requiring careful preparation, much patience and considerable practice if the eventual reward is to be a worthwhile catch."

(i) The Conducting of Interviews

Having carried out a pilot interview with colleagues and made minor adjustments to the semi structured format I arranged my first interview with one of the volunteers who on the postal questionnaire had indicated his preparedness to make himself available for interview. As with all subsequent interviews, I started the interview by thanking them for making themselves available for interview, spoke briefly about my research and then covered the "ground rules" of the interview. These ground rules covered the issue of confidentiality and anonymity as well as clarifying my role as part time research student and that of a local authority social worker.

I had always taken great care through the study to use University headed notepaper for all correspondence, a measure which reinforced in a positive way my two very different though overlapping roles, and I am certain that in doing so prevented any misunderstanding.

All the interviewees were keen to talk and although there was occasional initial uncomfortableness about the use of the tape recorder (perhaps emanating from myself in the early interviews), this soon disappeared when I reinforced the ethical weight placed upon confidentiality/anonymity.

A total of 18 interviews were carried out in 5 authorities, one of which was with a dedicated manager, four were with player managers and 14 with social workers. The gender split was 66% men, 33% women and there was one representative of the ethnic community.

(10) Researching one's own activity

Whilst all of the interviews and questionnaires were conducted with social workers who were not employed by my own authority and I made conscious efforts to separate my role as researcher and practitioner, the whole process very much felt like an "insider account". This is perhaps because EDT workers

numerically represent a small percentage of the social work profession, are an easily identifiable discreet group of workers who usually at a practical level enjoy a certain 'taken for grantedness' when contacting each other about operational practice issues - often in the middle of the night. In her chapter about .... "the problems of 'inside' research, Bell (1987, P44) considers that there are "definite advantages in being an inside researcher." These advantages include having an intimate knowledge of the context of the research, the best way to secure the co-operation of 'gatekeepers' (both formal and informal) in arranging access, whilst the commonality of being on EDT proved to be a very effective ice breaker. Perhaps it is because as individuals many EDT workers work alone at night and are a very isolated group that Bell's findings, (P44), that "colleagues welcomed the opportunity to air problems and to have their situation analysed by someone who understood the practical day to day realities of their task" seemed to be a constant feature throughout the interview. This keenness of social workers to participate in the research process is not however peculiar to social workers in EDT. Smith (1995) in reviewing "Social Workers as Users and Beneficiaries of Research" comments that "An important new study shows that social workers are crying out to have closer links with researchers and to be involved in

research relevant to their practice." She continues "While social workers feel there is a lack of liaison between researchers and themselves, they maintain a positive attitude to the value of research".

The majority of social workers who made themselves available for interview did so in their own time and I would suggest that being an "insider" facilitated access considerably. Presenting a paper at the National Conference for EDT social workers, conducting the postal questionnaire, sending a summary of my findings to every participant were all based on the principle of good social research practice and helped considerably . However, although I have no empirical evidence I do hold the view that my being an EDT worker and being known as such helped at the interview stage, both in practical terms but perhaps more importantly led to a more informed interview revealing rich data. In commenting upon the relationship between the researcher and the interviewees and how this may affect the outcome, Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:78) are of the opinion that

> "Whether or not people have knowledge of social research, they are often more concerned with what kind of person the researcher is than with the research itself. They will try to gauge how far he or she can be trusted, what he or she might be

> able to offer as an acquaintance or friend, and perhaps also how easily he or she could be manipulated or exploited."

Whilst to research one's own activity is methodologically and ethically acceptable, caution needs to be urged when taking an ethnographic approach to accommodate researcher bias. Whilst the emphasis during the interview was on open ended non directive questioning, this does not suggest that my role as interviewer was passive but my role was to stimulate the interviewee. In advocating reflective interviewing both as a counter measure against bias and as a method of increasing theoretical sensitivity, Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:110) comment that

> "The role of the interviewer in non-directive interviewing appears to be passive. This is misleading though. The interviewer must be an active listener, he or she must listen to what is being said in order to assess how it relates to the research focus and how it may reflect the circumstances of the interview."

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) whilst recognising that the influence of the researcher on the production of data is an important issue see the issue as being wider than simply trying to eliminate this bias in

order to obtain data which is more "pure" and "uncontaminated". They recognise that regardless of interview skills and methods it is a problem which cannot be avoided. Indeed they suggest that given insight and self awareness, the role and influences of the interviewer should not be regarded as a source of bias which must be removed but that the interaction can add dimension to the data. They make the point that (1983:112)

> "minimising the influence of the researcher is not the only, or always even a prime, consideration. Assuming we understand how the presence of the researcher shaped the data, we can interpret the latter accordingly and it may provide important insights, allowing us to develop or test elements of our theory."

Encouraged by Hammersley and Atkinson 1983, P112) remarks concerning research bias during insider interviews, i.e.

> "The aim is not to gather 'pure' data that are free from potential bias. There is no such thing. Rather the goal must be to discover the correct manner of interpreting whatever data we have"

I went ahead and arranged and carried out the interviews.

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Chapter 3

The Retrenchment of the Welfare State

Introduction

Having addressed the historical development of EDTs in Chapter 1 and the research methodology in Chapter 2, Chapters 3 and 4 will be an analysis of and commentary upon the current issues within EDT. Chapters 5 and 6 will be concerned with the future of this specialism of social work practice and will attempt to highlight some of the future developments which social workers, social work students and social work managers within EDT may choose to reflect upon. The substantive issues in these chapters will include those concerns which have been expressed by colleagues, both in postal questionnaire and during semi structured interview as well as occasional insights from contemporary readings. The setting and context for the discussion of current social work, social policy and managerial/ organisational issues will range from that at micro level (e.g. local concerns re the purchase/provider split) to that of a macro level when subjects such as the Health/Social Care divide and the European Time Directive and their implications for EDT are being explored.

It is hoped that from the exploration of issues during these chapters that the concept of a culture of social work within the EDT service will emerge, leading to discussion of how and why this has happened and of the role of sub cultures within large organisations. Whilst the core social work issues of genericism, training opportunities, supervision, social work values, anti oppressive practice and the role of professionals within bureaucracy will be central to the debate, and will feature largely in Chapters 4 and 5. The discussion will also consider the problem of paradox and its effect upon EDTs. There will also be a consideration of the concepts of both power and influence within organisations and an attempt to couch discussion of some of these issues within the framework of a management theory paradigm.

Whilst this research is not a longitudinal study following a cohort group of EDT workers, it is nevertheless the case that during the study the vast majority of EDT colleagues have been experiencing organisational and institutional as well as changes in social work practice. How from an EDT perspective has this change been managed and what are some of the consequences of these changes?

For some EDT workers the changes have been restricted to practice developments within their own agency, e.g.

further specialisation, the purchase provider split and the potentially further isolation of EDT from the remainder of both the social work profession and the organisation. For other EDT staff, however, the changes albiet 'locally' based have been much more fundamental and far reaching when a local authority will have been dissolved and been replaced by several new unitary authorities. What are the implications for its workers and its users in EDT service, where the new local authority is not sufficiently large for an EDT to be viable? In addition to changes peculiar to an individual local authority, EDT workers continue to practise social work (often in isolation) against social policy changes which are taking place on a much wider socio-political canvas. Strategic movements such as the contracting culture, the push (led by central government) for local authorities to become 'enablers' and purchasers rather than direct providers and the retrenchment of municipal welfare are all movements which can be seen as part of the dismantling of the welfare state and are the backcloth against which EDT workers continue to carry out their day to day (or night to night) social work practice. At a more operational level, EDT workers are still trying to manage the public ambiguity and ambivalence towards the social work profession, with particular regard to both child protection and community care of service users with a mental illness. The fine balance between

protecting vulnerable people and over zealous intrusion into and the undermining of family life requires a highly sensitive and measured approach if the often competing values of both personal liberties and individual safety are to be respected. However there is an added dimension for the majority of EDT workers as these complex situations are often faced alone, without specialist advice and managerial support at a time of night when feelings and emotions are usually heightened. Social work assessments are frequently made and implemented in very fraught circumstances with limited information resulting in significant consequences for both worker and service user alike. It should be no surprise that the major theme of the Third National Conference on Emergency Duty Social Work (June 1996) was "damned if you do - damned if you don't". This theme of the public consequences of decision making in EDT was highly relevant to all groups of service users including the frail elderly, child protection and sufferers from mental illness living in the community.

(1) EDTs Survival of "Welfare Reforms"

Respondents completing the postal questionnaire identified the retrenchment and dismantling of the welfare state as being the most important concept which was currently affecting their work (53%) with 52% of that number locating that retrenchment in the financial pressure placed upon Local Authorities by Central Government spending.

Whilst EDT practitioners are echoing the views of writers of current social policy, they were also basing their observations on their experiences at the sharp end of social work practice. Bamford (1990:159) in his consideration of the future of social work commented that "the troubled environment in which social workers have to operate today is difficult and uncertain". Since that time many of the concerns about the political context of welfare detailed in McCarthy's work (1989) "The New Politics of Welfare - An Agenda for the 1990s" have occurred. Whilst many of these social policy changes (e.g. towards Health, Housing and Social Security) lie outside the Personal Social Services provided by local authorities they nevertheless have had real practice and budgetary implications for social work organisations and practitioners. A clear example is the withdrawal of housing benefits for unemployed school leavers often

leading directly to requests from young people and their families to either provide accommodation within the Children Act or to make financial assistance particularly towards social housing.

Whilst there was the view that financial restrictions by central government to its own departments (particularly DSS and NHS) had caused an indirect effect upon social work in EDT, it was the direct squeezing of local authority finances which most concerned EDT workers. Where social workers were asked during interview to discuss the source and nature of these financial cuts, they also identified Central Government measure such as Rate Capping and the SSA as the source of limiting/reducing income. Respondents commented that at the same time there was increasing responsibility for social service departments brought about by such legislation as the Children Act 1989, the Community Care Act 1989 all of which had placed increasing demands upon what they saw as dwindling resources.

I was initially surprised at the significance given by EDT workers, not only to the issue of the current retrenchment in welfare but also to the thoughtfully retrospective and long term view in which they placed social policy and social planning in a clear historical context. However, many EDT social workers,

both as individuals and as teams have been in situ for a long time and are well placed to observe, reflect upon and articulate these changes, and of course to respond to them in their social work practice. Analysis of the postal questionnaire indicate that 32% of respondents had been in EDT between 6-10 years and a further 32% had been so for more than 14 years. When it is remembered that a minimum of 3 years post qualification social work experience is also usually considered to be a necessary prerequisite to join an EDT, these interviews have been carried out amongst an unusually experienced group of workers and such retrospective and considered views should not be a source of surprise. I would also suggest that the current climate of social policy with its dismantling of the welfare state is so noticeable to EDT workers because the majority will have practised social work in very different socio-political climate and the differences will be much more marked than had they worked in the profession for a shorter time. Many EDT workers would have been in day time mainstream practice both preceding and during the immediate post Seebohm years when Central Government response to remedy the social need as outlined by Seebohm was "by any standards, both speedy and substantial" (Webb and Wistow, 1987:160). It is salutary to remember that the formative professional years of many EDT workers would be in the mid 70s when the growth of government,

as predicted in the White Paper 1973/4 increased the growth rate for personal social services from 6.8% to 8.5% (Webb and Wistow (1987:161) remind us that,

> "The ten year planning circular confirmed that growth rate on this scale was to be a long term feature of the personal social services: authorities were asked to submit plans on an assumption of *10* per cent (my italics) annual compound growth rates for current expenditure throughout the ten years to 1982/83."

Whilst observation and analysis of changes in both social policy and social work as they relate to the development and current practice of EDT social work are important, such description and analysis are of necessity limited. However, should the reader seek a wider and more detailed discourse surrounding these change and their effect upon the social work task then "The Shape of Things to Come" (Jones 1991) provides more detailed reading, particularly of the 1980s decade. In addition to their cognitive observations about diminishing financial resources, EDT workers commented during interview about how they felt the current financial climate was affecting their role and task. "We are having to do more and more of a mopping up operation as daytime workers are unable to deal with things properly and work gets passed to us."

My own observations as an EDT practitioner are that there is a much higher threshold for social work intervention by daytime staff than was previously the case. The undertaking of preventative work with families by Local Authority Social Work Staff who are considered to be at risk of social and/or family breakdown is almost non-existent. As a daytime team manager of a child care team recently informed me "Unless it (i.e. the referral) is child protection, it doesn't get a look in". One of the consequences of a poorly resourced daytime service is that the circumstances of the service user worsen and a genuine 'crisis' arises necessitating EDT intervention. The other possible outcome is that as the knowledge of EDT service becomes more widespread, both members of the public as well as professionals in other agencies begin to view the EDT not only as a gatekeeper which may have a wider tolerance of intervention but they also begin to regard the EDT as a service which is more accessible and user friendly.

When during interview EDT workers were asked about their gatekeeping role, they commented that they need a constant reminding and reinforcing of the boundaries of their intervention and that whilst the request for social work intervention may well be appropriate, the response and ensuing intervention should be from the daytime services and not from the EDT. Social workers

in EDT clearly feel uncomfortable in not responding themselves to such expressed need and often knowing that a referral from themselves to daytime services may well not secure an appropriate intervention. In commenting upon the consequences of the retrenchment of welfare with particular regard to social work intervention by EDT (or rather non intervention) the following comments were made to me during semi-structured interviews:

> "... we used to deal with it (i.e. work unallocated by daytime teams) because there was nobody else. We learned to say no. That is part of what we have learnt in my opinion. "This is not an emergency" is what we have learned to say when we answered the phone and that was quite hard because you were so used (i.e. prior to retrenchment) to saying "Yes".

Another interviewee commented

> "We see ourselves purely for emergencies only."
> "We can say no much more effectively" (i.e. than daytime workers)
> "I think it is clear that we need to be very strict about our boundaries .... if the boundaries start widening in terms of what you deal with then you can't actually deal with the

crisis work."

"there's constant pressure to get involved in other (i.e. inappropriate to EDT) things."

Throughout the interviews I was surprised not only by the awareness that retrenchment was having an effect upon social work practice within EDT but was equally impressed by the sensitivity deployed and new skills learnt when "having to say no". A response by a very experienced EDT worker was typical of the discussions about how EDT workers could adapt to these changes in a way which did not leave the service user feeling even more dejected and marginalised.

"I think that part of the job is a lot of the time explaining why you can't actually respond to them (i.e. service users) and why it is not appropriate to respond."

"I find I do a lot of that (i.e. trying to say no constructively), possibly more than other people because I feel it's quite important not to just say "We can't help" but we can't help because of whatever ...."

Kay and Jeffery (1990:23-24) comment upon this in their article "Risk and Rationing in EDT".

"Saying no to a referral is inevitable and happens to all social workers whether as part of their caseloads or on office duty. It occasionally leads to a complaint. For EDT social workers the option of saying no is an integral part of the work."

"In reality social workers in out of hours teams are faced with especially difficult professional and organisational dilemmas over their decisions to requests for a visit away from the office, and also at times over action subsequent to a visit."

(2) Ease of Access to EDT workers

As an EDT practitioner myself I am aware that professionals in other agencies appreciate the accessibility of the service. When responding to a request by a GP for a visit by an Approved Social Worker (Mental Health) (ASW), I realised from my conversation with him how relatively uncomplicated access to an ASW service is on EDT compared with daytime services. He commented:

"This is marvellous - that the person who answers the phone is the same person who will be making a joint visit with me."

When I tactfully pursued the conversation I quickly realised the frustration which other professionals often have (or perceive that they have) in accessing ASW during "normal office hours". Perhaps accounts are anecdotal and subject to exaggeration but comments such as "the ASW is in a meeting", "(s)he is covering two districts" and "I'll give them a bleep and ask them to contact you as soon as possible" do have a certain resonance and whilst stereotype prejudices about social workers, these remarks cannot be dismissed as being totally without foundation. When asked to comment upon this during interview, a team manager of an inner city EDT commented

> "With mental health, certainly, the consultants hold back on referrals until EDT are on duty because they know that when they pick up a phone they come straight to an ASW. Whereas during the daytime the first person they meet is a telephonist, then the duty clerk, then the duty officer, then the team leader of adult services who can't find an ASW on his patch and he has to go to another patch to find an ASW. The consultants find this very frustrating so they hold on until 5 o'clock when they can speak to an ASW straight off."

Foster carers are a similar group who use the EDT appropriately for crises which occur "out of hours" but also appreciate and understandably make use of the EDT service because of the appeal of the immediate availability of a social worker to talk to. during interview, a worker pointed out

> "It's very difficult not to become inappropriately involved with a fostering situation when a foster carer has been trying unsuccessfully to seek advice or a visit from daytime services and has then rang ourselves, i.e. the EDT, and is seeking our intervention. I am always prepared to listen and to fax the social worker or team manager the next day with a request for an urgent response that day but I know only too well that, given the high workload and current staff shortages within that district office, it is highly likely that there will be an unsatisfactory response if one at all and the foster carer will be ringing the EDT again the following night."

Whilst this type of scenario well illustrates one of the important roles of an EDT, i.e. the safety net and ultimate back stop role, it also gives rise to perhaps a more important topic. This surrounds the managerial influence which the EDT is able to bring to bear

within the wider department. The degree of influence seems to be determined both by the internal structure of the EDT and how the team is managed but more importantly by the managerial links and networks which the EDT has with the remainder of the organisation, i.e. the social service department. It is the presence and effectiveness of this managerial interplay between the EDT and the organisation at both operational and strategic levels which will largely determine both the power and the influences which EDTs will be able to bring to bear upon policy, practice and ultimately outcomes for service users. The issue of power and influences is central to any debate addressing issues within EDT and will be discussed as an issue in its own right later in the dissertation. Whilst, during the semi-structured interview, I was discussing the issue of accessibility of the EDT service, an experienced team manager developed the point further by suggesting that it is not only the accessibility of the EDT service which encourages high usage by other professions but it is the genericism of the EDT service which also commends itself to other agencies.

> "I think we (i.e. the EDT) are well used and are very popular with casualty staff at hospitals as well as custody sergeants and desk staff at police stations because they only need to ring

> one number and the full range of social work services are available to them. It doesn't matter if there is someone mentally ill in the cells, a P.A.C.E. interview to be carried out, a homeless young person at the desk or an elderly person at risk in the community, they just press one button and I can see why that facility appeals in the way that it does."

When in 1987, 17 years after the Seebohm report, Webb and Wistow were commenting on the Seebohm reforms they remind us (pre Seebohm) of "the confusion caused to the public by organisational and professional 'Balkanisation'. The need from the public's point of view, it was argued was for 'a single door on which to knock'. Is this not the very service which the EDT now uniquely provides?

With the demise of generic social work and the geographical location of some social workers away from district social services offices (e.g. many ASWs are now members of multi disciplinary teams based in community mental health centres), other professionals find the single contact point of an EDT and one worker being able to respond in a competent manner across the whole range of social work problems a refreshing change to the response provided by very busy district offices with increasingly highly specialised teams.

Whilst debate continues as to whether or not Seebohm envisaged generic teams or generic social workers there is no doubt that Seebohm envisaged all appropriate social work services to be placed in a local geographical location. In commenting upon one social worker being able to respond to different needs, Seebohm's view was

> "We consider that a family or individual in need of social care should, as far as possible, be served by a single worker (para 156).

Whilst the provision of out of hours social work was <u>not</u> within the terms of reference of the Seebohm Committee (an interesting observation in itself) it is paradoxical that the EDT service which was not even a concept at the time of the introduction of the Seebohm reforms (1971) is now, 25 years later, the last bastion of a generic social work service.

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CHAPTER 4

Supervision and Training

Introduction

Supervision and training within EDTs is relevant to this thesis as a substantive issue in its own right. A constant theme throughout the research has been the importance of training in order not only to maintain current competence, but to ensure that EDT workers are well equipped to deal with future change in legislation, practice and departmental guidelines.

However, in addition to its relevance as a substantive issue, supervision and training adds a particularly useful secondary perspective to this thesis as it provides insights into how EDTs have become marginalised by social service departments, how this has affected both teams and individuals. The inclusion of supervision and training within this thesis is also important as it is a clear illustration of how, when approached in a positive manner both by individuals and organisations, it can be a vital counterbalance to the marginalisation and isolation which easily besets Emergency Duty Teams.

Both the postal questionnaires and semi-structured interviews indicated that supervision and training were high profile issues within EDT. 20% of respondents considered that ongoing training and supervision were the most important issue for them as EDT workers, a view which was increasingly reflected within interviews. Concern surrounding the issue of training and supervision not only concerned the traditional practice of supervision as carried out within local authority social service departments but the need to keep au fait with new legislation and codes of practice across the full range of social work task ranging from P.A.C.E. interviews to Community Care Assessment. This is particularly the case in those EDTs where social workers often work alone and without access to consultation in the traditional manner enjoyed by daytime colleagues. In emphasising the importance of training for EDT work, an EDT team manager of a medium sized shire authority was very clear that ... EDT members:

> "require it (i.e. training) not just as much as but more than daytime services and because of the vast amount of responsibility that the team have but because we speak <u>for the department</u> out of hours."

Training issues in this chapter will be discussed by a consideration of

(1) Regular planned individual supervision
(2) Training events (both in house) and specialist EDT event
(3) Post qualification training
(4) EDT as a placement learning opportunity

(1) Regular Planned Individual Supervision

The regular, planned and formal supervision sessions which take place between social workers and supervisor is now a mainstream core activity of most local authority social service departments. For example, Northumberland County Council Social Service Department have a document entitled "The Supervision Process".

The amount of supervision occurring within EDTs has wide variation between local authorities (the determining factor as to whether it occurs or not appears to be whether the EDT is systemically integrated within the department or is "bolted on").

When, during interview, I asked an EDT worker to tell me about the supervision he received his reply was "What supervision?" Sadly this type of response was

not limited to one authority. It appears not only illogical but dangerous for departments, social workers and of course service users for this most isolated group of staff, frequently working alone or at night, often in fraught circumstances responding to the full range of social work tasks not to be included in the usual supervision process. My research strongly leads me to believe that it is neither professional arrogance nor personal indifference amongst EDT workers which has created this situation but rather a reluctance within Social Services Departments to pay staff for the small number of additional hours which supervision would incur.

It is also sometimes the case that at the time of introduction of some EDT no hours other than time "on shift" were provided for reflecting at the best a managerial ignorance of EDT needs and at the worst an indifference to and marginalisation of the service. However, in those teams when supervision did occur, workers comments were predominantly positive, the common theme being that it was important that the supervisor had working experience of social work in EDT. The most popular model (from the work worker's perspective) was when the team manager was a 'player manager' i.e. (s)he had managerial responsibilities and tasks but continued to participate on the rota and undertake shifts. Conversely there was a healthy

scepticism where the only supervision (apart from a collegiate/peer group model) available to EDT workers was from a manager of daytime services. This was commented upon during interviews, the following being a good illustration:

> "There is no point in talking to him (i.e. the middle grade daytime manager) about social work in the EDT. He has never done a shift or worked on EDT and has no idea of the social work issues which we face."

However, in those teams where supervision occurred, it seemed to work well and was appreciated by staff who found the exercise both useful and supportive. The main benefits appeared to surround discussing difficult situations which they had dealt with, liaison with daytime services and trying to minimise the negative consequences of isolation. In discussing models of supervision with team managers, it became clear that careful thought had been given to both the process and method of supervision and the ways in which it could be more appropriately focused and tuned to the needs of EDT workers. When discussing the issue of supervision with a team manager he was clear that:

"First of all supervision is every bit as important if not more so for EDT workers as for those in daytime work. However, you can't use the traditional models such as looking at a case, setting an objective, monitoring it and reviewing progress say in 3 months, because we don't have cases as such. Our work is very short term intervention at a time of crisis in people's lives and it is part of my job to ensure that social workers are as well equipped as possible to carry out their work. It is very important that because of our rota system I do work alongside every team member at times and this is a live supervision of sorts from which we can both bring issues to our formal supervision sessions."

Formal supervision was also seen as a forum where both criticisms as well as positive feedback from daytime services could be discussed.

The main benefits of supervision, both from the point of view of the supervisor and the supervisee were seen to be the individual professional development of workers and the identification and response to the training needs of individuals and teams.

Training Events

The availability of 'in house' training events is a traditional and well established method of ensuring that social work staff can keep themselves au fait with contemporary changes in legislation, policy and departmental guidelines. To enable EDT workers to maintain their portfolio of competence across the full width of social work activities, it has been important that EDT workers together with daytime colleagues have attended such in house training events. However, during the past five years legislation and methods and models of practice and organisational structure have influenced social work in such a fundamental way which few could have foreseen. In commenting upon this phenomenon Osborne H reminds us that

> "1990 ushered in a sea change in the practice of social work in the United Kingdom, confirming the trends in social policy of the preceding years. In England and Wales, two major pieces of legislation - the Children Act 1989 and the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 - became the cornerstones of SSD activities. The NHS and Community Care Act 1990 also applied to Scotland but the Children (Scotland) Act was only passed in 1995 and circulars and guidance are awaited."

> "The Children Act changed fundamentally the relationship between children, families and social workers, emphasising not only work in partnership with parents but also parental responsibilities. For the first time children with disabilities were seen as children with special needs and under Section 17 of the Act became clearly a part of the remit of local authority SSDs."

EDT staff have considered their attendance at training events re Community Care and the Children Act to be essential not only because of the substantive matters about which they were being trained but also because in house training provided a unique opportunity to appreciate the changing culture of the wider social service department and to meet colleagues from daytime services. However, the reality of EDT workers being able to participate in these in house training events is often far from satisfactory. In their article Training in Out of Hours Duty Teams, Clark and Skelt (1993) make the following observation "Bearing in mind the small size of EDTs, the rotas they work make it difficult in many cases, to fit in daytime commitments and maintain out of hours cover. It has been difficult to convince management at all for training in many areas".

When during interviews, an EDT social worker was asked to comment upon the usefulness or otherwise of in house training the reply of

> "Yes, of course what we learn is useful and necessary, we need to know about these things (i.e. legislation etc.) but for me, the main benefit is being able to actually meet people who we would otherwise never meet and only speak to on the telephone or send faxes to each other. It somehow makes the job more manageable and rewarding, particularly when there is a difficult piece of work involved and there is plenty of scope for disagreement."

(c) Initiatives for Consortia based Training for EDT Workers

Whilst EDT workers considered it beneficial to join daytime colleagues in contemporary 'in house' training events, a constantly emerging theme during the 1980s was the need for specialised training for EDT workers which would provide particular focus on the EDT perspective of social work and social work intervention. Clark (1992) recalls how, as the newly appointed principal officer Lancashire EDT, she developed an initiative for consortia style training for EDT workers involving 17 North West authorities, but with initial funding to be underwritten by Lancashire. The need for this type of training was recognised at the BASW sponsored 'Out of Hours' Conference, whilst both a BASW Out of Hours Special Interest Group and a Social Services Inspectorate report exposed the need for such training. The article describes how the training sessions had to be appropriate for this experienced group of social workers "pitched at the right level, well planned and well presented in order to meet approval and ensure continued attendance". Evaluation after three years (by outside consultants) commented that "Consumer satisfaction was high, and a further list of training requirements was identified including community care, new technology and links with inspection units". As

part of my research into social work in EDTs I was pleased to accept an invitation to the North West Regional training event (now 5 days a year) where it was clear that these regular, well planned and well attended training events are highly popular with EDT workers and are seen as the major forum for education, networking and the development of informal support and exchange of ideas at both formal and informal levels.

Clark's article concludes with a reference to the (then) newly established Yorkshire and Humberside EDT Training Group which has developed along a model which is similar to the North West initiative and appears to enjoy equal success. I attended their three-day conference in October 1996 and was very impressed not only by the enthusiasm for the wide range of topics under discussion but by the informed debate of EDT issues taking place. It is because these events are sharply focused upon the training needs of EDT, have grown from within the EDT service itself (c.f. a training event organised by mainstream social services training departments) and have regional significance, that they have already established themselves as a core activity for EDT staff with subsequent high rates of attendance. As Clark (1993, P4) points out

> "They (i.e. EDT staff) work on very tight rotas, which means that funding time for training or any

other purpose not directly related to running the service is difficult."

However, it is because these events are so well planned that high levels of attendance are ensured which in turn encourages a wide range of high calibre speakers. Speakers at the most recent Yorkshire and Humberside training event included a Member of Parliament, a member of the DSS Inspectorate and a senior university lecturer with special interest in developing post-qualification training within EDTs.

Regional training consortia certainly appear to have a great deal to offer as a training forum amongst those local authorities where they have occurred they have rapidly developed from a local initiative to a consolidated position within the overall training strategy for EDT workers.

(d) National Training Conference on Emergency Duty Social Work

In September 1993 and again in June 1996 the above conferences were held at King's College London. The focus of both these conferences was about specific areas of social work practice within EDT (e.g. child protection and mental health assessments). The conference agendas (appendix C) clearly reflected the recognition by EDT workers that their very focused social work practice needs to be considered against the wider back-cloth of developments in both practice and legislation. The opening speaker at the 1996 conference was Dame Justice Butler-Sloss who spoke about changes in child care practice since the introduction of the Children Act whilst the final speaker was Professor David Brandon, Recent Chair of BASW.

The presence of two ex-cabinet ministers Tin Yeo MP and Tony Benn MP as speakers was also a reflection of the way in which at a macro political level social policy and Central Government intervention has direct influence upon the role and tasks of EDT workers and managers. Both events took place over 2 full days and were very well attended by over 150 delegates. A wide range of local authorities were represented, geographically ranging from Devon to Tayside, with densely populated inner cities, London Boroughs and

shire authorities sponsoring EDT delegates. Whilst these conferences had much in common with regional consortia based events (i.e. they were well planned and specifically targeted at training need of EDT workers) they offered different and additional training opportunities for EDT workers. Unlike consortia events these conferences have been organised by the independent sector (Professional Training Associates) and at a cost of £230 per delegate (c.f. £100 per local authority regardless of numbers of delegates), attendance at these National Conferences present very different budget implications for those local authorities sponsoring delegates. The fact that local authorities who are 'high profile' members of regional consortia continue to sponsor delegates to these national conferences (and there is even reason to suggest that they will continue to do so) adds weight to the view that this national training event does not duplicate those which are organised at a regional level but offer a different and additional dimension to EDT training needs. The importance of this training event cannot be over-estimated as it is the only national forum where debate is sharply focused upon EDT issues.

A consideration of topics for lecture/discussions at the national conference strongly suggests that these conferences are able to focus on national issues which

are affecting legislation, social policy and ultimately social work practice within EDT, regardless of geographical/regional location. The conference of 1996 embraced a wide range of topics including the Children Act 1989, Mental Health Act, the work of Childline and its liaison with EDTs as well as Housing Legislation and the legal principles and practice guidelines underpinning EDT response to the abduction of children and their threatened removal from U.K. jurisdiction. The conference had a very 'national' feeling about it and reinforced the view that it is often the solitary EDT worker who is left to deal with these complex situations on behalf of the social services departments and often without specialist professional advice and management support. The geographical location of these national conferences (Kings College, London) has undoubtedly facilitated the attendance of high profile figures and high calibre speakers whilst the event being held in London immediately negates any feelings of a provincial perspective. The 1996 Conference was opened by Dame E.B. Sloss and the debate following her opening paper again reinforced the view that if EDT workers are front line professionals whose training portfolios need to be as complete and contemporary as any other member of the social work profession.

Senior Members of Parliament from all parties, legal representatives from the office of the Official Solicitor, Legal Directors of large national voluntary organisations such as Shelter and Mind attended as conference speakers and a culminating address by Professor David Brandon (1996) all added weight to the view that the EDT specialism of social work is important and has validity.

An interesting development at the 1996 conference was the resolution that a letter be sent both to the Association of Directors of Social Services as well as to the DSS Inspectorate expressing concern re the possible withdrawal of the DSS out of hours service. Whilst to suggest that at a national level EDT workers have become a pressure group influencing social policy nationally would be an exaggeration, nevertheless such a conference motion represents a significant development. It will be interesting to see if conference motions become a regular feature at national EDT conferences and to reflect upon both the nature and effectiveness of such measures.

However, during informal discussions at the conference the issue of paradox frequently arose, where speakers were reminding EDT workers of their professional role and reinforcing their organisational importance and yet at the same time many EDT workers were lamenting

their marginalisation partly by the social work profession but even more so by their employing authorities. As one conference delegate put it to me:

> "We (i.e. EDT workers) are the eyes, ears and mouthpiece of the department for more than 70% of the week but for the other 30% of the time we don't exist as far as many middle and senior managers are concerned. Unless we make a fuss about training and our (i.e. EDT) involvement in organisational change we are completely forgotten. It is out of sight out of mind. It feels really strange to be attending such an important conference but at the same time I know that as soon as I am working my next shift I will feel completely ignored by (social service) departmental management."

This attitude was reinforced when, at the 1993 National Conference, I was invited to present a paper exploring the culture of EDT. During this presentation I commented on the fact that we were attending an important national conference, with eminent speakers representing other professions (in particular law and medicine) and yet the sole speaking representative of the social work profession was myself as a basic grade social worker. A show of hands confirmed that amongst the 150 or so delegates,

team managers of EDT were the most senior level of organisational management represented. Tension was added to my argument of suggested senior management indifference to EDTs by my comment that had the focus of the national conference been focused upon almost any other discipline of social work from adoption to the community care of service users with learning disability then both middle and senior levels of social services management would have been well represented at the conference. The immediate and spontaneous response from the conference delegates strongly suggested that a prevalent feeling had been identified and articulated (P173).

However, to suggest that the cause of managerial indifference and organisational isolation is wholly due to uninformed middle and senior managers and departmental organisational structures which cannot accommodate EDT would be both simplistic and erroneous. It may well be that the EDT culture and some EDT workers needs to acknowledge some responsibility itself for the estrangement from management which is frequently reported by EDT workers.

Data from the completed questionnaires indicates that 67% of respondents had (prior to joining EDT) previous experience as a team leader in social services

department. Whilst the methodological limitations of this questionnaire have been acknowledged in Chapter 2 of this dissertation it seems reasonable to suggest that EDTs are composed of a disproportionate (i.e. to other teams of social workers) number of social workers who have chosen to abandon a career in management and return to this particular branch of social work practice. A conference delegate who had himself been a team leader in daytime services made the following comment during debate on this issue of isolation of EDTs from both the organisational and managerial life of the department

> "I think that for some of us it <u>is</u> this isolation from the organisation that was part of the initial attraction of the job (i.e. an EDT worker) and as far as I am concerned it suits me fine to be well out of the chaos in which so much of current management finds itself. I do a good job when I am on my shift but I then go home and am not interested in what is going on in the wider department. That suits me fine but I think we have to be honest that some of us like it that way and we can't put all the blame on management for our isolation."

Whilst for some EDT workers this "flight from management" is a real attraction, for others and probably the majority this is not necessarily so. Whilst they value the autonomy and professional discretion which they enjoy as EDT workers, they equally recognise that professional estrangement and managerial isolation from the organisation will benefit neither service users nor their individual professional development. Being operational when the remainder of the organisation (apart from residential care) is not so, and being systemically and organically integrated within the organisation as a whole should not be seen as mutually exclusive positions but rather as necessary aspects of an effective EDT service. Both the recognition and the constructive management of this paradox in which EDT workers find themselves is fundamental if cynicism and negative hostility are to be avoided.

The different management models of EDT, and the interplay of their power and influence within the wider organisation will be discussed at a theoretical and practice level during chapter 6. However, as paradox and isolation seem to be recurrent theme at training events be they in house, regional consortia or national conference, it seems appropriate to identify and briefly discuss these concepts during research into training and supervision needs of EDT

staff. It is this management of paradox within EDT that is perhaps one of the most challenging tasks of managing an EDT at both operational and strategic level.

(c) Post Qualifying Education and Training

Whilst Post Qualifying training is important for all social workers, it has particular relevance for those in EDT who, by leaving mainstream social work, have consciously set aside the traditional clear path to social work management and have instead deliberately chosen a career in social work practice where there are comparatively few (when compared with daytime services) promotional opportunities. As one team manager put it to me, when being asked about his EDT management style "Managing an EDT does require additional skills as all the workers in my team have far more ability than they will ever have opportunity." Post Qualification training for EDT is important not only because of the substantive issues addressed, skills learnt and knowledge acquired during training but because the process of participating in such education and training will help offset some of the isolation and cynicism to which many EDT workers are so vulnerable.

The Central Council for Training and Education in Social Work has established a framework for the "continuing professional development of social workers" and is responsible for assessing and awarding two new Awards in Social Work. These are the Post Qualifying Award (PQSW) and the Advanced Award. The Post Qualifying framework is based on a system of credit accumulation and transfer and on the assessment of a workers practice competence as a result of learning.

Post-qualifying Training and Education in social work can be divided into the following categories for EDT workers

(1) the development of a PQ Portfolio
(2) Training for Approved Social Work (Mental Health)
(3) Practice Teacher Awards

(1) <u>The Development of a PQ Portfolio</u>

Dr. Martin, University of Leeds addressed the Yorkshire and Humberside EDT Consortia at their regional conference in October 1996 where he outlined proposals for a route whereby EDT workers could not only receive credits for both practice and formal training already carried out (such as ASW and Practice Teaching) but that recognition and subsequent

accreditation could hopefully be given for attendance at training events organised at consortia level. Whilst such plans are still at an embryonic stage, the future academic validation of such events would not only increase their existing credibility within social services training departments but would be a recognition by CETSW both of the peculiar training needs of EDT workers as well as the extensive wealth of generic experience which exists within the teams.

(2) Training for Approved Social Work (Mental Health)

One of the core functions of an EDT social worker is to act as an Approved Social worker within the terms of the Mental Health Act 1983. Being an approved social worker (Mental Health) or being prepared to undertake the necessary training is a necessary competency for social workers wanting to become members of an EDT. The vast majority of local authorities when advertising for EDT workers insist on either existing ASW status or the preparedness to undertake training with a view to approval at the earliest opportunity.

Whilst this legislation embraces a wide range of social work tasks and responsibilities including Guardianship and Community Supervision Orders, the Care Programme Approach, Section 17 After Care and

Supervised Discharge, the work of an ASW in an EDT usually focuses upon the undertaking and implementation of Mental Health Assessments. Whilst the approval and subsequent authorisation of social workers remains at the discretion of individual local authorities, the successful completion of an appropriate post qualification training course in mental health studies is now a necessary pre-requisite for a social worker to be accredited with ASW status.

The holding of this ASW status is important to all workers in EDT but is particularly so in those teams where there is only one worker on duty for the whole of the shift (usually 0000 hrs - 0830). The postal questionnaire indicated that of those respondents who considered personnel issues to be an important concept facing EDTs (49%), 55% of that group considered that recruitment of appropriate staff to EDTs to be the predominant issue. The practical dilemma facing managers of EDTs in appointing staff is that the main statutory emphasis of EDT is child care work (Child protection, children being looked after and P.A.C.E.) and whilst it would not be impossible to recruit an ASW with limited experience in child care work and provide appropriate training, it is generally considered to be more expedient (and perhaps more prudent?) to recruit experienced child care workers. It is then envisaged that when they have successfully

completed the four month PQ training course, they will be eligible for 'approval' they will then be expected to be competent across the full width of social work roles and tasks to which an EDT social worker needs to be able to respond, without supervision. However CCETSW have clear expectations that applicants for PQ(ASW) training will have had considerable previous experience in the field of mental health whilst the training itself has a certain 'taken for grantedness' with regard to the student's familiarity with some of the issues facing mentally ill service users as well as their carers. Interviews with social workers who have recently joined EDT and have a very limited knowledge of mental health issues (one worker was from a general hospital background, the other from a child care background) add weight to the view that the now well established move away from generic social work, together with formal post qualification training, is making comprehensive training and competency for EDT workers particularly in ASW work a difficult target to achieve.

Practice Teacher Awards

Whilst historically, experienced social workers wishing to supervise students, would receive informal approval within their own department for practice teaching, arrangements for student supervision are now

on a much more formal basis. Whilst individual local authorities have discretion to approve social workers as practice teachers under "transitional arrangement" it is the clear expectation of CCETSW that formal PQ training for Practice Teaching will be the required qualification within the near future. Whilst placement learning opportunities within the EDT are recognised as being beneficial to the appropriate and carefully chosen social work student, opportunities for practice teaching within EDTs will diminish unless practitioners are given the time to undertake appropriate PQ training for practice teaching. Releasing daytime social workers from their day to day duties in order for them to undertake necessary practice teacher training and then supervise students is nearly always fraught with difficulties, particularly regarding caseloads. The additional factor with EDT workers is that whilst they are participating in PT training and student supervision their availability to carry out shifts will be restricted. (This will become increasingly so as Local Authorities implement the European Directive on Health and Safety). Unlike the majority of budget holders within daytime services EDT budget holders may well have to pay locum social workers or overtime to other EDT workers when team members are unable to work their allocated shifts due to PT training. Whilst progressive social work departments will make an

overall budgetary accommodation to these circumstances other departments where a culture of corporate management does not exist may not, and some degree of understanding must be made to those EDT budget holders who judge that PT training for their EDT workers is not within their budgetary priorities and opportunities for this aspect at PQ training have to be forfeited. Perhaps a different source of funding will have to be developed and imaginative budgetary management will need to take place to facilitate the creation of practice teaching within EDTs.

Whilst EDT workers clearly need to receive appropriate and relevant training, they are equally well placed to make a real contribution to the education and training of student social workers and it is in the work of practice teaching that they are potentially able to make a very real contribution.

Placement Learning Opportunities in EDT

(a) Historical Background

Placement learning opportunities are very much part of the culture of training and education within the social work profession and is recognised as a core activity of social service departments. Whilst I have been unable to locate numerical data which would

provide information about the number of practice teachers within EDTs and the number of placement learning opportunities actually occurring within EDT, anecdotal evidence suggests that practice teaching in EDTs is a rate occurrence.

Whilst I can understand that practice teaching is not a priority issue when a local authority first introduces an EDT, I have difficulty in understanding why practice teaching appears to occur only rarely in EDTs. This research has thrown little light on why the occurrence of practice teaching in EDT is so very different to that in daytime services. Clearly an initial placement learning opportunity with an EDT practice teacher would be an event requiring careful thought and planning by the student, the University, the EDT and social services management. It would seem however that EDT, students and service users have much to offer each other but as with all placement learning opportunities, an inappropriate student and ill prepared teacher in hastily arranged placement would not only be counter productive in the short term but would jeopardise the more long term validity of such enterprises.

(b) Learning Opportunities which may be specific to EDT

Social workers in EDTs continue to be the only generic social worker employed in Social Services Department. This move away from genericism is likely to increase as the majority of local authorities not only pursue the adult care/child care and purchaser provider splits but progress the splits even within specialism. For the purposes of illustration, the specialism of children's services is increasingly managed at an operational level by specialist teams of family placement, child protection, youth justice and traditional preventative work amongst families. A student placed within an EDT will have the opportunity to practice social work which is not only generic in philosophy and theory but which has genericism as its operational base. For EDT workers not only work generically in terms of client groups (encompassing the full width of service users and responsibilities) but also practice in generic settings e.g. police stations, families' homes, hospitals and residential facilities. A wide range of generic skills including task centred casework, family therapy, systemic practice, and crisis intervention can be brought to bear upon the individual needs of different service users. It is this exposure to eclectic approaches to crisis situations which is rarely found outside EDT.

Whilst EDTs are usually a cohesive and supportive team working within a management structure, workers are often heavily reliant upon resources of the use of one's own self, and the development of network resources both informal and formal. EDT workers make assessments, judgements and decisions which, during traditional office hours would not be made in isolation but would take place with the benefit of both managerial and advisory staff. A student would have the unusual experience of, to some extent being involved in autonomous decision making often in fraught circumstances where the decisions will often have serious and long term consequences for clients and their families and daytime colleagues as well as the social services department.

Such decision making not only requires careful assessment skills but consequent intervention often requires some degree of diplomatic acumen. EDT workers "must act as ambassadors for the social work/social services departments, taking decisions which would be referred to management during the day (Skelt 1983).

A student will also have the opportunity to observe social work decisions challenged and these challenges responded to by EDT workers on the basis of social work professionalism and social work values and

ethics. These challenges will not only arise from families in their "Plea for removal crises" (O'Hagan 1996:40) but from other professionals in other agencies. General practitioners keen to admit people with mental illness to psychiatric hospital may seek to deny them the benefit of considered psychiatric opinion and custody sergeant wanting to retain overnight custody of young alleged offenders are immediate examples. The converse is also true as much of EDT work is based upon working together, particularly in area such as child protection and mental health. A student, having a practice learning opportunity within EDT will have ample opportunity to discern what is healthy collaboration and what is inappropriate collusion.

(c) Factors which would require particular consideration in using EDT as a placement learning opportunity

(1) Planning Skills

Whilst the intervention of an EDT worker/student may well have implications for long term planning in the lives of service users, the acquisition of planning skills within EDT will tend to be limited to the albeit important initial stages of assessment, intervention and perhaps the planning for initial case

conference and court appearances. Planning skills are a core social work skill and there needs to be recognition that there will be limited opportunities for such practice learning within EDT and accommodation made during the remainder of the student's DipSW training.

(2) Student Practice/Supervision oversight

As part of the placement agreement there needs to be particular clarity regarding the issue of whether or not the student will have opportunities to work alone without live supervision. Should the placement/ learning opportunity restrict a student to observe from the sidelines or will (s)he be given the opportunity to gain experience from being usefully involved in direct social work intervention? The amount of delegated discretion will clearly depend to some extent upon the capabilities/previous experience of the student, but if he/she is to have considerable discretion, albeit under close supervision then there needs to be team agreement and managerial countenance. Whilst this would be the case with a learning placement opportunity in daytime fieldwork service there is the important additional factor in EDT that there is often limited (if any) previous information surrounding a referral and the service user/family may

well not be known to the daytime services.

In traditional placements there are well tried existing models for the supervisor/student and student/team relationships. Thought needs to be given as to the student's immediate supervision needs as, owing to the shift system, the named supervisor may well be there only part of the time. Whilst the culture of EDT is based upon mutual trust and support amongst team members, there needs to be recognition of the demands such responsibility would place on EDT members in addition to the actual named supervisor.

It would appear that, given the awareness of the issues of the historical background of PLO in EDT, as well as some of the limitations and supervision factors which would be highly relevant to such a placement that practice teaching would be an activity which would be of real benefit to all participants. A placement learning opportunity in EDT would provide the student with a unique window through which to view the social work world. I would suggest that the paradox of academic institution and social service departments training sections working hard to further practice teaching and yet this resource of very well experienced and well qualified workers which is available in EDTs remaining largely untapped is symptomatic of the difficult and often fraught

relationship which EDTs have with the organisational and management structure of social services departments. It is the exploration of the causes and some of the consequences of such organisational conflict as well as the search for a more progressive theoretical and practical managerial model for EDTs which will be the main topic of discussion during the following chapter.

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Chapter 5

Leadership, Management and Cultural Issues Within EDT

Introduction

Chapter 4 identified Training and Supervision as reported contemporary significant issues within Emergency Duty Teams. The discussion of how social service departments as well as the social work profession responded (or in some cases did not respond) to these needs for training and supervision again highlighted some of the significant differences between EDTs and other social work teams working in daytime services. In trying to identify the factors which influenced the availability of appropriate training and supervision, much seemed to hinge upon the nature of the relationship which the teams enjoyed with the wider organisation, i.e. the social services/social work department. It would appear that the interplay between the EDT and the organisation not only influences issues of training and supervision within EDT but largely determines the degree of integration of the EDT service at both operational and strategic levels.

The chapter will attempt to identify the features of interplay between power and culture, between large organisations and specialist teams and how professionals function in a climate described by Bamford (1990) in his chapter "The Rise of Managerialism". The chapter sets out to identify some of the different managerial models for this interface and to comment upon the relative effectiveness of differing managerial arrangements. Having identified and commented upon these different structures, this chapter will explore and comment upon the component factors which constitute this relationship. These pivotal factors appear to be issues of power, authority and influence, role and task, the development of a culture and how large organisations respond to the development of a sub culture within. By drawing upon both theoretical works of organisational and management theory as well as observations from semi structured interviews, it is hoped that this chapter will make transparent some of the more opaque practice and managerial matters which are dominant features of the interplay between EDTs and their organisations.

(1) Management/Leadership of EDTs - The player/manager model

As discussed in Chapter 1, those local authorities which have introduced EDTs have done so in an ad hoc manner, at a time determined by themselves and to work within a brief which has also been locally determined. Some local authorities (e.g. Devon) decided to introduce a well staffed and funded service with a wide brief and designated title of "Out of Hours Team" in order that a comprehensive and accommodating social work service is available outside the 'normal' social work office hours of 9-5. Other local authorities, such as Northumberland, have introduced teams with a much more circumscribed role whose function is limited to those situations such as Child Protection, Mental Health Assessments, P.A.C.E. and responding to immediate care needs of vulnerable adults in the community. These teams are appropriately entitled Emergency Duty Teams. Irrespective of the EDT offering a "sticking plaster service" or a more encompassing role, there is a clear need for team management, to manage, at an operational level, both the individual workers as well as the EDT service. Of equal importance is the strategic management at the interface between the EDT and the department. It is also important to explore the interface between the EDT and other agencies, particularly the police and

the NHS. Informal pilot interviews and anecdotal experience suggested that it was these structural arrangements whereby local authorities managed these pivotal positions which were highly influential in determining both the nature of service offered to users as well as the relationship which the EDT developed with bureaucracies and organisations. Furthermore it was suggested, again without empirical evidence, that the management structure heavily influenced the development of a team approach and the development of a team culture.

To facilitate the gathering of data about this phenomena, questions about the management structure of individual EDTs were central to both the research questionnaire as well as to the semi structured interview. In keeping with the methodology of this piece of research, I was not attempting to test a hypothesis (e.g. a correlation between management structure and the effectiveness of an EDT) but was attempting to build theory by explorative discussion and the use of triangulation, the creative use of interviews and questionnaire design. Whilst as a practitioner/researcher I clearly had personal experience and knowledge of the different management structures and cultures of some EDTs, I was mindful neither to concentrate the discussions on wholly familiar (to me) structures nor to have a cursory

discussion of a wide range of structures. In commenting upon this balance Straus A and Cobin J (1990:37) remind us to

> "Recall that the main purpose of using the grounded theory method is to develop theory. To do this, we need a research question or questions that will give us the flexibility and freedom to explore a phenomenon in depth. Also underlying this approach to qualitative research is the assumption that all of the concepts pertaining to a given phenomenon have not yet been identified, at least not in this population or place, or if so then the relationships between the concepts are poorly understood or conceptually undeveloped."

Straus and Corbin conclude (P37) that

> "This reasoning creates the need for asking a type of question that will enable us to find answers to issues that seem important but remain unanswered."

Teams led by 'player managers'

This is the model whereby the EDT has a manager who although undertaking some shifts on the rota also carries out operational managerial tasks such as supervising EDT workers, organising the rota, arranging and chairing team meetings and day to day liaison with the department. Interviews with both EDT workers and EDT managers indicate that the proportion of time split between practice and management is largely determined by team size. Both completed questionnaires and interview suggested that a team of four social workers would have a team manager having an 75/25 practice/management split, whilst a manager with a team of 8 social workers would have a 30/70 practice/management split. Interviews recorded that the player/manager model reflected a high rate of job satisfaction by the team managers and was by far the preferred model of EDT management.

> "I really enjoy what I do. I enjoy a great deal of management discretion, useful interactions with the department and yet at the same time I work some shifts and still see clients and practice social work."

The player manager model reported a high rate of satisfaction by social workers. Comments such as "I couldn't see how I could be supervised and managed by someone who has never done the job (i.e. practised social work in EDT)" reflect this belief. Furthermore, interviewees considered that apart from maintaining credibility with the team, the player manager can hold a much more informed dialogue with the organisation by speaking from personal experience about EDT practice issues. The few criticisms of managers by social workers surrounded occasional lack of support either for them as individual social workers or for the influence which the team should have within the organisation. These findings are in keeping with the views of Handy's (1983). He comments upon the need for managers to support staff, particularly in circumstances such as those in which EDT workers find themselves. In writing about different leadership styles Handy (p96) suggests that

> "an ambiguous task confronted by a respected leader calls for a more supportive approach, if he is to draw out from his group all the contributions they can make".

Perhaps it is because of a <u>partial</u> recognition of the real ambiguity of the role of an EDT player manager combined with the autonomous style of social work

practice of EDT workers that occasional managers have not placed sufficient emphasis on their supportive aspect of their role resulting in criticism from within the team.

It is encouraging to read that Handy (P107) whilst recognising that the significance of "organisational theory has been to play down the importance of the individual and the group leader in favour of things like structure, control systems and climate" comments in positive terms that organisational theories are now beginning to highlight once again the importance of the individual leader/manager as an 'integrator' or 'a linking pin' or a 'catalyst'. This research strongly suggests that it is the 'individual' EDT managers aspect of group management rather than the structural and systemic aspects of the leadership role which are seen as being paramount by EDT workers in influencing their assessment of managerial effectiveness.

(2) Cultures within EDT

"Insiders" studying culture

The research methodology chapter, referred to the caution urged by Hammersley and Atkinson in researching one's own activity, especially when taking an ethnographic approach. However, it is encouraging

to note Schein's view on studying a culture as an insider. In commenting upon how one "learns most about what culture is, how it operates and what its implications are" he comments (P247)

> "At such times (i.e. when being interviewed by an insider) the insiders are more open, more willing to reveal what they really think and feel, and thereby, make it more obvious what things are shared and how things are patterned. At such times one also begins to understand what it means to go to "deeper" levels."

It certainly appeared to be the case during the interviews for this research that colleagues showed little if any hesitancy in exploring 'real issues'. This willingness may well have been aided by my introduction remarks surrounding anonymity and confidentiality but I would suggest that the 'depth' of discussion during interview was more to do with coming 'from within the culture' than any other reason.

(a) Insiders Studying Culture

Throughout the data gathering work of this research and particularly so during the interview process, the issue of the culture of social work would continually

emerge as an important issue. Whilst there were few references as such to "the culture of social work in EDT, unprompted remarks about culture would unexpectedly occur during the majority of interviews.

Examples include:

> "It feels totally different working in an EDT than in mainstream daytime social work. I know that working in a district office is different to working in a hospital or in a Community Mental Health Team but being in an EDT is different in a very different sort of way".

> "When I speak to another EDT social worker either whilst on shift or at a national conference, then there seems to be an immediate rapport and understanding in a way that just doesn't happen in other social work settings."

> "I seem to have increasingly more in common with social workers from other EDTs than I do with social workers in my own local authority. It's not just that we do the same things such as everything from P.A.C.E. to Mental Health Assessments, but we seem to use the same language and I often feel that we have similar values. When we are away at a conference and standing at

> the bar we tell the same stories and share the same fears. Perhaps we are all of a certain type but I think it is more likely that because of the way in which we work that we are still able to hold on to social work values and principles."

In discussing the strengths and limitations of the cultural metaphor in understanding organisations, Morgan G (1986:134) comments "a ..... major strength of the culture metaphor rests in shared systems of meanings. It (i.e. culture) influences the language, norms, folklore, ceremonies and other social practices that communicate the key ideologies, values, beliefs and guided action."

I decided to use culture as a conceptual and theoretical framework for looking at these 'difficult to quantify' aspects of social work in EDT, for two reasons. Firstly because there is an established body of knowledge surrounding culture but secondly because culture as a concept seemed to be wide enough to encompass all that appeared to be different about social work in EDTs but at the same time is sufficiently precise to identify those aspects of EDT which tend to be similar across different EDTs, but different again to other settings of social work practice.

In questioning the merits of using culture as an exploratory tool to understand organisations Schein (1985:245) asks:

> "Why do we need the concept of culture anyway? What does it add that concepts like norms, behaviour patterns and climate to not adequately convey?"

Schein then postulates the reasons why the concept of culture has been taken out of the context of representing some of the more refined aspects of social phenomena into anthropology and later into management theory. In exploring both the managerial structures and social work practice base of EDTs this research strongly suggests the emergence of those factors which meet both the criteria and discretion of a culture as defined by Schein who suggests that culture has the following attributes: the implication of stability, the emphasis upon conceptual sharing and patterning.

(1) Culture implies stability

If we look historically at the concept of culture we find that in anthropology culture was used to explain that in most societies there was a certain phenomena which presented over time and spread remarkable

stability even in the face of pressures towards change. EDT workers do see themselves as a long serving stable group who have remained unchanged in many aspects of their practice and structure. For example, they continue to be generic, adhere to the ethics and values of the social work profession in a way which is becoming increasingly fraught for daytime colleagues to do. The research also indicates that EDTs have been able to maintain player/managers as their preferred structure whereas in line managers in daytime services are perceived by EDT workers as now being marginally involved in social work practice as aspects of budgetary control and strategic planning increasingly dominate the role.

During research interviews EDT workers when commenting upon the value which they place upon the stability which EDTs offer to the social work profession, service users and social services departments. They also commented that what they (i.e. EDT) perceive as stability is often differently seen by management as being backward looking and a refusal to acknowledge/ embrace change. A theoretical insight into this conflict which 'stability' engenders is provided by Hoggett (1986:169) who in commenting about "structure and culture" and the problem of managerial style and culture states that

> "Put more bluntly, it is quite possible for an organisation to change its structures and procedures quite radically yet leave its style and culture (i.e. the values, attitudes, assumptions and behaviour of managers) relatively untouched."

Whilst stability is part of the EDT culture, and is a positive feature of those teams, it does lead to conflict with the values, ethos and managerial style of the wider organisation. It is the conflict of a sub culture within a culture.

(2) Culture Emphasises Conceptual Sharing

Schein (1990:245) comments that:

> "Early ethnographic researchers into organisations and societies were struck by a remarkable degree of similarities not only of outward displayed behaviour but also the perceptions, cognitions and feelings of a given society or group which suggested that there was something under the surface that new members or entrants learnt and that in time led to a high degree of similarity of outlook. Culture then, has something to do with *sharing* or consensus among the members of a group."

Some interviews with EDT workers reveal that when they first joined an EDT, they were surprised not only by how different the tasks and methods of EDT were to that of daytime work but by how the team *felt* very different in its cohesiveness as a group when compared with teams in daytime services. In discussing shared consensus and similarities within a group, Schein (1990:24) reminds us that

> "The most obvious aspect of such a sharing is of course the common language we use."

Whilst hopefully avoiding inappropriate emphasis, the semi-structured interviews strongly suggest that EDTs do have a common language, examples being EDT workers talk about 'Rotas',' overnight shifts', 'time off', 'PACE interviews at the nick', 'difficult sections' (i.e. Mental Health Assessments), 'Saturday morning courts' and 'problems at Casualty'. Clearly, other parts of the organisation use some of the above terms but it is the everyday use of such wide range of such shared language within and across EDTs which is unique to this group and adds weight to the view of there being a culture which is peculiar to this group of workers.

(3) Culture implies patterning

Both the semi-structured interviews and literature search strongly suggest within EDT that there is what Schein (1990:246) refers to as "perpetuation of observed regulations and the ability of a group to perpetuate patterns over long periods of time."

During interview I asked one long serving EDT worker to develop his comment about he attraction to him of the consistency and stability of the group. In reply he commented:

> "I always know for instance that X will be here in plenty of time to relieve me after a busy overnight shift at weekend and she knows that it will always be me who does so the following weekend. I also know that team meetings are the first Tuesday in the month and that once a quarter I will have the option of attending a training event organised by the regional consortia. There's just not anything like that in daytime work, you don't really know how things are going to be from one month to the next".

Anthropologists, when researching the culture have often experienced difficulty in tracing the origins of patterning and dynamics within social groups. This is because of difficulty in obtaining historical data regarding the group being studied. However, this difficulty of early origins does not apply to researchers examining the culture of organisations as "one can reconstruct historically the origin of organisations" (Schein, 1990:246). This is particularly true when researching the origins of both local authorities and social service departments, and the interviews for this research would often include discussions about the origins and development of individual teams.

The collection and analysis of the views and feelings of those social work staff working within what has emerged as a culture within EDT has been a major feature of this research. I would suggest that EDTs do have a culture and that they meet the criteria and definitions as formally defined by Schein (1990:247) suggests that

> "Culture is:
>
> 1. A pattern of shared basic assumptions,
> 2. invented, discovered, or developed by a given group,

3. as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration,
4. that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore,
5. is to be taught to new members of the group as the
6. correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

(4) Classification of Cultures

(a) Cultures Rational or Marginal?

Whilst Morgan (1986:135) acknowledges that modern organisations are sustained by belief systems that emphasise the importance of rationality and objectivity and that this "myth of rationality helps us to see certain patterns of action as legitimate credible and normal". He urges caution in accepting this rational view of organisational culture. In both offering a counter balance and commenting upon the limitations of the culture method, he likens the "experts" and organisational leaders to primitive magicians. He suggests that by discouraging cricital awareness and lack of reflection by others they (i.e. these experts and organisational leaders) "are like primitive magicians who engage in their mysterious

calculations and are allowed to preserve their credibility when events prove them wrong."

Schein's view 1985 is that whilst cultures are individual and unique to organisations they are often intangible, complex and operate at a more subtle and informal level, Handy (1983) however, does not accept this view but suggests that cultures are much more rational, are an outcome of the interchange between the external and internal factors and he sets out a much more formal paradigm in his varieties of organisational culture. It is important to identify those cultures and to consider their relevance to what this research has hopefully identified as not only a culture within an individual EDT but to examine whether these aspects of culture are common throughout the EDT service and have led to the emergence of a wider EDT culture.

(b) The Role Culture

Role cultures are typically found in bureaucracies and are often stereotyped as such. Role culture is based on reason, logic and rationality. The organisation with a role culture rests its strength in its pillars which symbolise its functions or specialities. These are co-ordinated at the top by a narrow band of senior management symbolised by the pediment. The role

culture is typical of social service departments not only at an overall strategic level but even at the operational level of a district based office.

In this culture it is the role or job description which is far more influential than the professional/ personal attributes of the individual postholder. Role cultures are most successful in stable environments where external factors are predictable and controllable and where economies of scale are more important than flexibility. Whilst the civil service is a classical example of role culture, it does have resonance and relevance for some of the large social service departments, particularly with the increasing specialisation occurring at both operational and strategic levels. For example, the specialisation of community care services for service users with mental illness may have negligible organisational interplay with the 'pillar' of the organisation representing the family placement specialisation of children in care. Whilst this role culture may have some appropriateness for daytime service, EDT workers would find it to be excessively restricting to the extent that it would probably render EDT workers inoperable due to their need to be operational throughout the organisation in a flexible manner and with immediate effect. Is this inappropriateness of role culture within EDTs which are set in an organisation where role culture is

predominant both partial cause and partial explanation of much of the conflict which occurs at the interface of EDT and daytime services?

The major source of power in a role culture is that of position power. Whilst "person power is frowned upon and expert power tolerated only in its proper place, rules and procedures are the major methods of influence" (Handy 1983:180)

This culture would indeed be a hostile environment for an EDT service to operate with its emphasis on flexibility, personal initiatives and the need for quick responses coupled with interaction with most sections of the organisation.

Kakabadse (1982) in commenting upon staff perceptions of culture in Social Service Departments suggests that in a Role Culture

> "Team Managers exercise quality control over Social Workers with an emphasis on administrative procedures."

The semi-structured interviews for this research strongly suggests that EDTs would find a role culture to be very difficult culture in which to practice social work. At individual levels many EDT social

workers made clear that leaving daytime services where role culture held sway was one of the main motivations for setting aside career prospects and becoming EDT workers.

Responses such as

> "One reason why I gave up being a team manager is that the job was becoming more and more hidebound and more about budgets and endless procedures in order to be able to do something relatively simple like provide someone with a home help."

> "From talking to colleagues who still work in the daytime it has only got worse and I know that I couldn't go back to it (i.e. daytime services). I don't think that having had the discretion which we enjoy in EDT I could survive in the environment of a district office any more. It is so bureaucratic."

(c) Power Culture

Handy (1983) represents this organisational culture as being similar to a web which depends upon a central power source with rays of influence spreading out from that central figure

"They are connected by functional or specialist strings but the power rings are the centres of activity."

The success or otherwise of these organisations is largely determined by the ability and quality of the people in the centre whilst resource power is the major power base in this web. Kakabadse (1982) comments that staff perceptions of this culture in social service departments are that "Management Team impose constraints, budgetary control and planning rigidity".

However, there is little evidence of this culture having presence in social service departments and even less so within EDTs. Why is this so? This may be explained by emphasis in social policy towards decentralisation and social democracy but any attempts to conduct a theoretical explanation of organisational culture needs to make reference to power culture whatever its influence in a particular organisation.

(d) The Person Culture

Person culture is not a culture which is found in many organisations as in this culture it is the individual which is the most important and central point and any organisational structure "only exists to serve and

assist the individuals within it" (P183 Handy). The classic examples of person culture is barristers chambers and The Kibbutz where structure is minimal and where it is the cluster of individuals that is the predominant influence whilst control mechanisms or managerial hierarchies are virtually non existent. Handy compares this culture to a cluster.

Whilst there is minimum opportunity within local authority social service departments for the emergence of a person culture, there are nevertheless some workers in EDT who ascribe to the values and mores of this culture and see the EDT as a group of individuals who work by themselves without supervision and are able to command considerable resources and exercise a wide discretion. These workers often become perceived by management and daytime colleagues in a 'maverick' light and are difficult to control. I would suggest that the development and maintenance of a team culture by the use of regular team meetings, group supervision and integrated training events are managerial measures that would help minimise what for an EDT would be the negative effects of a person culture. As an EDT Team Manager put it to me we don't have weekly team meetings in the way that daytime teams do but from my point of view the team meeting is vitally important as it reminds some of the individual workers in the EDT that they are not freelancers but are employees of

this department just the same as any other social worker. It would be interesting to observe how this 'Person Culture' would undoubtedly emerge should the ideology of privatisation continue and EDT plc. arrive.

(e) The Task Culture

Of Handy's four cultures in his theoretical framework it is the Task Culture which appears not only to be both highly relevant to the functions of an EDT but is widespread in its application. Task culture is job or project orientated bringing together the right people, at the right time with the right resources intent upon accomplishing the set task. Handy describes task culture as a net with some of the strands of the net thicker than others.

Much of the power and influence of this culture lies at the intersections of the net, at the knots. This theoretical framework is highly relevant in understanding when EDT workers talk about having considerable influence at interfaces both within the organisation as well as with other agencies. It also helps understand some of the motivation which both attracts some social workers to EDT work and partly explains why the vast majority stay with EDT for the remainder of their careers. When during interviews I

was attempting to locate social workers views as to the location and nature of their power and influence, it was clear that it lay partly in their "expertise" but that it also lay at several interfaces or 'knots' within the web. These knots often include other agencies as well as social service departments.

> "We have good working relationships with both police and hospital staff. I recently dealt with a difficult child protection case and I was able to liaise directly and effectively with the police and the hospital paediatricians and arrange a foster placement with minimum fuss. It's not just because we know and are on good terms with the other professionals, but they know that when they ring us (i.e. the EDT) we will be able to sort things out with the minimum of fuss and delay and they seem to respect our ability to respond properly. It is so different to working in the daytime when social workers have to refer everything to their senior for decisions and then contact the fostering team and explain what you want and wait for them to comeback to you with a possible placement. It's just not like that on EDT. You sort all these things out on your own ability and with your own networks and other people know it and respect us for that".

Handy's (1983, P182) highly relevant (to EDT) comments are that

> "Influence is based more on expert power than on position or personal power and is also more widely dispersed than in other cultures and each individual tends to think he has more of it. In this culture individuals find a high degree of control."
>
> The task culture therefore is appropriate where flexibility and sensitivity ..... are important."

Handy (1983, P182) also writes that

> The task culture therefore thrives where speed of reaction, integration, sensitivity and creativity are more important than depth of specialisation."

I would suggest that of all the cultures within Handy's structural and cultural paradigm, task culture emerges as the most relevant and useful both at levels of explanation and understanding of EDT culture. In addition to helping explain and understand EDT Culture, the concept of task culture is also a useful construct in explaining and understanding operational and practice issues within EDT.

(f) Goal Cultures

Handy's work on task culture has recently been developed and redefined by a contemporary author Sue Radford (1995:142). Radford develops Handy's themes and redefines task culture as GOAL CULTURES. She writes that

> "People (in a goal culture) are enthusiastic about and focused on completing tasks that support the goal or mission of the organisation".

The relevance of this culture for EDT is striking when she also writes (:142)

> "Their (i.e. professionals in a goal culture) focus is on using their professional knowledge in a satisfying and challenging way such as working with clients that require some unusual or creative solutions".

However, Radford also urges a salutary warning that when isolation from the organisation occurs (as is often the case in EDT) then other activities such as contact and communication with colleagues are pushed to the background. Burnout or extreme stress can be the outcome.

Both management theory and interviews with EDT team managers and social workers strongly support the view that a combination of the task culture and goal culture provide the most appropriate managerial setting for a progressive team where professional autonomy and organisational integration can be complementary ideals and not contradictory aims.

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Chapter 6

Introduction

Power and Influence within EDT

This dissertation has already referred to the issue of power and influence when EDTs were initially introduced during the 1970s and early 1980s. Any attempt at understanding the relationship between EDTs and social service departments needs to consider the issue of power and influence. These concepts frequently occurred during the semi structured interviews which suggests that they are salient features of social work in EDTs. It is also hoped that the consideration of power and influence both overt and covert, formal and informal will help penetrate the "surface appearance" of the organisational life of social services departments. Morgan (1979:158) suggests "In recent years, organisation and management theorists have become increasingly aware of the need to recognise the importance of power in explaining organisational affairs."

This research has also already examined why a major thrust for these innovative changes in the provision of arrangements for an out of hours service derived

from practitioners themselves supported by unionised negotiation. This was a rare occurrence whereby professional power and not government legislation nor managerial pressure was largely influential in bringing about change. Whilst positive power (e.g. lobbying by NALGO) was influential, negative power was, perhaps for the first time in the history of social work, used to influence the development of an aspect of social work service. A clear example of the exercise of negative power occurred throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s when social workers withdrew their services from standby rotas resulting in middle and senior managers having to take responsibility themselves for providing an out of hours service.

This rare incidence of professional power being so influential in bringing about organisational change was not only alien to the culture of social service departments but was in marked contrast to the traditional style of structural change within local government. It can be argued that from the very inception of EDTs the issue of power and the base of power and influence within EDTs has, as part of EDT culture been a predominant feature of the interaction between EDT and social service departments with the task culture in EDT and the increasing influence of role culture has led to disjuncture and estrangement

between team and organisation.

During the data collection (including interviews, conference attendances and literature search) it has been important to consider power from the following perspectives

(1) Power as exercised by management
(2) Power as exercised in practice with service users
(3) Power and its influences in the interaction between the teams themselves and the organised structure of social services departments
(4) Power issues surrounding gender
(5) The exercise of power in the interaction which EDTs have with other agencies particularly police and health authorities in whose culture the issue of power both professional and organisational held very different connotations.

In order to provide a theoretical base from which to recognise the contextual influence of power I shall briefly consider power from the following perspective:

(1) the sociological model - study of role, authority and power structures
(2) the problems of the professional in a bureaucracy
(3) the managerial analysis of how organisations function and the part that power plays in

organisations.

(1) The Sociological Model

It is important to recognise that power and authority are not conterminous. Weber's work (1947) on power and authority as outlined in "The Theory of Social and Economic Organisations" was criticised by Parsons for neglecting the issue of power in organisational theory. Clegg (1989:22) accounts for this seeming anomaly by "explaining the context in which Weber's classic of bureaucracy" was translated and incorporated into American sociology (1989:22). This argument of the separation of power and authority is developed by Bennis et.al. (1958:144) in noting that the "formal/informal distinction" as one were "authority is the potentiality to influence based on a position, whereas power is the actual ability of influence based on a number of factors including of course organisational position".

The structured interviews both with EDT workers and social services managers was designed to probe this difference between power and authority from the sociological perspective as well as how it affects both practice and managerial control. It is also important not only to consider the stated and obvious power structures within the organisation but to

attempt an identification and unpicking of the "real" power and authority issues as they affect EDTs. Thompson (1956) suggests that

> "the usual definitions of power are properly applicable to the internal structures of formal organisations. One reason why research workers have seldom regarded actual power in such organisations may be that the classics on bureaucracy have stressed rational aspects of organisation, with emphasis on authority to the neglect of unauthorised or illegitimate power. And it was not long ago that informal organisation was 'discovered' in bureaucracies."

(1) The Professional in a Bureaucracy

The conflict of the professional in a bureaucracy and the uses and limitations of professional power have become increasingly central to practice debate during the past 20 years as social work itself has become more and more the domain of large bureaucracies. In "Social Workers Versus Bureaucracy" Finch (1976:370) suggested that social work is often described as an organisational profession because most of its activities are carried out within formal agency setting. Do EDT social workers, whilst recognising that they do carry out their practice within a

bureaucratic organisation, see themselves acting as autonomous practitioners rather than professionals working within a system of welfare bureaucracy? Interviews with practitioners and managers has attempted not only to form a view as to how EDT workers are both seen and see themselves but also explored the reasons why such differences in perceptions exist. There will also be an exploration of the issues as to why such differing levels of professional discretion exist within the same bureaucratic organisation.

The increasing constraints upon social professionalism by bureaucracies have become a feature of social work practice following both the unification of social work (1970) and the Reform of Local Government (1974). During the course of this research, social services departments will be experiencing substantial changes. The purchaser/provider split as brought about by the Community Care Act is one example and the implementation of the Criminal Justice Act another. In many local authorities both the boundaries and functions of local government itself will be both under review and many will be subject to individual change. How, if at all, will these changes affect the power basis both of EDTs as groups of workers and the professionals within them? There is much interplay between the sociological and social work practice

perspectives of power not only in direct practice with service users themselves but within the organisation. In "Organisation and professionalism: the social work agenda in the 1990s" Hughman criticises the view that hierarchies are the most effective structure within which organisational professionals are located suggesting that "there was nothing 'natural' about hierarchy". Data collection would be concerned with enquiring into how the different locations of EDTs within different hierarchical structures affect the power bases of those workers and does this difference have an outcome in work with clients. What is that difference and what is a contribution which power (in this case the power derived from hierarchical location) make to such outcome.

Chapter 7

Managerial Perceptions of EDTs

This chapter has considered some of the different operational managerial models of structuring in EDT and has attempted to examine both the origins and nature of the often problematic interface which EDT experience with the organisation. Writing about EDT from some of the different theoretical perspectives of culture (Schien, Handy and Radford) adds tension to the argument that there is a culture within EDT which is peculiar to this specialism of social work practice. Whilst this culture does share some of the values, ethics, aims and objectives of the larger organisation the interviews suggest that EDT workers feel there is an estrangement between EDTs and the wider department. The rise of managerialism, financial restraints and a drift by management away from core social work values were identified by EDT workers as being the basis of this divide. On the other hand, EDT workers are often perceived by daytime colleagues as having largely unfettered professional discretion, unrealistic resource expectations and generous conditions of service. Many senior managers see EDTs as exercising disproportionate power and influence in their contact with service users and at the same time there is a view from EDT workers that

they are marginalised and estranged from the organisation having little opportunity or mechanism for influencing both practice and policy. I would suggest that the exploration of this paradox would be a worthwhile piece of further research.

Are EDTs then, the last bastions of generic social work basing their practice on unusual professional autonomy, or are they the dinosaurs of the profession who still yearn for what they remember as the halcyon days of the early post-Seebhom years. Certainly social work as a "new profession" was young and hopeful of bringing about change at both individual and societal levels, working with a paradigm of collectivism, state planning of social policy based on expansion to be delivered through the process of municipal welfare.

In reflecting upon 25 years of social work practice, Bradon (Community Care 10 April 1996) describes those immediate post Seebohm years as "the vigorous abrasive semi-mythological days of the 1970s when social work emerged from 100 years of volunteerism and local government officialdom and flooded into the newly created Seebohm social service departments". Clode (Community Care 10 April 1996, P6) reminds us that "The birth of this new profession occurred in the most politically radical post-war decade and the high water

mark of beliefs inherited from Beveridge that state planning was an essential means of achieving the "good society". It is perhaps no surprise that EDT workers are frequently perceived by current management as being "stuck" in this mode of post Seebohm values and ethics.

The rate of change which we now see in social policy, social change and social work practice certainly appears to be accelerating exponentially. The following final chapter of this dissertation will attempt to identify the source, the nature and the implications of these future developments for social work in general but from the particular perspective of social work in Emergency Duty Teams.

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Chapter 8

Issues affecting the future development of Emergency Duty Teams

Introduction

Emergency Duty Teams have for the past two decades been an increasingly acceptable method whereby social services departments have provided a social work service for the 73% of the week that the daytime services are not available. EDT work has become popular both amongst those social workers who practice within them and valued both by daytime social workers and departmental managers as well as by colleagues from other agencies and, albeit from anecdotal evidence by service users. Interviews, questionnaires and, to a limited extent, personal experience, all strongly suggest that genericism may be a significant factor in the popularity and perceived effectiveness of Emergency Duty Teams. Whilst the merits of genericism in EDT social work were discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, an exploration of the relevance of genericism and the contribution which it can now make to contemporary mainstream social work may well be a useful piece of further research. Has the time perhaps arrived for a resurgence of generecism?

This final chapter will consider some of the issues which may well affect social work in EDT as we move towards the millennium. The majority of these influences which include European legislation and the 'European factor' in social work, the socio-political debate re the nature of welfare and future recruitment to Emergency Duty Teams will have relevance throughout social work. However, there will be other influences such as increasing specialisation, Health and Safety legislation and Central Government Direction which will have particular relevance for EDTs and social workers practising within them. It is the purpose of this chapter to identify these issues and perhaps predict how their influence will be brought to bear.

(i) Recruitment to EDTs

Over the past 20 years Emergency Duty Teams have become popular amongst both those social workers who practice within them and valued by daytime social workers who are no longer required to undertake 'standby'. The postal questionnaire deployed as part of this piece of research indicates that there is (when compared to daytime social work) a very low turnover of staff within these teams.

32% of respondents replied that they had between 6-10 yrs in EDT whilst a further 32% had in excess of 14

years experience in EDTs.

Table 4. Turnover of Staff within EDTs

Less than 1	6%
1-5 yrs.	29%
6-10 yrs.	32%
14+ yrs.	32%

EDT workers interviewed during the semi-structured interviews frequently made comments which add weight to the view of EDT consisting of a very stable staff group. Comments such as:

> "I would never go back into daytime social work either as a social worker or as a team manager"
> and
> "I just could not imagine myself being anywhere else in social work, other than in an EDT"

being typical responses to my gentle probing as to where their future career may lie if not in EDT. If low turnover of staff is a criteria of a stable work group who enjoy considerable job satisfaction, then it would be reasonable to suggest that staff leaving EDT for other social work posts is not likely to be an issue affecting the future of EDTs. There is no reason

to believe that the future of EDTs may be in jeopardy because of dissatisfaction by social workers currently practising within those teams.

To have interviewed middle and senior social work managers and gain their insights and perspectives into contemporary and future issues within EDT, would have been useful. However, to have done so would have been outside the parameters of this research. Such interviews/questionnaires however, as well as providing raw data for the research as a whole, would, together with data collected from EDT social workers and EDT managers have provided triangulation upon the question of recruitment/staff turnover within EDT.

However, anecdotal evidence, together with observations from EDT managers suggest that both the social work practice methods and operational arrangements within EDT have generally found favour with middle and senior managers. As one EDT team manager suggested to me,

> "I am directly accountable to the assistant director who seems to appreciate that the team is a safe pair of hands, is the ultimate back stop for any really important work not picked up by daytime teams and he is obviously relieved at no longer having to be involved in rotas, disputes

> and sometimes having to take calls himself. Having said that he never allows me to forget that the EDT is not a cheap service to run. The message for me is that the department will continue to fund the service provided that we continue to provide a first class service to our users which of course includes the department (i.e. social services) itself."

It seems reasonable to suggest that given their popularity amongst EDT workers, social work managers, daytime social workers and service users, that issues facing managers and practitioners in EDT will be those of maintaining a steady state and accommodating changes in social work practices and legislation through the process of gradualism. I was surprised therefore that this view is not one which is supported by the respondents to the postal questionnaire who, when considering the future for Emergency Duty Teams, see no room for complacency. 49% of respondents considered that issues of personnel would be a very important concern facing EDT in the near future and of those respondents who did hold that view, 53% named recruitment to EDTs as being the predominant personnel issue.

The difficulty in staffing EDTs does not lie in social workers leaving these teams and returning to daytime

work nor does it lie in reluctance by daytime social workers to join EDTs. The problem is rather that of there being rapidly decreasing numbers of daytime colleagues who are sufficiently experienced in generic work and are also eligible to hold Approved Social Worker status (Mental Health Act). Whilst the shortage of generic social work is a problem for all EDTs, it is particularly so for those smaller teams where for part of the working hours (usually after midnight) there is only one worker on duty and that worker has to possess key competences in all disciplines of social work including ASW work.

Some of the new unitary authorities and some London Boroughs are attempting to meet this difficulty by use of consortia arrangements. Community Care 17 February 1994 has as its cover story "London Calling" where Francis (1994) writes at length about the difficulties of shared Emergency Duty Teams. Whiteley and Valios (1996), also raise both concerns and potential difficulties as new unitary authorities decide whether to collaborate on Emergency Duty Teams. "How long some of these arrangements (i.e. EDTs) will persist is more open to doubt" said Tom Beggs, Director of Newport Social Services. This model is itself often fraught with difficulties of accountability, budgetary control and differing criteria for intervention.

Adverts placed in professional journals by local authorities for EDT staff make clear that whilst their preference is for experienced generic social workers holding ASW status they would be prepared to provide ASW training for new EDT workers should this be needed. My own experience as a manager of an EDT is that this approach towards EDT recruitment is itself far from straightforward and can often be also fraught with difficulties.

Training for ASW is now at Post Qualification level and candidates are required to have considerable prior experience of working with service users suffering from mental illness. The training very much takes for granted that ASW students will have a working appreciation of the culture of mental health provision (both in patient and community care). Whilst some colleagues have managed to successfully undertake this training, others have found it was not possible to achieve this steep learning curve within the time limits as set down by CCETSW. Recruitment to EDTs will also have to respond to this government's (June 1997) commitment to introduce similar (i.e. to ASW) training and approval for social workers practising in the field of child care. Whilst further details of the length and standard of training are still awaited, it seems reasonable to suggest that this commendable development within child care practice will

necessitate considerable previous child care experience and will add to rather than alleviate difficulties of recruitment of social workers with appropriate generic practice portfolios to Emergency Duty Teams.

(2) The Influence of Europe

In 1957 the European Economic Community was founded - (Treaty of Rome 1957) but it was not until 1972 following a national referendum that the UK joined. The Single European Act 1987 had as its main provisions free trade and free movement of goods, services and people and it was following this legislation that Social Policy began to have significance leading to the setting out of the Social Chapter in 1989. This was opposed by UK and Denmark on the grounds that it would lead to greater unemployment. It was this Social Charter (1989) which became the Social Chapter of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, the UK being the only one of 12 member states who would not agree to its implementation. However the Labour government elected in May 1997 has agreed to implement the Social Chapter of the Maastricht Treaty. Whilst it is aspects of the Social Dimension of this treaty which concerns this research, it is important to remember that in addition to the social dimension the other two controversial aims of the

Treaty were Economic Union (i.e. a single European currency) and a United States of Europe (i.e. increased political movement towards a federal state of Europe).

The underlying social principles and issues of the Social Dimension include social equality, and the avoidance of marginality, greater rights for women, members of ethnic minorities, older people and those with disabilities as well as refugees and immigrants. Whilst these underlying principles will markedly shape and influence social policy, I would suggest that at the more tangible level of social work practice and operational management within EDT there are two Directives from the Charter which will have influence on the future development of social work within EDT. These are 'The General Directive on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications' and 'The European Directive on Health and Safety'.

(a) <u>The General Directive on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualification</u>

In defining a professional qualification the directive adopted the principle that professional training had to be of at least three years duration and be subject to national recognition and monitoring. Whilst CCETSW sets down the criteria for social work training and

monitors standards, social work in the UK does not receive mutual recognition as it is possible to obtain professional qualification within two years study. The relevance of this is that whilst trained social workers from within the EU will be eligible for full professional status and subsequent employment within the UK, social workers trained in this country will not be entitled to reciprocal arrangements. Whilst the social work profession within UK would undoubtedly be enriched by such free flow of labour, the defensiveness produced by UK social workers being able to practice throughout the EU may well dilute this opportunity. The status of social work and its low professional self image will not be helped by this restriction, particularly when other professionals including nursing and teaching are eligible for mutual recognition. Whilst there is some room for optimism under the new government for the introduction of a 3 year training course the reality of financial obstacles should not be minimised.

(b) <u>The Europeanisation of social problems</u>

Writing in 'Social Work in a Changing Europe' P169 Lorenz (1994:169) comments that:

> "The internationalism of social problems has become inescapable, not just in inner-city areas

> which experience the effects of international crises more immediately in the encounter with refugees and migrants but also in remote rural areas.... People's own awareness of global processes has been immensely highlighted through the impact of the media and they plan their lives more and more with reference to international dimensions."

Together with social workers in daytime teams, EDT workers in those authorities containing major airports and ports have a heightened awareness of issues of immigration and work within established inter-agency protocols to provide immediate relief. However, EDT social workers regardless of their geographical location, need to be au fait with potential situations caused by geographical mobility within Europe and have their responses well prepared and ready to hand. This is particularly the case in those EDTs where there is only one social worker on duty at any time and there are no facilities for either peer group consultation or managerial direction.

One of the most serious situations requiring prompt intervention by an EDT worker is that of child abduction including abduction of children subject to care orders. As an EDT worker I spent three days in mainland Europe assisting in the recovery of a young

child who had been abducted. Important information was received by EDT on a Friday evening and matters could not be left until daytime services were available on the Monday. An urgent response was needed and EDT met that need. Although EDT intervention is usually limited to and involvement of telephone/fax/liaison nature and the above scenario is unusual (though not exceptional) it nevertheless reflects one of the ways in which Europeanism has become a factor in EDT social work. At the National Training Conference on Emergency Duty Social Work (London 1993) there was a presentation by a specialist lawyer representing the Official Solicitor's Office who gave clear procedural guidance to and led a conference discussion "How child abduction (usually by estranged parents) across UK and international borders has to be managed". In response to demand from workers and managers within EDT the same lawyer again gave a presentation at the 1996 National EDT conference (London), where delegates were appraised of recent changes in European legislation re child abduction and specialist guidance provided re an appropriate method of speedy social work intervention. (Conference Programme in Apendix 1)

(c) <u>The European Directive on Working Hours: Council Directive 93/104 adopted on the basis of Article 118A of the Treaty of Rome</u>

During open ended interviews with EDT workers many interviewees commented that enjoying extended periods of time off was one of the motivating factors in initially attracting them to EDT work and encouraging them to stay in the work.

> "I know that we have to work weekends and we do long overnight shifts during the week but it is really worth it to be able to spend so much time during the day at home."

The main reason why many EDT workers enjoy such extended time off duty is because they have traditionally worked long overnight shifts. It is not unusual for EDT workers to commence duty at 1700 hrs. one afternoon and remain on duty until daytime service recommence usually at 0830 the following day. These long periods of duty occur in those authorities where there is an anticipation if not an expectation by the worker that (s)he will have attended to all referrals by the early hours of the next morning. As one EDT worker explained to me:

> "More often than not everything is 'written up and faxed by four o'clock in the morning and I can put the camp bed up and have a few hours sleep which means that I am not totally exhausted by the end of the 15 hour shift."

For a descriptive account of a typical EDT shift written by an EDT worker see "All in a Night's Work" Neat P. (Community Care November 1990).

I then asked the interviewee about the attitude of senior management to paying him for what in reality was sleeping time.

> "They seem to accept the argument that I am being paid for being available if not fully occupied. It also helps that the Director is supportive of EDT, arguing that it is because we are here on duty and perhaps asleep that he himself can sleep undisturbed. However, if we were to have a change of Director then the costs and benefits of paying for such all night cover would clearly be reappraised."

The European Directive on working hours (the objective of which is to prevent employees working excessive continuous hours) may well give organisations the mandate to change the contract of EDT workers and prevent them from working overnight shifts of long hours. The sections which appear to have relevance for EDT workers (as they also have for residential workers) are those which limit night work to a maximum of eight hours and which enforces a fixed meal break after working four hours.

Summary of Main Provisions of the Working Hours Directive

* daily rest period of at least 11 consecutive hours
- rest break where the working day is longer than 6 hours
* uninterrupted rest period of at least 24 hours per week
* the right not to work more than 48 hours per week, on average, including overtime
- paid annual leave of at least 4 weeks
* night work must not exceed an average of 8 hours in any 24 hour period
* night workers, whose work involved special hazards or heavy physical or mental strain, must not work more than 8 hours in an 24-hour period during which they do night work
- employers must provide night workers with a free and confidential health assessment
- night workers suffering health problems connected with night work should be transferred where possible to suitable day work."

* Provisions which would have particular relevance for EDT workers.

It was as recent as July 1997 that the UK became a signatory to the social chapter and thereby introduced legislative powers regarding the directive on Working Hours. However, there seems little doubt that sooner or later this European driven issue will have considerable influence upon Emergency Duty Teams initially at an operational level which will have consequences for staffing and recruitment.

(3) Influence of UK Central Government on Out of Hours Provision

In January 1997 the NHS Executive produced a consultative report "Developing Emergency Services in the Community". This report (P2) was

> "...part of a co-ordinated exercise to ensure that emergency care services meet the requirements of patients. The Secretary of State asked the Chief Medical Officer to review emergency care services in the community, i.e. outside hospital".

The brief of the working group (P4) was

> "to develop a clear understanding of what patients require from emergency care services outside hospital: to identify means of meeting

those requirements based on the evidence available; to clarify the roles of different professional staff and to define appropriate models for the delivery of emergency care services (including for psychiatric services) so as to ensure a seamless service across the primary and community sectors as well as social services".

Group membership was of this working party was interdisciplinary and represented professional groups and organisations providing social/health care outside "office hours". Whilst the review in its 'emerging conclusions' P31 wrote at considerable length and depth about "The Role of Social Services" P31, the membership of the Review Group (Annex 1 P.53|) indicates that both the social work profession and social work organisations are disproportionately under represented when compared with medicine, nursing, dentistry, midwifery and the ambulance service and health service management. (The review group has 55 members but representation of social services departments was limited to a single Director of Social Services). Whilst it would be well outside the remit of this study to enquire into what appears to be a further illustration of the marginalisation of the social work perspective, the apparent dominance of the health model of social care, together with the

comparative lack of infrastructure within the social work professions are salutary considerations.

The "emerging conclusions" of the role of Social Services acknowledges the legislative and organisational background for the provision of out of hours social work to service users and comments that "the level of resourcing of the (duty services at night) i.e. EDT provision varies enormously - in different authorities". This is in contrast to other out of hours services which are provided under the administrative umbrella of one organisation, i.e. the NHS Whilst there is no overt criticism of such wide ranging discretion resting with local authorities, it is apparent that the anomaly of such ad hoc arrangements does not fit comfortably with central government pursuit of the provision of 'seamless' care. Whilst we still await publication of the final document, the funding of a unified on call service between Health and Social Services as will be taking place on the Isle of Wight may well be a signpost for Central Government led 'working together' and joint arrangements.

> "The Isle of Wight Health Authority has provided the funding of £40,000 what will be required for the 74 GPs on the island to finance a **unified on call service with social services."** (Medico

Economics June 1997)

The provisional views of the Review Group about how best Social Service Departments can contribute to improving emergency care and their contribution to care and their contribution to such are as follows:

- Alternatives to admission to hospital or residential care should always be considered in an emergency. Consideration should be given to the range of support services that might be developed at a local level to respond quickly to identified needs out of hours.
- Authorities should audit their current processes in response to an emergency against the expectations for SSDs as set out in guidance and publish ways of accessing services
- The response to emergencies in the community should be agreed between agencies to clarify the roles and responsibilities of different professionals and agencies
- There should be shared information systems to support quick and effective responses to emergencies
- To facilitate inter-agency communication, contact numbers should be available to all

relevant agencies and practitioners.

There is a strong theme of inter-agency provision throughout the interim report and any observations about the future strategic development of EDTs needs to take into account the influence which this powerful group will have upon future developments of the service.

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Chapter 9

The Future

This thesis has argued that EDTs have, over the previous two decades, become a well established method of providing a social work service out of hours to service users, to other agencies and to their own organisation. The workers within these teams have also established themselves as a professional group whose specialism is, paradoxically, their genericism. Their social work methods of assessment and intervention continue to be the core social work skills which they deploy across all client groups, often working alone, frequently in fraught circumstances and usually without supervision. EDT workers continue to manage the paradox of carrying enormous responsibilities when, apart from residential services, the organisation is closed, i.e. 70% of the week, yet feeling that when the organisation is operational between 0830-1700 they frequently become marginalised and minimalised. As one interviewee put it to me

> "We are seen as the wise owls who keep watch over the department at night but when organisational change is taking place and training events being planned it feels as if EDT is only considered as an afterthought and that makes me feel angry."

Another interviewee commented reflectively:

> "Just because we work at night there is no reason for us to be kept in the dark."

In spite of this frequently commented upon estrangement from the organisation and a high level of professional isolation EDTs have remained a stable influence within departments where innovations such as purchaser/provider split, privatisation and increasing specialisation have brought about fundamental changes to social work practice as well as structural changes to organisations. To attempt to predict, with any degree of certainty, on the future of EDT would be as unwise as trying to predict the future of social work itself. At the 'Community Care Live' conference September 5th 1997 the Junior Health Minister Paul Boateng spoke of "A reconfiguration in the way that social care is to be organised" but promised the social work profession that it had nothing to fear from such reconfigurations. Community Care editorial (1997) whilst acknowledging that social workers "must brace themselves for further changes" did see the future of social work in an optimistic light and commented that "There is a very different emphasis to that discernible in the words and policies of ministers of the previous government. There is cause for hope."

The social work profession itself will not be the master of its own destiny but will become increasingly influenced and shaped by the direction of wider social policy and political developments at a macro level. Bamford (1990:168) predicts that " ... the social policy role of social work is going to be of major importance ... but it is at the heart of social work in a tradition dating back to Victorian reformers.

At the time of writing March 1998 we have a new Labour government pledged to reduce marginality and social exclusion but within strict limits of public spending. Only time will tell how social work fares when competing with Education and Health for scarce resources. Whilst the future ideological base of society remains uncertain and subject to debate, it is very clear that the public/political commitment to welfare cannot be taken for granted. Ginsberg (1991) commented that "the future ... of welfare states viewed from 1991 looks increasingly uncertain. There seems little likelihood of a return to the political and economic conditions which sustained the post war expansion of the welfare state; the post war "settlements" embodied in welfare consensus continue to wither away." In attempting to be predictive about the future direction of social policy in Britain Ginsberg (1992:195) suggests that " ... the future trajectory of the welfare state in Britain could take

a number of different directions - pan European corporatism, a revived Liberal Collectivism or a friendlier face of Thatcherism. some awkward combination of the three seems most likely."

What is certain is that if EDT is to continue providing a service to vulnerable people who are in crisis situations then social workers and managers within those teams need to establish and maintain a high profile both within the social work profession and social services/social work organisations. social work as a profession will continue to find difficulties in influencing social policy both at the level of strategic planning as well as that of day to day practice within organisations. The importance of a high profile EDT perspective together with the raising of managerial consciousness towards "out of hours" crisis cannot be overestimated. Mechanisms for the systemic integration of practice and policy issues arising from EDT involvement with service users need to be nurtured if the EDT perspective is to become an appropriate part of the corporate life of social work organisations. For EDTs to become a mere appendage of organisational culture would be to unnecessarily minimalise an otherwise important contribution. For those EDTs who frequently feel estranged and marginalised by organisations to achieve and maintain such influence requires particular diplomatic and

political acumen as well as additional managerial and advocacy skills. Training events at in house, regional and national level all have their very real contribution to make to the debate as does practice teaching and the encouragement of further research into EDT social work. The engagement of departmental managers and elected members is also a vital task for those with interest in EDT work. However, at the end of the day it is the proactive influence which social workers and team managers within EDT can bring to bear on the organisation which will be fundamental in ensuring that a service which is rightly proud of its achievements throughout the past two decades will have a future which is every bit as professional and service user orientated as has been its past.

Note: In March 1998 the DSS Inspectorate produced a report entitled "Survey of Out of Hours Services in 24 Local Authorities". This report was not available at the time of writing this thesis and is therefore outwith its contents.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire given to delegates at National EDT conference September 1993

For office use only

'ULTURE OF EDTs: THE STATE OF THE ART

ank you for completing this questionnaire. I know that filling forms can be a chore but I have tried to make it as 'user friendly' possible. Please complete as much of the form as you are able and turn it in the S.A.E. provided.

would empahsise that there will be total anonymity in the processing your responses. You are not required to give your name.

ur contribution to my research into social work in E.D.T.s is much preciated.

) Please state your age group

(a) 22-29 yrs.

(b) 30-39 yrs.

(c) 40-49 yrs.

(d) 50-55 yrs.

(e) Over 55 yrs.

) Please state your gender

(a) male

(b) female

) Please specify your ethnicity

(a) White

(b) Black Caribbean

(c) Black African

(d) Black other

(e) Indian

(f) Pakistani

(g) Bangladeshi

(h) Chinese

(i) Other - please specify .....

For office use only

How long have you been in E.D.T.

(a) Less than one year

(b) One year to five years

(c) Six years to ten years

(d) Eleven years or more

In which of the following social work posts have you had experience? (Tick as many as relevant)

(a) Generic fieldwork

(b) Mental health

(c) Child care

(d) Hospital

(e) Team leader/manager

(f) Residential worker

(g) Social work education

(h) Other - please specify .....

Training and qualification (tick as many as relevant)

(a) CQSW or equivalent

(b) CSS

(c) Graduate

(d) Post qualification

(e) ASW (Mental health)

(f) Other - please specify

For office use only

7) Had E.D.T. not been introduced, then where do you think you now would be in social work?

(a) District based social work

(b) Hospital social work

(c) Social Work Management

(d) Social work Education

(e) Leave social work

(f) Other - please specify .....

(g) Don't know

8) Is your E.D.T. managed by

(a) A player manager i.e. a manager who participates on rota and does shifts but also carries responsibility for managing and supervising the team

(b) A dedicated manager i.e. a manager whose sole responsibility is to manage the E.D.T. but who would not be scheduled to be on the rota

(c) A remote manager i.e. a manager who amongst other responsibilities carries managerial responsibility for the E.D.T. but who does not participate in the rota

Comments

_____

_____

9) How would you describe the attitude of your department's senior management to E.D.T.

(a) Enabling and interested

(b) Indifferent

(c) Obstructive and difficult

Comments

_____

_____

For office use only

10) Please specify type of local authority

(a) County Council

(b) London Borough

(c) Metropolitan District

11) Is your local authority likely to undergo Local Government Reorganisation

(a) Yes

(b) Likely

(c) Unlikely)
)
(d) No) Go to Question 13
)
(e) Don't know)

Comments

_____

_____

12) If answer to 11 is (a) or (b) then how do you envisage E.D.T. being arranged

(a) An E.D.T. for the new authority

(b) A joint E.D.T. between new authorities

(c) Other - please specify

(d) Don't know

Comments

_____

_____

13) Is your team staffed

(a) Solely by E.D.T. worker

(b) E.D.T. workers and 'standby volunteers'

(c) E.D.T. workers and locum workers

(d) Other - please specify

_____

For office use only

14) Does your team

(a) Work from an office

(b) Work from home

(c) Mixture of Home/Office

Comments

_____

_____

15) How do public access E.D.T.?

(a) Directly - re telephone number publicly available

(b) Indirectly i.e. calls filtered

(c) Other - please specify

_____

16) Numbers of workers in team

(a) 4 and under

(b) 5-8

(c) 9-12

(d) Above 12

For office use only

Availability of Information Technology

(17) Do you have access to the following (tick as many as relevant)

(a) Child Protection Register

(b) Departmental client information system

(c) Fax machine

(d) Car phones

(e) Bleep

(f) Mobile phone

(g) Other - please specify

_____

(18) How would you describe your team's level of access to information technology

(a) Satisfactory

(b) Barely adequate

(c) Inadequate

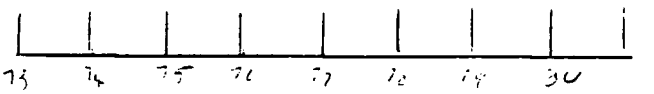
Comments

_____

_____

For offic
use only

19) What do you see as the main issues facing E.D.T.s in the next two years?



Thank you

Please deposit completed questionnaire in the box provided. However, should you wish to forward it, then please do so to my home address:

Roger Rayner,
12 Olympia Gardens,
Morpeth,
Northumberland,
NE61 1JQ.

Appendix B

Feedback to all delegates who completed questionnaire.

University of Durham

Centre for Applied Social Studies
Director: Audrey Mullender Tel: (091) 374 4610

15 Old Elvet, Durham City, DH1 3HL.
Telephone:
(Switchboard) Durham (091) 374 2000
(Secretary) Durham (091) 374 4611
(Direct line) Durham (091) 374
FAX: (091) 374 3740

May 1994

ar Colleague,

search In Emergency Duty Teams

ank you once again for taking the time and effort to complete the estionnaire following last year's conference "Social Work in Emergency Duty ams". It was very clear from the thoughtful replies that everyone had put nsiderable effort into thinking about issues in E.D.T. and your responses e proving to be most valuable in progressing the research. I am enclosing short report re the early analysis of the questionnaires which will pefully be of interest to you. Please remember that these are early ndings and I would ask you at this stage to make allowances for numerical rrections and absence of tabulations.

ny of you kindly offered to make yourselves available to me for interview Social Work in E.D.T.s and I shall be writing to those of you again in the ry near future. In the meanwhile, thank you once again for your nsiderable contributions so far. Should you wish to contact me please write my home address: 12 Olympia Gardens, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1JQ or ave a telephone message at E.D.T. i.e. 0670 716450.

nd Regards,

ger Rayner

Initial Findings of Questionnaire

troduction

a recent national conference (Social Work in Emergency Duty Teams) I esented a paper in which I explored some early thoughts surrounding the lture of Emergency Duty Teams (EDTs). Questionnaires were then distributed conference delegates and the returned questionnaires were processed using ftware package for social scientists. This paper reports on the early ndings of that analysis.

Sampling

It is not suggested that respondents completing and returning questionnaires were representative of social workers in EDTs or EDTs themselves. Nor is it suggested that the respondents were randomly selected from this group of workers. However it can be argued that the respondents were a self selected group of EDT workers in that they were motivated to both attending the conference and completing and returning the questionnaire.

Age

Of the 65 respondents 33.8% were aged 30-39 yrs. and 41% of the group aged 40-49 yrs with 75.3% of respondents being within the age group of 30-50 yrs.

Gender

60% male, 40% female.

Ethnicity

95% specified their ethnic group as being white.

Number of years in EDT

Less than 1	6%
1-5 yrs.	29%
6-10 yrs.	32%
14 yrs. +	32%

Previous Social Work Experience of current EDT workers

Whilst 97% of workers had previous experience of generic work, these early findings strongly indicate that both EDT teams and EDT workers also have a breadth of previous practice experience of working in specialisms.

60% of current EDT workers had experience in mental health

62% " " " " " " in child care

24% " " " " " " in hospital social work

47% " " " " " " as team leader

15% " " " " " " in residential social work

Levels of Training of EDT workers

97% of social workers had undertaken CQSW, 3% had experienced CSS training whilst 52.3% were graduates with 26% having taken post graduate post qualification training. 88% were ASW.

Management Structure of EDTs

49% of respondents were managed by a player manager

11% " " " " " " dedicated manager

37% " " " " " " remote manager

Attitudes of Senior Management to EDT

45% of respondents reported attitude of "enabling and interested"

40% " " " " " "indifference"

7% " " " " " "obstructive and difficult"

4% " " " " " "a mixture of above"

Type of Local Authority

63% of respondents work for County Councils

25% " " " " London Boroughs

10% " " " " Metropolitan Districts

Likelihood of the Local Authority to Experience Local Government Reorganisation

Yes	=	49%
Likely	=	10%
Unlikely	=	6%
No	=	23%
Don't know	=	10%

Of those authorities where change is envisaged the proposed arrangements for EDT are as follows:

(1)	An EDT for the new authority	16%
(2)	A Joint EDT amongst new authorities	35%
(3)	Don't know	48%

Staffing arrangements for current EDTs

(1)	Staffed only by EDT workers	57%
(2)	Staffed by EDT workers and standby	17%
(3)	Staffed by EDT workers plus locum	26%

Operational Base of EDT

49% of workers worked from an office

36% " " " " home

14% " " " " home and office

Public Access to EDT

59% of respondents reported that the public were able to directly access the EDT

38% of respondents reported that calls from the public were filtered

Size of EDT

26% of workers were in teams consisting of 4 workers and under

47% " " " " " " " 5 - 8 workers

14% " " " " " " " 9 - 12 workers

12% " " " " " " " over 12

Information Technology

95% of workers reported access to Child Protection Register

58% " " " " " Dpt. Client Information System

69% " " " " " fax machine

40% " " " " " car phone

66% " " " " " bleep

95% " " " " " mobile phone

Reported levels of satisfaction with Information Technology

50% of workers expressed access to I.T. as being "satisfactory"

31% " " " " " " " " "barely adequate"

19% " " " " " " " " "inadequate"

Perceived Issues facing EDTs

The final part of the questionnaire gave respondents the opportunity for them as individual EDT workers to identify the main issues with which they considered EDTs would be faced with during the next two years. There was no list of issues provided and respondents defined and noted the issues for themselves.

52 separate issues were identified with many respondents reporting several issues as being important. For the purposes of coding these issues were grouped into 8 concepts which are listed below. The adjacent percentage figure refers to the percentage of total respondents who considered the concept to be important. Also listed is

the predominant issue within that concept, together with the percentage of respondents who considered that issue to be important.

CONCEPT	%	PREDOMINANT ISSUE	%
The introduction of specialisms within social services departments	47	Conflict of generic/specialist perspective of social work	83
The introduction of new legislation	37	Community Care	62
The retrenchment of the welfare state	53	Financial pressure upon Local Authorities	52
Training	20	Identifying and meeting training needs of EDT workers	69
Personnel Issues	49	Recruitment to EDTs	53
Privatisation	20	No predominant issue	
Local Government Reorganisation	17	No predominant issue	
EDTs meeting standards of quality assurance	26	No predominant issue	

Roger Rawson 27th May 94

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