
EDITORIAL

The Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini, launched two key processes in 2013, both of which will have important implications for social security and welfare services. She has appointed an Advisory Committee to oversee recommendations about the payment system for social grant payments. The intention is to streamline these payment systems with the idea of making them more effective and efficient, and providing a caring system for approximately 16 million social grant beneficiaries. In the past, changes in the social security systems have revealed fraud and saved the state millions of rands. Recently, the South Africa Social Security Agency (SASSA) announced that voice recognition would be introduced to identify beneficiaries in addition to biometrics. Clearly, SASSA is moving towards more technology-based identification in order to reduce fraud, although a balance needs to be obtained to make this system more user-friendly.

The second process which was launched in September 2013 is the Ministerial Committee to review the implementation of the White Paper for Social Welfare. This is a two-year process under the able leadership of the chair, Professor Vivienne Taylor. The purpose of this committee is twofold: To review the implementation of the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) in all provinces; and to review the White Paper for Social Welfare and make recommendations and proposals arising from the review. This undertaking is mammoth and takes in what policies and legislation have arisen since the inception of the White Paper; the gaps that exist as well as recommendations on social welfare services, social security, institutional arrangements and human resources that have to be made.

Many of the articles in this issue reflect research and intervention with children, learners and marginalised sectors of our society. The White Paper for Social Welfare addresses many of these sectors in our society today, but the review by the Ministerial Committee will provide insights into the achievements, challenges and gaps in welfare services over the past 17 years.

The article by Simeon, Herbst and Nienaber reflects on the interesting experiences of grade 11 learners in a leadership development programme, Pick-A-Leader programme (PAL), in resource-restricted communities in the Potchefstroom district. This is one of 75 community engagement

programmes run by the North-West University's Student Rag Community Service.

Delpont and Spies's article relates to adolescents' understanding and experiences of their right to participate during statutory intervention. In spite of the policy and legislative requirements for the right of children to be heard in statutory proceedings, there is still a question around whether children are provided this opportunity. The study done by these authors makes recommendations in this regard.

The study on the Child Support Grant (CSG) by Du Toit and Lues provides research material on developments relating to this social grant which has become institutionalised over a period of 15 years. This social grant reaches more than 11 million children throughout South Africa. However, in spite of numerous marketing campaigns by SASSA and amendments to the Social Assistance Act of 2004, the province of the Northern Cape struggles to meet the projected intake rates for the CSG. Recommendations are provided by the researchers on how to increase the number of qualifying primary caregivers and to assist the Department of Social Development in achieving their annual projected targets.

The article by Magaiza and Crause highlights the discourse on social businesses as viable development tools and approaches as options for youth development. The authors believe that social workers may be able to expand community development strategies using social businesses and thus tap into the social capacities of youth. They see this as an asset-based approach which could foster inclusion and the expansion of livelihood options among youth.

Collins' article reflexively describes the influence of bias between the participants and the facilitators in a participatory research project at the University of the Western Cape. The research findings reveal that there were elements of racial power hierarchies in one small group. The author argues that there are still biases of power which are unrecognised in dialogues and these promote inequities which can be identified as part of the legacy of apartheid. The author believes that identifying such biases is key to transformation in South Africa.

In Londt's study, the researcher employed purposive sampling of 100 participants utilising the Canadian Risk Assessment Tool, the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) guide. This tool was used to assess the 'risk' and to 'predict the dangerousness' of continued violence in men

with a history of violence/intimate violence. The results revealed that batterers presenting with specific risk factors posed a significant risk to their intimate partners. Risk assessment and risk markers could contribute to highlighting and addressing violent aspects of masculinity, which may be responsive to intervention.

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