

Science advice helping shape the health and social care workforce of the future

11.3.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

How science advice helped shape new research priorities, funding and pandemic preparedness for the future health and social care workforce.

Dr Jo Daniels, a UKRI Policy Fellow, worked within the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) Science Research and Evidence directorate. The UKRI Policy Fellowship was focused on Area of Interest (ARI) 3 “Shaping the Health and Social Care Workforce of the Future”. Dr Daniels also worked with the pandemic preparedness team and the Chief Scientific Adviser on the research culture in health and social care settings, maximising on the opportunity to benefit from her expertise in workforce.

Dr Daniels worked with policymakers and stakeholders to refine the scope of the ARI3 research priorities, identifying evidence gaps and specifying new research priorities. She worked with the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to develop several new cross-NIHR funding calls to generate new knowledge to inform future policy development.

As part of her role, Dr Daniels authored the first workforce funding priority section in the government spending review, briefing the Chief Scientific Adviser and ministers on workforce research and evidence, and feeding into the long-term workforce plan. She represented DHSC in the Academy of Medical Sciences and Council of Deans working groups for increasing research capacity.

Dr Daniels led the workforce section of the national pandemic research framework, collaborating with NHS England and stakeholders to develop research priorities for both ‘peacetime’ and pandemic contexts, in order to inform policymaking for future pandemics.

She worked with the Chief Scientific Adviser to produce the inaugural evidence briefing on the benefits of conducting research in health and social care settings, contributing to Chief Scientific Adviser’s briefing resources, a national webpage and development of policy and strategy within DHSC.

As a result of Dr Daniels’ UKRI Policy Fellow, several new NIHR calls for funding have been launched, shaping the direction of future workforce research. As a result of Dr Daniels’ leadership on workforce pandemic preparedness, new research into NHS workforce deployment has been commissioned by NIHR. The revised pandemic preparedness framework has been published, enhanced with new workforce research questions developed by Dr Daniels through stakeholder consultation and priority setting, evidence reviews and identified research gaps. National priorities and initiatives have been launched as a result of the work she contributed to with the Academy of Medical Sciences and Council of Deans.

Since leaving her fellowship, Dr Daniels has been appointed Faculty Director of Partnership, Engagement and Impact at the University of Bath. Her key strategic priority is to increase policy engagement. As part of her fellowship, she co-led a policymaker-facing document to support the integration of academics into policy settings, which her work builds from.

While at the DHSC on policy fellowship, Dr Daniels was awarded the prestigious Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine to her services to workforce policy and

impact, and has been invited to talk across the UK on pathways to making impactful and policy-relevant research. Her psychological expertise also contributed to the government's 10-year Health Plan and the NHS research capacity-building strategy. She continues to be consulted by DHSC and NHS England, think tanks, charities and other organisations on national workforce and mental health policy.

Source: UKRI

<https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/science-advice-helping-shape-the-health-and-social-care-workforce-of-the-future>