

# The value of practitioner research

## Panel session

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# WHAT IS PRACTITIONER RESEARCH?

- Practitioner research – focuses on practitioners engaging in researching their own practice to solve problems and enhance what they do
- Professions and practice evolve continually- therefore we need to be critical of our practice and knowledge to ensure we are fit for purpose
- Neary and Hutchinson (2009) assert there has been a concerted effort to support practitioners to engage in research as a agent and recipient contributing to professionalisation of practice
- Practice is built from theoretical and empirical research

*“Participation in research based activities should be regarded as a key aspect for personal and professional development for academic and practitioner alike” (Irving and Barker, 2004)*



# RESEARCH AND THE EVIDENCE BASE

- Encourages reflection
- Supports practice to move forward
- Extends the body of knowledge
- Contributes to 'career studies' as an academic discipline
- Identify what works and doesn't work
- Evidence of impact at different levels for different audiences
- Builds a better understanding of practice
- Delivers better services for clients – we know what works and why!
- Policy makers and funders value evidence



## MODEL OF PRACTITIONER RESEARCHER ENGAGEMENT

Practitioners engage with  
research  
(Consumers)

Practitioners use and  
apply research  
(Applicators)

Practitioners  
become research active  
(Producers)



“But for those who do qualify and engage in autonomous professional practice, the realisation dawns that qualifying is not the point of arrival, but the point of departure”.

Mulvey, 2004



# References and Resources

Irving, B.A. and Barker, V. (2004) Living in the real world: Developing and delivering qualitative research. In: Reid, H. and J. Bimrose (eds). *Constructing the Future: Reflection on Practice*. Institute of Career Guidance.

Neary, S. and Hutchinson, J. (2009) More questions than answers: the role of practitioner research in professional practice. In: Reid, H. ed. *Constructing the Future: Career Guidance for Changing Contexts*. Institute of Career Guidance.

## CDI website

- <https://www.thecdi.net/National-Research-Conference-2022-Resources>
- NICEC Journal – members area of CDI website
- Thecdi.net/CPD-resources/Practitioner-Research-members area of CDI website

Neary, S. and Johnson, C. (2016) *CPD for the career development professional*. Trotman.





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**Inaugural Lecture- Guiding the future: A professionalisation  
project for the career development sector**

<https://www.derby.ac.uk/research/inaugural-lecture-series/guiding-the-future-a-professionalisation-project-for-the-career-development-sector/>

