



Voices from the Frontline

Guidelines for authors

We invite contributions from front line social workers and service users about their experiences. Each article should be 2000-4000 words long, including references. If you would like support to develop your idea and the article, please contact kerry.cuskelly@gmail.com.

To start developing your idea, you may need to develop a journal-style entry first, to write down the experience and your initial thoughts and feelings about it. We hope the remaining guidance will be useful to help you shape an article from that initial 'sketch'.

First, think of the key messages you want to communicate to your peers and colleagues in the wider social work community. This should shape the content that gets included in the article and potential headings.

At the beginning of the article, please offer a brief description of your wider practice context. We have international readership who may not be familiar with the organization of frontline practice in your country. Think about how you would explain that context – briefly – to someone from another country. This shouldn't be more than one or two paragraphs of information.

This is likely to need to be followed by a brief description of the events or practice that you are writing about. The descriptive part of the article needs to be kept brief. You may wish to develop it last – including only details that are truly relevant for the story you want to share. Again, this information shouldn't be longer than one or two paragraphs.

The main body of the article should be reflexive and analytical. As mentioned, we can offer further support to help you shape this and other sections. Some of the things to think about as you prepare your reflection and analysis include:

- Focus on what you are thinking and feeling (what is your motivation to want to talk about your selected theme? What have you learnt from it? What is the impact of what you are writing about on you and other stakeholders? What does this experience relate to in terms of wider practice?)
- Focus on what you are doing and how (which methods/ways of working are you writing about? How were they developed? Should they change? If yes, why and, if you feel you know the answer, what should be elements of that future change?)
- In the conclusion, consider your 'takeaway points' for future practice, either your own or for others

- Include relevant sources – it is important to fact-check your work as much as possible and include relevant sources. Consult relevant reading – it doesn't have to be academic – and provide references to it.

In terms of style, please avoid long sentences and make sure you use paragraphs to organize your writing.