

Maria Duggan – professional highlights

I have a professional background in UK social work as a **practitioner, manager and educator**. In the last 20 years, my interests have focused increasingly on research, policy development, policy analysis and service development. I am particularly, but not exclusively, interested in participation by communities, workforce and service users in policy, strategy and service development.

I have worked **at national level** in the UK, including with the Cabinet Office and the Department of Health in England and internationally, with the European Commission in Brussels, with national primary care organisations in Germany, the USA and in Australia where I have been an Associate Professor of Health Policy with the Australian Health Policy Collaboration at Victoria University in Melbourne since 2018. My work has primarily focused on the development of policy proposals for the prevention of chronic disease including dementia.

I have been a longstanding member of Public Service Works and, over the years, have contributed to several collaborative projects with PSW colleagues. In 2024, I worked with Sheila Marsh and Roma Iskander to support a series of facilitated conversations with frontline hospice staff in the UK in anticipation of change in the law on assisted dying. In my experience, better public policy results from an honest interaction between those who use public services and those who deliver them, with support from researchers and policy professionals, working together from the early formative stage.

PublicServiceWorks approach is grounded in this understanding. PSW brings a unique set of skills to the development of implementable policy in a range of sectors. These skills include first class public engagement and group facilitation capabilities, strong research expertise and incisive communication. Most importantly, individually and collectively, we have a deep understanding of organisational structures and processes in a range of sectors. Our focus is on the achievement of feasible and implementable change, and the importance of working with the constraints and opportunities associated with each context. Recognising that each situation is unique, PSW offers a bespoke approach to each new challenge.

Some recent publications are listed below.

- [Women's Mental Health](#)
- [The costs & consequences of co-morbid chronic diseases](#)
- [Active school travel](#)
- [Improving Heart Health](#)
- [The State of Self-Care](#)
- [Improving Brain & Body Health: linking dementia and chronic disease prevention](#)

- [Integrating the Prevention Agenda for Brain & Body Health](#)
- [Being Equally Well National Policy Roadmap](#)
- Duggan, M., Dunbar, J.A., Morgan, M.A., Mc Namara, K.P., de Courten, M.P. and Calder, R.V., 2024. ***An effective approach to tackling complex health policy challenges. Using a clinical microsystems approach and rethinking codesign.*** *Frontiers in Public Health*, 12, p.1405034. [fpubh-12-1405034.pdf](#)