



School for Public Health Research @ LSHTM (SPHR@L)

SPHR@L Seminar Series: 2013-2014

A talk by **Dr. Silvia Scalabrini**
Durham University

Tuesday, 7th October 2014, 12:45 pm

Jerry Morris A, LSHTM, 15-17 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SH

Abstract

‘Shifting the Gravity of Spending?’ Exploring methods for supporting public health commissioners in priority-setting to improve population health and address health inequalities

The relocation of lead responsibility for public health from the NHS to local government in England in 2013 means that priority-setting is taking place in new organisational and political contexts. Our study aims to provide support to commissioners involved in prioritising investment and disinvestment in services and making decisions to improve health and wellbeing and tackle health inequalities. The paper presents qualitative findings drawing on 29 semi-structured interviews with selected members of Health and Wellbeing Boards and local stakeholders in three local authorities.

It focuses on a number of key themes, such as participants’ views on the relocation of public health responsibilities, the different organisational arrangements of the public health teams in each of the study sites, and some of the definitional uncertainties that public health practitioners experienced in the transition from the NHS to a local government setting. Importantly, the paper also explores respondents’ understandings of public health, their views on priority-setting methods and barriers to applying them in practice, and the differences in how evidence was understood and its role in priority-setting.

While the research has yet to be completed, it is yielding important insights which might form the basis of further exploration concerning how best to strengthen prioritisation processes during a time of economic stringency.

Dr. Silvia Scalabrini is a Post Doctoral Research Associate at the Centre for Public Policy and Health. Her PhD thesis was a qualitative study exploring comparatively NHS-related patient and public involvement policies within citizen-engagement organisations in England and Wales. Her main research interests are in medical sociology, health policy and qualitative methods.