

**RESILIENCE**  
***AND* PERSONAL**  
**EFFECTIVENESS**  
***FOR* SOCIAL WORKERS**

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# 5



## **MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND NEW WORK STYLES TO ENHANCE PRACTICE**

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### Key Concepts and Issues in this Chapter

- Applying new technologies to public sector work and the cultural barriers to its effective implementation
  - Using new technology to make case recording, scheduling and report writing easier
  - Preventing digital technologies from distracting our attention, dominating our work and damaging our work/life balance
  - Using social media safely
  - Effective deployment of hot desking and agile working
  - Social work practices and other changes to how social work services are provided
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## Digital innovation and social work

If I asked you to come up with names of some people who were pioneers of digital technology I imagine you would give me a list of names such as Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg, Bill Gates or going back in history Alan Turing. The odds are that your list would all be men. My digital hero is a woman and you probably have not heard of her. Her name is Grace Hopper, she was a Rear Admiral in the U.S. Navy and she was born in 1906 and died in 1992. Among her accomplishments was being a programmer of the 16-metre long Harvard Mark 1 computer during the Second World War, inventing the very first compiler program and many, many other innovations in computer technology over a very long career. One of her more amusing contributions was to coin 'debugging' a computer after an incident in which she removed a moth in a computer relay. In 1973 she was the first woman to be made a Distinguished Fellow of the British Computer Society. In 1986 at her (involuntary) retirement she was awarded the Defense Distinguished Service medal. These are just a few of the accolades and awards which this amazing woman won over her career.

The reason I think Grace has much to teach us in social work is because of her positive attitude towards risk taking and striving for improvement and her ability to see clearly all the practical benefits which technology can bring. Unfortunately many social workers operate within very risk-averse organisational cultures where the first response to any new technology is to list all the potential snags and then decide it is too risky to be used. I remember a time when many social workers were denied access to the internet at work in case they spent their time playing poker or looking for cheap holidays. Nowadays that attitude would seem ridiculous. However, just as social workers were once denied access to the powerful tool of the internet, employers are currently taking risk-averse approaches to new technologies which would allow social workers to use their time more effectively. By contrast, Grace Hopper always encouraged young people whom she trained to take risks and was willing to back them up. One of the many quotes of wisdom attributed to her was, 'If it's a good idea, go ahead and do it. It is much easier to apologise than it is to get permission' (quoted in Purrington et al., 2003). This is an especially useful motto for anyone working in a bureaucracy, though do bear in mind that you can get disciplined if your idea breaches local authority policy.

Importantly, Grace Hopper was always in favour of innovation and progress. She said that 'People love to say "we've always done it this way". I try to fight that. That's why I have a clock on my wall that runs counter-clockwise' (quoted in Schieber, 1987). In the 1980s Hopper recognised that paper was becoming redundant and that records which were then on paper could be stored electronically. Hopper made this observation in the 1986 issue of a Navy magazine. This was thirty years ago and yet I know social workers today who are still writing case notes and reports on notepads and passing the notes to a typing pool. In one authority in England staff were recently given state of the art tablets. The idea was that workers would be able to put information directly onto case notes while on visits as well as completing important forms while on visits. This is important both from the point of view of saving worker

time and also ensuring that case notes are always completely up to date. The innovative policy was scuppered by the authority's IT department who refused to allow this direct linkage to authority information systems – presumably because of security fears. Of course, security is an important issue but there should be ways of building in improved security to overcome these risks. As a result of the IT department's intransigence the state of the art tablets are going to be used as expensive notepads. Buying good IT and properly securing it is expensive but the cost savings associated with greater efficiency make it a very effective investment.

## Using technology effectively

Grace Hopper showed that innovation is not restricted to the private sector and that with courage and imagination, technological innovation can be driven ahead in the public sector. The local government sector desperately needs its own Grace. While we are waiting for one to appear there are still lots of opportunities to make the best use of the technology we are provided with.

### Electronic calendars

These are very effective ways of planning our use of time. In the last chapter we looked at how techniques such as creating an unschedule and putting entries into our calendar for important tasks from our to-do list. An electronic calendar such as Outlook provides a good mechanism for this as it is easy to attach notes to the entries and a lot easier to change or delete items as contingencies arise.

The other benefit of an electronic calendar is that if you are inviting colleagues to a meeting then you can send them an invitation through the scheduling facility in Outlook. All your invitees need to do is to click 'accept' on your meeting request and the meeting will go into their calendar without them having to type in anything. If you have a Blackberry or other mobile device then you can schedule appointments with service users when you are out on visits. If you have an iPad or other tablet device, then even if it is not connected to the internet you can still enter appointments into your Outlook calendar and then they should be uploaded into the system as soon as you get into a wi-fi area. If you are not issued with equipment such as this you can of course buy your own mobile or tablet device. If you are going to use the equipment for work you will have to get permission from your employer and have a safety check on it. This ought to be welcomed by your employer but I have heard of local authorities preventing their workers from linking work email accounts and calendars to their own devices. This is a very short-sighted policy but sadly all too typical of the sector.

Some social workers run two diaries – an electronic one and a paper one. This is, however, a recipe for confusion and it prevents you from leveraging the benefits of electronic scheduling.

## Using digital record keeping to minimise time spent on administration tasks

As I have indicated above, the best way to streamline your recording and minimise your workload is to have devices which can interface directly with all the databases and systems which you are required to work with. Ideally, these systems should talk to each other so that you only ever have to record a piece of information once and it then goes to every other place that that information is needed. This requires good information systems design and is a reason why managers and frontline workers should take an active interest in the computer systems of their agencies. If you are ever offered the opportunity to be part of a committee in your organisation which is concerned with purchase or implementation of a new system for recording and managing data then you should take it. It is only by successfully communicating the needs of frontline workers that you can ensure that information systems do what we need them to do. You will have to use any IT system that your authority buys for a number of years, so any help you give in specifying it will reap dividends to you and your colleagues.

While few authorities will offer you the type of functionality and connectivity I am suggesting above, many will at least now offer you an iPad or other tablet device. You can record information which the service user gives to you in draft form. Facts which are to go into reports can be checked through with the service user before leaving the visit. Then as soon as possible after the visit this information can be tidied up, made grammatically correct and expanded upon to fit the format needed for reports and case notes, etc. Nobody in this day and age should be writing information in a notepad and then retyping their words into a computer or writing it out again neatly for a typist. These practices are hugely inefficient and are one of the reasons for reports in the social work media that social workers are spending large amounts of their time doing admin. Used correctly, digital devices can reduce our workload considerably. I wrote most of this book on a laptop. Some of it was drafted on an iPad in trains and hotel rooms, sent to myself by email and then cut and pasted into my draft manuscript. No pens have been used in the creation of this book other than to sign the contract with the publisher. If you do possess a pen then please consider throwing it away now and learning the discipline of doing all your writing electronically. I know that some people claim that they cannot think as clearly when in front of a keyboard as they can on paper. However, you will find that this is probably just because it is what you are familiar with and that typing information will become natural to you once you get more practice.

## Mobile phones

All social workers should get a mobile phone so that they can easily ask for help if they become stranded or they run into difficulties. Ideally this should be a smart-phone with email.

## Wrangling your email inbox

Although technology can reduce stress through efficiency, email is a technology which has been found to create a great deal of stress for workers. In fact, some people feel that they could spend all their time trying to empty their email inbox. This can drive their whole time in the office. Unfortunately email is such a cost-free form of communication (for the sender) that people will send queries by email which they would not bother asking if they had to make a phone call or walk down a corridor. Emails also make it possible to send the same email to multiple recipients, which often include large numbers of people for whom the email contents are irrelevant. What many people fail to realise is that this seemingly 'free' form of communication carries a significant cost to the recipient. There is the time taken to read the email; the time taken to think about whether the email is relevant to us; the time to compose and write a response (if one is required); the time taken to note down any important information in the email or save any attached documents; and then the time taken to resume our other work or move onto our next task following time spent on our inbox. Jackson et al. (2006) worked out a formula for calculating the cost to an organisation of its employees reading emails.

$$\text{Organisational cost of reading email} = (t_1+t_2)wn$$

Where  $t_1$  is the time taken to read all of a batch of emails received in minutes,  $t_2$  = the time taken to recover and move on to next task,  $w$  = the average cost per minute of employing staff and  $n$  is the number of people in the organisation. Think about your email inbox for a moment and then think of the time costs of it multiplied by the number of colleagues in your agency.

Jackson et al. found in their study of a UK business that 16 per cent of emails were copied in to people unnecessarily, 13 per cent were irrelevant to the recipient or untargeted, and only 46 per cent of emails which required a response made the action required explicit.

Email is therefore not free at all. There is a cost in worker time imposed on the recipients of every email. We can help reduce these costs by:

1. Avoiding sending out emails to everyone in our organisation or large groups of people when the email could be more targeted. That is a small amount of extra time for us but it is a big saving to all the people who don't receive unnecessary communications.
2. Making it clear in the subject line exactly what the topic is, whether the email is urgent and whether it is for information or for action.
3. Where actions are required, making these explicit and who is responsible for which actions.

I think that organisations should seriously consider levying internal costs on departments for the volume of email traffic which they generate. I am not aware of this approach having been used. However, some organisations set aside days in which

emails cannot be sent. Others have experimented with the use of Facebook-style groups as an alternative to email for sharing information and encouraging collaboration between different parts of agencies.

In the absence of better agency policies we can help reduce the negative effects of emails on ourselves by developing good email habits.

I would recommend avoiding answering emails on a Monday morning unless they appear urgent. This is the time that people are most likely to be at their desk and there is a significant chance that they will respond to your email right away with a follow-up query. It is possible to spend a Monday morning working on emails and have more emails in your inbox by lunchtime than you started with. I would recommend answering emails at the end of the day when your energy levels for large pieces of work are at their lowest and there is less chances of getting further responses to your inbox.

Not everything in your email inbox needs to be treated in the same way. Queries and emails that require actions that can be completed very quickly (i.e. less than five minutes' work each) are best dealt with right away and then deleted or archived. Emails which all relate to a similar topic, and you intend to deal with them at the same time, should be put together in a folder and a time for dealing with them scheduled in your calendar. For example, if you have sent out a lot of invitations to a meeting and you plan to send out venue details and an agenda once you have all your replies in, then put all the replies into one clearly labelled folder (e.g. case conference meeting responses) as they arrive. This allows you to quickly assess who is coming once all the replies are in rather than having to trawl through your whole inbox. The same approach can be used if you have a number of emails which require short to moderate pieces of work that you don't have enough time for at the moment. You could put them in a folder named admin tasks and then schedule time in a day in which you have time in the office to do them. It is important not to have too many folders at once and also to clear them out or delete them regularly. Emails which request a report or a large piece of work should be turned into a task in Outlook with a deadline for completion put into your calendar system. Blocks of time should be allocated for completing the task and a reminder set up to ensure that you are on track with working towards completion.

If you subscribe to emails which are about updates in your field, e.g. emails from *Community Care* or the *Guardian* about social work news, these can be put in a folder. If you have email on a smartphone you can read these emails while queuing for coffee, waiting for an elevator, etc.

## Exercise

### Reviewing Your Use of Email

Over a period of a week record how much time you are spending on emails and what time of day you are working on them. For each email session make a brief record of the degree to which the time was used effectively and whether there are any changes

which you could make to your use of email which could have made the use of time more effective. Also reflect on the emails which you write yourself and consider whether another form of communication such as phoning might have been more effective. Also consider whether use of folders could make it easier for you to find emails which you need.

At the end of the week come up with a strategy for using your email inbox more effectively and start implementing it the following week.

## Getting breaks from technology

Rosen (2015) described the phenomena of FOMO (fear of missing out) and FOBO (fear of being offline). Many people, and I have to confess that I am one of them, have developed a habit of constantly checking digital devices and looking at their emails, Twitter account, Facebook, etc. This is an addiction and it can be annoying to other people and can intrude on our personal life. Rosen recommends training yourself to have periods without accessing technology. He also suggests that it is important to keep digital devices out of the bedroom and not look at computer or phone screens an hour before going to bed because they can affect the quality of sleep. Rosen also suggests that we should have a break from working at a computer every 1.5 hours and have a 10-minute break in which we go for a walk, have some brief exercise or listen to some relaxing music. The 1.5 hour rule is apparently linked to research evidence that our brains work in 1.5 hour cycles with intermittent rest periods. Whether or not you want to stick to 1.5 hour bursts of activity, most people will find that regular rest breaks are helpful when engaged in long difficult written tasks.

## Use of social media

A high percentage of the population of the UK now have Facebook accounts and will be aware of the benefits of it as a way of sharing news and experiences with family, friends and acquaintances. Many will also use resources such as Twitter and other online forums. These can be excellent ways of sharing information and ideas and having debates. However, there are dangers for social workers in relation to social media use. The first is that disgruntled service users (often people who had their children removed) will try to track down where you live and even publish photos or information about you online. It is very important if you are a social worker to understand the security settings on social media accounts. Remember also that even if you only share your postings with friends, things which you post on their accounts could be seen by a much wider audience. Photos of you and your family can be tagged with your name and the date and location of the photo for example. All sorts of information, which people assume is private, is available online

and searchable such as the sale price of your house, unlisted phone numbers, etc. The internet also allows us to make connections between these different types of information. I was once puzzled by the identity of someone who had sent me a message on Twitter. I googled their Twitter name. This not only revealed their name but also links on all sorts of potentially embarrassing hook-up websites in which they used the same username.

The second danger for social workers who use social media is that people who are ill-disposed towards them, and this can include service users, unfriendly co-workers, and even bullying bosses, can scan the internet looking for material to use against them. Schraer (2015) reported on a social worker who had been reported to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) by a member of the public for writing offensive tweets to David Cameron, Donald Trump and others. It is understood from reports elsewhere that the Twitter account had few followers so it is unlikely that many people actually read the offensive tweets. However, the case was taken seriously enough for the case to go before the HCPC. I have also heard anecdotally of a social worker who was reported to their employer for making rude comments to someone who had had dealings with them on Ebay.

Social work is considered to be a 'moral profession' and so any public deviation from what is considered to be that professional image can be used against you. The use of aliases and avatars will not necessarily protect you due to the inter-connectedness of the internet. Local authorities are very conservative and risk-averse organisations and professional regulatory bodies will take any allegations about your conduct from the public very seriously even if there is malicious intent behind the referral.

The British Association of Social Workers (2012b) has a very good Social Media Policy which every social worker should read carefully. I would recommend that if you post views about social work issues that you should stick to discussing these in the abstract and never refer to any work which you have actually done or been involved in yourself. This includes positive comments as well as negative ones. If you post on Facebook 'Had a really positive time working with service users this afternoon', that could be taken by someone that you didn't feel positive about whoever you saw in the morning. It is best not to discuss your work at all. When posting your views about social or political issues always ensure that you can defend your position against accusations of any kind of prejudice. If someone calls you out for being unkind, unfair or making sweeping generalisations about anything always be prepared to apologise, even if you think they have unreasonably taken offence. We can all use more friends and there is no point in making enemies.

Used properly, social media like Twitter can give you access to lots of sources of information which will be immensely useful to you in your career. You can search Twitter to look for people to follow using ordinary search terms like 'social work' and hashtags such as #socialwork which aid in searching. Twitter will also give you suggestions of who to follow based on your interests. Twitter often gives you opportunities to interact directly with writers, politicians, academics and others through commenting on their tweets. You should not expect replies from famous people but it is exciting when it does happen.

## Hot desking and agile working

Hot desking means not having your own desk but instead finding a desk when you need one. Agile working is a related concept and refers to the ability to work easily in a range of environments. If you are an agile worker then if you have time between visits in which it is impractical to return to the office, you can use other locations such as cafes (provided privacy of data is ensured) or your car to catch up with recording or report writing. Never leave your computer unattended with your email or any confidential documents open or where your screen could be overlooked by others. Agile working requires good mobile IT devices such as iPads or laptops, which as I have stated before should ideally be linked to email and local authority recording systems. Hot desking just requires the ability to obtain a desk and log onto a computer in a shared office environment. Hot desking and agile working are based on the principle that in a paperless working environment we have no need of permanent desks, filing cabinets, etc. They also work on the principle that since social workers should be spending most of their time out in the field it is wasteful of resources to provide a permanent personal desk and computer for each worker. It is therefore a cost-effective strategy.

There are also positive benefits for social workers themselves in hot desking. We tend in a normal office environment to spend all our time with the same colleagues. Hot desking can give us the opportunity to randomly mix with colleagues from other teams or even other professions.

Personally I believe that hot desking and agile working have a lot of benefits for social work but the experiences of many social workers have not been good. McGregor (2012a) reported on a survey undertaken by *Community Care* and Unison on social worker experience of hot desking. A large percentage of respondents felt that they had not been properly equipped and supported. Nine out of ten people in the survey had commented that hot desking had a negative effect on morale and that they had less access to peer support. Social workers sometimes need quiet and privacy for sensitive phone calls. They also need space to have supportive conversations with colleagues. The large open-plan offices often associated with hot desking do not facilitate these important interactions. Many local authorities have adopted this approach to save money but have not thought about alternative ways to provide some of the important functions of a conventional environment. To leverage the benefits of hot desking thought needs to be put into the design of the office environment. It cannot all be about cost cutting.

Small changes on the part of workers and managers can make a difference to the experience of workers who are hot desking. Bee (2015) mentioned the importance of workers not locking up computers which were supposed to be for communal use. He also suggests the use of software to track the availability of free workstations so that social workers can easily discover where the nearest free workstation is to them.

Fayard and Weeks (2011) discussed how workspace can be designed to facilitate collaboration between workers while allowing them the privacy they needed. They observed that a number of studies have shown that when employees are in large

open-plan offices they often have much more superficial discussions because they are aware that other people can hear them. They suggest that offices need to have spaces where people can meet accidentally such as corridors but the architecture needs to also include features such as alcoves in which people can have privacy to continue the conversations which they strike up with colleagues. Areas can be created which have a mixed function, e.g. sofas to sit and have discussions on and printers/copiers in the same area. The sharing of social and work space makes workers feel less self-conscious about sitting and having a discussion than they might if there was no office equipment in the area. They also said that management has an important role in promoting collaboration by not making derogatory remarks whether in jest or otherwise to workers who are having discussions in social areas. Instituting modern work practices is only going to be effective when the professional needs of social workers are taken into account in how they are implemented.

## Understanding changes in how social care is structured: outsourcing, privatisation and markets

The structure of public services continues to change at a rapid rate. The traditional employers of social workers, local authorities, are increasingly becoming purchasers of services rather than service providers. This process began with the contracting out of services such as residential care and is increasingly being applied to qualified social work roles. Jones (2015) described the moves towards outsourcing child protection services. There is a great deal of negativity towards outsourcing in the social work sector. While understanding these concerns I also consider that the profession should recognise that these changes offer opportunities to social workers to have greater control over how their services operate.

The use of markets and a move towards privatising public services began during the government of UK Prime Minister Mrs Thatcher. This pattern has continued through subsequent UK governments and has spread internationally. More recently, the country of Greece has been asked to open up its public services to privatisation as a condition of receiving international bailout money. These trends parallel a growing use of outsourcing in the private sector. The advantages of outsourcing parts of an organisation's activities are that the customer organisation does not need to make capital investment in the activity and that it can make full use of specialist expertise which exists in the market. The negative side of the equation is that it is less easy for government to regulate the quality of outsourced services.

The application of markets and quasi-markets within public services also has the purpose of forcing service departments to improve their performance in meeting the needs of their internal 'customers' through making them compete with rival departments in other organisations. A few years ago I co-facilitated a team-building exercise for a hospital laboratory. The turnaround for certain types of lab results had

previously been a week but in order to win a contract the lab managed to reduce that turnaround time drastically. The problem had not been lack of resources but just a lack of identification of bottlenecks, which were slowing down processing.

The potential benefit of competition for providing public services is greater performance but the downside is the cost of failing departments which fail to win contracts.

Outsourcing forces public bodies to acknowledge the real cost of certain activities. For example, if the writing of certain types of report is outsourced and the organisation is charged per report then it causes managers to think more carefully about whether all the reports they are asking for are actually required.

However, there are costs and dangers associated with privatisation of social services. In 2011 the field of older people's care was rocked by a scandal of the collapse of the care home company Southern Cross. This was caused by the owners of the company selling off the care home buildings to realise large profits and then renting back the residences from the new owners. The additional costs for the remaining care home business in paying the high rents became unsustainable and the company collapsed. Local authorities then had to pick up responsibility for the Southern Cross residents.

An investigation by the *Financial Times* (O'Connor and O'Murchu, 2011) in the wake of the Southern Cross scandal found much poorer Care Quality Commission (CQC) ratings for the quality of care homes in the private sector in comparison to the state and voluntary sectors. An editorial in the *Financial Times* (2011) declared the state of UK care homes to be an 'affront to human dignity'. They found that the model of privatisation for older people's care had a 'fundamental flaw'. This flaw was that competition between homes caused under-occupancy and squeezes in funding led private companies to cut back on the quality of care to boost profits. When these factors are combined with the psychological costs to frail residents when homes close down it raises very serious questions about whether privatised services can provide the stability and quality of care needed for vulnerable citizens.

Additional changes to the financing of public services include the use of new approaches such as social impact bonds. These are financial instruments which return a profit to investors in social care projects if these projects meet certain objectives in terms of measurable improvement in service users' circumstances. Bugg-Levine et al. (2012) suggest that greater 'precision and transparency' are needed in measuring social outcomes. This is a significant stumbling block to this type of funding. Measuring the outcomes of social work interventions is extremely difficult and it is something which the sector has never got to grips with. Do we conclude, for example, that a person with an alcohol problem has improved if they are sober six months after finishing a programme or do we have to wait until a year or two years after the intervention to decide if treatment has been successful? For services such as day care, finding a measure of improvement is even more elusive. Different service users will obtain different benefits and turning benefits into numerical measurements is extremely difficult. Each service user's situation is unique and each will have a different view about what represents improvement for them. There is also the issue of the supposed savings to the public purse, which allows the government to

fund the return to investors in social impact bonds. A project which diverts service users from prison or psychiatric hospital will be of immense benefit to the service users who access it but will not necessarily generate cashable savings. As long as the prison or the psychiatric hospital remains open other people will be found to fill them or some beds will simply be left empty while the ward in which they sit still has to be staffed. Funding methods such as social impact bonds are interesting developments but I doubt if they will realise the high expectations which some people have for them. Most investors will put their money into the sector via funds which invest in a number of social projects to offset risk. For the sector as a whole to generate returns for investors the additional funding to successful projects will have to be greater than that lost by the unsuccessful ones. As the ultimate customer for social services is the government these additional returns will have to be financed through the public purse.

For field social workers, the prospect of the outsourcing of their jobs provides cause for concern but also opportunity. Jones (2015) warns of private companies, some of which have a poor reputation for public services, winning contracts to provide child protection services. An alternative possibility, however, is for social workers to form social work practices. By working at arm's length from the local authority social workers could take charge of their relationships with the communities they serve; practise in a way which more directly fits with their professional ethos; manage their public relations and public image better; reduce unnecessary bureaucracy; and equip their teams with better IT and be less risk averse in deploying it. It is in my opinion a certainty that social work services will be outsourced gradually throughout the country. If the danger of social work services going to unpopular companies is as significant as Professor Jones suggests then I believe it is imperative that social workers themselves take some control of the outsourcing process. They can do this by developing a model which safeguards working conditions and improves the quality of outcomes for service users. Unfortunately the high degree of negativity towards outsourcing from within the profession and social work academics seriously hampers the development of social-worker-led services. The predominant response is opposition to any change but without any political, media or public support it is difficult to see how the status quo can be maintained.

The Department for Education (2012) produced a report on an evaluation of a number of pilot children's social work practices. The report gave mixed findings but identified some benefits of social work practices as a model. A report on pilot adult social work practices by the Social Care Workforce Research Unit (2014) also reported mixed conclusions, not helped by the fact that the pilots looked at were varied in nature.

I would recommend that any social worker in fieldwork services reads this report and starts giving some thought to how they function within an outsourced service. It is important in my opinion that social workers are active agents in shaping changes to services and are not passive recipients in changes which are driven by others.

Shaping the future will be a real test of the resiliency of the profession and its ability to envision a positive future outside local authority control.

## Chapter recap

In this chapter I reviewed some of the ways in which new technologies can improve the efficiency of social workers and some of the cultural obstacles to achieving the maximum benefits of technology. I looked at why some modern work practices such as agile working and hot desking have failed to be used effectively in social work and how they can be made to work by taking account of the professional needs of social workers as well as the pressure to reduce costs. The chapter also looked at changes in how services are funded and organised, and implications of this for the profession.

## Further reading

There are various bloggers online talking about the use of technology in social work. If you want to read about innovations in the use of technology in the workplace the *Harvard Business Review* is an expensive but excellent source. It is available at larger news outlets in major cities or by subscription.

The *Financial Times* periodically runs articles on public sector finance issues. It is the most reliable source of information on these issues. *The Times* is another good source of reliable information on these issues. Both of these newspapers have pay-walls online. You can find out if they have salient articles by checking the front page of the print versions at your local newsstand if you are not a regular reader. The *Guardian* Social Care pages online are also an essential source of information about structural changes in social work as is the *Community Care* website. I would recommend subscribing to the email newsletter for both of these websites.

## Next up!

In the next chapter I will look at how to develop good cooperative relationships in the workplace and how to deal with negative ones such as bullying and harassment.