Why is significant practice change in health so difficult to achieve? Insights from practice theories and ethnographic research

This seminar (which is FREE to attend) will be held in

**Room 1G06**
Dalhousie Building
University of Dundee

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**ALL WELCOME**

For catering purposes, if you would like to attend then please contact
Rosanne Bell, r.c.bell@dundee.ac.uk or
Fred Comerford, fac1@st-andrews.ac.uk

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My presentation provides an overview of some current research being undertaken at the Centre for Research in Learning and Change, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Technology Sydney. Whilst diverse in its practice foci – early childhood health services, integrated primary health care, a residential rehabilitation centre for mothers with chronic alcohol and drug and mental health issues, and the development of health professional education across all health disciplines in Australian higher education – a common focus is on the achievement and the difficulty of achieving significant service and practice change. A further commonality is the use within many of our studies of socio-material theories, in particular, practice theories, and the use of ethnographic methods to get close to and stay close to practice as this is occurring in the workplace.

I will briefly outline the different perspectives on practice, learning and change that are offered by socio-material theories when contrasted with more individually and cognitively focused approaches to practice, learning and change. Socio-material theories argue that professional ‘practices’ are deeply embedded historical and cultural formations, intimately entangled with identity, status and being in the world. Arguing for significant change is frequently seen and experienced as disturbing and destabilising. These issues are not well identified in many programs of service redesign. I will conclude by exploring some of these implications as we have seen them in our research.

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