

I DIDN'T GET TO WHERE I AM
TODAY (SOME MID-CAREER
REFLECTIONS)

Tracy Power

CHAIN – HEALTH ANALYSTS' SPECIAL
INTEREST GROUP

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Where am I today?

- Tracy Power
- Director of Information and Analysis (IAD), DHSSPS
- Outposted from Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA)
- Lead team of 30+ statisticians plus 3 economists and 10+ administrative professionals

What does IAD do?

- Supports DHSSPS policymakers, Minister and Assembly Information needs (and public)
 - Collect and publish official HSC data (eg. Waiting times)
 - Hospital Inpatient System (PAS download)
 - Assembly Questions
 - Population Health surveys
 - QOF
 - Resource Acquisition and Allocation
 - Health Inequalities Monitoring

How did I get here?

- Graduated with BA Hons in Geography 1986, Ph.D. in 1989 (Granitic Weathering)
- Recruited as Assistant Economist to PPRU in 1989 ('Statistician' in 1991)
- Worked in NIO until 1992
- Promoted to DHSS – until 1999
- DOE/DRD 1999 – 2005
- Promoted back to DHSSPS since 2005
- 10 years as a 'Health Analyst'

Geography

- How it helps
- 'The study of variations on the surface of the Earth'
 - Variance over space and time
 - Demography & Deprivation
 - Observation and deductive reasoning
 - Statistical Methods, GIS
 - (Reading, writing and doing sums)

Big Projects/Big Lessons

- Life Sentence Review Board

(Applied Statistics is about REAL people)

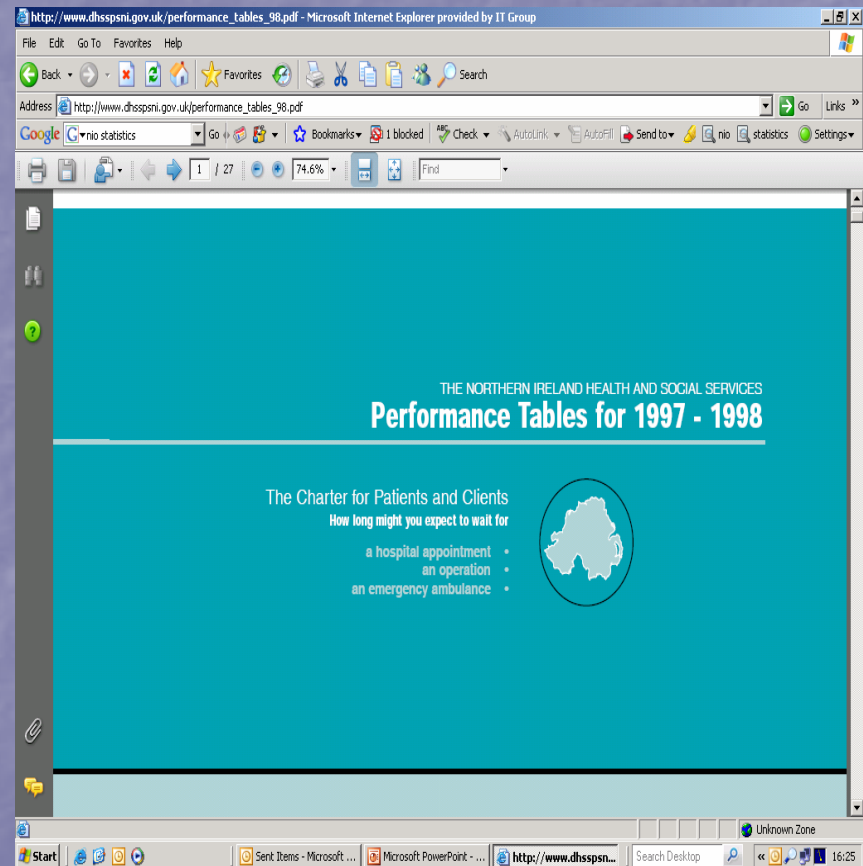
- Corporate Monitoring / Charter returns

(Don't analyse the data until you understand it (definitions, how collected, quality issues))

More

■ Performance Tables

(Complexity of health and social care makes numbers difficult)



More

- PES Modelling

(Comparability over time and space often impossible – basic currencies)

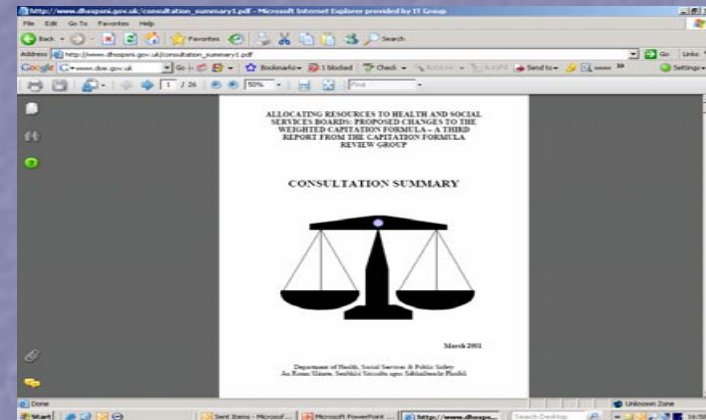
- GP Fundholding Budgets

(Health professionals should be included and respected)

More

- Board Capitation / General Grant

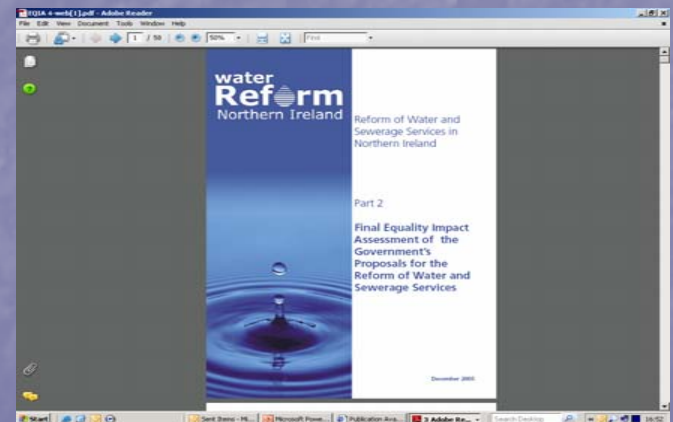
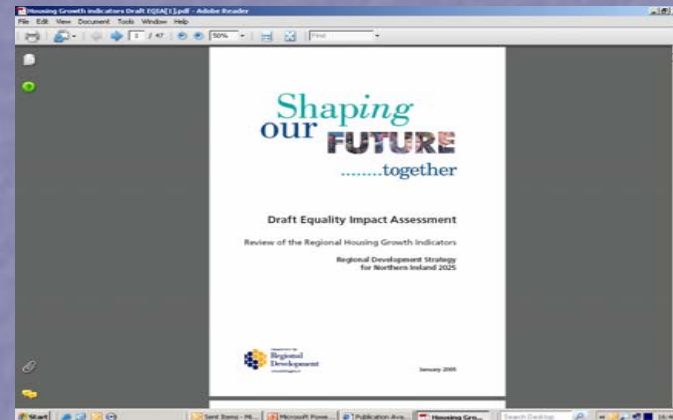
*(Difficult sums/
problems are the
most personally
rewarding)*



More

- Equality Impact Assessments

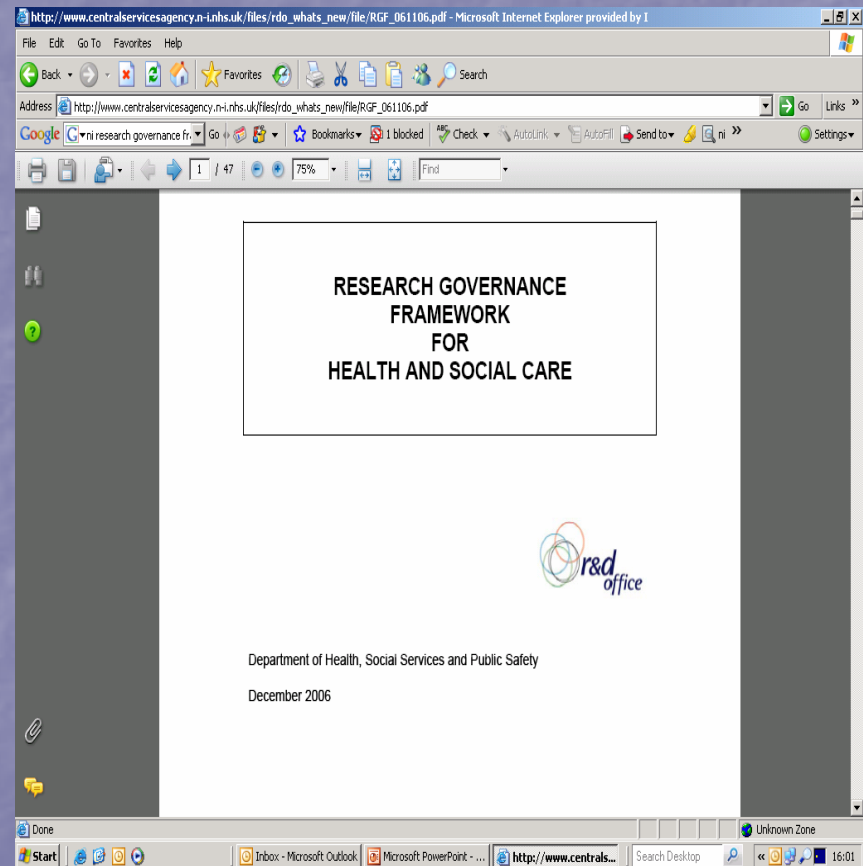
(If you don't have the data, find someone who does, then spread the good news)



More

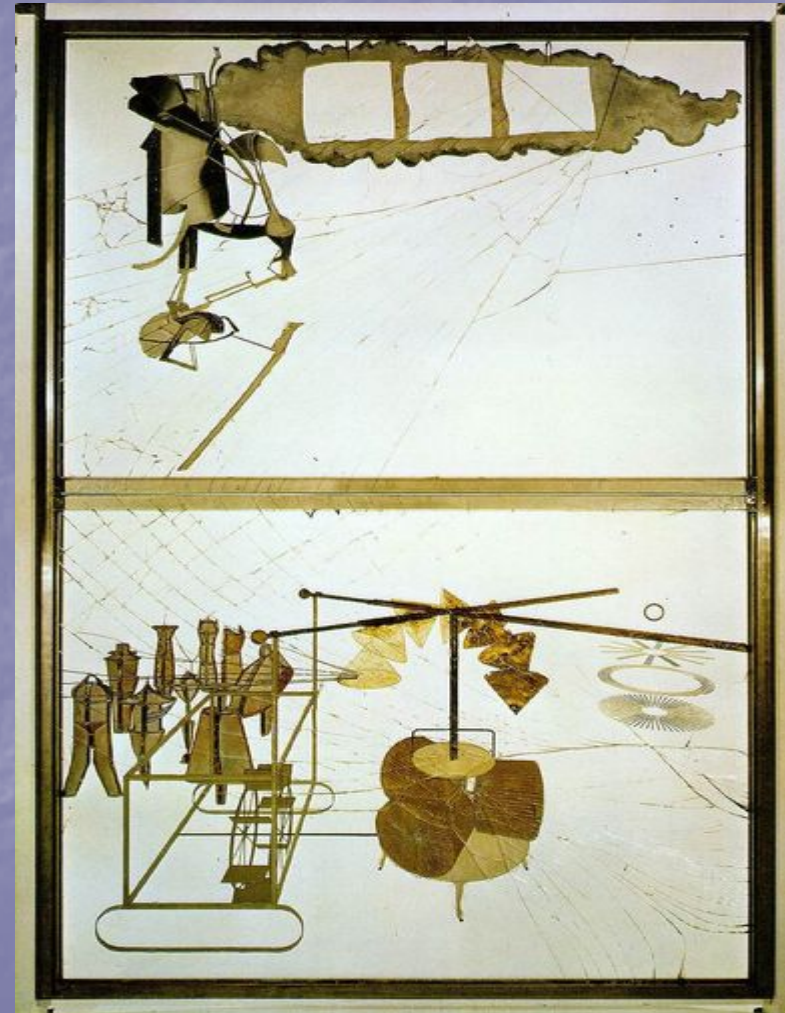
- Research Governance

(You have to do the right thing, even when it's unpopular)



Ongoing Issues

- Relationship with policymakers
 - 'Give me a number' (button pressing)
 - Under-appreciation of skills
 - 'Shoot the Messenger'
- Reducing Resources
 - No time to 'think'
 - Dissemination poor
 - 'Advertising budget' non-existent



More Issues

- Increasing Complexity of Service
 - New diseases, new technologies
 - Over-specialisation – high risk
 - Individuals difficult to replace
- RPA
 - Uncertainty, demotivation
 - Confused roles & responsibilities
- An opportunity to get it right this time?

Gaps that need filled

- NI HSC Information Strategy
- Information Audit
- Investment in IT and clinical coding
- Data definitions service
- Public Health administrative systems (GMSIS, NILS)
- Small area data (disability, ethnicity)
- Build a Strong Analytical Community

How we can help each other

- Build relationships / become allies
- Share data and meta-data
- Share methodologies (eg. disclosure)
- Share resources and ideas

And Finally

- I didn't get to where I am today ...
 - By being a brilliant academic statistician
 - By being a brilliant IT expert
 - By being everyone's friend
 - By being lazy
 - By never making mistakes

Thank You

QUESTIONS?