ADR UK and Impact

What is impact?

As an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) investment, ADR UK adopts the definition of impact used by ESRC and across UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) as a whole:

> *"Impact is the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy."*

This includes, for example, informing changes in government policy and public service practice that lead to better social and economic outcomes for people and communities.

This impact can be at any geographic level, from the local, to the national and international.

What types of impact does ADR UK aim to have?

ADR UK seeks to maximise value from administrative data access, linkage, and research across the 'Five Ps':

1. Impact on **Process:** championing a lasting culture change towards closer working between academics and government to routinely share, link and use administrative data for research. This includes improving the tools, resources and infrastructure available for administrative data research and building the capacity, skills and methods of researchers to utilise these datasets.

2. Impact on **Policy:** influencing government or other public bodies – whether at a local, devolved, or UK level – to inform policies, strategies and standards, through understanding and insight gained from ADR UK-enabled research in a range of key policy areas such as inequality, crime, and vulnerable populations.

3. Impact on **Practice:** influencing public sector and other professionals to change or maintain the way they deliver public services – such as within health, education or justice – informed by an understanding of 'what works' provided by ADR UK-enabled research and evidence. In addition, influencing data practice at local and national levels, including supporting better collection of data, improving data quality and identifying data gaps.

4. Impact for **People:** the tangible, real world improvements to the outcomes and quality of life of individuals and communities that may stem from the changes to policy and practice ADR UK-enabled research stimulates. This is the impact all our work ultimately strives towards, to benefit the public, repay and maintain their trust, and make a difference to society.

5. **Potential** impact: ADR UK's programme of work creates both sustainable research resources, in the form of linked administrative datasets that can be accessed by other researchers in future, and sustainable bodies of knowledge and understanding of the data

and what it can tell us. In this way, ADR UK seeks to have a legacy impact that enables others to build on our success and create further impacts on policy, practice and people in the future.

How does ADR UK maximise its impact?

Across ADR UK, our partners have a range of strategies to maximise impact across our 'Five Ps'. Common approaches include:

- **Partnering with government**: each of ADR UK's devolved national partnerships – ADR Northern Ireland, ADR Scotland, and ADR Wales – is set up as a close partnership between government and multiple universities. This puts them in the best possible position to access data, and to deliver research insights directly to the policy community. Likewise, at a UK level, ONS and the Strategic Hub partner closely with Government departments to link data and enable research.

- **Aligning with national strategies and Areas of Research Interest (ARIs)**: in the devolved ADR partnerships, data that is linked and analysed is prioritised in line with national government strategies, to ensure research is relevant to the most pressing social challenges – the Prosperity for All strategy in Wales; the National Performance Framework in Scotland; and both the previous Assembly's Programme for Government and the New Decade, New Approach agreement that re-established the Assembly in Northern Ireland. Likewise, at a UK level, data linkages are aligned with priorities in government departments' published ARIs.

- **Dual publication**: to have far-reaching impact on policy and practice, research findings need to be widely accessible to academics, policymakers and practitioners alike, in formats that are easily digestible and usable by each audience. This is why ADR UK utilises a dual publication approach, publishing research in both influential academic journals and easily accessible policy papers and briefs.

- **Engaging with stakeholders, communities and the public**: for research to be of use to practitioners, and of benefit to the communities they serve, it needs to ask the right questions. One way of assuring that is by co-producing research projects with those stakeholders, and working closely with representatives of relevant communities and publics. For ADR Northern Ireland, project steering committees are established to empower voluntary and community groups to set research priorities and interpret findings alongside academics, while ADR Wales and ADR Scotland both have public panels to help guide their work. At a UK level, the Strategic Hub works closely with project partners to ensure relevant communities are engaged as their work develops.

- **The public interest test**: ADR UK's work takes place within the legal framework of the 2017 Digital Economy Act, which enables public bodies to provide access to administrative data for the purpose of research, subject to a number of criteria, including that the research be in the public interest. To ensure this, ADR UK research projects must be

approved by the UK Statistics Authority's Research Accreditation Panel. This is fundamental to enabling research that has positive impact on people's lives.

- **Making datasets available for further use**: when ADR UK facilitates the linkage of data for research, it is on condition that the resulting datasets are deposited, in de-identified form, for access by accredited researchers via our secure data processing and access partners – the ONS SRS, the SAIL Databank in Wales, NISRA in Northern Ireland, and the National Safe Haven in Scotland. This extends the use of these datasets beyond the original research projects, which maximises the return on resources expended to create them, and enables the creation of further potential impact in future.