



Job description

Student internships in primary care Summer 2018

One or more internships will be available in the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences: <http://www.phc.ox.ac.uk/>

Project information

Interested candidates should apply indicating their preference of project. Currently available projects are as follows:

1. Understanding the context for development and implementation of care organising apps

Technology is widely viewed as a major part of the solution to the growing challenge of providing health and social care to an ageing population. But despite significant investment and high expectations, five problems persist (abbreviated as NASSS): digital technologies are either **not adopted** or **soon abandoned** by professionals and/or their patients and clients, or else the technology-supported service succeeds as a small-scale demonstration project but fails to **scale up locally, spread to other comparable settings** or be **sustained over time**. This student internship will assist a multidisciplinary team with the study (informed by the NASSS framework, described [here](#)) of why one particular group of technologies (care organising apps) have not been adopted or used as much as their designers intended. The student will undertake the following (under supervision by Professor Greenhalgh or one of the IRIHS research team) and work towards a literature review paper on which they will have an opportunity to be first author. The review will cover:

- a. The history of the emergence of health and care apps
- b. The policy and regulatory framework for the development of health and care apps
- c. Economic considerations, especially the value chain in development, marketing and supply of health and care apps

These results will be written up in at least one paper and prepared for presentation. Funding will be available for the successful candidate to attend a conference with the aim of presenting this work. Prof Trish Greenhalgh will be leading on this project. Trish.greenhalgh@phc.ox.ac.uk

2. Improving diet and treating obesity (Diet & Nutrition Research Group)

In order to provide a first-hand insight into primary care research typically conducted in our group and offer hands-on research experience, the intern will have the

opportunity to work on a range of projects within our programme of work. They'll develop their own project within one of these areas which we envisage will lead to submission of an abstract for presentation at an academic conference or a paper for publication in an academic journal.

- 1. Characterising dietary patterns and health outcomes in the UK Biobank population.** Investigate sources of saturated fat, free sugars and salt in the UK diet and exploring associations between dietary patterns and cardiometabolic health.
Data will be sourced from the UK Biobank study which is a prospective observational cohort with around 210,000 participants completed a web-based 24-hour diet recall questionnaire (WebQ). Health outcome data will be derived from the mortality and cancer registries as well as from the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES).
- 2. Exploring behaviours linked with successful weight loss.** This project will involve the analysis of data collected using the Oxford Food and Activity Behaviours questionnaire from individuals who took part in a recent weight loss trial. The intern will analyse the data to determine which strategies/behaviours are associated with successful weight loss and weight loss maintenance.
- 3. Assisting with ongoing clinical trials.** We have several ongoing clinical trials including interventions which aim to improve diet and interventions for weight loss and dietary management of disease. The intern will assist in the running of these trials to gain first-hand experience of undertaking clinical research in a primary care setting.

Day to day supervision will be by Dr. Nerys Astbury and Dr. Carmen Piernas.
Nerys.astbury@phc.ox.ac.uk carmen.piernas-sanchez@phc.ox.ac.uk

3. Medical student internship in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Medicine and health care have much to learn from the social sciences and humanities. Primary health care in particular addresses not merely the biomedical aspects of disease but also the question of illness in its social and cultural context. The Interdisciplinary Research in Health Sciences group within the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences is pursuing an exciting research agenda which seeks to celebrate and retain the traditional and the humanistic aspects of medicine and healthcare while also embracing the unparalleled opportunities of contemporary science and technology to improve health outcomes and relieve suffering. Three particular interests are the health needs and illness narratives of minority and disadvantaged groups; the introduction of technology-based innovations in healthcare; and the complex links (philosophical and empirical) between research, policy and practice. We would welcome a student intern with a strong track record of interdisciplinary scholarship and achievement (e.g. in global health, advocacy, technology transfer or other relevant fields) to undertake a project of their choosing that aligns with the interests of the IRIHS group (<https://www.phc.ox.ac.uk/research/interdisciplinary-research-in-health-sciences>). Dr Sara Shaw will be leading on this project. Sara.shaw@phc.ox.ac.uk

- 4. Perspectives on unexpected weight loss as a precursor to a cancer diagnosis: a qualitative secondary analysis**

The post holder will conduct a secondary analysis of existing qualitative interviews to inform our ongoing work investigating unexpected weight loss as a marker of cancer and serious disease. The following data sources are available from which to collate patients' accounts of experiencing and responding to unexpected weight loss:

- 1) transcribed interview data on patient experiences of lung and colorectal cancer diagnosis in England (Denmark and Sweden)
- 2) transcribed interview data from patients from Oxfordshire discussing safety netting for symptoms such as weight loss that could represent underlying cancer;
- 3) transcribed interview data from cancer patients from all over the UK, HERG archive (also published on cancer sections of healthtalk.org)

The post holder will be responsible for identifying all mentions of unexpected weight loss in the data sources listed and collating them in preparation for discussion in a residential workshop with project leaders Professor Sue Ziebland and Dr Brian Nicholson together with other members of the Health Experiences Research Group. This project will lead to a peer reviewed publication and the opportunity to present the research at a conference. Sue.ziebland@phc.ox.ac.uk

Purpose of the post

This Primary Care Student Internship has been funded by the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences to support the research training and development of a medical student, MSc or PhD student or allied health professional, for a period of 2 months over the summer vacation.

The Intern will:

- Receive appropriate training;
- Develop a translational research project (see the job description for details);
- Prepare the work for potential presentation +/- publication in an academic journal.

Daily working relationships will be with the team leads and members of their teams.

Main Duties

This is an exciting opportunity for a student or early career health professional to undertake an internship and obtain a research grounding in world-leading academic departments. The main duties of the posts will involve working up and then delivering the research projects. On a day to day basis the work will be variable and will depend on the project chosen. The successful candidate will be an integral member of the multidisciplinary research team and will thus benefit from exposure to a range of research techniques. For exceptional candidates the work may provide a grounding for future applications for clinical academic posts or fellowships.

Selection criteria

Candidates will be judged on the basis of the following criteria and should try to ensure that their application shows how they meet the criteria. Candidates will be expected to give examples of relevant experience which need not be work experience, but can be experience from other areas of life.

Your application must include a supporting statement from a personal tutor or equivalent and a short covering letter (one page) describing how you meet the criteria below and what you hope to gain from the internship.

Essential

Enrolled on an undergraduate medical course with access to a long vacation (ie usually 1st /2nd /3rd year). Applications will also be considered from suitably qualified students moving from a relevant MSc or PhD programme with a vacation in between OR an established health professional (e.g. midwife, neonatal nurse) considering a research career and able to take 8 weeks leave of absence from their clinical post.

Interest and enthusiasm for primary care

Ability to collaborate with team members from multiple scientific disciplines.

High standard of written English communication.

Desirable

Previous experience of health research

How to apply

Please apply via email to recruit@phc.ox.ac.uk, with the subject heading 'Primary Care Medical Student Internship application', and attach the following documents:

- CV
- Covering letter explaining how you meet the criteria for the post and what you hope to gain from it.
- Supporting statement from personal tutor or equivalent

Please state clearly which project you prefer and whether you are also interested in any of the others.

Closing date for applications is Friday 4 May and interviews will be held on 14 May afternoon.