

Name & email supervisor(s):

Dr Kate Greenwell
Dr Adam Geraghty

Length and dates of internship:

4 weeks in June 2024

Host department:

Primary Care, Population Sciences and Medical Education, University of Southampton

How will the internship be conducted:

- ☐ In person at the university
- ☐ Virtual/ from home
- ☒ Both are possible, depending on preference of student

Title internship project:

Scoping review of the literature on couples-focused interventions for chronic conditions

Summary of the internship project: *(max 250 words, can include hyperlinks to further information)***Background**

Low back pain is one of the most common and costly conditions that GPs see in practice. It remains the leading cause of years lived with disability globally and the burden is due to increase as the population expands and ages. Low back pain can have a significant impact on the quality of life of individuals and their families. Partners can be integral to how people living with low back pain manage their condition, providing vital practical, emotional, and social support. There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that interventions targeted at couples can achieve greater benefits in self-management of long-term conditions than those targeted at individuals alone. However, there is a lack of research exploring the partners' perspective and the acceptability, feasibility, and effectiveness of couples-focused interventions for low back pain in a UK context.

Methods

The first stage of this NIHR School for Primary Care Research funded project will involve conducting a [scoping review](#) of the qualitative and quantitative literature on couples-focused interventions for chronic conditions. For each study included in the review, we will summarise the key findings and the recruitment methods, theoretical approaches, content (e.g. behaviour change techniques), and delivery methods (e.g. group, 1:1, online) used.

Impact

The scoping review findings will be used to inform: (1) a qualitative study to explore the experiences and support needs of people with low back pain and their partners; and (2) the development of a novel couples-focused intervention to support self-management of low back pain.

Learning objectives:

- To understand the purpose of a scoping review.
- To develop skills in scoping review methodology, such as searching electronic databases, screening papers for inclusion, data extraction, and comparing findings across studies.
- To gain an understanding of couples-focused interventions and how these interventions might facilitate self-management in chronic conditions.

Any further information: