

Newcastle University SPCR Summer Internship Projects

Project 1: Educational Research

We have a growing GP educational research team under the leadership of Dr Hugh Alberti including GPs, GP trainees, foundation doctors and medical students. The successful student will have some choice about the project s/he is involved in and it may include a literature review, data collection and/or data analysis. Projects are related to GP educational research and include evaluations of GP teaching, career influences, studying GP placements, and research on the teaching of topics such as empathy and sustainability. The student will join a team studying parallel surgeries (student-learning) in GP placements through video and surveys, and will be involved predominantly in data analysis.

Supervisors: Dr Hugh Alberti, Sub-Dean for Primary and Community Care & team

Contact: hugh.alberti@newcastle.ac.uk

Project 2: Validation of a set of alcohol health literacy assessment tools

Alcohol health literacy refers to the set of skills patients need to be able access, understand, and use information and services to make informed decisions about alcohol drinking. These skills include: the ability to read and understand written documents about alcohol harm (print literacy); to use quantitative information about alcohol consumption (numeracy); and to listen and express themselves confidently when communicating with primary care clinicians about their drinking (oral literacy). Being able to assess alcohol health literacy in patients is important for both academic research, and as a tool for practitioners to help them communicate with their patients about alcohol. Newcastle University researchers have developed a set of assessment tools to help primary care clinicians evaluate alcohol health literacy in their patients. However, these tools have these have not yet been tested in the wider population. This internship will involve the administration of a web-based survey of these assessment alcohol health literacy tools in sample of local authority employees; generation of descriptive statistics based on the survey data; and the production of a short report to summarise the findings. The intern would also have the opportunity to be a co-author on the research paper arising from the study.

Supervisors: Gill Rowlands, Professor of General Practice and Dr Amy O'Donnell, Newcastle University Research Fellow

Contact: Gill.Rowlands@newcastle.ac.uk

Project 3: Health professional views and experiences of dementia medication review and de-prescribing in people with dementia: a qualitative evidence synthesis

Medication is the most common medical intervention in primary care, and costs the NHS around £9 billion per annum. This financial pressure on the NHS is in part, is because people are living longer with more multi-morbidity. One common long-term condition strongly associated with older age is dementia. People with dementia often have many other long term conditions. Previous research has suggested that people living with dementia take multiple medications, many of which are not appropriate; these medications can be burdensome, and even harmful. Health professionals working in primary care are often responsible for medication management, so their views and experiences of how all medication is reviewed and de-prescribed are important. This is particularly the case for people living with dementia as the illness advances and mental capacity and communication skills are lost. There have been several studies published on this topic, but no one has systematically summarised all of the information to ensure it is easily accessible for researchers, policy-makers, health professionals, and patients and their families. This proposed project, therefore, is to conduct an evidence synthesis to bring together the literature on primary care health professionals' views and experience of medication review and deprescribing in people with dementia.

Supervisors: Louise Robinson, Regius Professor of Primary Care Ageing, Dr Adam Todd, Reader in Public Health Pharmacy, Johanne Dow, SPCR GP Career Progression Fellow

Contact: a.l.robinson@newcastle.ac.uk