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| Host department: Manchester |
| Project Title: |
| Improving patients’ and professionals’ experiences of patients having online access to their primary care health record. |
| Proposed supervisory team: Names and areas of expertise to be included |
| Professor Caroline Sanders, Professor of Medical Sociology with expertise in primary care research focusing on patient experience and digital health.  Dr Brian McMillan, Senior Clinical Lecturer, GP, and Health Psychologist with expertise in applying digital technology and psychological theory to improving patients' experiences of primary care.  Professor Jeremy Horwood, Professor of Social Sciences and Applied Health Research, Centre for Academic Primary Care (CAPC), University of Bristol. Expertise in primary care digital health. |
| Potential for cross consortium networking and educational opportunities: |
| The supervisory team are engaged in multiple national and international collaborations presenting opportunities for networking and training. Opportunities include links to projects as well as seminars and training via our NIHR infrastructure networks associated with the School for Primary Care Research (SPCR), the Patient Safety Translational Research Centre (GM PSTRC), and the Applied Research Collaboration (ARC-GM). Dr McMillan is deputy chair of the QResearch scientific committee, based at Oxford University, is a member of the Oxford International Primary Care Research Leadership Programme, and is also engaged in collaborations with OpenNotes, an international movement promoting and studying transparent communication in healthcare. Prof Sanders leads collaborations for Public and Patient Involvement and Engagement (PPIE), including the GM Public and Community Involvement and Engagement Forum which partners with many organisations and networks, including: the GM Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) leadership group; the GM Health and Social Care Partnership; Health Innovation Manchester; the Clinical Research Network, Manchester Biomedical Research Centre. Sanders is also a member of executive teams for Manchester Academic Health Science Centre and the Health Data Research UK (HDRUK) Better Care North Programme. Prof Horwood leads the Intervention Optimisation and Implementation Theme for NIHR Health Protection Research Unit (NIHR HPRU) in Behavioural Science and Evaluation and leads the Behavioural and Qualitative Science Team for NIHR ARC West. |
| Project description: |
| The GP contract in England commits practices to offer patients ‘full online access’ to prospective information in their health record, starting from the date they register for this service, and from early 2022, full prospective online records access for patients will become the default. Research to date has mainly focussed on the impacts of records access on patient outcomes, but there is little work on how these services could be improved for both patients and clinicians.  The successful candidate will be embedded within an NIHR-funded programme of research exploring how patients having online access to their primary care record impacts upon their experiences of care, and the experiences of those delivering that care. The research seeks to explore how online records access services could be improved for both patients and primary care staff. The programme is in four stages: initial exploratory work, design of potential platform enhancements/interventions, intervention development, and feasibility testing. The successful PhD candidate will have the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of the study, with an emphasis on the planning, design, and development stages.  The objectives will be: 1. To identify key issues, needs and challenges associated with patients having online access to their primary care health record.  2. To identify guiding principles that will steer interventions aimed at improving patient and staff experiences of online records access services.  3. To develop one or more interventions, and optimise these from the user perspective through iterative cycles of feedback and modification.  The successful candidate will work alongside the supervisors to decide if their PhD will address all three of the above objectives, or alternatively, hone in on one or more of the objectives in more detail to develop their own lines of interest and enquiry. For example, there could be a focus on inequalities and the needs and challenges for a specific patient group or community. The successful candidate will be expected to employ appropriate methods to address their specific research questions but should include qualitative methods to explore the views of primary care staff and patients. They will also be expected to critically review and draw upon existing models and frameworks such as the Person Based Approach, the NASSS framework, or other relevant theory as appropriate to their research focus. |
| Training and development provision by host: |
| *Formal training:* All PhD students undertake a training programme delivered by the Doctoral Training Academy within the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health. This is delivered in partnership with the Centre for Academic and Researcher Development (CARD) and is aligned to the Researcher Development Framework (RDF). It provides foundation and intermediate level training at key stages of the programme, and provides access to a wide range of professional, personal and career development opportunities. Funds will also be available to attend training sessions from external providers where necessary. The successful candidate will be expected to attend and participate in the centre’s vibrant lunchtime seminar programme. |
| *Informal training:*  The successful candidate will benefit from the division’s supportive environment which is home to a number of senior academics with related interests. They will be able to draw upon the multi-disciplinary expertise within the Centre for Primary Care and Health Services Research (CPCHSR), which comprises staff with backgrounds in general practice, nursing, psychology, health economics, and statistics. Their research will fit well with the themes of the centre, especially ‘Quality and Safety’ and ‘Person-centred care and complex health needs’, for which Professor Sanders is lead. In addition to the centres own lunchtime seminars there are a wealth of other seminar programmes in the division which the candidate will be free to attend and participate in. |
| *PPIE:* Professor Sanders is leads Public and Patient Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) across multiple components of NIHR infrastructure in Greater Manchester and has the necessary experience and links to support PPIE as a core component at all stages of the PhD. The program of work is firmly founded in PPIE, and Dr McMillan has co-authored publications with several PPIE collaborators at Manchester. We have two PPIE co-applicants working on the current project, and also have access to PRIMER (Primary Care Research in Manchester Engagement Resource), a diverse group of patients, carers and members of the public with an interest in primary care research, based at the CPCHSR. The successful applicant will be encouraged to follow frameworks for inclusive research, the national NIHR standards for public involvement, and to explore innovative approaches for PPIE as appropriate. |