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| Host department: UCLChoose an item. |
| Project Title: |
| Sexual Healthcare |
| Proposed supervisory team:  |
| **Dr Julia Bailey** (Sexual health speciality doctor, Associate Professor, UCL)**Dr Patricia Schartau** (GP, Academic Clinical Lecturer, UCL)**Vanessa Apea** (Consultant Physician, Barts Health NHS Trust, QMUL)**Geraldine Leydon** (Professor in Primary Care, University of Southampton)The supervisors offer expertise in sexual health, digital health, mental health, digital intervention design and evaluation, qualitative and quantitative methodology, discourse analysis, science communication, and sexual healthcare for marginalised groups. |
| Potential for cross consortium networking and educational opportunities: |
| There are excellent opportunities for collaboration and learning:* Departmental sexual health research group
* PhD students across UCL , e.g. Qualitative Research methods group; Methodology groups
* NIHR Health Protection Unit (STI and Blood Bourne Viruses)
* NIHR School for Primary Care Research (national)
* Collaborations with NHS clinical service providers and policymakers locally and nationally
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| Project description: |
| The supervisors will work with candidates to develop their own projects. Suitable themes include Sexual Health; Digital Health; and/or Science Communication*Examples:*****Contraception choice for marginalised communities****The evidence-based, tailored [Contraception Choices website](http://www.contraceptionchoices.org/) for contraception decision-making is very popular. However, the website is currently available only in English, and requires a reasonable level of literacy to understand the pros and cons of different contraception methods to make an informed choice.This project would explore Contraception Choices website adaptation for other populations - this could include translation for other language communities, or multi-media formats for those with learning difficulties for example. The project would involve in-depth field work with a chosen community to identify their needs, then seeking their views on proposed website adaptions. The project would involve a systematic review; qualitative field work; and pilot testing digital intervention content and design. ****Understanding the complexity of sexual health consultations****Discussions about sexual health may be difficult for patients and for clinicians because of unspoken inferences about patients' sexual behaviour, ‘risk’ and identity. Advice for clinicians about how to discuss sexual health in consultation is often quite general, for example to 'avoid being judgemental', but it is not clear how best to approach this. This project would utilise qualitative methods including conversation analysis to understand delicate communicative problems, identifying the discursive features of 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' communication to develop training materials for clinicians. Experience/training in qualitative methods is a pre-requisite. Training in advanced qualitative methods (such as conversation analysis) will be offered.Sexual health care for intersex peopleUp to 1.7% of people have variations in sex characteristics (genetics, genital morphology, +/- hormone profiles), which may manifest at different stages in life. People with sex variations commonly experience secrecy, confusion, and surgery or hormonal treatments they did not consent to. Poor relationships with the medical establishment can reflect past traumatic experiences. Clinicians often lack the knowledge, experience and consultation skills to ensure that encounters with intersex people are constructive, collaborative and healing rather than harmful. In this context, it can be very hard to access appropriate sexual health care.This project will explore the sexual health needs of intersex people, and develop an online training package for clinicians. The project will have a steering group which includes intersex people. The project would involve a systematic review; qualitative field work; and pilot testing an e-learning intervention.  |

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| Training and development provision by host: |
| *Formal training:* Students will have access to high quality (free) training available through the [**UCL Doctoral Training**](https://www.grad.ucl.ac.uk/) programme: as well as department seminars, training, and research group meetings. Students can attend the popular UCL [Qualitative Research methods in Health](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/short-courses/search-courses/qualitative-research-methods-health) course.  |
| *Informal training:* Students will be offered individual and small group support for learning including systematic review methods, qualitative and quantitative methodologies, writing, career development etc. There is a large, motivated and supportive community of PhD students at the Research Department of Primary Care and Population Health (PCPH).  |
| *PPIE:* This is essential. PCPH has an Expert by Experience panel, and PPI recruitment can also be more targeted. |