# SPCR internship projects 2023 – Keele University

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| **Name & email supervisor(s):**  **Supervisors:**  Sarah Harrison (s.a.harrisson@keele.ac.uk)  Pip Nicholson (philippa.nicolson@ndorms.ox.ac.uk)  **Study team members:** Simon White (expertise: pharmacy), Aaron Poppleton (general practice, medicine), Mel Holden (physiotherapy, osteoarthritis), Vicky Welsh (general practice, medicine, older people) |
| **Length of internship and when it could take place:**  4 weeks, flexible start date |
| **Host department:**  School of Medicine, Keele University |
| **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:**  Examining medicines use among people aged 80 years or older with hip/knee osteoarthritis and comorbidities |
| **Summary of the internship project:** *(max 250 words, can include hyperlinks to further information)*  People aged 80 years or older are the fastest growing population group in the UK. Hip and knee osteoarthritis are debilitating conditions that are common in this group, as are other long-term health conditions. As this population group is the also least physically active with the highest healthcare expenditure, helping them to better manage their health conditions is a priority.  People with osteoarthritis are often prescribed non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and/or pain medicines (e.g., opioids). Those aged 80 years or older are also often taking multiple other medicines for their health conditions. The more medicines a person is taking the higher their risk of negative effects (e.g., interactions, side effects, falls). Older people have a particularly high risk of serious adverse events from polypharmacy because they are more likely to have reduced renal and hepatic function, reduced hearing, vision, cognition and mobility.  We have undertaken a pilot randomised controlled trial (RCT) to evaluate a tailored exercise intervention compared to usual care among 50 adults aged 80 years and over with hip/knee osteoarthritis and comorbidities (the TEMPO study). In this internship project we will examine medicines use among participants in the TEMPO study to decide if this population may benefit from a medicine optimisation programme as well as non-pharmacological rehabilitation.  Using baseline data from the TEMPO study (n=50) we will:  (1) describe the health profile of participants  (2) describe the medicines profile of participants, with a focus on NSAID and pain medicine use: which medicine classes they are taking, doses and the total number of medicines  (3) Use established criteria to examine the appropriateness of medicines used (e.g. Beers, STOPP/START) |
| **Learning objectives:**  **Undertaking this project will enable the candidate to:**   * Increase their knowledge and understanding about osteoarthritis and its management * Increase their knowledge and understanding about randomised controlled trials and other applied health research methods (e.g., systematic reviews, surveys, qualitative methods) * Increase their analytical skills (including completing basic descriptive statistical analyses and interpreting the results) * Improve their presentation skills (presenting the study findings to the OA Research Group at the end of the internship) * Improve their writing skills (with the aim of writing up the project for submission to a primary care scientific conference and peer reviewed journal) * Attend wider academic training events and meetings within the department, university, and within the SPCR network * Have increased understanding about possible career trajectories for clinical academics |
| **Any further information:**  An approximate timetable for the project will be as follows:  Week 1: Meet the team, background reading, finalise the study protocol, commence research methods training programme, become familiar with the dataset  Week 2-3: Undertake the analyses and interpret the results  Week 4: Draw conclusions, present findings to the OA Research Group, plan future study outputs  ***Further information about the TEMPO study can be found below:***  TEMPO study link <https://www.ndorms.ox.ac.uk/research/tempo>  TEMPO study protocol <https://europepmc.org/article/ppr/ppr559858> |
| **How to apply:**  Applicants should email their application to Philippa Bailey by the **2nd May 2023** ([p.bailey2@keele.ac.uk](mailto:p.bailey2@keele.ac.uk))  The application should include:   1. A copy of the applicants up to date CV (including 2 nominated referees) 2. A supporting statement (no more than 1 side of A4 in length) providing information about:  * The applicants background and experience to date * Why they want to gain experience in primary care-based research * Which project they would like to undertake and why   Selection of candidates will be based on the written application only (no interview will be required) using a standardised scoring sheet.  We will let NIHR SPCR know the selected candidates by the **22nd May 2023** |