STUDENTSHIPS IN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE 2013

Applications are invited from individuals with a strong academic record who wish to develop a career in primary care research. These 3 year awards are offered in national competition at all eight Universities within the NIHR School for Primary Care Research: Birmingham, Bristol, Keele, Manchester, Nottingham Oxford, Southampton and University College London. Details of the specific research training opportunities available at each University are detailed below.

As the eight Universities do not always offer mentorship in every discipline relevant to primary care, it is possible to apply for a “linked” award so that applicants can benefit from training within the School but maintain a link with, or be primarily based within, a University outside the School that can provide discipline-specific mentoring. In these cases, the linked NSPCR partner must be agreed and specified in the application.

Awards will normally be taken up in October 2013.

Applicants must have a first degree in a discipline relevant to primary care research and will be expected to complete a PhD/DPhil during the award period. The precise academic qualifications required depend on the University and training offered. Students must be defined as "home/EU" for fee purposes to be eligible to apply for this award.

Studentship awards include fees, an annual tax-free stipend of £18,000 and a non-pay allowance of up to £30,000.
HOW TO MAKE AN APPLICATION

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the University at which they would like to hold the award to discuss their application. Contact details for each University (and in some cases for each subject area offered) are given on pages 4-14.

Interested individuals should submit a 2 page CV and a covering letter of not more than 2 pages. This letter must:

1) Explain why you want to train in primary care research;

2) List your preference for attachment to individual Universities if more than one University offers the training you would like.

The application should be sent by email to e.g.fletcher.20@bham.ac.uk and copied to the relevant contact person at your first choice University (see list below). Please state SPCR Studentship 2013 as the subject of the email. Formal applications must be received by 12 noon on Monday 7th January 2013. Applications not adhering to these instructions will not be considered.

Birmingham: h.j.stokeslampard@bham.ac.uk
Bristol: nancy.horlick@bristol.ac.uk
Keele: c.ashmore@keele.ac.uk
Manchester: maureen.glendinning@manchester.ac.uk
Nottingham: steve.barrett@nottingham.ac.uk
Oxford: eleonora.fulcini@phc.ox.ac.uk
Southampton: l.sturdy@soton.ac.uk
UCL: m.ogbogbo@ucl.ac.uk

For applications to the University of Oxford, please note the deadline for applications is the 4th January, at 23:59, applicants must apply directly to the University using the online application form: https://apply.embark.com/grad/Oxford/16/. On page 8, “Departmental Studentship Applications” insert the following reference code:- BZ/NIHR/MT13.

For applications to UCL, your submission should also include a one A4 page outline of your proposed research (UCL only). Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the named supervisor or head of unit identified to discuss potential ideas and applications. Applicants may apply for a particular project listed on the website, or may wish to discuss their own ideas with potential supervisors.

Please note that you will be making an application to your chosen university using their local recruitment procedures. Each member of the School will select candidates and present a recommended candidate to a meeting of the School’s Board in March 2013 where final decisions on awards will be made.
### Competition Timetable

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Competition Launch</td>
<td>Monday 26&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; November 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit CV and covering letter</td>
<td>Monday 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2013 12 noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invitation to interview</td>
<td>From Monday 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; January 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Mid to late February 2013 Dates to be confirmed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendations to SPCR Board meeting</td>
<td>Late March 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Announcement of Awards</td>
<td>By Easter 2013</td>
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<td>Start of studentships</td>
<td>Normally October 2013</td>
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### For Applications to the University of Oxford, please note one change to the table above

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<td>Submit CV, academic references, written work and research proposal</td>
<td>Friday 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; January 2013 23.59</td>
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### For Applications to the UCL, please note one change to the table above

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Dr Georgina Fletcher  
Senior Scientific Manager  
NIHR School for Primary Care Research
DETAILS OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AT EACH UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Primary Care Clinical Sciences (PCCS) in Birmingham is one of Europe's premier centres for primary care research, with 5* in RAE 2001 and 95% world leading/internationally significant research in RAE 2008. We are also the largest UK centre producing 13% of the national primary care papers in RAE 2008 and host very successful clinical and non-clinical career development programmes. The successful applicants will be based within one of ten research teams: Respiratory, Anticoagulation, Chronic Disease Prevention, Ethnicity, CEMS (Cancer, Endocrine and Metabolic Disease), Lifestyle, Qualitative Methodology, Health Outcomes, Quality Outcomes and Statistics. There is also a flourishing, CLRN funded, NIHR accredited clinical trials unit which supports the work of all these research teams.

To take up a studentship, applicants need to be eligible to register for a PhD at the University of Birmingham. PCCS offers studentships in a number of clinical areas (e.g. doctor, nurse, physiotherapy, dietician) or non clinical areas (e.g. statistics, health economics, medical ethics, epidemiology, health research):

Studentship in Medical Statistics - applicants will usually hold a Masters degree in medical statistics or applied statistics. Contact: r.l.holder@bham.ac.uk

Studentships in applied health research - applicants from any health related scientific discipline will be considered if they achieved a 2(i) or 1st class degree from a leading University, though a Masters would normally be expected. The studentship will be based in one of our research groups.

Contact leads for the following areas of interest:
Respiratory: Prof D Fitzmaurice, d.a.fitzmaurice@bham.ac.uk
Anticoagulation: Dr Ellen Murray, e.t.murray@bham.ac.uk
Chronic Disease Prevention: Prof Tom Marshall, t.p.marshall@bham.ac.uk
Ethnicity: Dr Paramjit Gill, p.s.gill@bham.ac.uk
CEMS: Prof Jim Parle, j.v.parle@bham.ac.uk
Lifestyle: Dr A Daley, a.daley@bham.ac.uk
Health Outcomes: Dr Mel Calvert, m.calvert.1@bham.ac.uk
Quality Outcomes: Professor Helen Lester h.e.lester@bham.ac.uk
Qualitative Methodology: Professor Sheila Greenfield, s.m.greenfield@bham.ac.uk
Statistics: Dr Roger Holder, r.l.holder@bham.ac.uk
Trials Unit: Director Prof Richard Lilford, r.j.lilford@bham.ac.uk

If you are thinking of applying, please get in touch with the various leads to discuss your application.

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

The Academic Unit of Primary Health Care conducts high quality research addressing questions of priority to the NHS. We are a large, friendly and thriving unit within the School of Social and Community Medicine, which includes many world class academics conducting research in different aspects of health services research and epidemiology. We offer the expertise of a wide range of academic staff from clinical and non-clinical backgrounds including statisticians, social scientists and economists. These staff cover a range of methodological approaches, including RCTs, observational epidemiological studies, qualitative research and economic evaluations. Formal research methods
training is available in all these areas through a highly popular programme of short courses. In the 2008 RAE, the Unit had 70% of its submission rated as either of world class or international standard. Our particular areas of interest in primary care, with details of who to contact for an initial discussion, include:

- Design and analysis of randomised controlled trials in primary care, development and validation of questionnaires (Alan.A.Montgomery@bristol.ac.uk, Sara.T.Brookes@bristol.ac.uk)
- Domestic violence, management of coronary artery disease in primary care (Gene.Feder@bristol.ac.uk)
- Diagnosis and treatment infections in primary care (Alastair.Hay@bristol.ac.uk)
- Qualitative research methods, patient-practitioner relationships and interaction, patient experiences of illness and healthcare (Ali.Heawood@bristol.ac.uk, Katrina.Turner@bristol.ac.uk)
- Economics of primary health care, methodological issues around economic evaluation in a primary care setting (S.P.Hollinghurst@bristol.ac.uk)
- Primary care mental health, CBT, use of technology to deliver mental health interventions (David.Kessler@bristol.ac.uk)
- Health inequality, substance use, sexual health, data linkage (John.MacLeod@bristol.ac.uk)
- Emergency and urgent care, unplanned hospital admissions, end of life care, primary care dermatology (Sarah.Purdy@bristol.ac.uk)
- Improving access to and delivery of primary care, evaluation of new models of care, multimorbidity, generalism (C.Salisbury@bristol.ac.uk)
- Management of childhood obesity in primary care (Katrina.Turner@bristol.ac.uk)

Please see our website (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/primaryhealthcare/) for more information about the range of our interests, current projects, and who best to contact to discuss possible ideas for studentships or fellowships. We have a very strong track record in developing research capacity and obtaining externally funded research training awards at all levels, so a post in this Unit provides a superb foundation for a successful academic career.

Applicants should be graduates with a good honours degrees (2.1 or higher). A Master’s degree in a related area will be highly advantageous. Students must be defined as "home" for fee purposes to be eligible (see: http://www.bris.ac.uk/academicregistry/fees/class/). An interest in research relating to primary health care is essential, within one of our areas of interest and expertise. Relevant academic or professional backgrounds include medicine, medical sociolgy, anthropology, health economics, psychology, health psychology, medical statistics, exercise and health, nursing or other allied health professions. After holding initial discussions with one of the academics listed above in relation to their area of interest, applicants for studentships should then contact Nancy.Horlick@bristol.ac.uk for information about how to apply online.

KEELE UNIVERSITY

The Arthritis Research UK Primary Care Centre at Keele University has an internationally renowned research programme in chronic pain and musculoskeletal disorders in primary care underpinned by several existing and ongoing high-quality observational cohorts and randomised clinical trials, with linkage to medical records (for further information please see http://www.keele.ac.uk/pchs/)

Current NIHR, MRC, Wellcome and Arthritis Research UK grants to the Centre amount to over £33 million.
The Arthritis Research UK Primary Care Centre forms a strong collaboration between academics from primary care, clinical rheumatology, epidemiology, physiotherapy, psychology, pharmacy, ageing research and health services research, and its clinical partner the North Staffordshire Primary Care Research Consortium.

The main areas of research interest are:

- musculoskeletal conditions and chronic pain, focused on joint pain and osteoarthritis, back pain and widespread, inflammatory arthritis (gout, polymyalgia rheumatic) and regional pain
- common mental problems managed in the community
- primary care and public health research in these areas, embracing allied health care professions and general practice, and focused on prevention, early identification and effective management of these conditions
- epidemiological research, trials and mixed methods involving qualitative research

The Centre has a strong commitment to ensuring that research findings contribute to evidence-based practice, health policy and guidelines, and development of enhanced scope practitioners and related training.

To be eligible for postgraduate study at Keele, applicants should have at least an upper class honours degree in a relevant subject. Ideally we prefer applicants with a Master’s degree.

Applicants should have excellent communication and interpersonal skills and have the ability to adopt a logical, scientific and questioning approach to research. In 2013 we are able to offer studentship opportunities in all research themes and across the following methodological areas: medical statistics, clinical trials, clinical and population based epidemiology and social science research.

For further information on studentships, please contact:
Professor Christian Mallen c.d.mallen@keele.ac.uk Professor of General Practice

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

The University of Manchester is the largest, single-site University in the UK, which was rated third in the UK in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The Manchester programme of the National School for Primary Care Research sits within the Centre for Primary Care in the Institute of Population Health
http://www.population-health.manchester.ac.uk/research/primarycare/

In the 2008 RAE, 80% of the Research Group’s research was rated in the two top international categories with 40% rated 4* (world leading) and 40% 3* internationally excellent. The Faculty of Medicine has undergone recently a major reorganisation and primary care research now forms a major part of a new Institute for Population Health.

The Centre for Primary Care is recognised internationally to be one of the UK’s leading research centres for research in primary care. The Centre was ranked 2nd in the UK in the last RAE, and was a founder member of the prestigious NIHR School for Primary Care Research, a collaboration of 8 leading primary care departments in England. The Centre hosts currently the NIHR Greater Manchester Primary Care Patient Safety Translational Research Centre, the Department of Health Policy Research Unit for NHS Commissioning, and leads the NIHR CLAHRC for Greater Manchester. The work of the Centre is supported by a truly multidisciplinary staff including general practitioners, psychiatrists, sociologists, psychologists, economist, statisticians and health services researchers.
PhD studies and students are central to the Centre for Primary Care group’s culture and research capacity building. The Centre has an extensive academic presence and multidisciplinary team which provide outstanding facilities for PhD students. It has strong collaborative links nationally and internationally. Our aim is to train future research leaders by providing multidisciplinary training and career development opportunities within primary care research. Students will be assigned to work with one of our Research Themes which will enable the student to develop their own project within the theme and benefit from the support of other researchers working in the same area:

- Quality and Safety – with a focus on quality of care, quality improvement, patient safety, the use of primary care databases and the role of incentives
- Health Policy, Politics and Organisation – with a focus on commissioning and contracting in the NHS
- Long-term conditions – with a focus on multi-morbidity and mental health, health technology assessment, and patient health and illness experience

Applicants must have a first class or masters-level degree in a discipline relevant to health sciences/primary care research. We welcome applications for studentships in a number of areas: patient experience and involvement, patient safety, quality of care, health organisations, mental health, medical statistics and co-morbidities/long term conditions. Studentships will be for 3 years.

*Studentship in Patient Experience /Patient Safety/Quality of care/Mental Health/Health Organisation and Policy/Co-morbidity and long-term conditions* – applicants must have a 1st class degree in a social science from a leading University.

*Studentship in Medical Statistics* – applicants will need to have a good first degree (2.1 or higher) or a Master’s in statistics or medical statistics and preferably some experience in a research environment. Applicants interested in doing methodological work related to statistical meta-analysis or the analysis of observational studies is encouraged.

For quality and safety contact Stephen.Campbell@manchester.ac.uk
For health organisation contact Katherine.H.Checkland@manchester.ac.uk
For long term conditions, contact Peter.Bower@manchester.ac.uk
For patient experience, contact Caroline.Sanders@manchester.ac.uk
For mental health contact Peter.coventry@manchester.ac.uk
For medical statistics, contact David.Reeves@manchester.ac.uk

We would be interested also in applications from other outstanding applicants who have a strong interest in pursuing other topic areas, within primary care related research.

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**UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM**

The Division of Primary Health Care in Nottingham has particular expertise in the analysis of large primary care databases and in the development and evaluation of complex interventions in primary care. We have methodological expertise in statistics, health economics and qualitative research. Areas of research interest include applied genetics; clinical epidemiology; ethnicity, disadvantage and health; injury epidemiology and prevention; safe and effective use of medicines, and smoking cessation. Further information about our research is available at: [http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/CHS/Divisions/primarycare/research/index.aspx](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/CHS/Divisions/primarycare/research/index.aspx)

The following PhD studentships are available:

**Impacts of smoking cessation and medicinal nicotine on early life outcomes**
Background
Smoking in pregnancy remains a massive public health problem. Smoking cessation in pregnancy improves immediate birth outcomes, but impacts on later infant outcomes (e.g. cognition and development) have rarely been explored. Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) is an effective smoking cessation treatment when used outside of pregnancy, but has not been shown to be effective when used in pregnancy. If NRT were to be found effective in pregnancy it would not be widely used without reassurance regarding safety, but there is very little evidence on this issue. The University of Nottingham, working with NHS Nottingham City and other PCTs across the Midlands and Cheshire has hosted Smoking Nicotine And Pregnancy (SNAP) trial. This double-blind, placebo randomised trial compares nicotine and placebo patches for smoking cessation in pregnancy, is the biggest such trial internationally and has randomised 1050 women. It is providing unique data on outcomes amongst infants born to women who smoked or used NRT when pregnant at 6, 12 and 24 months after birth. Outcomes measured include maternal smoking and health status and infants’ health service use, respiratory symptoms, cognition and behaviour. Measures used were agreed with Professor Neil Marlow, a neonatologist of international renown, ensuring that all relevant domains of early childhood development have been adequately assessed. As the SNAP trial is the only ever trial of NRT in pregnancy to monitor infant outcomes after birth and one of the few smoking cessation trials in pregnancy to monitor later infant outcomes quite so rigorously, this PhD studentship will exploit this unique dataset. In addition to SNAP data, the student may have access to a longitudinal cohort survey of pregnant women who smoke in pregnancy which has recruited 850 women and will be completed in August 2013. The proposed supervisory team are members of the UK Centre for Tobacco Control Studies and any appointed student would be able to benefit training opportunities and expertise which are available from this organisation as well as from within the wider University of Nottingham and the NIHR School for Primary Care Research.

Research questions
1 To provide contemporary estimates for the impact of maternal smoking in pregnancy on: i) maternal health status (EQ5D) at 6 months after delivery; ii) infants’ health service use, health and respiratory symptoms at 6 months; iii) infants’ health service use, health and respiratory symptoms 1 year and infants’ cognition and behaviour at 2 years

2 To investigate the impact of NRT use in pregnancy on outcomes listed in 1, above.

For further information please contact: tim.coleman@nottingham.ac.uk

Translating genetics into clinical care in primary care
Two studentships are offered through the Division’s Applied Genetics Research group. The group has a wide portfolio of applied genetics research encompassing topics, such as, translating evidence-based genetic guidelines into primary care practice, application of General Practice databases to genetic research, evaluation of genetic screening programmes and tackling inequalities in access to genetic services.

PhD Proposal (1) Application of General Practice databases to Applied Genetic Research
Genomic medicine is reaching all aspects of clinical care. The move towards personalised or stratified medicine is enhancing this role. To achieve maximum benefit, individuals need to be accurately phenotyped. Such work would also support genotype-phenotype association studies. Interrogation of GP databases will have a key role in exploring such issues. Further, this research methodology offers opportunities to identify the natural history of inherited monogenic disorders.
A linked PhD between Division of Primary Care at University of Nottingham and Department of Primary Care & Public Health at Imperial College or University College London would be considered.

Applicants will have a higher degree in epidemiology or related subject, and experience of working with large routinely-collected databases.

For further information please contact nadeem.quireshi@nottingham.ac.uk

PhD Proposal (2) Improving the identification of familial risk in Primary Care
Identification of familial risk can improve health outcomes in breast cancer and coronary heart disease. Currently the research group is exploring interventions to improve adherence to national guidelines on familial hypercholesterolaemia and familial cancer. There will be opportunities for a PhD studentship to be integrated with these studies.

Applicants from any health related scientific discipline will be considered if they have achieved a 2(i) or 1st class degree from a leading University and experience of mixed methods research

For further information please contact nadeem.quireshi@nottingham.ac.uk

Developing Behavioural Interventions to Improve the Effectiveness of Vaccinations
The Centres for Disease Control describe vaccinations as among the 10 most significant health achievements ever documented, and across many diseases they have been an unmitigated success. However, the effectiveness of vaccinations is dependent on the ability of the immune system to respond to the vaccine antigens; so they work less well in people with compromised immune systems such as the elderly. In previous work we and others have shown that behavioural interventions can modulate the immune response to vaccination. We have conducted a systematic review of this literature and this suggests that interventions focussed on modifying mood, physical activity or diet can improve the immune response to vaccination. However, limitations exist with this evidence. First, previous interventions have focussed on single behavioural factors. So we do not know whether diet, activity, mood, or a combination of these will have the most potent effect on the immune response. Second, previous work has varied in the timing (both pre and post vaccination) and duration of interventions. So we do not know when an intervention should be delivered or for how long. Third, studies have varied in their assessments of the immune system. So while there is evidence of immune benefit, the changes are not always specific enough to know if a clinically significant improvement in the response to vaccination has been achieved.

This studentship will provide a unique opportunity to work in a novel and innovative programme of interdisciplinary translational research which will address these issues and will, in turn, lead to the development of a behavioural intervention for use in primary care. The successful candidate will be supervised by a multidisciplinary team including expertise in health psychology, primary care, immunology, statistics, nutrition and exercise sciences.

For further information please contact kavita.vedhara@nottingham.ac.uk

Childhood injury research opportunities
Injury in childhood is largely preventable yet continues to be a significant public health issue. In high income countries the most common injuries in preschool children are falls, burns and poisonings and most occur in the home.
It is crucial that we understand the factors that increase the risk of injury in children so that effective preventative interventions can be developed and targeted to those families with the highest need. To help us do this we have begun a programme of work at the University of Nottingham (http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/injuryresearch/index.aspx) utilising routinely-collected data from primary and secondary care to investigate the epidemiology of injury across the UK. Using a method that we have developed to link children with their mothers and other family members in these otherwise anonymised data, we have started to investigate the contribution that individual and household-level factors have on the likelihood of injury in children.

**PhD project 1) Is the risk of injury in children associated with co-morbidities or household-level factors?**

Our early studies have looked at the risk of injury in all children and following on from what we found in this work and based on additional evidence in the literature we would like to investigate whether existing co-morbidities in children (e.g. sensory disability such as deafness or blindness, bone density disorders or physical disorders such as cerebral palsy etc) affect the likelihood of injury in children and whether this is influenced by other household factors such as family size and socioeconomic status. Understanding the risk of injury better in children with medical conditions will provide important information about their long term healthcare.

**PhD project 2) Is maternal mental ill-health a risk factor for injury in children?**

We have shown that children under the age of 5 whose mothers have a record of depression during pregnancy or shortly after delivery are more likely to have burn or poisoning injury. We are now looking for an exceptional PhD candidate to help us investigate this association further by looking at whether other types of maternal mental health problems (e.g. anxiety, depression, OCD, Schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, drug or alcohol misuse or a combination of conditions) contribute to the risk of injury in children and whether particular patterns of injury tend to cluster in certain families. If such associations exist then identifying and treating mothers’ mental health problems in primary care may help to reduce the burden of childhood injury.

For further information please contact elizabeth.orton@nottingham.ac.uk

**Alcohol harm research opportunity**

**Recording of alcohol consumption, brief interventions and treatment in linked primary and secondary care data.**

Alcohol consumption is associated with chronic health problems such as psychiatric illness, liver, neurological, gastrointestinal and cardiovascular conditions and several types of cancer. It is also linked to accidents, injuries, poisoning and premature mortality and can have serious detrimental effects on the development of unborn children. Whilst in the UK most healthcare is accessed via the GP, little is known about how alcohol consumption patterns are monitored in primary care even though up to 1 in 5 patients presenting to primary health care are likely to be excessive drinkers and that people classified as ‘problem drinkers’ consult their GPs twice as often as the average patient (http://www.ias.org.uk/resources/factsheets/nhs.pdf). In addition, in the 2012/13 Quality and Outcomes Framework, which rewards practices for the provision of quality care, there is only one indicator that promotes giving advice for safe alcohol use to people with a diagnosis of hypertension and one indicator that recommends alcohol consumption is recorded for people with a diagnosis of Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder or other Psychoses.
Understanding how alcohol use is currently ascertained in primary care is an important first step therefore in understanding whether more can be done to help prevent the morbidity associated with alcohol misuse and inform future policy to improve patient outcomes. To do this we will use the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD), a primary care database, linked to secondary care data from Hospital Episodes Statistics, to investigate primary care recording of alcohol use at certain times, such as after registration or once a woman becomes pregnant or across the UK. In addition, we will investigate the recording of brief alcohol advice and referral to treatment services, particularly in patients with and without a diagnosis indicative of excessive alcohol use.

For further information please contact elizabeth.orton@nottingham.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The Department of Primary Care Health Sciences in Oxford was the top-rated centre for primary care research in the UK in the 2008 RAE and has ongoing research on a range of clinical issues including childhood infection, cardiovascular disease, patient experience, cancer and methodological research. (see http://www.primarycare.ox.ac.uk). The Department has an active academic programme for students and offers a range of research support services (e.g. database management, protocol design, statistics). It also has strong collaborative links with other Oxford Departments (particularly in infection/immunity, paediatrics, diabetes, cardiology, clinical neurology and medical engineering). Students will be supported in maximising these opportunities. They will also be encouraged to develop international links, exploiting existing research collaborations with centres of excellence overseas. Students will be a member of a College as a graduate student.

Studentships
To take up a studentship in Oxford, applicants need to be eligible for matriculation as a graduate student and be admitted to a College; details of the graduate application process are available at http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/postgraduate_courses/index.html. Please check your eligibility at this site. We advise you to contact the department about the studentship prior to submitting an application to the University.

Application criteria
Applicants are expected to have achieved a first-class or an upper second class undergraduate degree (or international international qualification).

As part of the application process you must include;

**Academic references or letters of recommendation**, which support intellectual ability, academic achievement, motivation and ability to work in a group.

**Written work and/ or portfolio produced by the student**, two relevant academic written pieces of work for their most recent assignment of at least 2000 words each, or 2000 word extract of longer work in English. This will be assessed for: understanding of the subject area; ability to construct or defend an argument; powers of analysis; powers of expression. It is not important that the written work relates closely to the proposed area of study.

**Research proposal or personal statement** A research proposal normally two pages in length to cover areas such as background to research, aims, methodology, expected results, contribution to the field of learning. This will be assessed for: the coherence of the proposal; the originality of the project; evidence of understanding of the proposed area of study; the ability to present a reasoned case in English; the feasibility of successfully completing the project in the time available (maximum 4 years).
**Subject Areas**
The main Research themes are; Cardiovascular and Metabolic Disease, Clinical Trials, Infection and Childhood Disease, Patient Experience and Health Policy, Primary Care for the Developing World, Evidence based Medicine and Research Methods (http://www.phc.ox.ac.uk/). We have several types of projects to offer including cohort studies, diagnostic studies, database studies and qualitative studies. Areas we work in include: diabetes, chronic kidney disease, rheumatoid arthritis, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, self-monitoring of chronic diseases, non communicable diseases and patient reported outcome measures.

To discuss a potential project, please contact Alison Ward, Director of Postgraduate Studies (eleonora.fulcini@phc.ox.ac.uk) in the first instance, who will then direct you to a potential supervisor appropriate to the research area that interests you.

For applications to the University of Oxford, applicants must apply directly to the University by January 4th, 23.59 using the online application form: https://apply.embark.com/grad/Oxford/16/. On page 8, “Departmental Studentship Applications” insert the following reference code:- BZ/NIHR/MT13.

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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

The Southampton Primary Medical Care (PMC) group was ranked third highest primary care group for research quality in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, when 85% of its research was rated as ‘internationally excellent’ or ‘world-leading’. We are a thriving department that offers a broad spectrum of expertise in both methodologies and topic areas.

The following shows some of the areas of interest within the department:

- Internet-based interventions for acute and chronic illness such as hypertension, weight management, dizziness and distress
- Asthma
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)
- Complementary and alternative medicines, including mindfulness meditation and herbal medicine
- Urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- Communication with cancer patients and primary care patients
- Upper Respiratory Tract Infections
- Back pain
- Otitis media
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Developing decision rules for the diagnosis of some cancers
- Eczema

The Primary Care Department is part of the Primary Care & Population Science Unit in the Faculty of Medicine leading to very close links with the Public Health Department and interests such as kidney disease, alcohol misuse and offender health. The following link will provide more information about the department:

http://www.southampton.ac.uk/medicine/academic_units/academic_units/primary_care_population.page

In addition to the collaborations noted above, the group also has strong links with health psychology, social statistics, health sciences, and computing sciences within the University and
Students and Fellows may be co-supervised by clinical academics in primary medical care and basic scientists in these disciplines. They will also be supported to develop national and international links, through existing collaborations, where appropriate.

In 2012, the PMC group is hoping to offer projects in one or more of the following areas:

**Studentship in Respiratory Disease Management** - The University of Southampton has a strong research interest in respiratory and allergic diseases, particularly asthma, and the department has a number of currently funded and in-development large-scale projects on asthma management in the community. We would welcome interest from primary care researchers interested in respiratory disease management, with the possibility of engaging with on-going work as well as helping to develop new projects. If this is an area that interests you please contact Prof Mike Thomas at d.m.thomas@soton.ac.uk

**Studentship in Health Psychology** – we prefer applicants with a Master’s degree in health psychology. Co-supervision will be arranged through the Centre for Clinical Applications of Health Psychology in the School of Psychology (Prof Lucy Yardley). There will be an opportunity to register for the Stage 2 Health Psychology qualification. Contact Dr Adam Geraghty awg2d09@soton.ac.uk

**Studentship in Health Research** – applicants from any health related scientific discipline will be considered if they achieved a good degree from a leading University. The studentship will be based in the acute illness, health promotion, or patient self management groups. Applicants with a research-related Master’s degree are particularly welcome but for those without a four year studentship is feasible with a taught element in the first year. Contact Prof Paul Little p.little@soton.ac.uk

**Studentship in Complementary and Alternative Medicine** – applicants from any health related scientific discipline will be considered if they achieved a good degree from a leading University. The studentship will be based in the Complementary Medicine Research Unit. Applicants with a research related Master’s degree are particularly welcome but for those without a four year studentship is feasible with a taught element in the first year. Contact Professor George Lewith g.lewith@soton.ac.uk

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**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON**

The Research Department of Primary Care and Population Health at University College London undertake a programme of internationally competitive multi-disciplinary research addressing the management of disease in individuals and populations in areas of priority to the health of the public. We have a multidisciplinary approach to both research and teaching with expertise within the department in clinical primary care, epidemiology, medical statistics, medical sociology and health psychology. We have particular methodological strengths in quantitative and qualitative research and analysis of large clinical databases (i.e. GPRD and THIN) and trial methodology.

The department works closely with the MRC Clinical Trials unit and together with the Department of Mental Health Sciences at UCL we run PRIMENT, a fully registered Clinical Trials Unit with expertise in the design, conduct and analysis of trials and other large, well designed studies in primary care and mental health research. At the 2008 RAE UCL made the largest submission in the UK under UoA 8 (Primary Care and other community subjects). Its submission was ranked second in the UK on the basis of the simple medal table.

Highly motivated applicants will have a first, upper second or masters-level degree in a discipline relevant to primary care research for these 3 year Awards. Fees will be included in the Studentship.
The department is able to offer studentships based in one or more of the following research units. For more details of specific PhD topics available, please see our website (http://www.ucl.ac.uk/pcph/postgrad).

**British Regional Heart Study** - The Cardiovascular Epidemiology Group includes major longitudinal research on risk factors for cardiovascular disease, in particular the British Regional Heart Study (BRHS) of over 7000 men recruited through general practice. The successful candidate will work within a team principally of statisticians and epidemiologists, with strong links to collaborators who are applied methodologists and experts in primary care. The projects will suit a candidate with a background in medical statistics or epidemiology and experience in analysing large datasets. Contact Richard Morris richard.morris@ucl.ac.uk

**Centre for Ageing Population Studies** - Aging Population Health includes health services research on effective primary care for older people, and includes work on the integration between health and social care. Particular areas of interest are dementia, depression, physical activity promotion in later life, comprehensive needs assessment and palliative care. The group has particular strengths in health service research methodology and primary care nursing. Contact: Steve Iliffe (s.iliffe@ucl.ac.uk)

**PhD topics**

1) What are the biopsychosocial determinants of sustained change in activity levels in older people?
2) What factors inhibit or promote integrated palliative care for people with dementia?

**E-Health Unit** - The e-Health Unit focuses on the use of new technologies, such as the internet, to improve health and health care. Areas of interest include using the internet to deliver self-management programmes for patients with long term conditions (e.g. diabetes, heart disease) and for health promotion (e.g. alcohol, sexual health). The unit also undertakes research on implementation of new technologies in the NHS. Contact Elizabeth.murray@ucl.ac.uk

**Electronic Health Records Research** – Areas of interest include epidemiological research on mental health of mother, father and child, prescribed medicine in pregnancy, development of new methods for analysis of longitudinal records, missing data. For further details of our work and specific PhD projects please see our website http://www.ucl.ac.uk/pcph/research-groups-themes/thin-pub/ Projects with this group would suit applicants with epidemiological/statistical background and some experience in handling large datasets. Contact i.petersen@ucl.ac.uk