

2014/2015 Summer Studentship Project Application Form

Send to: Research Office, University of Otago Christchurch, PO Box 4345, Christchurch, by 3pm on **4 July 2014**

Supervisor Information (First named supervisor will be the contact):

Supervisor's Name(s): **Charlotte Matthews and Professor Les Toop**

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ZIP Code:

Research Category (Choose one category only – to be used for judging the students' presentations):

Clinical

Laboratory

Community X

Project Title (20 words MAXIMUM):

“Understanding the Learning Needs of Community Physiotherapists”

Project Description:

Aim

- To complete a learning needs analysis of Community Physiotherapists to establish the most effective modes for potential delivery of continuing professional development (CPD)
- To identify opportunities for further development of the Pegasus Health education program to deliver a sustainable professional development pathway for Community Physiotherapists
- To offer a physiotherapy student the opportunity to work with Community Physiotherapist and General Practice teams to gain a greater understanding of how these disciplines work together to provide ongoing care for our enrolled population

Background

The Pegasus Health Small Group Education Programme (SGEP) is a peer lead programme that was established for GPs in 1993, expanded to include Practice Nurses in 1998 and Community Pharmacists in 2010. It is based on the philosophy of the team approach to continuing education within the primary care environment.

The inclusion of multiple disciplines in the Education Programme aims to provide an opportunity to improve the quality of health care delivery by:

- i) Improving the understanding of each health professional's role and where they overlap in the delivery of care
- ii) Generating discussion about areas of practice, the evidence base, and where evidence gaps exist
- iii) Improving collaboration between the disciplines
- iv) Exploring and promoting innovative ways of working; this may involve the shifting of responsibilities between the different roles thereby enabling the more efficient use of resources

Educational material is prepared with input from a Community Pharmacist, GP and Practice Nurse. This multidisciplinary approach ensures that whilst all professional groups receive the same educational messages, the content for the Community Pharmacy, GP, and Practice Nurse Programmes are tailored to meet the specific needs of each professional group. The SGEP provides an opportunity to share ideas and experiences within a supportive peer environment, issues are discussed openly and the quality and content of this programme is partly determined by the active involvement and contribution of participants.

In 2011 a large group education training day was provided for Community Physiotherapists on falls prevention. This was facilitated by Pegasus Health and supported by the Canterbury Clinical Network. The session was

extremely well received and from those who attended the training day Physiotherapy Falls Champions were selected and now operate successfully in the community.

This research project will provide us with a greater understanding of the learning needs of Community Physiotherapists, which in turn supports our aim of increasing the delivery of an efficient and effective health care service to our communities by way of the multidisciplinary team. This supports the delivery of the 'Better, Sooner, More Convenient' service model.

Method

- Conduct a brief literature review on learning needs and educational requirements of Community Physiotherapists.
- Complete a brief search of current professional development available to Community Physiotherapists in Canterbury.
- Cross sectional survey, with focus group discussion of results.
- Source Community Physiotherapists via Physiotherapy New Zealand (PNZ) in Canterbury
- Spend at least 3 days with 3 Community Physiotherapists to gain an insight into these roles within the context of the project.
- Develop a questionnaire to be sent to Community Physiotherapists to survey satisfaction levels and engagement with the current continuing professional development (CPD) available and if this is meeting their learning needs.
- Pilot and revise the questionnaire and set up a simple database.
- Organise and post out mailings of the questionnaire.
- With assistance, analyse data using simple calculations of means and proportions and simple statistical tests to collate responses.
- Facilitate a focus group to further explore expectations and clarify areas arising from the questionnaires. Participants for the focus groups will be from a randomly selected group of Community Physiotherapists.
- Focus group will be taped and transcribed. Themes will be based on the responses to the quantitative questionnaires and a simple thematic analysis performed.
- In addition to the reporting requirements as outlined in the University of Otago Summer Studentship handbook, the student will be required to write up a comprehensive report suitable for presentation to Pegasus Health.

Significance

Pegasus Health recognizes that physiotherapists make a valued contribution to patient outcomes in primary care and that there is a potential need for continuing professional development support for this group.

The potential addition of physiotherapy to the SGEP could help extend collegial working and learning relationships across multiple disciplines, improving communication and in turn providing better outcomes for patients.

Please email the completed Project Application form to: research.uoc@otago.ac.nz

Also send a signed hard copy via the internal mail to:

Research Office, University of Otago, Christchurch School of Medicine, PO Box 4345, Christchurch 8140