

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): Geraldine Wilson / Janetta Skiba

Department: Department of General Practice/ RCPHO

Institution: Rural Canterbury PHO

Phone: 0800 800 743 ext. 206 or 021 769956

E-mail: Janetta_skiba@rcpho.org.nz

Mailing Address: Janetta Skiba, Rural Canterbury PHO, P O Box 14021, Christchurch 8544

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

Community

Project Title (20 words MAXIMUM):

Breastfeeding in Primary Care: The experience of mothers who seek breastfeeding support.

Project Description:

Introduction:

Breastfeeding rates in New Zealand have not increased significantly over the past 10 years; and in Canterbury, breastfeeding rates are lower than the national average.

We know that:

- Breastfeeding lays the foundation for a healthy life. Breastfeeding also contributes to the wider wellbeing of mothers.
- Although breastfeeding is natural, it sometimes doesn't come naturally, so it's important that mothers have access to appropriate support and advice.
- An increase in breastfeeding rates is seen as a proxy measure of successful health promotion and engagement and access to support services.

The percentage of babies fully/exclusively breastfed at 6 weeks	Actual 2011	Target 2013	Target 2014	Target 2015
	67%	69%	71%	>71%

(Data from: CDHB – Canterbury's Priority Plan for Breast Feeding 2014-15)

Goal 5 in the Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) Breast Feeding Plan is that:

'All women will be supported by well educated, confident health providers to exclusively breastfeed until around six months and continue to breastfeed for up to one year and beyond once complimentary foods are introduced'

To support this DHB-wide goal there is a Community Lactation Consultant Service, provided by Rural Canterbury PHO (RCPHO), which has increased in demand every year since its commencement in 2008. The main focus of their work is supporting women with complex breastfeeding issues. To enable as many women as possible to be seen they hold clinics throughout Canterbury, but they also visit a number of mothers at home. They also offer advice to Plunket nurses, LMCs and other primary health care providers on individual cases.

Aim:

The aim of this project is to identify the:

- duration of breastfeeding for women who have accessed the RCPHO Community Lactation Consultant service
- length of time the mother intended to breastfeed (for example, her antenatal aspirations) and match this to the actual time she breastfed, or continues to breastfeed
- variables which influence the breastfeeding practices of the mother
- barriers and facilitators to the duration of a mothers breastfeeding
- reasons why women stop breastfeeding
- breastfeeding education and supports that the mothers found useful and not so useful

Method:

1. All women who have accessed the RCPHO Lactation Consultant services over a 6 month period in early 2014 will be invited to participate in the survey.
2. Participants will be identified through the RCPHO Lactation Consultant data base.
3. We expect that approximately 500 women will be invited to participate in the survey, with an expected response rate of 30%. This estimate is based on previous surveys performed by the service.
4. The mothers of babies who have had tongue tie releases (a surgical intervention) will be excluded. These mothers have been studied elsewhere.
5. The content of the survey will be inclusive of the CDHB goals for breastfeeding, and the design will be in the form of a postal or web-based questionnaire.
6. The student will develop, pilot and revise the questionnaire, with the support of the supervisors.

Analysis:

1. A data base will be set up with the support of the Pegasus Health analytical team.
2. The student will enter the data into the database and analyse the data using both simple descriptive statistics and analysis of emergent themes.

The student will lead on the delivery of this project. They will design the survey tools, distribute the tool, analyse the data, and interpret the findings with support from the Project Supervisor and Sponsors.

It would be preferable that the student commences the summer studentship as soon as possible after the completion of their study year.

Significance:

We recognise that breastfeeding is beneficial to both mothers and babies, but we have little understanding of the local barriers and facilitators to breast feeding, and what influences a mother's decision to continue to breastfeed or not. It would also be beneficial to know what breastfeeding support and education the mothers identified as being integral to the continuation of breastfeeding.

We anticipate that gathering this information will help optimise the delivery of targeted and timely care to breastfeeding mothers in Canterbury, and to assist them to extend the time that they choose to breastfeed their babies for.

It is hoped that through this study we can identify ways to support breastfeeding mothers to achieve longer term breastfeeding practices.

Dissemination:

The report will be summarised and reported through usual communication channels within the PHO, outcomes will be shared with funders.

The evaluation's findings will be used directly for quality improvement of the programme.

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