

2015/2016 Summer Studentship Project Application Form

Send to: Research Office, University of Otago Christchurch, PO Box 4345, Christchurch, by 5pm on **3 July 2015**

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

Supervisor's Name and Title(s): Dr Ben Hudson, Dr Lynley Cook

Department: Department of General Practice, University of Otago

Institution: UOC or CDHB

Phone:

E-mail: Ben.hudson@otago.ac.nz

Mailing Address:

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

Clinical

Project Title (20 words MAXIMUM):

Knowledge and attitudes of general practitioners and practice nurses to the Green Prescription Programme and Community-based Smoking Cessation programmes

Project Description:

The objectives of this research are to

1. To understand the referral models and processes used at high referring practices and low referring practices.
2. To understand the knowledge and attitudes of general practitioners (GPs) and practice nurses (PNs) to the Green Prescription Programme and community-based smoking cessation programmes.

Background

There are many behaviour change programmes readily available in Canterbury and provided by a range of service providers, including governmental and non-governmental organisations, for example Quitline, the Green Prescription Programme, community-based smoking cessation programmes, the Alcohol and Drug Service, Triple P Parenting, etc. These programmes generally receive low rates of referral from general practice teams and many have spare capacity. This has been noted by the Green Prescription Programme and community-based smoking cessation programmes, and will be substantiated further in this research. There are anecdotal reports that primary health care professionals do not know about many of the service options available to their patients and in some instances where they are familiar with a service, they are reluctant to refer to this service. A quick survey of GPs and PNs about the Green Prescription Programme in 2014 to understand why there were low referrals into the Programme did not reveal any useful insights.

There is a combination of knowledge and attitude issues that are potentially leading to people to not utilise the behaviour change programmes and services available to them that could be effective in their making positive behaviour changes. General practice staff have described different referral models and processes being used when referring patients into community-based behaviour change programmes. At some practices, PNs or other staff members make the referrals—not the patient's GP.

Pegasus is currently reviewing its approach to skill development in motivating and supporting positive behaviour change in primary health care professionals. A working group has been established to develop education modules around this. As a sector, health seeks to reduce siloing in its approach to health services, including in programmes that support positive behaviour change, as

it is becoming increasingly more evident that these programmes should stop being considered separately, but rather how they work as a whole.

Significance

Better understanding of the referral models and processes of practices into programmes that support positive behaviour change, and knowledge and attitudes of GPs and PNs to behaviour change programmes will help guide the future development of services, communications and education programmes.

Methods

To understand the (1) different referral models and processes used to refer patients into the Green Prescription Programme and community-based smoking cessation programmes at high and low referring practices, and (2) knowledge and attitudes of GPs and PNs to these programmes, qualitative research methods will be used .

Participant Recruitment:

- High and low referring practices will be identified through the Green Prescription Programme and community-based smoking cessation programmes referral data.
- These practices will be contacted individually and provided a description of the research project and invited to participate.
- Practices will be contacted until three high and three low referring practices agree to be the participants for the study.

Focus Groups:

- Focus groups will be used to understand the referral models and processes at the practices, and determine knowledge and attitudes (including barriers and enablers) of GPs and PNs towards the Green Prescription Programme and community-based smoking cessation programmes.
- There will be three to five focus groups held with high referring practices and three held with low referring practices, for a total of six focus groups. The groups will be comprised of a mix of GPs, PNs and staff with a role in making patient referrals.
- The focus groups will last for approximately one to one and a half hours, and be held at the participating practices during the lunch hour. Lunch will be provided by the focus group facilitators.
- Focus group participants will receive a one-off payment for their time, as per Pegasus's payment policy.
- A focus group discussion guide will be used to guide and prompt discussion.
- The focus groups will be audiotape recorded.
- Experienced researchers will conduct the focus groups in conjunction with the student.

Analysis:

- The taped discussions will be transcribed.
- Descriptive thematic analysis will be used to analyse and identify themes in the data.

Reporting and Dissemination

The research project will report to Pegasus Health's Flexible Funding Pool, Canterbury Primary Health Care Organisations, and Canterbury DHB Planning and Funding.

Student Prerequisites (eg. Medical Student) if applicable:

Ideally would be a student interested in health services and has knowledge of qualitative research methods.