

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

Supervisor's Name and Title(s): Prof E Shipton and Ms Jessica Mills

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

Clinical

Project Title (20 words MAXIMUM):

Psychosocial Variables and Characteristics of Patients with Persistent Pain assessed at a NZ tertiary care Pain Medicine Centre

Project Description:

Introduction: The prevalence of chronic pain makes it a major health issue and a critical public health problem in both Australia and New Zealand.¹ Chronic pain is Australia's third most costly health condition after cardiovascular diseases and musculoskeletal conditions. In New Zealand, it has become the third-biggest cause of illness-related disability for New Zealanders.² One in six New Zealanders (16.9 per cent) suffer from chronic pain³. Forty-eight per cent of them used some form of medical treatment. There was an increased prevalence with age (from 8.6 per cent to 28.1 per cent)³. Little is known on epidemiology of chronic pain in New Zealand. Its management has been based on data and models in North American/European studies.

Aim: This study will be a retrospective, cross-sectional analysis on existing clinical assessment data (audit) collected over a 24-month period. This project will evaluate demographic and psychosocial correlates of pain severity, duration, and disability (PSDD) in chronic pain patients for assessment at a New Zealand tertiary care Pain Medicine Centre. Through this study, it is hoped that more will be known about effects of chronic pain on New Zealanders. It is expected that the use of validated psychometric testing will enable proper assessment that should inform the clinical management needed for chronic pain patients.

Method: Pre-admission data will be collected on a consecutive series of patients presenting for assessment over a 24-month period. This included demographic (gender, educational attainment, ethnicity) and psychosocial data. Pain severity was measured by numerical rating scale and present pain intensity using the Burwood Pain Management Centre Assessment Questionnaire. Duration was measured in months. Disability was measured by using Pain Disability Index and depression using the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale. Distress was measured using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale and self-efficacy using the Pain Self-Efficacy Questionnaire. Catastrophizing was measured by Coping Strategies Questionnaire and pain acceptance by the Pain Solutions Questionnaire.

References

1. Blyth FM. Chronic pain--is it a public health problem? *Pain* 2008;137(3):465-6.
2. Ministry of Health. Health Loss in New Zealand: A report from the New Zealand Burden of Diseases, Injuries and Risk Factors Study, 2006–2016. Wellington: Ministry of Health, 2013. From:

<http://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/health-loss-in-new-zealand-final.pdf>

3. Dominick C, Blyth F, Nicholas M. Patterns of chronic pain in the New Zealand population. NZ Med J 2011;124(1337):63-76.

Student Prerequisites (eg. Medical Student) if applicable:

None