

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 Liz Macdonald (Co-Supervisor: Dr Sarah Harris)

Department: Mothers and Babies Service, Princess Margaret Hospital

Institution: CDHB

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Mailing Address:

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

Clinical ✓

Laboratory

Community

Project Title (20 words MAXIMUM):

Vulnerability of infants admitted to a regional Mothers and Babies service.

Project Description:

Introduction:

Vulnerability in early life is a current policy focus in New Zealand. The identification of vulnerable children may allow us to intervene to prevent the downstream effects of being "at risk". The South Island Regional Perinatal Mental Health Service is based at Princess Margaret Hospital providing inpatient and out-patient mental health support for those with severe and enduring mental illness.

Aims:

- To collect information about the factors in the antenatal period and first year of life that may contribute to childhood vulnerability, poor physical and mental health outcomes in a population of infants admitted to a regional Mothers and Babies service. It is anticipated this will include approximately 100 mother-baby dyads.
- To use this information to better inform us about how to support the needs of this population.

Method:

- The student will conduct a literature review (In the interests of time the student will receive some direction in this by the supervisors of this project)
- A retrospective review of factors* in the antenatal period and first year of life will be conducted by chart review (the bulk of this data has already been collected but some additional factors will need to be added by the student).
- As there is no control group available where all of this data has been collected data will be analysed by comparison with relevant population based statistics (NZ statistics and Ministry of Health Data) and with The Growing Up in New Zealand Study data (a contemporary population based longitudinal study). An assessment of the significance of any difference between our cohort and population based statistics will be made.
- The student will then make recommendations to inform a wider project that is looking at service provision for the infants admitted to our service. This project includes improving liaison between obstetric, paediatric and primary health care services. This project will also inform a prospective

study that is planned to look at the long term physical and mental health outcomes of infants admitted to the Mothers and Babies Service.

- It is anticipated that this project will be written up for submission for publication and there may be an opportunity for the student to present their work at a peer-reviewed meeting.

*These factors are annotated on an attached sheet

Value of this Project to a Student:

- Experience in conducting a literature search to answer a clinical question
- Experience in data entry using an established Access Database
- Experience in applying research findings to clinical practice to improve health care
- Experience writing for publication

Student Prerequisites (eg. Medical Student) if applicable:

Medical Student