

2016/2017 Summer Studentship Project Application Form

Send to: Research Office, University of Otago Christchurch, PO Box 4345, Christchurch, by 5pm on **4 July 2016**

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

First Supervisor's Name and Title: Dr Jennifer Jordan

Department – Psychological Medicine, UOC

First Supervisors Phone: 03 3720400

First Supervisors Email: jenny.jordan@otago.ac.nz

First Supervisors Mailing Address: Psychological Medicine, UOC PO Box 4345, Christchurch 8140

Co-Supervisors Name and Title(s): Prof Martin Kennedy,

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

Clinical

Laboratory

Community

Project Title (20 words MAXIMUM):

Establishing the true costs of anorexia nervosa: asking those affected

Project Description:

Introduction:

Anorexia nervosa is a serious condition with significant medical and psychological and social impacts on individuals and their families. Overseas literature suggests that there are significant costs in health care usage from a service delivery perspective but also tremendous psychosocial and financial costs including (both direct costs and opportunity costs in terms of impacts on careers) to those with the eating disorder (1) (2). Carers are also significantly impacted by the eating disorder but until recently the costs and burden on families has been under-recognised. The New Zealand health care system differs from other countries and service delivery models vary greatly across New Zealand. New Zealand data are lacking on the actual costs of anorexia nervosa for those with the condition and their families.

Our team (Martin Kennedy, Jennifer Jordan) successfully recruited over 500 participants with a lifetime history of anorexia nervosa for an international research collaboration to identify genes contributing to anorexia nervosa. This New Zealand cohort has consented to be re-contacted for future research. All participants completed an online survey and were consented by face to face consent interviews or by skype if out of Christchurch so our research team has experience with this approach. This study is part of a planned wider research project examining the costs of eating disorders in New Zealand, being conducted in collaboration with EDANZ, the Eating Disorders Association of New Zealand.

Aim:

The aim of the summer studentship is to establish the range of financial and psychosocial costs experienced by a cohort of those with a history of anorexia nervosa and a recruited sample of carers for someone with anorexia nervosa.

Possible impact:

To our knowledge this will be the first study examining the various costs to those affected directly: persons with a history of anorexia nervosa and carers. This will inform treatment providers and carer organisations of the visible and unmet needs to enable better provision of support.

Method:

Participants will be those with either a lifetime history of anorexia nervosa or those who have been carers / support people for someone who has had anorexia nervosa. We will aim to recruit at least 50 in each group by the start of the summer studentship. Participants will be recruited by notifying those already on our contact list, through EDANZ and through the network of eating disorder providers that we have established in the earlier study.

Participants will complete an online (Qualtrics) survey with questions relating to illness duration and severity, access to and health service usage (including their perception of what helped or what would

have been more helpful), extra costs of health care related to the eating disorder outside the publically funded system, impact of the ED on education and occupation (attendance, productivity, whether it changed their potential career path), impacts on relationships and family life. A parallel survey of carers will cover similar material from a carer perspective. Open-ended questions will allow participants to add comments in their own words. Quantitative data will be analysed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data from the open ended comments sections will be analysed using thematic analysis