

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 Lee Thompson,

Department - UOC &/or CDHB (if applicable): UOC & CDHB

First Supervisors Phone: 03 3643644

First Supervisors

First Supervisors Mailing Address: PO Box 4345 Christchurch

Co-Supervisors Name and Title(s): Dr John Alchin, Bronny Trewin & Jonathan Williman (advisor)

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

Clinical

Laboratory

Community

Project Title (20 words MAXIMUM):

Burwood Assessment, Screening and Education for Chronic Pain: An evaluation

Project Description:

Chronic pain is a significant global health problem with an estimated prevalence of between 10 and 30%. A Lancet systematic analysis reporting on the Global burden of Disease Study placed four types of chronic pain amongst the top ten causes of years lived with disability globally. Chronic pain can place severe strain on health and wellbeing, affecting work, sleep, interpersonal relationships, mental health and physical functioning. The New Zealand prevalence is approximately 20%, with a higher burden experienced by Māori, older people, and those living in more deprived areas.

Reducing the personal, social and economic burden of chronic pain is of obvious benefit, but managing chronic pain is complex. The condition disturbs common sense; conventional analgesics are often ineffective because the mechanisms are different in acute and chronic pain. Because of the complex and counter-intuitive nature of such pain, patients can feel, angry, frustrated and dismissed. They can have great difficulty accepting that there is no cure. Even once patients accept that their condition cannot be cured, response to available biomedical treatments is usually disappointing. This lack of efficacy presents both clinicians and patients with a conundrum; when pain cannot be cured, it must be managed as best it can.

An average of 1078 referrals are made each year to Christchurch's Burwood Pain Management Service. Of these, approximately 35% can be accepted for Comprehensive Pain Assessment (CPA) and for further treatment if indicated. There is therefore a significant group of people with chronic pain who have either no, slow, inappropriately timed, or too limited engagement with specialist pain services. The Burwood Pain Management Service have developed an innovative pilot programme called BASE (Burwood Assessment Screening and Education) which involves offering a half day group programme of education and basic self-management principles for all appropriate referrals. The goal of BASE is to not only have many more people exposed to the principles of pain management, but to provide more comprehensive and appropriate data for triage into CPA. BASE begins in July 2016. Process evaluation questionnaires will be administered to patients as they complete the BASE programme.

Aim: The aim of the proposed research is to analyse data from BASE process evaluation questionnaires.

Possible impact:

Findings from this studentship project will provide interim data on the extent to which the programme is acceptable and effective in increasing patient self-reported understanding of the mechanisms of chronic

pain, fostering acceptance of chronicity, and openness to self-management. These findings will be used to modify the programme as appropriate.

Method:

The quantitative data from approximately three months of patient questionnaires will be entered and analysed, initially using descriptive statistics, with further analyses guided by a biostatistician if appropriate. Free text qualitative comments will be transcribed to typed text and analysed using content and thematic analysis. The student will develop knowledge about chronic pain as well as skills in the use of software for statistical analysis, basic qualitative content and thematic analysis, and report writing for clinical and lay audiences.