**UQ Summer or Winter Research Project Description**

Please use this template to create a description of each research project, eligibility requirements and expected deliverables. Project details can then be uploaded to each faculty, school, institute, and centre webpage prior to the launch of the program.

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| **Project title:** | **CARE-SCI - Co-designing Actionable Recommendations to Enhance support for older adults with Spinal Cord Injury navigating age-specific policy.** |
| **Hours of engagement & delivery mode** | Number of students: 2 students, ideally from disciplines within SHRS  Duration of the project: 4 weeks  Hours of Engagement: ~ 30 hours per week  Engagement/Delivery Mode: Project can be completed under on-site working arrangements, and/or hybrid working arrangements (i.e., remote with some on-site commitments). |
| **Description:** | Experiencing a spinal cord injury (SCI) signifies a sudden and impactful life change, with its occurrence becoming more prevalent among older adults.(1) While this experience often results in numerous challenges, one key issue recognised by older people with SCI, families, and health teams is the inequality caused by age-specific policies and funding for home and community care. In Australia, those aged 65 and above can access government-funded services through My Aged Care (MAC). However, when comparing these services with those available through insurance-based schemes like the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland (NISSQ), designed for younger individuals and those with severe/catastrophic injuries, prominent differences emerge. To appreciate how differences impact outcomes for older people with SCI and their families, this project focuses on exploring patient journeys, outcomes, and the interplay with policies and funding from various stakeholder perspectives. Through experience-based co-design(2) and interpretive description(3), this research aims to collaboratively design and create practical solutions, fostering enhancements and proposing recommendations. The objective is to advocate for meaningful change that will significantly influence both policy and practice, ultimately improving outcomes for older people with SCI and their families. |
| **Expected learning outcomes and deliverables:** | Student scholars can anticipate developing and/or refining qualitative data collection and analysis skills, encompassing tasks like conducting interviews and creating journey maps and commencing preliminary analyses. Scholars will also actively contribute to preparing for co-design activities, aiding in the development of resources and artifacts that facilitate collaboration between consumers and health professionals. Engaging with a newly formed research team, comprising academics, clinicians, and consumer investigators, provides students with valuable exposure to diverse perspectives and collaborative dynamics. This experience positions students to contribute meaningfully to the project and cultivates a well-rounded skill set. The culmination of the project may involve students producing a report or delivering an oral presentation to share findings with interested stakeholders, providing a platform to showcase acquired skills and insights gained throughout the project. |
| **Suitable for:** | This project is open to applications from UQ enrolled School of Health and Rehabilitation students. Some knowledge of qualitative data collection and analysis would be highly regarded. |
| **Primary Supervisor:** | Dr Melanie Hoyle & Associate Professor Jacki Liddle |
| **Further info:** | Further information can be sought from Dr Melanie Hoyle – [m.hoyle@uq.edu.au](mailto:m.hoyle@uq.edu.au). It is not a requirement to contact the supervisory team prior to applying. |

**Reference List**

* 1. van den Berg MEL, Castellote JM, Mahillo-Fernandez I, de Pedro-Cuesta J. Incidence of spinal cord injury worldwide: A systematic review. Neuroepidemiology [Internet]. 2010;34(3):184–92. Available from: https://[www.karger.com/Article/FullText/279335](http://www.karger.com/Article/FullText/279335)
  2. Boyd H, Mckernon S, Old A. Health Service Co-design. Working with patients to improve healthcare services. [Internet]. Waitemata District Health Board; 2010. [cited 2023 Apr 9]. Available from: https://[www.wdhb.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Documents/45f463d911/rttc\_health-service-co-design-by-h-boyd.pdf](http://www.wdhb.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Documents/45f463d911/rttc_health-service-co-design-by-h-boyd.pdf)
  3. Thorne S. Interpretive Description: Qualitative research for applied practice [Internet]. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge; 2016. Available from: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315545196