**2019 SHRS UQ Winter Research Project Description**

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| **Project title:** | **Physiotherapy cancer exercise classes at the Princess Alexandra Hospital – patient and research resources** |
| **Project duration:** | * 4 weeks * 30 hours /week |
| **Position/s available** | 1 |
| **Description:** | Background: Cancer is recognised as a chronic disease and is the leading cause of disease burden in Australia (AIHW 2017). Approximately 134 000 new diagnoses of cancer were expected in Australia in 2017, with the most common types being breast (females), colorectal, prostate, and melanoma.  Recent research has demonstrated exercise can counteract the side effects of cancer and its associated treatments (Stout et al 2017). In addition, a recent systematic review found patients who exercised after cancer diagnosis had a lower relative risk of dying from cancer and of having their cancer recur (come back) after treatment, in comparison to patients who performed no or less exercise (Cormie et al 2017).  The Cancer Care Physiotherapy team at the Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) conducts an outpatient based exercise program for patients with a diagnosis of cancer. A mixed methods evaluation of the exercise program was conducted in 2018 by two physiotherapy honours students. Recommendations have been made to modify elements of the program based on this evaluation; for example, qualitative interviews with patients found that patients wanted more information about where they could access exercise classes and facilities in the community upon completion of the program at the hospital. We are seeking a Winter Scholar to help our research group prepare for the next phase of this exercise program.  Activities for the Winter Scholar student:   * Work with UQ researchers and PAH physiotherapy staff * Produce resources for use in the modified program e.g. patient information booklets, contact lists for community gyms * Conduct online searches for information, in formal literature databases and other online sources * Design material for the next phase of research with this exercise program, including questionnaire sheets and online surveys * Contribute to the preparation of educational presentations for patients on topics such as healthy eating, cancer-related fatigue management, and maintenance of physical activity in the community |
| **Expected outcomes and deliverables:** | The Winter Scholar will gain/learn:   * Communication skills with academics and physiotherapy clinicians * Skills in interpreting information and summarising it in a form appropriate for presentation to patients * Skills in finding and analysing relevant scientific literature * Critical analysis skills used on public facing websites with health information * Knowledge of the planning and preparation involved in research projects in real world clinical environments * Experience in utilising existing mixed methods research output – quantitative statistics as well as interview data   The Winter Scholar will be expected to complete as a part of the project:   * Electronic resources that can be used by patients, or by physiotherapists with their patients, in the cancer exercise program * Research resources such as questionnaires and online surveys * Contribute to material for presentations aimed at patients with a cancer diagnosis on topics relevant to their clinical group |
| **Suitable for:** | This project is open to 2nd and 3rd year physiotherapy students. |
| **Primary Supervisor:** | Dr Elise Gane, Conjoint Research Fellow, UQ and Princess Alexandra Hospital |
| **Further info:** | Please contact me via email ([e.gane@uq.edu.au](mailto:e.gane@uq.edu.au)) to meet prior to submitting an application.  Apply via [UQ Advantage](http://www.uq.edu.au/uqadvantage/wr-info-for-applicants). |