

Funded PhD Opportunity in the School of Nursing and Midwifery at Queen's University Belfast 2020-21

The School of Nursing and Midwifery, in collaboration with the Centre for Evidence and Social Innovation at Queen's University Belfast is delighted to announce an opportunity to apply for a fully funded PhD Studentship.

Title: Addressing risk of suicide in a post-conflict society: how do we enhance our resilience?

Click here for the proposal document.

Applicants must have at least a 2.1 degree (or equivalent) in a relevant subject area.

The closing date for this application is **5pm, Friday 19 March 2021** .

Interviews are anticipated to take place online, on 19th or 20th April 2021.

Apply using our online Postgraduate Applications Portal go.qub.ac.uk/pgapply and follow the step-by-step instructions on [how to apply](#).

When prompted, applicants should supply a cover letter (max 2 pages long) outlining their suitability for the project, rather than a proposal document. [The cover letter should be uploaded with your application, instead of a proposal]

Within this document, please provide evidence to support the following additional criteria for this opportunity;

- Experience of working with people experiencing mental health challenges
- Experience of survey methods
- Experience of co-design methods
- Expertise in conflict-related trauma

The full-time studentship is funded by the Northern Ireland Department for the Economy (DfE) and is supported through collaboration with MindWise. MindWise is a charitable organisation providing a wide range of mental health support services across Northern Ireland, within a national [www.mentalhealth.uk] and international network of charitable affiliates [Human Health Project, www.humanhealth.org. & EUFAMI, www.eufami.org , member organisations across Europe including Denmark, Finland, The Netherlands, France, Spain and beyond].

Funded studentships may cover maintenance and fees for a maximum of three years, depending on residency status. For further details about eligibility criteria (including academic, citizenship and residency criteria) please click on the DfE Research Eligibility Guidance

Notes: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/department-economy-studentships>.

The University is committed a policy of equal opportunity. Prospective students with a disability or long term condition are encouraged to disclose as early as possible in the application and selection process by contacting admissions@gub.ac.uk. Upon disclosure the University will ensure appropriate reasonable adjustments and additional supports can be put in place for applicants. Reasonable adjustments and additional supports will be determined on an individual basis, in line with the course entry requirements to ensure selection standards are maintained.

Proposal Document for 2021 Collaborative Studentship commencing September 2021

Title: Addressing risk of suicide in a post-conflict society: how do we enhance our resilience? A comparative cross-sectional study, informing a co-design approach to service recommendations and priorities.

Supervision Team: Dr Karen Galway, QUB (Primary Supervisor), Dr Mark Linden (Supervisor), Ms Anne Doherty (MindWise CEO and Mentor)

Background:

Exposure to suicide through suicidal ideation, behaviours or bereavement is more common in post-conflict settings and risk factors are higher in Northern Ireland (NI), compared to other regions. However, **the extent to which exposure to political conflict and trauma are associated with exposure to suicide in the region has not yet been quantitatively assessed.** An accumulation of traumatic experiences and consequent poor mental wellbeing are already known to increase risk of suicide. **Less is known about the role of resilience, as a protective mitigating factor.** Addressing this gap in knowledge on resilience and/or post traumatic growth can make an impact across public mental health, mental health service development and service delivery in post-conflict settings. Since the Covid-19 pandemic has raised the profile of mental health problems in the NI population, knowledge on what improves our resilience has become more pertinent than ever.

Objectives:

1. To carry out a **scoping review of the literature** on the role of resilience/post traumatic growth in reducing risk of suicidal ideation, suicidal behaviour and impacts of bereavement, in post-conflict settings. We will provide a taxonomy of terminologies (for example resilience, post-traumatic growth, trauma informed recovery) to ensure shared understanding and to identify robust measurements.
2. To carry out a **cross sectional study of mental health, suicidal behaviour and resilience/post-traumatic growth** after exposure to trauma in Northern Ireland in people with and without experience of mental health services. The review findings, along with input from mental health service users and a panel of mental health support staff at MindWise, will inform the development of the study content (survey questions).
3. A co-design workshop process will **translate the survey findings into priorities and recommendations for practice**, as well as helping to prioritise future interventional research.

Methods:

The proposed survey will examine associations between suicide risk, trauma and resilience/post traumatic growth measuring; (1) exposure to political violence (2) adverse childhood experiences, (3) measures of resilience/ post-traumatic growth/ recovery, (4) diagnosed mental health conditions including substance misuse and (5) suicidal ideation, behaviour and bereavement. **Survey data (n = 600) will be collected using a population based approach, with a nested cohort of people with experience of mental health services (n=150).** Data will be analysed using descriptive statistics and regression modelling. The models can also compare those with experience of mental health services, to those without such experience. These findings will provide much needed data to drive effective suicide prevention interventions and mental health service provision.

The co-design process will aim **to translate evidence into practice recommendations**, examining trauma informed approaches and post traumatic growth in post-conflict settings. Survey participants will be invited to take part in this co-design process and to join a PPI research 'register' for creating a mental wellbeing reference group for future work.

For further information please contact Dr Karen Galway k.galway@qub.ac.uk
