

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

The School of Nursing and Midwifery, Queen's University Belfast (QUB) in collaboration with the Department of Health (DoH), Northern Ireland is pleased to announce an opportunity to apply for a fully funded 3-year PhD Studentship. This is a unique opportunity facilitated by a collaborative partnership between QUB and DoH, offering significant leadership development potential in addition to academic study to PhD level. The DoH collaborative partnership will facilitate a close working relationship with the Midwifery Officer, DoH including at least 3 months placement at the DoH facilitating experiential insight of policy development and strategic level working. This PhD study is aligned to the strategic direction and transformation of maternity services in Northern Ireland (NI). This project is one of two linked PhD studentship opportunities related to Continuity of Midwifery Carer in NI currently open for application.

Title: Continuity of Midwifery Carer in NI for Women with Additional Care Needs Across the Continuum of Care

The full-time studentship is funded by the Northern Ireland Department for the Economy (DfE). 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>.

This studentship comes with an additional £14,250 uplift in student stipend.

Click here for the proposal document.

Essential Criteria

- Applicants must have at least a 2.1 BSc (Hons) degree (or equivalent) in Midwifery or a relevant subject area.
- Applicants must be currently registered as a midwife on the live Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Register (or eligibility to attain NMC registration as a midwife)
- Recent experience of clinical midwifery practice
- Professional interest in continuity of midwifery care/carer

Desirable Criteria

- Currently registered on a MSc programme in a relevant subject area
- Completed MSc qualification in a relevant subject area
- Evidence of post registration academic accredited study
- Experience of providing/implementing continuity of midwifery care/carer

The closing date for applications is **Friday 19th March 2021 5pm.**

Interviews are anticipated to take place online on **14th April 2021**

How to Apply

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 University is committed to 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@qub.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.

PhD Proposal: Continuity of Midwifery Carer in NI for Women with Additional Care Needs Across the Continuum of Care

Supervision Team: Dr Jenny McNeill, QUB, Dr Fiona Lynn, QUB and Dr Dale Spence, Department of Health

Background: The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Standards of Proficiency for Midwives clearly articulate the role of continuity of midwifery carer (CoMC) for women with additional care needs. It is recognised that midwives have specific roles for women with additional care needs including providing ongoing midwifery care and continuity as part of an interdisciplinary team. A Cochrane review (15 trials, 17,674 women) identified that women who received CoC (one midwife or a small team of midwives) were significantly less likely to experience preterm birth, fetal loss <24 weeks and had fewer fetal neonatal deaths overall. Women requiring additional care for various reasons such as existing health conditions, social complexity, perinatal mental health are at risk of increased mortality, morbidity and poorer outcomes. Randomised Control Trial evidence from Australia demonstrates a reduction in caesarean rates and overall cost compared to standard care costs for women with known risk factors receiving caseload midwifery care. CoMC for women with additional care needs has the potential to impact positively on outcomes and women's satisfaction with care.

Aim: Explore and evaluate the current provision of continuity of midwifery carer in NI for women with additional care needs

Method

The objectives of this PhD study seek to identify and evaluate clinical and social outcomes for women with known risk factors across the continuum of care receiving care via a continuity of midwifery carer model compared to women with known risk factors receiving standard care. The study will also explore the perspectives of women with known risk factors who receive care across the continuum of care in a CoMC model. This PhD study will include exploration of the economic cost of providing continuity of midwifery carer models for women with additional care needs. Finally, the study will aim to identify key features of an evidence based CoMC model for women requiring additional care suitable for implementation in NI. It is anticipated this study will incorporate a prospective comparative cohort study incorporating mixed methods, facilitating comparison of women requiring additional care experiencing CoMC on key clinical outcomes with women receiving standard care. It is anticipated interviews and focus groups will form elements of the data collection along with data capture from routine electronic systems in use within maternity services and include the perspective of a range of stakeholders.

For further information please contact Dr Jenny McNeill, School of Nursing & Midwifery, QUB by email: j.mcneill@qub.ac.uk
