**Queen’s University Belfast**

*School of Nursing and Midwifery*

**Project Title: Sleep in Children with Cerebral Palsy**

**Proposed Supervisor :** Claire Kerr

Sleep disturbances in children with cerebral palsy are common, impact negatively on achievement of cognitive tasks and quality of life and affect the wider family. The extent of use and effectiveness of pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions to manage sleep disorders in this population has not been established.

This PhD will (1) establish the nature and extent of sleep disturbances experienced by children with cerebral palsy in Northern Ireland, and compare this to an Australian cohort; (2) explore the impact of disturbed sleep on the family unit; (3) determine use of prescribed medications that aim to reduce sleep disturbances in children with cerebral palsy; and (4) investigate use of non-pharmacological interventions to reduce sleep disturbances in children with cerebral palsy.

A mixed-methods approach will be employed: cross-sectional questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and data linkage of existing epidemiological and prescribing data will be undertaken to successfully meet the aims of this study. The project will necessitate collaboration with children with cerebral palsy and their families, health and social care professionals, the Northern Ireland Cerebral Palsy Register and the Enhanced Prescribing Database.

This project will provide robust information on prevalence, impact and current management of sleep disturbances in children with CP. The project will scaffold development of an evidence-based intervention that will be further developed and evaluated in the next phase of this programme of research.

For further information please contact Dr. Claire Kerr, c.kerr@qub.ac.uk

**If you wish to be considered for a studentship, please complete the following two steps:**

1. **Email an up to date CV and a covering letter explaining why you want to undertake a PhD in the School of Nursing and Midwifery to Sean Morrison at sean.morrison@qub.ac.uk.**
2. **Complete the online application by clicking here for the QUB Postgraduate Applications Portal.**

**The closing date for applications is Friday 05 May 2017. Interviews for shortlisted candidates are expected to take place the week commencing 15 May.**