



NATIONAL CENTRE OF
IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA



Hunter Medical Research Institute

PhD Scholarship

Hunter Medical Research Institute, Health Research Economics (HRE) - Assessment of the translation and impact of public health implementation research

We are seeking expressions of interest (EOI) from highly motivated candidates interested in pursuing a PhD program in impact assessment and implementation research with the National Centre of Implementation Science (NCOIS) and Health Research Economics (HRE) at the Hunter Medical Research Institute.

WHO ARE NCOIS, HMRI AND HRE?

The research will be undertaken as part of the National Centre of Implementation Science (NCOIS). NCOIS is a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funded Centre for Research Excellence (CRE). Comprising world leading Australian and international researchers, the NCOIS executes research to improve the implementation of chronic disease prevention programs in community settings and develops initiatives to build research capacity in implementation science, facilitate knowledge translation and collaboration.

The Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI), has earned a reputation for translating its world-class medical research into real and immediate benefits for patients and their families. HRE is located within HMRI and was established to: foster the integration of economic principles and techniques into health research; build regional capacity and expertise in health research economics; and conduct original research of relevance to the field of health economics. We are an internationally respected centre in applied health economics that promotes efficient, equitable and affordable health care by focusing on translational research.

A branch of our work at HRE is in the area of impact assessment which applies economic and non-economic principles, methods and tools to encourage, optimise and measure translation and impact from investments in health and medical research to i) increase the likelihood of impact being generated, ii) reduce the time to impact and iii) identify the benefits and returns from this research investment. This work is underpinned by the Framework to Assess the Impact of Translational health research (FAIT) which was developed by HRE staff in collaboration with HMRI researchers and key stakeholders to be applied to all forms of health and medical research [1].

WHAT WOULD THE PHD FOCUS ON?

The PhD will focus on research to inform the application of FAIT within the implementation science research program, concentrating specifically on its application to research involving implementation of chronic disease prevention programs, policies and practices in community settings. The two main

arms of this work will be: The retrospective application of FAIT to Good for Kids (a Hunter region-based program designed to support schools, childcare centres and sporting clubs promote healthy eating and physical activity policies and programs targeted at children). This evaluation work was commenced by the HRE team, in 2016 [2] and this PhD will complete the impact assessment of GFK. This PhD research proposal will also use the learnings from the GFK application and refinement of the methods underpinning FAIT that have occurred since 2016, to customise FAIT for application within NCOIS.

The outcomes of this work would support future applications for continued funding of NCOIS by demonstrating the impact assessment and translation capability that has been built by the CRE and the impacts that have resulted from their research.

This work is also closely aligned to the aims of NCOIS and an NHMRC Partnership Grant, both interested in how we best increase the implementation, scale and/or sustainment of healthy eating and physical activity programs in community settings.

WHAT ROLE WOULD THE STUDENT HAVE ON THE PROJECT?

As part of NCOIS and HRE, the PhD student will be part of a multi-disciplinary team working alongside leading applied health economists, impact specialists and public health researchers. As part of this team you will be well supported to develop applied skills in impact assessment so that by the end of your candidature you have developed core competencies in developing a model that supports and encourages research translation and impact applied to public health implementation research.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR IN A POTENTIAL PHD STUDENT?

We encourage applicants with a relevant undergraduate or postgraduate degree with an interest in impact assessment or health economics to apply. Relevant degrees may include, but are not restricted to, economics, psychology or allied health. Whilst having completed an Honours project is advantageous, it is not essential. Students in their final year of undergraduate or postgraduate study are eligible to apply.

WHAT ARE THE SCHOLARSHIP DETAILS?

This scholarship is available for domestic students only. The successful applicant will be offered a 3.5 year full-time scholarship at the value of \$28,092 per annum tax free (2020 rate - indexed annually). In addition, and in accordance with the scholarship rules, the successful applicant may also be offered the opportunity to be employed one day per week through the research group on a commensurate HEW scale. For additional information about undertaking a PhD at UoN see <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/research/future-students/scholarships>

WHAT ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE?

The student will be a member of a multi-disciplinary team and located at HMRI providing an opportunity to work alongside and engage with leading health economists, statisticians and public health researchers. The position will also be supported by the research environment of The University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) and the appointed student will be encouraged to join in staff development, meetings and other opportunities. The student will also be eligible for membership of the University of Newcastle's Priority Research Centre in Health Behaviour.

WHAT IS THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

The position is for one PhD student commencing first semester 2021 (by 01 March 2021). Please refer to the [admission eligibility criteria](#) for minimum academic requirements. In addition, the successful applicant must be able to meet the following criteria:

1. Excellent organisational, time management, written and verbal communication skills;

2. The ability to work both independently and in a team environment;
3. Demonstrated ability to write reports or peer-reviewed manuscripts
4. Commitment to Indigenous health

HOW DO I APPLY?

Interested applicants should e-mail a **one page** letter outlining how they meet the above eligibility criteria, a brief (2 page) CV and copies of academic transcript to Penny Reeves penny.reeves@hmri.org.au

APPLICATIONS CLOSE

Friday the 5th of December 2020

REFERENCES

1. Searles A, Doran C, Attia J, Knight D, Wiggers J, Deeming S, et al. An Approach to Measuring and Encouraging Research Translation and Research Impact. *Health Research Policy and Systems* 2016;14(60).
2. Reeves P, Deeming S, Ramanathan S, Wiggers J, Wolfenden L, Searles A. Measurement of the translation and impact from a childhood obesity trial programme: Rationale and protocol for a research impact assessment. *Health Research Policy and Systems*. 2017;15(1).