

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

This 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 (maximum 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@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.

PhD Proposal: Continuity of Midwifery Carer in NI

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

Background: High quality maternity care is essential to ensure that women progress safely throughout their antenatal, intranatal and postnatal journey and that newborn infants are given the best start in life. Central to providing high quality maternity care is continuity of carer, specifically continuity of midwifery carer (CoMC) which is shown to unequivocally lead to better outcomes for women and their newborn infants. The Strategy for Maternity Care in Northern Ireland (NI) highlights that continuity of carer is pivotal; and subsequent to the publication of this Maternity Strategy, maternity policy across England, Scotland and Wales has been published, which outline guidance for the evidence-based transformation of maternity services to ensure that most women receive continuity of carer. The focus on CoMC in NI has been initiated at strategic level and this PhD study will provide the opportunity to inform the design and implementation of CoMC and provide valuable data to shape regional transformation of maternity service provision.

Aim: Explore the current provision of continuity of midwifery carer in NI and identify strategies to facilitate successful implementation

Method

The objectives of this PhD project will seek to facilitate greater understanding of the experiences and perspectives of midwives and maternity service users regarding CoMC models currently in NI. The study will also seek to identify key barriers and facilitators impacting on the implementation of continuity of midwifery carer in NI. The economic cost of providing continuity of midwifery carer models will also be included. Finally, the study will aim to identify key features of an evidence-based CoMC model or models suitable for implementation in NI. It is anticipated this study will incorporate a participatory action research (PAR) approach utilising mixed methods. It is likely interviews and focus groups will form elements of data collection along with data capture from routine electronic systems in use within maternity services.

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