

Assessment Criteria

As part of the application process, proposals will undergo peer review and be based on the following criteria.

- Scientific quality and importance of proposed research
- Originality of the proposal
- Suitability of the candidate and supervisory team
- Relevance of the work for clinical practice

Previously Funded Projects

Exploring trauma experiences in children with chronic constipation and faecal incontinence

Lay Summary: This research aims to explore traumatic experiences in children with ongoing Constipation (CC) and Faecal leakage (FI). These children and their families are greatly suffering both physical and psychological burden in their daily life. Current research in this area is limited, thus, this study will use data collected from in-depth interviews to explore and describe traumatic experiences in children with CC and FI and their families. We anticipate that a theory can be developed to explain how their experiences may contribute to the development of trauma related to their condition. Interviews will be conducted with 10-15 children and their families about their experiences, and the analysis will consider similarities and differences in their stories. We anticipate by understanding the different factors that may contribute to children's experiences of trauma, we can develop in the future, a trauma screening tool to ensure the children and their families are quickly identified and receive relevant treatment support. Furthermore, it can be used in clinical assessments to guide the most appropriate therapy for the patient to reduce the impact of trauma they have been previously exposed to. This will hopefully allow the patient to deal with future hospital exposure.

Recovery from intensive care acquired muscle weakness: molecular determinants and consequences for physical recovery and quality of life in patients after heart surgery

Lay Summary: Muscle wasting and weakness associated with critical illness prevents patients leaving intensive care units (ICU) after they have recovered from the original problem. Muscle wasting starts within the first few days of illness and is established long before the patient begins recovering. It delays patients leaving ICU, going home, and then from regaining independence and normal levels of activity. There are no treatments for this problem. We will focus on improving our understanding of muscle recovery and its effects on patients' quality of life, because for most patients requiring ICU, the muscle wasting happens in the first few days of illness and there is a limited opportunity for prevention. Recovery from muscle wasting in this patient group has not been studied before using the genetic techniques described, so we believe that this work will meet an unmet need and may have a huge impact on critically ill patients and their carers.

Advice for Proposal Writing

- ✓ Liaise with your prospective supervisor through the proposal writing process and ensure that the project you are planning on doing will provide you with enough skills and body of research to obtain a PhD
- ✓ Give your proposal a snappy title that sums up the main point of the project
- ✓ Sell the overall vision of the research but make sure enough detail is provided on how the day to day work will be carried out
- ✓ Give timescales and set measurable milestones for success of the project – use a Gantt chart to achieve this
- ✓ Give a long-term vision of where you see the project going and the impact it will have in the next 10 years (even if you do not want to continue to research this yourself)
- ✓ Ensure any literature citations are up-to-date with newest discoveries in the field
- ✓ Be as clear as possible, try not to use long sentences and try to keep everything simple - usually several people will have to read the proposal with different skill sets and it needs to be understood by everyone
- ✓ Considering why your proposal is scientifically important and relevant is key because it will make you consider the bigger picture - reading outside of the academic aspect of your research (i.e. newspaper reports and professional reports) will really help when you come to frame it
- ✓ Whilst you are writing, talk academics and your colleagues about your proposal – get feedback on your ideas and practice talking about the research you want to do
- ✓ Start writing early and regularly ask people to read and review what you've written