

SELF FUNDED PHD OPPORTUNITY

Supporting the psychological needs of parents of newborn infants diagnosed with complex congenital heart disease, using a storytelling based intervention

Supervisory team

Director of Studies:

Dr Kerry Gaskin, Head of Department of Post-Qualifying Courses, Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Worcester

Supervisors:

Dr Béré Mahoney, Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology, University of Worcester

Background

Congenital heart disease (CHD) refers to any defect of the heart present at birth and occurs in at least 8 per 1000 live births in the UK (NICOR, 2016). This equates to almost 5000 infants born with CHD each year in the UK (Townsend et al., 2013), around half of these will require surgery in the first few days of life and life-long follow up for major and life threatening, life limiting conditions. Having an infant with CHD can have psychosocial consequences for the parents' health (Gaskin 2017; Crowe et al., 2016; Fischer et al., 2012; Franich-Ray et al., 2013; Jordan et al., 2014) and whilst the psychological sequelae of CHD for families are documented; the development, implementation and evaluation of interventions designed to support the psychological needs of parents are less considered (Brown & Smith, 2018; Ferrari, 2017; Sjostrom-Strand & Terp, 2017). This is despite calls to support the emotional needs of parents of infants with CHD (Burger & Tallett, 2015; Hall, Phillips, & Hynan, 2016).

We are looking for a PhD student who would like to develop and evaluate a narrative based psychological intervention for parents of infants with CHD. This study will be conducted across both a University and NHS environment, offering an opportunity for the successful applicant to develop an applied, impactful research study that could directly enhance parents' experiences of caring for their infants with congenital heart disease.

References

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