



Economic
and Social
Research Council



Improving the digital delivery of primary health care post COVID-19

ESRC DTP Joint Studentship

University of Nottingham and Loughborough University

The Midlands Graduate School is an accredited Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). One of 14 such partnerships in the UK, the Midlands Graduate School is a collaboration between the University of Warwick, Aston University, University of Birmingham, University of Leicester, Loughborough University and the University of Nottingham.

The University of Nottingham as part of Midlands Graduate School is now inviting applications for an ESRC Doctoral Studentship in association with our joint partner, Loughborough University, to commence in October 2021. The student will be based at Nottingham.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the rapid introduction of remote consultations in primary care, with many practices becoming remote by default (RCGP, 2020). This change to service delivery allows care provision to continue, whilst limiting the risk of COVID transmission. While 'remote' in the current context has sometimes referred to services delivered by telephone, use of video-over-the-internet platforms has increased significantly and these are here to stay.

This research is a unique opportunity to identify the specific communicative challenges posed by the use of video consultations in primary care and identify ways to minimise them. The PhD research will be supervised by Professor Alison Pilnick (University of Nottingham), Professor Elizabeth Stokoe (Loughborough University) and Professor Tony Avery (University of Nottingham). It will focus on the following questions:

- What are the key communicative challenges arising for GPs and patients during video consultations?
- Are there particular contexts in which these challenges recur (e.g. patient group, or activity type within consultation)?
- How can these challenges be negotiated and minimised in order to optimise remote care delivery?

The student will undertake a conversation analytic (CA) study. This inductive qualitative approach analyses social interaction, focusing on verbal and bodily conduct and its social consequences. Intensive comparative analysis of multiple episodes allows identification and explication of recurrent patterns and their consequences, thereby moving the analysis beyond individual psychological dispositions. Through this research the student's findings will highlight areas GPs and patients currently find challenging, and whether there are recurring contexts for these challenges, as well as successful strategies developed by participants to negotiate and overcome them. Findings

will be disseminated to clinicians with the assistance of the supervisory team. This project also has potential to inform wider sociological debate on the impact that greater reliance on digital technology has on social interaction.

Application Process

To be considered for this PhD, please first check eligibility and then complete the Joint Studentship Application form [available online here](#) and email this along with a CV and covering letter to vicky.spencer1@nottingham.ac.uk. Shortlisted applicants will also be required to provide two references.

Application deadline: 1st March 2021. Interviews will be held (by Teams) on 10th March 2021.

Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP

Our ESRC studentships cover fees and maintenance stipend and extensive support for research training, as well as research activity support grants. Support is available only to successful applicants who fulfil eligibility criteria.

To check your eligibility, visit: www.mgsdtp.ac.uk/studentships/eligibility/

Informal enquiries about the research prior to application can be directed to Professor Alison Pilnick (alison.pilnick@nottingham.ac.uk).