**UQ Summer Research Project Description**

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| **Project title:** | **The adaptation, acceptability and implementation barriers of a self-efficacy program (Groups 4 Health) to prevent and manage loneliness in the community across age groups and settings.** |
| **Project duration, hours of engagement & delivery mode** | The duration of the project is several months but the student component or subproject would be six weeks, with the hours of engagement between 20-36hrs per week depending on tasks needed each week.  We can offer one position.  The project can be completed under a hybrid working arrangement, mostly online including one-hour weekly meeting for coaching and reporting of progress, but on-site attendance is required on occasion for contact with project participants if the student is engaged in focus group discussion or in-depth interviews. |
| **Description:** | **Background**  Social disconnection and loneliness are commonly reported in young people in transition to high school and university as well as among older people living with chronic diseases, and if unmanaged can further undermine quality of life, emotional health, and social functioning. We have developed a program that directly targets social connectedness, empowering people to build and sustain their social networks in ways that will improve their psychosocial health. This program, Groups 4 Health (G4H), has proven efficacy under research conditions, as demonstrated in three trials1-3, and in its current form has been found to be both feasible to deliver and acceptable to clients2. Our current initiative is translating this evidence into the real-world settings of high schools, residential aged care, selected health services, and the community. We are seeking the contributions of students into subprojects to progress the program of research.  There will be subprojects targeting young people and separately projects targeting older people.  We aim to (1) examine the acceptability of G4H for high school students and adults (2) identify adaptations that would be necessary to support the program’s fitness for purpose for target communities, and (3) identify factors that would affect program integration and implementation.  This project aims to answer the following research questions:   1. Is G4H a program that is acceptable to managing social connectedness? 2. What adaptations would be necessary to the G4H program materials (Trainers’ manual and participants’ workbook) to enhance its fitness for purpose? 3. What factors (barriers and enablers) affect integration and implementation of G4H in routine Australian services (high schools, independent living, chronic health services)?   Method: The umbrella project stage is the co-design phase and involves a mixed method approach to joint development of the subsequent intervention to prevent or manage loneliness (the latter isbeyond the student summer project timeline).  References  1.. Cruwys T, et al. Acceptability and Feasibility of an Intervention to Enhance Social Group Belonging: Evidence From Three Trials of Groups 4 Health. [doi: 10.1016/j.beth.2022.06.011](doi:10.1016/j.beth.2022.06.011)  2.. Cruwys T, et al. Groups 4 Health protects against unanticipated threats to mental health: Evaluating two interventions during COVID-19 lockdown among young people with a history of depression and loneliness. [doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2021.08.029](doi:%2010.1016/j.jad.2021.08.029)  3. Cruwys T, et al. Groups 4 Health versus cognitive-behavioural therapy for depression and loneliness in young people: randomised phase 3 non-inferiority trial with 12-month follow-up. [doi: 10.1192/bjp.2021.128](doi:%2010.1192/bjp.2021.128) |
| **Expected outcomes and deliverables:** | The initiative is currently underway and depending on the stage of the projects at the time the student joins, candidates may be involved in at least two of the following to develop skills or contribute to:   1. Narrative literature reviews (screening titles, abstracts and full texts, data extraction and data analysis) 2. Co-production of sub-project protocols/ethics submissions 3. Conduct of a focus group discussion and collaborating in thematic analysis (using NVivo software or Excel) 4. Conduct of a few in-depth interviews and collaborating in thematic analysis 5. Contact of study participants by telephone for follow-up surveys, enter data and conduct quantitative analysis 6. Assist with recording meeting summaries/minutes and analysing process data   All substantial contributions as specified above will earn the student a place as co-author on the manuscript submitted to a peer-review journal.  Scholars are expected to deliver the completed task assigned by the University of Queensland supervisor at the weekly meetings. |
| **Suitable for:** | Applicants with a passion for translating research into practice and to assist with a variety of tasks to develop or refine a wide range of skills in behavioural science or public health are best suited for these roles.  This project is open to applications from Psychology students in later years of their undergraduate course or in early postgraduate stages. |
| **Primary Supervisor:** | Dr Magnolia Cardona PhD, MPH, MBBS  Associate Professor of Implementation Science |
| **Further info:** | If interested, please email [m.cardona@uq.edu.au](mailto:m.cardona@uq.edu.au) prior to applying, with a single paragraph on your motivation to join, and a phone number. |