Year 1-2 Medical Student Community Research Project Supervisors

A funded opportunity to host medical students to undertake a longitudinal health improvement research project supporting your services and communities.

About us

The Pears Cumbria School of Medicine welcomes its first graduate entry medical students in August 2025, with a vision to improve health outcomes for the people of Cumbria. We aim to produce doctors committed to delivering cutting-edge healthcare, and serving the needs of their local community.

Their curriculum includes an innovative 'Prevention and Healthcare Delivery' module that runs through years 1 and 2 of the programme. The module includes public health, quality improvement, leadership and education, models of healthcare and reducing health inequalities.

As part of the module, students will undertake a community research project in a clinical or community context during their first eighteen months. Students will work in teams of six (two groups of three). The project goal is to support an improvement that benefits the health outcomes of an identified group of citizens/patients. The project can be based in a community, care or hospital setting.

We hope you will want to become one of our pioneers, providing and supporting one of these student research projects, starting in September 2025 and running for about 18 months.

As a guide, students will have at least 150 hours allocated time each to undertake the work, including several full and half days where they can attend physical locations as part of their research.

In Year 1, students research the context of an issue affecting your service, area or population, and then through an evidence review, design an intervention or improvement with an evaluation plan. We hope they will have opportunity to explore project governance within research, and that there may be space to explore new technologies and AI in their delivery.

In Year 2, we aim for that intervention to be implemented, giving students the chance to evaluate its impact and report their findings.

Students are assessed on the work carried out during the project in both years, including through

Q: What kind of projects are you looking for?

A: We're hoping for a real mix for our students to choose from. There needs to be an opportunity for students to collect and respond to some kind of data, and that could deliver an improvement to the health outcomes of a community, population or service user group.

submission of a protocol and evidence review, delivery of a peer education session, and a final poster. We recognise that not all interventions will be delivered and that, as with all research, outcomes will be varied. Our hope is that the students experience the journey through the process of undertaking research and improvement in a real world setting with citizens/patients, and learn with you as they do so.

An opportunity for you

Funding: Project supervisors will be funded to support the PCSM students and to enable the project (see below). To participate, you will need to be able to offer our students an opportunity to investigate and improve a service/area that benefits local citizens/patients within the region.

You will support our students to conduct evidence review and staff/patient/people engagement on the opportunities and challenges of improving a health outcome, and then work with them to design, and hopefully test, an improvement that responds to that need. We will provide library support and mentorship in research methods to enable their work.

> **Q: I've not been a formal research investigator. Does this matter?**
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> **A:** No. Whilst we do need you to have familiarity with conducting research or quality improvement, we can support you on unfamiliar areas. We're happy to support an enthusiastic supervisor with a great idea.

You will also support the students as they learn to work as a team and seek to overcome the common challenges that arise when trying to make improvements. Students have further access to a tutor who is there to support them at PCSM.

Our students are graduate entry, with a previous scientific degree, bringing a rich mix of past academic and employment experiences. They will already have enhanced DBS and workplace health checks undertaken as part of their clinical placement preparation. If students require additional honorary arrangements to access your organisation, this can be supported. You may need ethical approval to collect data etc. and we will support this as much as is reasonable.

Expectations of you as a Project Supervisor

You will have ...

- Understanding of research/quality improvement methodologies (quantitative and/or qualitative)
- Awareness of systematic literature search strategies, e.g. supporting decision making on inclusion/exclusion of study types
- Ability to guide students on identifying bias and collating evidence from multiple sources
- Familiarity with ethical and data governance considerations around designing and implementing data collection
- Excellent communication skills, and ability to monitor and guide performance and timescales of the student team, ideally with past education experience with medical or other healthcare professionals
- Experience or knowledge in designing interventions / research to improve patient/citizen experience/outcomes
- Support from a place / site / institution to ensure the project can be progressed and delivered in complement to wider priorities
- Supervisor availability of equivalent of one day per month to contribute to the project.

Remuneration of supervisor

We hope that the investment of our student time will deliver measurable improvements for your service users/staff and organisation, as well as longer term impact for the communities you serve through producing more connected and capable future doctors.

We recognise that the supervisor function requires dedicated time, and you through your organisation will be granted £16,000 (£8,000 year 1 + £8,000 year 2) for each group of six students hosted, for your time and to enable the project.

It is expected that supervisors will be available for;

- Regular check-in and support for student groups throughout their project, including supporting timescales and group working. It is expected that students will manage their own timeline.
- Supervisor review of draft materials produced for project and assessments, within an acceptable timeframe.
- Ad-hoc education on topics required to deliver project
- Supporting student access to site and patients/people/data as required, including facilitating face to face visits, and any necessary information governance requirements.
- Attendance at student assessment centre days (x3 days maximum, per 18 months)
- Optional contribution of up to one half-day teaching session/tutorial on topic relevant to the supervisor's experience to a full year cohort of PCSM students (circa 60-90 students), subject to your availability and consent

We are not able to cover any additional costs (such as software licenses) that are not already available to students as part of their registration with the university. However, the funding provided can be used for these purposes.

Organisations will be asked to provide a brief report at the end of year 1 and project close on how the monies have been used. Students will be expected to support the production of this report, as would be expected for many research grants.

Support from PCSM

PCSM will have a lead Senior Teaching Fellow for any queries or issues that arise through the project time. Students will also have access to library services. There will be additional support via the module lead and some administration support.

Transport and project costs will not be additionally reimbursed beyond the project grant, although it is planned that students will have access to vehicles from the PCSM to travel to your location.

Students may, as part of their learning journey, be encouraged to apply for small grants from local and national bodies to support their improvement idea, and placements are encouraged to use some of their supervisor reimbursement to enable the project.

Application process

If you would like to be considered as a project supervisor for our students, please complete the online form at https://forms.office.com/e/Ze81eAASqL by Midday 18th July 2025.

If there is extensive interest in participating, we reserve the right to close applications early, or to undertake a second selection stage for shortlisted supervisors and projects. Projects that are not selected by students in the first instance will not receive any payment, but they can be readvertised to students in future years.

A list of the application questions is available below.

For further information, please contact:
Dr Christopher Chiswell, c.chiswell@imperial.ac.uk (Module lead)

Project Host Application Questions

1. Supervisor details
   a. Supervisor name
   b. Supervisor job title
   c. Supervisor email
   d. Supervisor phone

2. Organisation details
   a. Name of organisation or place where the student will be based
   b. Base location for student placement
   c. Does your line manager/professional lead support you acting as supervisor for this project? yes/no

3. Proposed project
   a. Working title of proposed project
   b. Provide a brief description of the research area the students will work on, and the potential impact they could have (1250 characters max)
   c. What past experiences or knowledge might help a student succeed with the project? (750 characters max)
   d. What skills and competencies can students expect to develop through the project? (750 characters max)

4. Supervisor experience
   a. What is your experience (as project supervisor) of education / research / quality improvement and supervision (1250 characters max)