Title: Weight-bearing exercises following primary total hip replacement: a feasibility study to assess effectiveness

Application Deadline: 27 April 2014

Start Date: 1 July or 1 October 2014

Supervisory Team:
Primary: Dr Jane Cross, email j.cross@uea.ac.uk
Secondary: Dr Toby Smith, email toby.smith@uea.ac.uk

Abstract of PhD project:
Total hip replacement (THR) is one of the most common orthopaedic procedures undertaken in the UK. Physiotherapy is regarded as a key aspect in the recovery of people following THR. Whilst surgical techniques have evolved, the rehabilitation of this group of people has altered little in the past forty years. The objective of this programme of study is to build on previous research undertaken by the supervisory team on rehabilitation following hip surgery (Smith et al, 2009; Smith et al 2008).

This project has been divided into two parts:

Part 1. Systematic Literature Review
Training will be provided in relation to designing a systematic review, search strategy techniques, data extraction, analysis skills (narrative and meta-analysis) and writing for publication and for thesis on research synthesis study designs. Areas which a student will be expected to investigate include: the effectiveness of different post-operative management strategies following THR and lower limb arthroplasty surgery and how these may impact on exercise regimes; epidemiology of THR population, and the impact of characteristics on exercise capability with particular focus on potential stratifying characteristics for a subsequent RCT design, including age, gender, surgical approach, analgesic regime and pre-operative interventions.

Part 2: Phase 2 Feasibility study
This will be a pragmatic feasibility study to assess the effectiveness of (1) a weight-bearing exercise and gait re-education programme, to (2) gait re-education only group. Since this clinical question has not been previously examined, this study will be designed as a feasibility study to examine a number of factors to inform a definitive trial. Such factors will include: the determinacy of cohort’s stratification characteristics e.g. surgical approach and age, specific information on the gait re-education programme; the outcome measurements chosen; the acceptability of the interventions; the recruitment and retention processes; data collection methods and randomisation procedures. These will be assessed through various means including recruitment logs, exercise compliance diaries, study attrition and complication rates, in addition to researcher’s and participants reflections. Outcome measures may include a battery of patient-focussed functional outcome measurements and perceived health assessment questionnaires respecting the pragmatic nature of the feasibility trial.
References:


Entry Requirements:
Applicants should hold a 2:1 degree or above or a master's degree in science, social science or health related subject or equivalent.

Those applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate evidence of appropriate English language proficiency, normally defined as a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 (Overall Band Score) with at least 6.0 in all elements or equivalent.

Funding:
This project is open to applicants who are self-funded or have external sponsorship to cover fees living costs and total project costs of £1,600. Overseas applicants may be eligible for an international bursary of £5,000 to £15,000 per annum.

Making Your Application:
Please apply via the University's online application system.

To discuss the application process, please contact the: Admissions Office, email: pgr.enquiries.admiss@uea.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0)1603 591709.

To discuss the specific project, please contact the primary or secondary supervisors via their email.