

**UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM**  
**SCHOOL OF COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES**  
**EPIDEMIOLOGY & PUBLIC HEALTH**  
**MRC DTA PHD STUDENTSHIP**

**Further Particulars**

Applications are invited for a PhD Studentship in the School of Community Health Sciences, available from June 2007.

Funding will be available to cover University UK/EU tuition fees. A tax-free stipend of currently £12,300 per annum is also available to applicants wishing to study full-time.

**Project Title**

Use and development of electronic databases in epidemiological studies

**Project Summary**

The project will be based on information management systems and web technologies. Using established and projected epidemiological and clinical studies, it will investigate the feasibility and effectiveness of using existing databases to establish relationships between disease (specifically cancer) and common drugs, as well as evaluating and developing systems to facilitate the initiation of research studies.

**Background**

**Part 1**

The GPRD is an extensive database with over 3.5 million patients and over 35 million patient years worth of data. Information contained within the database includes patient characteristics, drugs dispensed, clinical diagnoses, referrals to consultants and hospital admissions.

It has been suggested that patients on anti-depressant medication are at a reduced risk of developing brain tumours, but this hypothesis has not been tested in an epidemiological study before. The project will access the GRPD database to investigate the relationship between the use of tri-cyclic and other types of antidepressants and the incidence of glioma (grades 1–IV) in adults aged over 16 in the UK.

The project will involve the use of the GPRD and a wide range of epidemiological, statistical and data analysis techniques including logistic regression, multi-variance modelling and case-control analysis.

**Part 2**

The MRC-funded VOTES project aims to develop a validated Grid-based resource to develop and utilise systems to support the conduct of clinical research within both primary and secondary care, addressing three key components:

- Recruitment of potentially eligible participants
- Data collection during the study
- Study administration and co-ordination

The project will evaluate the efficiency and efficacy of using patient electronic records, initially by investigating the use of MIQUEST Quest Browser and Quest Central technology to identify:

- Incident prostate cancer patients and their frequency-matched controls
- Patients with BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia), either clinically diagnosed or defined by symptoms, to assess the size of the target population and their characteristics in order to facilitate the establishment of clinical trials.

Written applications should include a detailed CV and the names and addresses of two referees.

**Contact and supervisor details:**

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CLOSING DATE for applications: extended to 4th May 2007

This studentship is only open to UK/EU applicants for full-time study. Applications from students willing to self-fund can be considered at any time.