PhD opportunity

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Innovative digital solution to optimise STI/HIV care in general practice

The Sexual Health Unit (Centre for Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Melbourne School of Population & Global Health), is seeking a talented and appropriately qualified student to undertake a mixed methods PhD commencing in 2026.

Context

This opportunity arises from a recently funded five-year National Health and Medical Research Council Partnership Project which aims to reduce the STI/HIV burden in Australia by increasing testing and promoting best practice through implementation of Australia's first multifaceted digital clinical decision support tool for STI/HIV in general practice. The tool will be developed and tested over five phases.

- Phase 1: Evidence synthesis to identify relevant clinical guidelines and resources for best practice STI/HIV care in Australia and to develop clinical care pathways.
- Phase 2: Design workshops with end-users (GPs/nurses/patients) to co-design a prototype
- Phase 3: User experience testing in a simulated and real-world general practice setting.
- Phase 4: Evaluation in a hybrid effectiveness-implementation cluster randomized controlled trial in general practice.
- Phase 5: Develop a plan for widespread scale up.

Partner Organisations include the Victorian Department of Health, general practices, sexual and reproductive health services, primary health networks and professional organisations. The project will work closely with these organisations to ensure the scope, priorities and research aligns with priorities for STI/HIV care and the general practice setting.

This PhD

There is allowance for one PhD scholarship within this project [equivalent to the Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship (fortnightly stipend)]. PhD candidates are also asked to apply directly for a RTP with their application.

This PhD is intended to be embedded in this Partnership Project and requires close collaboration with research staff and project partners. The PhD will focus on the co-design, development and usability testing of the STI/HIV tool with specific areas for exploration negotiated with project staff/supervisors. This presents an exciting PhD opportunity to join a dynamic team of researchers, clinicians, informatics specialists and policy makers in working on a innovative digital tool that will improve the diagnosis and management of STI/HIV in primary care.

The project will suit candidates with undergraduate &/or graduate degrees in public health, epidemiology, nursing, medicine or other areas of health, and/or work experience in public health, sexual and reproductive health, implementation research, evaluation or primary care.

Information on eligibility and application

- PhD eligibility and applying: https://study.unimelb.edu.au/how-to-apply/graduate-research
- PhD fees & payments:
  - https://study.unimelb.edu.au/how-to-apply/graduate-research/domestic-applications/fees-and-payments
  - https://scholarships.unimelb.edu.au/awards/graduate-research-scholarships

Further information

- Dr Jane Goller (jane.goller@unimelb.edu.au)
- Dr Jacqueline Coombe (Jacqueline.coombe@unimelb.edu.au)