Primary Care and Health Sciences

Research Project Proforma (School of Medicine)

Research Title:	Understanding the extent of, and reasons for, diagnostic delay in inflammatory bowel disease.
Keywords (up to 5)	Inflammatory Bowel Disease; Diagnostic delay; Mixed methods; Systematic review, Meta-analysis
Supervisor: **Job Title:** **Department:** **Email Address:** **Telephone:** **Webpage link:**	Dr James Prior Research Associate Research Institute for Primary Care and Health Sciences j.a.prior@keele.ac.uk 01782 734847 https://www.keele.ac.uk/pchs/staff/researchers/jamesprior/
Type of projects offered (delete as appropriate)	Intercalated MPhil

(1) Outline the broad aims of your research (max 150 words):

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) is a chronic condition characterised by inflammation in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. Prompt initiation of treatment can not only alleviate unpleasant symptoms, but also positively influence the natural history of IBD through the reduction of future complications. Despite the importance of identifying IBD early, it can take years for patients to receive a final diagnosis. However, it remains unclear exactly how long patients are waiting for their diagnosis and what may be the reasons behind such delays.

The student will undertake a mixed-methods MPhil thesis to examine the extent of diagnostic delay in IBD and what are the specific barriers to receiving this diagnosis promptly. The thesis will comprise two distinct, but complimentary, work-packages (WP). WP1, will involve conducting a systematic review and meta-analysis of all research which has been published to date, reporting the time-period between IBD symptom onset and final IBD diagnosis; extracted data will then be pooled using meta-analysis to determine the current period of diagnostic delay for IBD. The second work package (WP2) will involve the student conducting qualitative research with a group of IBD patients to examine in greater depth the specific barriers which patients' experience in receiving their final diagnosis.

(2) Indicate the skills/techniques the student will learn (max 100 words)

The student will gain quantitative research experience in conducting a systematic review of medical literature and conducting statistical analysis, in the form of meta-analysis and qualitative research experience through the patient interviews. The general areas of development for the student will be in developing the review design and search criteria, performing searches within medical literature database, refining searches to a final list of articles for inclusion into the review, conducting statistical analysis, undertaking research patient interviews and analysing qualitative data. Finally the student will submit an abstract to a medical conferences and write up findings for both the thesis and academic papers.