PhD in Gender and Pain Control

Lead supervisor: Dr Ed Keogh, Psychology  
Co-supervisor: Professor Chris Eccleston, Health  
Collaborators: RB

Background

Pain is a universal index of suffering that produces considerable personal and societal costs [6].

Gender emerges as a vulnerability factor in pain - females suffer more pain, with greater frequency and severity [1; 7]. There are gender differences in chronic pain coping and treatment [2-5; 8]. Females make greater use of healthcare, consume more analgesics, and use social support. Men are less likely visit their GP, and more likely to use distraction. However, relatively little is known about the choices and decisions around pain control within the context of more frequent, everyday pains.

The primary goal of the current PhD project is therefore to consider choices made to manage everyday pain. It will focus on adult men and women’s pain control decisions, including use of analgesics, within the context of everyday pains (headache, lower back pain). It will adopt qualitative and quantitative methods, through a series of interrelated, yet feasible, studies.

Supervisory arrangements and fit

This project fits within the priorities of the Bath Centre for Pain Research (BCPR).

Dr Keogh (Psychology; Deputy Director BCPR) has primary research interests in gender differences in pain, and so this is directly relevant to his area of expertise.

Professor Eccleston (Health; Director BCPR) focused on evidence-based pain, and psychological factors in pain and analgesia.

Gender is a core research area for the BCPR, and one we are strategically building up and investing in. The student would join current PhD students whose research is in very closely related areas, and are also supervised by Dr Keogh and Professor Eccleston.

The proposal also complements research priorities in Psychology, fitting with the Cognition, Affective Science & Technology Laboratories (CASTL), Health, and Clinical research groups.
It would strengthen cross-departmental collaborations (Health), and clearly fits within the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences Health and Wellbeing theme. It would help the graduate school meets its broader strategic goals to see greater research collaborations with non-academic, industry based, partners (e.g., SWDTC).

This research helps meet the wider goals of the university to promote internationally-recognised ‘research clusters’ (i.e., pain), and promote high quality research advancing knowledge in a useful and meaningful context.

**Collaboration details**

Subject to agreement, this PhD studentship project will be a co-funded collaboration between the University of Bath and RB. Bath Centre for Pain Research and RB have interests in pain control and analgesia, including individual differences in analgesic choice.

**References**


