**University of Leicester**

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| **Project Reference** | BRC Studentships |

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| **Additional Supervisor** | ​ |

**Section 2 – *Project Information***

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| **Project Title** | Improving access to asthma care for children and young people and caregivers from underserved communities​ |
| **Project Highlights:** | 1. | 26,000 UK children require hospital admission with a severe asthma attack each year. The majority are from poor and ethnic minority backgrounds. You will be working in one of the UK’s most ethnically diverse cities within a department specialising in ethnic health and gain unique research skills working with different ethnic and socioeconomic groups to understand their health needs.  |
| 2. | You will be instrumental in helping to better understand barriers to access to good quality asthma care for children and young people from underserved communities.  |
| 3. | This is an NHS priority area and your work will have the potential to influence UK healthcare policy. |
| **Project Summary**  |
| **Background:** ​Improving access to healthcare with the aim of achieving better health outcomes is a key NHS pledge <https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/patient-equalities-programme/edc/>.  We know from work nationally and our own work that children from underserved communities (including ethnic minority and socioeconomically deprived backgrounds) have worse asthma outcomes and higher rates of hospital admissions with asthma attacks. However, primary care practices in more deprived areas of Leicester have smaller proportions of patients on the asthma register.  An important unmet need is understanding the barriers and facilitators to better access to high quality asthma care for children and young people of ethnic minorities and socioeconomically disadvantaged families.The overarching aim of this project is to better understand why underserved communities find it harder to access high quality asthma care to design strategies that can be tested in a clinical trial.**Research Plan:** ​Objectives:  1. Compare differences between ethnic groups and between families with high and low index of multiple deprivation for:
	* 1. Coding for asthma on GP records
		2. Attendances at the annual asthma review
2. Differences in asthma control and adherence to preventer medication
3. Explore barriers, health beliefs and facilitators of better asthma care in different ethnic groups, families with different socioeconomic status and primary care healthcare workers.

You will work on an already funded project exploring use of a Smart Digital inhaler in asthma management for high-risk children (aged 5 to 16 years). <https://sbrihealthcare.co.uk/news/the-accelerated-access-collaborative-through-sbri-healthcare-awards-2-7-million-to-respiratory-disease-innovations/>. This study will involve 10 Leicester primary care practices to identify high-risk children on the asthma register and high-quality asthma reviews will be conducted by separate researchers including lung function testing. Children and young people will then be offered digital smart inhaler monitoring for 6 months. To understand barriers and facilitators to good asthma care in underserved groups, you will conduct qualitative interviews with:* teenagers and families from ethnic minorities
* families from high- and low-income backgrounds
* practice staff including nurses and GPs

​ **Expected outcomes and impact:** ​During this exciting and important project you will gain a detailed understanding of differences in asthma care in underserved communities in Leicester that can likely be extrapolated nationally. You will also gain excellent mixed methods research skills in the supportive and vibrant environment of the Centre for Ethnic Health Research in one of the UK’s most ethnically diverse cities.  |