**Funding Source: Self-funded / own sponsor**

**Proposed start date: to be confirmed/negotiable**

**Closing date for applications: open until filled**

**Eligibility: UK/International**

***International Tuition fee: £29,300 per annum (2024/5 entry).***

***Standard UK PhD tuition fees for Home students:*** *full-time £4,786, part-time £2,393 (2024/5 rates). Please note that depending on your area of research there may be additional costs to allow for such as attendance at conferences, travel, training and consumables etc.*

**Department/School: Healthcare**

**Supervisors: Professor David Wright. D.j.wright@leicester.ac.uk**

**Project Title: Improving pharmaceutical care for people with epilepsy and dysphagia**

**Application link:**

[**https://le.ac.uk/study/research-degrees/research-subjects/school-of-healthcare**](https://le.ac.uk/study/research-degrees/research-subjects/school-of-healthcare)

**Project Description:**

Aspiration pneumonia is one of the most common causes of death in dysphagia prevalent conditions e.g. stroke, Parkinson’s, dementia, epilepsy. In such patients it is therefore important that dysphagia associated with aspiration is identified and that the texture of food, liquids and medicines is appropriate for a safe swallow. Whilst the safety of the swallow is usually considered for food and liquids, medicines are often forgotten or not considered. This means that nurses and carers frequently have to resort to crushing or dispersing tablets and capsules to make it easier for individuals to swallow. Even when liquid medicines are prescribed these may not be appropriate due their viscosity not aligned with the preferred texture required for the individual patient.

Research has shown that people with dysphagia are far more likely to experience medication errors,(1) nursing practice surrounding the administration of medicines in dysphagia is not standardised(2) and no one profession assumes responsibility for this element of patient care.(3) Whilst there is a building body of evidence and guidance for the care of older people with dysphagia,(4) there is limited research regarding those with epilepsy.

The aim of the PhD would be to describe the experiences of people with epilepsy and dysphagia and their carers regarding medicines administration and identify how their pharmaceutical care could be enhanced. The output from the PhD would be recommendations for interventions to increase the likelihood of patients receiving therapy which optimises their care and minimise the likelihood of medication errors.

The project will consist of the following:

* Realist synthesis of the evidence to identify what works for whom and where with respect to the safe administration of medicines to people with epilepsy and dysphagia
* Realist evaluation to build our understanding of what is required to improve the pharmaceutical care of people with epilepsy and dysphagia.
* Development of guidance to improve pharmaceutical care for people with epilepsy and dysphagia

***References:***

*1. Kelly J, Wright D, Wood J. Medicine administration errors in patients with dysphagia in secondary care: a multi-centre observational study. J Adv Nurs. 2011;67(12):2615-27.*

*2. Kelly J, Eggleton A, Wright D. An analysis of two incidents of medicine administration to a patient with dysphagia. J Clin Nurs. 2011;20(1-2):146-55.*

*3. Wright DJ, Smithard DG, Griffith R. Optimising Medicines Administration for Patients with Dysphagia in Hospital: Medical or Nursing Responsibility? Geriatrics. 2020;5(1):9.*

*4. Baijens LW, Clavé P, Cras P, Ekberg O, Forster A, Kolb GF, et al. European Society for Swallowing Disorders - European Union Geriatric Medicine Society white paper: oropharyngeal dysphagia as a geriatric syndrome. Clin Interv Aging. 2016;11:1403-28.*

**Entry requirements:**

Applicants are required to hold/or expect to obtain a Bachelor Degree 2:1 in a relevant subject area e.g. Nursing, speech and language therapy or pharmacy

The University of Leicester English language requirements apply where applicable: <https://le.ac.uk/study/research-degrees/entry-reqs/eng-lang-reqs/ielts-70>

**Application advice:**

To apply please refer to: <https://le.ac.uk/study/research-degrees/research-subjects/school-of-healthcare>

With your application, please include:

* CV
* Personal statement explaining your interest in the project, your experience, why we should consider you in addition to confirmation of how you will pay your fees.
* Degree Certificates and Transcripts of study already completed and if possible transcript to date of study currently being undertaken
* Evidence of English language proficiency if applicable
* In the reference section please enter the contact details of your two academic referees in the boxes provided or upload letters of reference if already available.

*In the proposal section please provide the name of the supervisors and project title (a proposal is not required)*

Application and project queries to [soh-pgr@le.ac.uk](mailto:soh-pgr@le.ac.uk)