

Institute for Social Science Research - PhD Student Project

ISSR Impact Area: Health

Title: *Sleep health program to achieve better sleep and improved mental health in Indigenous adolescents*

Supervisor/s: Dr Yaqoot Fatima

Funding: This scholarship includes a living stipend of AUD 28,092 (2020) tax-free, indexed annually, tuition fees and Overseas Student Health Cover (where applicable).

Project description:

Despite the well-established link between poor sleep and mental health, sleep has never been the focus of targeted intervention for improving the mental health of Indigenous adolescents. The first-ever comprehensive report on Sleep health of Indigenous Australians highlighted 18% prevalence of poor sleep in Indigenous youth that in turn, increase the risk and severity of emotional and mental health problems. Therefore, timely prevention, diagnosis and management of poor sleep in Indigenous adolescents can reduce the risk and severity of mental health issues and improve opportunities for living life to the fullest potential.

The overarching goal of this project is to develop novel resources and tools for sleep health improvement in Indigenous adolescents, generate robust evidence using these tools and work as a catalyst for incorporating culturally appropriate sleep health programs in Indigenous mental health and wellbeing services. The key aims are to co-design and deliver a sleep improvement program for Indigenous adolescents and evaluate the preliminary feasibility, acceptability and effectiveness of the program in improving sleep health and mental health symptoms in Indigenous adolescents. This project will leverage successful partnerships with Aboriginal primary care services, youth services and community relationship to offer sustainable and effective solutions for improving sleep health and reducing the risk and the severity of mental health issues in Indigenous adolescents

The candidate:

We are seeking a candidate who has an excellent academic record and a particular interest and commitment in conducting high-quality research to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Australians. Applications will be judged on a competitive basis taking into account the applicant's previous academic record, publication record, honours and awards, and employment history.

The applicant will demonstrate academic achievement in the field(s) of advanced data analysis and the potential for scholastic success.

A background or knowledge of the epidemiology and outcomes of poor sleep is highly desirable, but not essential

Domestic and international candidates (onshore) are eligible to apply. The successful candidate will be required to hold a valid Blue card. The candidate should be willing to relocate to Mount Isa (QLD) or be willing to stay in Mount Isa for extended periods. Working knowledge of statistical software, e.g., R, SPSS, would be of benefit to someone working on this project

Achievable Outcomes:

- A PhD from The University of Queensland
- Experience working within an interdisciplinary team of researchers
- Experience with oral/written presentations at national/international conferences
- Scientific papers in high impact research journals