Graduate Diploma in Health Research
PROGRAM – 2018 SUPERVISOR &
PROJECT INFORMATION FORM

Please complete and return via email only (gdip.hres@utoronto.ca) by September 4, 2018
(forms received after this date will not be posted).

Supervisor Information

Name: Karen Okrainec                      Email: karen.okrainec@uhn.ca

Degree(s): MD                           SGS Department: Institute of Health

Policy, Management and Evaluation

Academic Rank: Assistant Professor       Field of Research: Health Services,
                                        Health Disparities, Transitions in Care

Research Institution Affiliation (if applicable): Toronto General Research Institute, OpenLab,

Institute of Clinical and Evaluative Sciences

Allocation of student contact time: 15
(number of hours per week YOU are available to the student for any concerns or to review progress)
Project Information (for posting on GDipHR website)

Title: Impact of Disparities on Transitions Home from Hospital

Description (max 500 words):
For patients and families, transitioning home from hospital can be a time of significant stress, especially as they often experience communication gaps, have difficulty understanding and retaining verbal instructions, and do not feel confident in their ability to manage their own care. The majority of patients discharged from hospital do not know what side effects or danger signals to look out for, who to call for help if needed and when to resume usual activities. Led by co-PI Karen Okrainec, a team of researchers have implemented the Patient Oriented Discharge Summary (PODS), an individualized discharge tool which was co-designed with patients for patients, including vulnerable subgroups, at several hospitals across the province. An ongoing mixed methods study comprised of a randomized controlled trial and qualitative study will address whether the PODS is having an impact on patient experience, understanding of discharge instructions and adherence to instructions. A secondary objective, which the student’s proposed project would address, is to measure variability in the impact of the PODS, and to better understand how patient disparities might impact how instructions are received, understood and used. Disparities due to age, sex, gender, income, disability, immigration status, language, health literacy and the intersection of these variables will be studied using both quantitative and qualitative data generated from the PODS study.

This study is nearing completion of study enrollment and we are therefore seeking interested applicants from the GDipHR program interested in disparities research to work with the research team at addressing the secondary objective of the PODS study. We are looking for students preferably with previous clinical research experience, particularly who feel comfortable critically appraising the literature, conducting literature searches and working with patient data.

If human subjects are involved, have the appropriate Research Ethics Board approvals been obtained?

xYES □NO □Application Submitted □N/A

Do you expect this work will be published within the 20 months?

xYES □NO □Uncertain
Student’s roles and responsibilities (please be as specific as possible):

- The student will be responsible for conducting a literature search to better understand the knowledge gaps in disparities during transitions in care.
- The student will be responsible for verifying health disparity data (quantitative and qualitative) already collected from the PODS study. Following this review, additional chart review may be needed which the student will conduct following training and with support from the research team.
- The student will be responsible for analysing the results of the study along with the PI/research team and preparing tables summarizing these results.
- The student will be responsible for summarizing their findings from their literature search and data analysis into a manuscript.
- The student will be responsible for submitting this manuscript to a journal (and other venues i.e. conferences if interested) and resubmitting to subsequent journals and/or making appropriate revisions with supervision from the PI.
- While not a responsibility, the student will have the opportunity to engage with multiple members of the research team, including other co-investigators, towards knowledge translation and quality improvement work stemming from their work.

Please indicate who will serve as the student’s direct report for daily oversight (PI, PhD student, technician, etc...): Both PI and research coordinator for study.