



# Shared decision- making for underserved populations

Faculty of Wellbeing Education  
and Language Studies (WELS)

Call for PhD projects starting in October 2024

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# Project description

## School

Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

## Supervisory team

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## Aims

- To explore the experiences of shared decision-making for cardiovascular disease treatments from the perspective of people from underserved populations.
- To explore health professionals' experiences of involving patients from underserved populations in making decisions about cardiovascular disease treatments.
- To identify the barriers and facilitators of implementing a high-quality shared decision-making process between health professionals and patients from underserved populations.

- To explore the decisional needs of people from underserved populations who are making decisions about health treatments for cardiovascular diseases.
- To understand what resources are required to improve the process of shared decision-making for underserved populations considering cardiovascular disease treatments.
- To develop recommendations to improve shared decision-making for underserved populations considering cardiovascular disease treatments in NHS settings.

## **Methodology**

Systematic review; Mixed-Methods.

## **Background to the project**

Shared decision-making is a collaborative, two-way interactive process, where healthcare professionals and patients work together in partnership, to help a patient make a decision about their health that is right for them. This includes decisions about medications, procedures, diagnostic investigations, and screening tests etc. Shared decision-making is recommended in clinical guidelines by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the UK General Medical Council.

In a high quality shared decision-making process, patients are informed about all options and the potential benefits, complications, and outcomes. Information is provided in an accessible way. Patients reflect on this information and how

each option aligns with their own values, treatment preferences and priorities. Sharing this information with health professionals enables a greater patient-centred and personalised conversation.

Underserved populations are groups of people who face barriers to accessing healthcare and are less likely to be involved in shared decision-making, due to a wide range of factors such as low health literacy levels and language barriers. By understanding the perspectives of underserved populations and the health care teams that care for them, we aim to develop approaches that NHS providers can use to increase their patients' involvement in shared decision-making. Potential patient benefits include:

- Better knowledge about health conditions and treatment options
- Improved satisfaction with care and trust with health professionals
- Reduced uncertainty in the decision made
- Better adherence to treatment regimes
- Improved communication between health professionals and patients
- Better experience of care.

# PhD project

The doctoral researcher will:

1. develop the focus of the project and lead the research with support from the supervisory team.
2. complete a learning needs assessment to guide their knowledge and skills development.
3. develop skills in conducting systematic reviews, synthesising research evidence, and study protocol development.
4. lead all elements of the study, with support, and be guided through ethics application, literature searches, data collection and analysis.
5. be expected to contribute to the research culture of the school by attending key meetings and sharing their findings internally and externally.

