



ESRC DTC Joint Studentship between Division of Mental Health and Wellbeing at the University of Warwick and the MindTech Institute at University of Nottingham

Project Title: Virtual reality as a tool for improving young people's mental health

This PhD student will investigate the feasibility of using existing Virtual Reality environments as a method to improve social functioning in young people with mental health difficulties. There is some flexibility in the research question and scope dependent on the student's interests and previous experience.

It is envisaged that the PhD project will include:

- Systematic review on a relevant aspect related to the project (e.g. the use of virtual reality in assessing and treating mental health problems).
- Development of specific Virtual Reality environments for assessing and improving social functioning in young people using existing technologies in conjunction with young people/service users (involving young people directly in the development using co-design techniques) and assessing the likelihood that young people with mental health difficulties will find this approach useful and will engage in this as a treatment
- A pilot study to assess whether a specific social environment intervention to improve the performance on social functioning and social cognition in patients with early psychosis is feasible and acceptable. This will include collecting quantitative data on functioning and using qualitative data from focus groups and interviews with young people to assess acceptability.

The successful candidate will join a vibrant and expanding research team at the University of Warwick within the Division of Mental Health and Wellbeing. The Division of Mental Health is led by Professor Swaran Singh and has an international reputation into research in youth mental health and early intervention strategies. The studentship is an exciting collaboration with the NIHR MindTech Healthcare Technology Co-operative who are based at the Institute of Mental Health at the University of Nottingham. There will be access to the ESRC Doctoral Training Centre at both institutions.

The first academic supervisor will be Associate Professor Andrew Thompson, Division of Mental Health and Wellbeing, Warwick Medical School. Additional supervision will be provided by the MindTech research group, led by Professor Chris Hollis.

The studentship covers fees and maintenance stipend (if eligible) and extensive support for research training, as well as research activity support grants. For eligibility requirements please visit http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/esrcdtc/studywithus/eligibility/

The closing date for applications is Friday 29th April 2016. Interviews will be held late May at the University of Warwick.

Please contact Associate Professor Andrew Thompson for further information:
andrew.d.thompson@warwick.ac.uk or 024 7657 4387.

To formally apply, please send a copy of your Curriculum Vitae (CV) and a one page personal statement at wms.rdcoord@warwick.ac.uk clearly stating the studentship you are applying for.