

# Sustainable Care: connecting people and systems

ESRC Large Grant programme and International Partnership, 2017-2021

## Five exceptional PhD study opportunities - PhD No. 1

Study topic: ***Technology for sustainable care at home: a future-oriented study***  
Dates: ***October 2017 - September 2020***  
Awarding institution: ***University of Sheffield***  
Funding: ***Sustainable Care PhD studentship, available for three years of study***

The successful applicant will be awarded a 3-year studentship (subject to satisfactory performance at annual review points) covering doctoral fees and an annual stipend to support living costs<sup>1</sup>.

Supervisor(s): **Mark Hawley**, Professor of Health Services Research, CATCH, UoS  
**Luc de Witte**, Professor of Health Services Research, CATCH, UoS;  
**Marieke Spreeuwenberg**, Professor of Remote Care, Zuyd University, NL

Linked Work Package: ***Achieving sustainability in care systems: the potential of technology (WBA3)***

Description of the PhD study: This PhD is in health and related sciences. It will focus on exploring the potential role of technologies in the development of sustainable care systems, using a future oriented perspective and taking a broad view of advances in technology. Advanced technology offers promising solutions to the growing care gap, but the place of technology as a source of sustainability for the future is far from clear<sup>2</sup>. This PhD will collect and analyse data relevant to the development of a roadmap for the future development of a specified technology<sup>3</sup>. It will consider its potential for sustainable wellbeing in care at home, and address questions of practical, attitudinal and ethical acceptability as well as design and how the technology can be embedded into care systems and optimised to contribute to system sustainability. It will be part of the WPA3 work with stakeholders to identify technologies capable of addressing the needs of older people living at home.

### ***Indicative research questions:***

- To what extent, and why, can the specified technology address challenges in supporting older people at home?
- Does international evidence support the case for incorporating this technology into care systems?

### ***Indicative research methods:***

These will be negotiated to suit the agreed focus of the PhD and may include: trend analysis, expert interviews, focus group discussions and roadmap development.

### Essential Applicant Requirements

- A Masters qualification, or equivalent, in a relevant discipline (awarded, or expected in 2017)
- Demonstrable research skills, supported by a relevant qualification
- Ability to work independently, supported by a supervisory team
- Ability to work in regular dialogue with the wider ESRC Sustainable Care team and as part of the linked WP team (see above; see also 'Expectations of all linked PhD students')
- Strong written and oral communication and presentation skills
- Fluency in English language

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<sup>1</sup> The studentship will cover tuition fees at the UK/EU rate (worth approx. £4,170 pa) and provide a tax-free stipend at the standard UK Research Council rate (for 2017/18, £14,553 outside London), for 3 years. Additional funds will be provided for travel and equipment, and students will have access to unique opportunities within the ESRC Sustainable Care programme. NOTE: UK and international students are eligible to apply; those from outside the EU must be able to pay the difference between the applicable UK/EU and overseas tuition fee rates.

<sup>2</sup> Marasinghe, K. M. (2016) 'Assistive technologies in reducing caregiving burden among informal caregivers of older adults: A systematic review', *Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology*, 11 (5): 353-60; Chi, N. C. & Demiris, G. (2015). 'A systematic review of telehealth tools and interventions to support family caregivers', *Journal of Telemedicine and Telecare*, 21(1): 37-44; Hogenbirk J, C., Liboiron-Grenier, L., & Pong, R. W. (2005) *How can telehomecare support informal care? Examining what is known and exploring the potential*: Final Report. Home and Continuing Care Policy Unit: Health Canada.

<sup>3</sup> Specific area negotiable, but likely to include aspects of robotics. Applicants for this PhD should identify an area or areas of interest which they wish to develop.