

Sustainable Care: connecting people and systems

ESRC Large Grant programme and International Partnership, 2017-2021

Five exceptional PhD study opportunities PhD No. 3

Study topic: ***Employers' voluntary care leave schemes in the UK: a comparative analysis***

Dates: ***October 2017 - September 2020***

Awarding institution: ***University of Sheffield (UoS)***

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 costs¹.

Supervisor(s): Sue Yeandle, Professor of Sociology, Dept Sociological Studies, UoS
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/socstudies/staff/staff-profiles/sue-yeandle>
Jason Heyes, Prof. of Employment Relations, School of Management, UoS
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/management/staff/heyas>

Linked Work package: ***Combining work and care: workplace support and its contribution to sustainable care arrangements [WPB2]***

Description of the PhD study: This PhD spans the disciplines of management (of people at work) and sociology (of employment). It is a collaborative PhD studentship undertaken with the support of project partners *Employers for Carers* and *CIPD*². It will focus on carers (people who provide support to a relative or friend who needs their help because of disability, chronic illness or frailty in late old age). Most carers are of working age and are also in paid work. Although incompatibility between caring and paid work is a known risk to sustainable care, more evidence is required of the support needed to promote wellbeing among working carers / those they assist. This PhD will contribute to the wider work of WPB2, which also features international comparative analysis and a new study of 'workplace standard' schemes for carers in Canada and Scotland.

Indicative research questions:

- What constitutes good workplace support for carers in employment, and how does it enhance carers' ability to integrate their paid employment and caring roles?
- What is the impact of this support on sustainable wellbeing for carers, employers, care users and care workers, and what are the costs and benefits for employers?
- What are the characteristics, impact, uptake and outcomes of the voluntary care leave schemes operated in the UK by employers which are members of *Employers for Carers* (EfC) and the *CIPD*?

Indicative research methods: The study is likely to centre on a set of comparative case studies of approximately 6 organisations which are EfC or CIPD members and which offer employees some form of paid care leave. In each, data collection is likely to include: an email survey of EfC and CIPD Human Resources contacts; a focus group with 6-8 working carers (recruited via the organisation's carers' network); and individual qualitative interviews (with managers, workers and employee / TU representatives). Details will be negotiated with the successful applicant; the research will be subject to university research ethics approval.

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')

¹ The studentship will cover tuition fees at the UK/EU rate (worth approx. £4,170 pa) and will also provide a tax-free stipend at the standard UK Research Council rate (for 2017/18, £14,553 outside London), each 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: **International students from outside the EU are eligible to apply, but must have the means to pay the difference between the applicable UK/EU and overseas tuition fee rates.**

² *Employers for Carers:* <https://www.employersforcarers.org/>; *CIPD* <https://www.cipd.co.uk/about/who-we-are>

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- Strong written and oral communication and presentation skills
- Fluency in English language