

Department of Psychiatry

Summer Scholarships at Southern Synergy

If you are interested in a Summer Scholarship position at Synergy, then please follow these steps:

- Read the possible task list (below). Note that this list does NOT guarantee work on those particular tasks, it is provided to inform you about the type of work you will be required to do at Synergy
- Check the requirements for obtaining a Summer Scholarship (Synergy cannot over-ride these, so if you are ineligible, then unfortunately we cannot consider you)
- Contact katrina.long@monash.edu by sending your resume and a cover letter. In your cover letter, please explain why you would like to work at Synergy during the summer of 2017-18.
- We will review the resumes, trying to match student's interests with our needs. We will then contact a short-list of students for interview.

Summer Scholarship at Synergy, *summer of 2017-18*

Synergy is offering a summer scholarship to 1 **Pharmacy** student. Students are required to work full time or part time (4 days/week) between November and March. Students will be considered as a full member of the research team during the Summer Scholarship period and will be welcome to participate in research and staff meetings, staff mindfulness sessions, journal club and social activities.

Students must be available to work at our Dandenong site. Since late 2013 Southern Synergy has been located in new purpose-built offices at Dandenong Hospital. Designed to optimise translational opportunities for work in mental health care, the facility has close co-location with the key leadership team of Monash Mental Health.

Students may assist our researchers with research tasks that are generally performed across the centre, allowing for a more diverse experience and greater insight into conducting research in an academic setting. The type of work students may be involved in will include:

- a. Assist with quantitative data entry and/or management, with a special focus on prescription medication.
- b. Contribute to discussions on the analysis and reduction of medication data.
- c. Maintain documentation of data handling and analysis.
- d. Undertake small, focused literature reviews on a given topic.
- e. Assist with project grant applications.
- f. Assist with writing draft study methods and analysis sections.
- g. Edit and proofread draft study reports and manuscripts.

Also students may have the opportunity to be involved in one or more of the many research projects at Southern Synergy. The Pharmacy student will primarily work within the PULSAR project, but may also be involved in the following projects:

1) **Mental Health Services Research**

PULSAR

- PULSAR stands for 'Principles Unite Local Services Assisting Recovery'. Recovery-Oriented Practice involves supporting a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential. The PULSAR intervention was staff training with the aim to embed Recovery-Oriented Practices in participating primary care and specialist mental health care settings. Several evaluations are underway to evaluate the effectiveness of the PULSAR intervention on adult consumers of mental health services.

Medicare services for mental health care

- High quality population-level research should guide mental health care policy. Yet, in Australia, billions of government dollars are spent each year on services that are not informed by rigorous research evidence. Funding policies for mental health services do not have a strong evidence base in terms of need, leading to scenarios whereby some high need areas (or groups) have inadequate services. This project is examining National Medicare and survey data over a 4-year period.

2) **Refugee and Asylum Seeker Mental Health**

- Projects aiming to determine the prevalence of mental health of the refugees and asylum seekers in the region and also nationally.

3) **Mindfulness**

Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy

- Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) is a group based intervention designed to reduce rates of relapse of major depressive disorder. It integrates aspects of cognitive therapy with components of a mindfulness-based stress reduction program. It teaches clients to become more aware of, and to relate differently to, thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations; in particular, to view thoughts and feelings as passing events in the mind rather than as necessarily reflecting reality. We have collected data from nearly 200 people evaluating the effect of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy on depressive relapse over a two year follow up period (the DARE project).

The successful applicant(s) will be notified by the scholarship office in November.