



University of South Wales KESS MRes Studentship USW MINI 21087

Project Title: An exploration of compassionate care from the perspectives of older people, carers and service providers

Here is an **exciting opportunity** to conduct a multi-phase, mixed-method study, which could lead to entirely **new approaches** in future care delivery via gaining a better understanding of the concept of compassionate care for older people across the health and social care sector.

This is a **funded MRes**, including a generous **stipend and tuition fees**, with **well-resourced** circumstances for a successful scholarship.

The **selected candidate** will apply their research and interpersonal **skills and ambition** to conduct applied research with the University of South Wales and Torfaen County Borough Council. This research project will allow the student to develop **transferable knowledge and skills** in this **most exciting and active field of** applied health and social science **research**.

This **Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarship (KESS) project** will be held in the Faculty of Life Sciences and Education at the **University of South Wales**. KESS is a programme funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) awarded by the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) in the Welsh Government. The MRes will be associated with Torfaen County Borough Council. The project will focus on an innovative research area by exploring the concept of compassionate care from the perspectives of older people, carers and service providers. The outcomes of this research will have the potential to improve future care delivery for older people and beyond.

Company partner: Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC)

The project is in partnership with the Social Care and Housing Services of TCBC as the lead agency, but also with opportunity to link with the agencies represented on the Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB), including other local authorities within the Gwent region and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. TCBC aims to safeguard and improve the quality of life for people in the county. The research project is in line with its two key objectives:

1. Disadvantaged people in Torfaen will receive care and support of the highest quality, provided equitably, with priority afforded to those in greatest need.
2. Children and vulnerable adults, living in Torfaen, are protected from harm and risks to their wellbeing are effectively safeguarded.

This project will provide TCBC with research evidence to:

- inform the evaluation of their current services for older people
- shape and inform care delivery

- feed into regional partnership working across the Gwent Regional Partnership
- inform their Area Plan, as required under the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act, and
- Inform and support the work of the Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board.

Programme of research:

The number of older people within the UK population continues to rise. In 2016, 20.4% of the population in Wales were aged 65 or over (Welsh Government 2017). Older people often suffer from frailty, various chronic illnesses, and impairments, which make them require care and support from others in their daily living. UK health and social care policy for older people has increasingly emphasised a person-centred, preventative approach in community settings to facilitate quality of life, independence, individual choice and autonomy.

In recent years, there have been some high profile exposes of serious failings in compassionate care in UK hospitals and care homes, as revealed in the Francis report (2013), the Andrews and Butler report (2014), and reports from the Older People's Commissioner for Wales (2011, 2013, 2014). This proposed project is driven by these reports and current policies on compassionate care, which highlight the importance of compassion, empathy, respect, and dignity in patient care. In Wales, little information is available on how compassionate care is understood in practice, especially in social care settings. Moreover, little is known about the concept of compassionate care and whether service users and service providers share a similar view. A better understanding of these issues would inform the development of future services.

The overall aim of this study is to explore compassionate care from the perspectives of older people, carers and service providers in social care settings. The objectives are to:

- Identify key elements of compassionate care from the perspectives of participants
- Analyse the data and compare similarities and differences between the perceptions of older people, carers and service providers
- Develop a conceptual framework of compassionate care and ensure all perspectives from older people, carers, and service providers are included in the framework

A two-phase, mixed-method design will be adopted, including in-depth interviews (phase 1) and group concept mapping, a systematic, structured process (phase 2). Participants will include people aged 50 or over, their carers, and service providers from private, public and the third sector organisations where domiciliary, nursing, residential, and day care is provided to older people.

In phase 1, we will conduct in-depth interviews with around five older people to explore their views on compassionate care. In phase 2, we will recruit around 20 older people, 20 carers, and 20 service providers. This phase (group concept mapping) involves six steps: preparation and participant recruitment; generating statements; structuring statements; data analysis; interpreting the maps; utilising the maps.

A steering group of experts in policy, practice, education and research will be set up at the beginning and meet up once at each stage of the research process.

Studentship:

The studentship will cover the fees for a 1-year full-time MRes programme and pay a stipend of circa £11 k p.a. There is also around £3k project support costs available for consumables, travel, minor equipment, training (including the KESS Grad School) and conference attendance.

The position is available from 1st October 2018.

Eligibility of Student:

To be eligible to hold a KESS studentship, you must:

- have a home address in the Convergence area (details below)* **at the time of registration.**
- have the right to take up paid work in the Convergence area* on completion of the scholarship.
- be classified by the University as 'home' or 'EU' for tuition fees purposes according to the University's guidelines.
- satisfy University of South Wales's admissions criteria: see below, *qualifications and experience and application process*

**The Convergence area covers West Wales and the Valleys, and is made up of the following 15 local authorities: Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.*

Qualifications and experience:

Eligible applicants will:

- Have a degree (2i or higher) in an appropriate discipline, such as nursing/allied profession, health/social care, psychology, or social sciences
- Possess a reasonable understanding of health and social science research methods and have an interest in research with older people
- Be highly self-motivated, with capacity to learn and develop applied research techniques
- Have well-developed and positively collaborative interpersonal skills
- Have an ability to deliver technical reports and communicate findings
- Be willing to travel and work in community settings, such as domiciliary, nursing, residential, and day care settings.

Application Process:

To download an application package, please visit: [Participant Application Package](#)

For any queries on eligibility, please contact: KESS Team at Research and Innovation Services, University of South Wales: kess@southwales.ac.uk 01443 482578

For academic enquiries, please contact: Dr. Juping Yu (juping.yu@southwales.ac.uk; 01443 483879).

Closing date for applications: midnight Sunday 8th July 2018
(Interviews tbc)

Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships (KESS) is a pan-Wales higher level skills initiative led by Bangor University on behalf of the HE sector in Wales. It is part funded by the Welsh Government's European Social Fund (ESF) convergence programme for West Wales and the Valleys.