

School of Public Health - PhD Student Project

Title: Towards an evidence-informed mental health system: closing the evidence to policy gap ([QCMHR](#))

Supervisors: Professor [Harvey Whiteford](#), Dr [Carla Meurk](#), Professor [Brian Head](#), and Professor [Wayne Hall](#)

Funding: Student Scholarship required, top-up funding available to suitable candidate

Student Objectives:

- Advance understanding of the mechanisms of the Australian health policy cycle
- Learn and apply a variety of qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques
- Provide regular research updates through oral and written presentations
- Interact with team members in order to optimise research outcomes

Project Outline:

Mental disorders are a leading cause of health related disability. Globally, there have been calls to use the evidence on effective interventions to scale up services to reduce the burden of mental disorders, and develop more strategic and co-ordinated approaches to mental health planning and service delivery.

However, translation of evidence into policy requires more than information on the cost-effectiveness of treating disorders and more than policymaker engagement. The mechanisms underlying the policy making process in Australian Mental Health sector are still poorly understood and a series of studies to establish priorities for burden reduction in the treatment and prevention of mental disorders in Australia have had limited success in promoting significant change in the service system, despite engaging policymakers from an early stage.

There are a number of potential areas for PhD research on this topic. These include:

- Research aimed at facilitating the implementation of e-mental healthcare within the Australian health system
- Examining the role of media in evidence-based mental health policy development
- Understanding online help-seeking behaviour and its implications for policy development
- Developing new techniques to maximise data utility and evaluate e-mental health initiatives.

Achievable outcomes:

- A PhD in Population Health or Public Policy
- Multiple scientific papers in good research journals
- Experience with oral/written presentations at national/international conferences

Please look at the following websites for more information:

www.qcmhr.uq.edu.au

www.mhsystems.org.au