



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin



**Health
Information
and Quality
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

PhD Studentship

Empowering patients towards better healthcare and self-management through Digital Health Technologies

A unique opportunity has arisen for a PhD Studentship in Digital Health¹ available at the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) <https://www.higa.ie/> in collaboration with Trinity College Dublin . This is a funded PhD Studentship to undertake a defined piece of work relating to digital health technologies, specifically mobile health and electronic patient portals. The aim of the PhD work is to investigate the design and development considerations to influence the adoption of digital health technologies for chronic disease management for community based patient care in Ireland.

Research Programme

HIQA was set up in 2007 and its statutory remit is outlined in the Health Act 2007. Under section (8)(1)(k) of the Health Act 2007, the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) has responsibility for setting standards for all aspects of health information and monitoring compliance with those standards. Against this statutory remit, the Technical Standards team aim to improve the quality and safety of all health and social care services by setting National Standards, Guidance and Recommendations to enable health information to be safely shared between eHealth systems. More information and examples of the work of the Technical Standards team can be found [here](#).

The Sláintecare Implementation Strategy is the Government's plan for delivering a sustainable and equitable health and social care service over the next 10 years. This research on Digital Health for chronic disease management in community care aligns significantly with Sláintecare. The Sláintecare Action Plan for 2019 was recently announced

¹ Digital health has the potential to empower patients to track, manage and improve their own healthcare by providing safe access to their personal health information leading to greater independence and self-management and ultimately improved health outcomes. Digital health encompasses many sub-sectors including eHealth, mobile health (mHealth), Telehealth, Health Information Technology and Telemedicine.

and is a fundamental enabler in the delivery of the Sláintecare vision, with a core objective to shift the majority of care from the acute to the community setting to bring care closer to home for service users. The development of a Citizen Health Portal and a project to improve the management of chronic disease so that care can be provided at or close to home were both cited as key deliverables. The Technical Standards team are now placing increased emphasis in relation to the needs of Sláintecare and this research proposal will support this objective.

Digital Health has the potential to help patients, their carers', and healthcare providers to better manage health information which can minimise medical errors during unscheduled care or when patients present to a new healthcare provider, or where electronic or paper records are not accessible. It can facilitate patients to be continuously active and engaged in managing their own care. Despite the potential benefits of Digital Health, some challenges inhibit their adoption including mechanisms to integrate digital health technologies into the overall health technology infrastructure and legal and security concerns. Digital Health is an area that needs further evaluation and forms part of this PhD research.

This PhD will contribute to this work by increasing an understanding of how Digital Health can impact on patients with chronic diseases to better self-manage their condition in a community setting, potentially leading to better outcomes and improved experiences for people using health and social care services in Ireland.

The successful candidate will be enrolled in a four-year PhD programme at Trinity College Dublin. It will be jointly supervised by HIQA and Trinity College Dublin. The candidate will be based in HIQA offices in Dublin and will have the opportunity to simultaneously develop knowledge and skills in the area of Digital Health. The PhD Candidate will contribute to the work of developing Technical Standards, Recommendations and Guidance for Health and Social Care Services in Ireland.

Required Experience

Applicants should have an understanding of the health and social care system in Ireland. An interest in Digital Health/Health Informatics, Business information systems or Computer Science is required. Applicants must demonstrate excellent inter-personal skills, and a high standard of spoken and written English. Applicants must be self-motivated and have an enthusiastic and dynamic approach to work. The positions are open to applicants of any nationality. The expected start date is September 2019.

Qualifications

- A degree in the area of computer science, health and social care, business information systems or other related area is required

- Masters degree in Digital Health /Health Informatics is desirable

Funding Details

The PhD position is funded for **4 years**, including a monthly stipend and a travel budget to present research outcomes at national and international conferences. Travel and subsistence for data collection will also be covered. The studentship will cover EU fees, travel and pay a stipend of **€18,000 per annum (tax free)** for up to 4 years. Non-EU candidates may apply but they will have to cover extra fees themselves.

To Apply

Interested candidates should apply by email to Dr Louise Mc Quaid (lmcquaid@higa.ie). Enquiries before application should be directed to Dr Louise Mc Quaid. The **closing date for applications is 5pm, Friday 31st May 2019**.

Applications should include a:

1. Cover letter (1 page) explaining their interest in the project topic and mentioning any relevant experience;
2. Curriculum Vitae.

Academic transcripts and two academic references will be required when requested.

Prospective candidates must ensure that they can commence their academic studies in October 2019 and that they meet the minimum entry criteria for a PhD programme as specified by Trinity College Dublin - <https://scss.tcd.ie/postgraduate/structuredphd/>