Title: Implications of chronic pain - understanding the treatment burden of cardiometabolic disease and chronic pain

Supervisor/s: Dr Barbara Nicholl, Professor Frances Mair, Dr Sara Macdonald

Outline:
Chronic pain affects approximately 1/5 of the UK and European population; it is one of the most commonly co-occurring conditions in patients with heart disease, diabetes, stroke and depression. Yet how it affects the capacity of individuals to self-manage and cope with the self-care demands (treatment burden) posed by their conditions is unclear. Understanding the challenges faced by patients and practitioners will help inform the development of interventions to optimise management of this common combination of morbidities and would have important implications for other long-term conditions.

This PhD project will use novel quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the treatment burden associated with cardiometabolic conditions, chronic pain and depression; it will involve 3 distinct phases of work:

1. Synthesis of current literature relating to treatment burden in individuals with complex combinations of cardiometabolic conditions, chronic pain and depression.
2. Epidemiological study of the pattern of cardiometabolic disease, depression and pain reporting and the associated medication use in a large dataset of UK adults.
3. In-depth qualitative study of patient and professional perspectives on the management and burden posed by this combination of conditions.

Undertaking this PhD will provide the opportunity to develop skills in a number of research methodologies and analysis techniques in the important field of multimorbidity and treatment burden.

Study aim:
The overall aim of this PhD studentship is to examine the pattern of morbidity reporting and the extent of medication use for individuals with one, two or three of these cardiometabolic conditions alongside chronic pain +/- depression and to explore the experiences of their treatment and management.

Research methods:
A mixed methods approach, involving systematic review, quantitative and qualitative approaches.

References (maximum 3):


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