



2027 Summer Research Project Template

Help us present your project in a way that connects with the right students. Thoughtful, engaging descriptions tend to attract stronger and more suitable applications. Thank you for putting a project forward - these programs rely on your contribution, and we couldn't do it without you.

Section	Description
Project title	Patient perspectives of participation in the PuMPS trial: qualitative data collection for a nested substudy
Hours & delivery	30 hours per week for 6 weeks Delivery: Hybrid, in-person and remote activities as appropriate, including patient interviews and telephone interviews. Location: The Prince Charles Hospital
About the project (150–250 words)	The PuMPS trial is an international clinical trial investigating whether pulsatile flow during cardiopulmonary bypass can improve recovery and outcomes for people undergoing high-risk cardiac surgery. Alongside the main trial, we are conducting a qualitative substudy to understand what participation in the trial is like from the patient's perspective. This project will give a student the opportunity to be directly involved in this part of the research. Working with an experienced qualitative researcher, the student will speak with patients about their experiences of cardiac surgery, recovery and taking part in research. They will help collect and organise interview data that will be used to better understand what matters to patients and how their experiences can inform the PuMPS research program. The project is particularly suited to someone who is interested in the human side of clinical research. While randomised trials measure outcomes such as complications, hospital stay and quality of life, talking to patients can provide a different perspective on what those outcomes mean to them and what they value during recovery. The student will be part of an active clinical research team and will gain first-hand experience of how qualitative research can complement a large randomised controlled trial.
What you'll do (100–150 words)	During the project, students will work closely with the qualitative researcher to help deliver the PuMPS qualitative substudy. Activities will include: • preparing for and assisting with participant recruitment and interview scheduling • reviewing and becoming familiar with the semi-structured interview guide • conducting or assisting with interviews with PuMPS participants, either in person at The Prince Charles Hospital or by telephone • learning how to ask open-ended questions and encourage participants to share their experiences • documenting and organising interview data for subsequent analysis • attending meetings with the research team to discuss the interviews and progress of the substudy. Students will be involved in the research process from participant contact through to preparation of the interview data for analysis, with training and supervision provided throughout.



What you'll learn (100–150 words)	Students will develop practical skills in qualitative research, including conducting semi-structured interviews, communicating with research participants and collecting and managing qualitative data. They will learn how to approach sensitive conversations with patients, listen actively and ask questions that encourage people to describe their experiences in their own words. They will also gain an understanding of how qualitative data are analysed and how patient perspectives can complement the clinical outcomes collected in a randomised controlled trial. Working within the PuMPS research team will provide insight into the day-to-day work involved in clinical research and how different researchers contribute to a large multidisciplinary study. The project will also develop skills in research documentation, confidentiality, teamwork and communicating research findings.
Project outcomes (75–125 words)	By the end of the project, students will have contributed to the collection of interview data for the PuMPS qualitative substudy and gained practical experience in patient-centred clinical research. Students will contribute to a set of appropriately documented and organised interview materials for subsequent qualitative analysis by the research team. They will also prepare a short report or presentation reflecting on the project, the research methods used and what they have learned. Depending on the progress of the substudy, students may also contribute to the early development of themes or recommendations arising from the interviews. Their work may contribute to future presentations or publications from the qualitative substudy.
Who should apply? (75–125 words)	This project would suit undergraduate students with an interest in medicine, clinical research, patient-centred care, psychology, public health or qualitative research. It would be particularly relevant for students considering a future career in medicine, academic research or healthcare. We are looking for students who are curious, empathetic and comfortable talking with and listening to patients. Good communication skills, reliability and attention to detail are important, as is an ability to work sensitively with people's experiences of major surgery and recovery. No previous qualitative research experience is required. Training will be provided, so the project would suit a student who is keen to develop research skills and gain experience working directly with patients.
Team & supervision (75–125 words)	The student will join the PuMPS research team at The University of Queensland and be based primarily at The Prince Charles Hospital. They will work closely with the qualitative researcher leading the nested substudy, as well as members of the wider PuMPS clinical trial team. A/Prof Jonathon Fanning, Chief Investigator of PuMPS, will provide overall supervision, with day-to-day guidance from the qualitative researcher. The student will have regular opportunities to discuss their interviews, ask questions and learn about the wider trial. The project will provide an opportunity to work alongside clinicians, trial researchers and qualitative researchers and to see how different research methods come together within a large international clinical trial.
Additional opportunities (optional)	Students will have the opportunity to attend PuMPS research meetings and engage with members of the wider clinical trial team. They may also have opportunities to present their work within the research group or at the UQ Research Showcase. Contributions to the qualitative substudy may support future presentations or publications.
Additional requirements (if applicable)	Students will need to complete relevant UQ and hospital research, privacy and health and safety training before undertaking participant-facing activities. All interviews and participant interactions will be conducted under appropriate supervision and in accordance with the approved study procedures.



Contact

(Yes/~~No~~), students (may/~~may not~~) contact the supervisor before applying.

Direct enquiries to: PUMPS.trial@hmbs@uq.edu.au
