

Chris Walsh, Advanced Practice Physiotherapist, Western General Hospital

Pre-Doctoral Gateway Award



Tell us a bit about yourself and your career to date

I came to Physiotherapy to physio later than most after a few years spent swanning around Europe and Canada working as a ski instructor. I gained an MSc distinction from Robert Gordon University in January 2015 and worked in a rotational role in NHS Tayside. I moved into a more senior role in Musculoskeletal and Rheumatology Physiotherapy in Tayside before moving to NHS Lothian in 2018. I now work as the Rheumatology Physiotherapy lead for Edinburgh in an updated Advanced Practice Role.

What is the focus of your Gateway Award?

I am doing the Pre-Doctoral Bridging Gateway Award and will be mentored by Professor Lorna Paul at Glasgow Caledonian University.

The award's focus is to develop a competitive application for a clinical academic fellowship to undertake a PhD. My research proposal is to investigate whether Physiotherapy screening forms help identify Axial Spondyloarthritis (a painful, chronic arthritis that mainly affects the joints of the spine) and help reduce the delay to diagnosis.

The award funds me for 13 days and I will take these between 1st February and 12th October 2023.

What motivated to apply for this Gateway Award?

I've always thought about trying to develop a clinical academic career, but I didn't know the right pathway for me or see an opportunity. The award provides those, so it was a no brainer!

What are you hoping to get out of the award you have received?

Funded time to put together a credible PhD application. The opportunity to learn grantsmanship skills with my mentor and develop appropriate networks and patient involvement.

What difference do you think having this funded support will make to your understanding of research?

The award opens up opportunities to do courses or self-directed study, which would have been difficult to do on top of full time clinical work.

What do you hope to do in the future and how do you think this Gateway Award will help you achieve this?

I hope to be accepted onto a clinical academic fellowship and the award is designed to help me put together the best application I can.

For more information please contact:

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February 2023