**UQ Winter Research Project Description**

Please use this template to create a description of each research project, eligibility requirements and expected deliverables. Project details can then be uploaded to each faculty, school, institute, and centre webpage prior to the launch of the program.

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| **Project title:** | **Indigenous Australians' Healthcare Experience of Access to and Utilisation of Surgical Care Pathways: A Systematic Review** |
| **Hours of engagement & delivery mode** | The project will be offered remotely or in hybrid arrangements. |
| **Description:** | Background  Surgery is the most common instrumental procedure for treating disease conditions. To get surgical treatment, people need to follow healthcare care pathways such as primary, secondary, and tertiary care. Within these care facilities, people follow multiple step-by-step procedures, including primary healthcare provider visits, diagnosis, referral, surgeon or specialist appointments, in-hospital treatment procedures, and follow-up.  Access to surgical care for treatment is unequal between populations, particularly for Indigenous people in Australia. Research has revealed that First Nations people face multiple barriers at every point in the surgical journey, including the lack of culturally safe care, lower access to specialist services and elective surgery, and poorer surgical outcomes (due to factors such as presenting at more advanced stages of disease). Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data also showed the apparent gaps in the poor access to and utilisation of healthcare services, and the pathways and timely treatment. The overall rate of elective surgery (including private elective surgery) for Indigenous Australians (48.9 per 1,000 persons) was markedly lower than for non-Indigenous Australians (85.5 per 1,000 persons). Overall, for 2004–05, Indigenous Australians had higher rates of admission (34.1 per 1,000) for public elective surgery than other persons (26.1 per 1,000). Indigenous Australians waited longer to be admitted for elective surgery in 2021–22 than non-Indigenous Australians. 50% of Indigenous patients were admitted for elective surgery within 50 days, compared with 39 days for non-Indigenous patients. Research warrants exploring the Indigenous people's experience when using different healthcare pathways for surgical treatment.  Aim  This systematic review will explore Indigenous people’s experiences when receiving surgical care within the Australian Healthcare pathways.  Methods  A literature search will be conducted using different databases to identify qualitative studies of Indigenous people’s surgical care experiences in Australia, from pre- to post-surgical care. Studies published in the journals will be included and qualitatively analysed to see if they reported Indigenous patients’ healthcare service experiences, enablers and barriers, expectations from healthcare service providers, and gaps within the surgical care systems. |
| **Expected learning outcomes and deliverables:** | Scholars may gain skills in systematic literature searches using different databases and full-text screening using Covidence software. If time allows, scholars will extract qualitative data and also learn the thematic qualitative analysis method. |
| **Suitable for:** | This application is open to applications from students with a background in health and medical science. |
| **Primary Supervisor:** | Dr Saira Sanjida, Research Fellow, UQ Poche Centre for Indigenous Health |
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