

An MSc in Implementation and Improvement Science

A practical course for anyone who is interested in improving health services and wants to know how to do that well.

Is this Master's for me?

- Yes if you are a health professional, a health researcher or health service manager working in the NHS, voluntary sector or private sector.
- Yes too if you are a patient or service user activist, or a member of a patient organisation, or if you work for a charity interested in making health services better, or if you are a social scientist interested in health and healthcare, or if you work for a commissioning organisation.

The course content is suitable for people at the start of their career as well as people who have been working in, or using, health services for a longer period of time.

Research results demonstrating best treatment and care are readily available – so **why doesn't the evidence get put into practice?** Why aren't all health services offering patients and service users treatment and care informed by up-to-date guidelines and the latest knowledge? What can be done to make health services the best they can be?

Implementation and improvement science investigates factors that hinder or help change for the better. Attitudes of health professionals, patient knowledge, funding for services, organisational culture and leadership style may all play a part. Context is often important – evidence generated by research in one place or setting might not be applicable in another.

There are many theories of implementation and scores of improvement techniques. **This MSc teaches what's already known about various different approaches** and how to critically examine techniques and theories.

You will learn how to **properly plan an improvement or implementation project**, to think about the improvement or research question in a logical way, to **consider different theoretical approaches, designs and methods** that can be used, and the pros and cons of each.

You will learn about the **importance of measurement** – how to discover if an improvement or implementation project is actually making a positive difference, or whether there are any unintended consequences – and **how to evaluate the effectiveness of different implementation strategies.**

You will learn **research and project management skills that will help you make real and lasting improvements in health services** – including how to present your findings clearly to a wide range of audiences, using a range of communication and dissemination strategies.

And you will discover the similarities and differences between improvement and implementation, knowledge mobilisation, knowledge translation, translational medicine, patient safety interventions, service improvement and clinical innovation.

Your **teachers will include some of the world's leading experts in implementation and improvement science**, many of whom have contributed to the development of this programme, and you will gain practical experience by working on an improvement or implementation project.

The MSc is awarded by King's College London. It has been created jointly by researchers at King's and St George's, University of London who are part of the CLAHRC South London, a research organisation working to improve health services and funded by the National Institute for Health Research. CLAHRC stands for Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care.

Find out more about the NIHR CLAHRC South London at
www.clahrc-southlondon.nihr.ac.uk

Full-time or part-time

The MSc is offered as a one-year full-time course. It can be completed part-time over a period of two to five years.

Assessments

Many of the course assessments are practical and have been designed to help students learn new skills, or as a contribution towards their Master's project. For example, you will be asked to prepare a poster; produce a presentation for a non-expert audience about the implementation of a quality improvement intervention; compile an application for ethical approval for research.

Project

Each student will undertake a project that will form the subject of a 12,000 word Master's dissertation and viva. Students will also be asked to write a 3,000 word article for peer-reviewed publication. Some students will have a project in mind: if not, students will be allocated an existing implementation or improvement project in south London. Supervisors at King's College London and St George's, University of London will propose relevant projects. For example, students may be asked to carry out a systematic review on a topical issue, or undertake a data-driven evaluation of a quality improvement or implementation intervention. All projects will be facilitated by a health professional or a health service manager who will work in partnership with the academic supervisor.

Teachers and guest speakers

The course director is Dr Rachel Davis, lecturer in implementation and improvement science at King's College London. The expert faculty includes:

- Professor Nick Sevdalis, professor of implementation science and patient safety at King's College London
- Professor Jane Sandall, professor in social science and women's health at King's College London
- Dr Annette Boaz, reader in health care research at the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education at Kingston University and St George's, University of London
- Professor Jill Manthorpe, professor of social work at King's College London
- Professor Graham Thornicroft, professor of community psychiatry at King's, and director of the CLAHRC South London and King's Improvement Science (part of the CLAHRC South London).

In addition, there will be guest speakers from the Health Foundation, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), NHS Improving Quality (NHSIQ), patient organisations and the Royal Colleges as well as people involved in implementation and improvement projects and research in the USA, Canada and many other countries.

Contributing faculties

Staff from the following faculties are teaching on the MSc:

- Faculty of Life Sciences & Medicine, King's College London
- Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy, King's College London
- Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, King's College London
- King's International Development Institute, King's College London
- Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education, Kingston University and St George's, University of London
- Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing & Midwifery, King's College London.

Compulsory modules

- Principles of implementation and improvement science
- Measurement and evaluation in healthcare practice
- Issues in the conduct of health services research
- Implementation and improvement science dissertation.

Optional modules

- Leadership in change management
- Quality and patient safety
- Health economics and health policy
- Key issues in health policy
- Comparative public policy analysis
- Engaging publics in health research: theory, politics and practices
- Strategic health management
- Qualitative research methods (mental health)
- Advanced qualitative research methods
- Health policy and healthcare systems in emerging economies
- Foundations, methods and practices of international development evaluation
- Sociology of health and illness
- Social research methods for public health
- Mental health economic evaluation
- Advanced statistical methods in psychiatric epidemiology.

The 'Leadership in change management' module is taught at the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education, Kingston University and St George's, University of London. All other modules are taught at King's College London.

Summer school

Students will attend a two-day Implementation Science Masterclass during the summer, led by experts in the field from all over the world. In 2015, the Masterclass faculty included Brian Mittman (USA), John Øvretveit (Sweden), Rahul Shidhaye (India) and Sharon Straus (Canada).

Entry qualifications

- A first degree (2:1) or equivalent
- All prospective students will be interviewed and asked why they want to study implementation and improvement science and what they hope to achieve by joining this course.

Fees

- **Full-time:**
£8,240 for home/EU students
£16,480 for overseas students.
- **Part-time:**
£4,120 for home/EU students in year one, with an increase in inflation for subsequent years.

2015 scholarships

There are five £2,000 scholarships available to students who work or live in south London who want to start the course (full or part-time) in 2015.

To find out more, visit

www.kcl.ac.uk/prospectus/graduate/implementation-and-improvement-science/applying

Administration

For student registration purposes, the MSc is hosted by the Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing & Midwifery at King's College London.

For more information and to apply for a place

www.kcl.ac.uk/prospectus/graduate/implementation-and-improvement-science

- The Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) South London is investigating the best way to make tried and tested treatments and services routinely available. University-based researchers, health professionals, patients and service users are working together to make this happen.
- The collaborating organisations are Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, Health Innovation Network (the NHS England-funded academic health science network in south London), King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, King's College London, King's Health Partners, St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, St George's, University of London and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.
- The work of the CLAHRC South London is funded for five years (from 1 January 2014) by the National Institute for Health Research, collaborating organisations and local charities. It is hosted by King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.
- The CLAHRC is also working closely with GPs, local authorities (responsible for public health) and commissioners of health services in south London.