

# Interdisciplinary engagement as an Early Career Researcher through a NIHR School for Public Health Research (SPHR) Transdisciplinary Placement with Fuse

*14 March 2025 – Durham Law School*

**Dr Dafni Lima**

Assistant Professor, Durham Law School

TDP at Fuse/Newcastle University



# Transdisciplinary Placement in Public Health Research

## Who can apply for these placements?

These placements are aimed at people working outside of public health research but in a relevant field (e.g., engineering, architecture, law, public policy, data science). Public health research is transdisciplinary and intersects with many areas of society. Successful applicants will have a strong research track record in their base discipline, which must have relevance to public health.

Funded by the **National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) School for Public Health Research (SPHR)** – 4-6 weeks – January-April 2024

Fellowships will be aligned to the SPHR research programmes:

- Health inequalities
- Public mental health
- Healthy places, healthy planet
- Children, young people & families



# What is SEAMS?

- Supporting Engagement with and Access to Maternity Services
- Barriers to maternity care for pregnant women and people on low incomes
- Improving access to care and pregnancy outcomes
- Mixed methods study
- Poverty-Proofing© approach (Children North East)



# Research Team



Prof. Judith Rankin



Prof. Heather Brown



Assistant Prof. Abi Ayorinde



Prof. Ruth Kipping



Office for Health Improvement & Disparities

David Gardiner

Dr Kerry Brennan-Tovey

Dr Oluwaseun Esan

Dr Ryc Aquino

Dr Nicola Heslehurst



North East and North Cumbria  
Local Maternity and Neonatal System



North East and  
North Cumbria



Because growing  
up can be hard



The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Background

- Women living on low incomes in England are at increased risk of experiencing poor health during pregnancy.
- Women and babies living with socioeconomic disadvantages had a 40% increased risk of worse pregnancy outcomes



# Background



- Poverty Proofing© is an approach that helps teams to identify and overcome the barriers individuals face in accessing services.
- Using this approach, we will explore how access to support can be improved by poverty proofing maternity care.



# Study Aims and Objectives

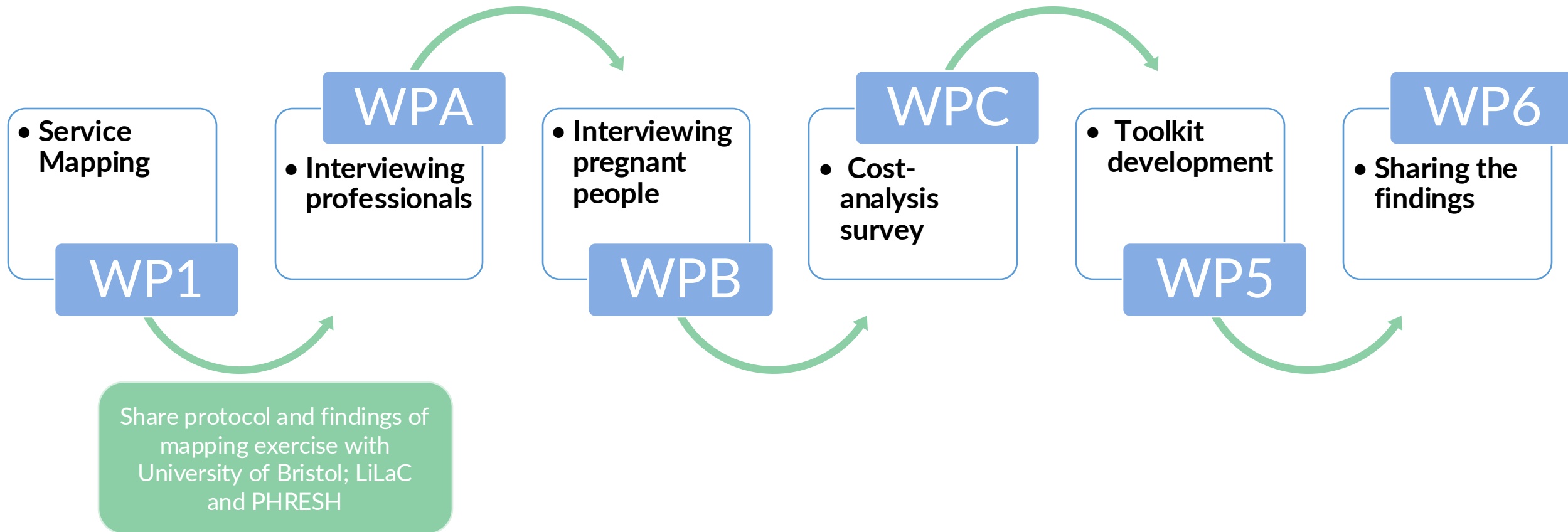
Aim: To explore barriers to accessing maternity care services among women living on low incomes, and identify a range of practical actions that will improve access.

Project Objectives:

1. To map maternity care and VCSE pregnancy/maternity support services
2. To identify barriers to accessing maternity care in Newcastle from voluntary and community groups' and healthcare professionals' perspectives
3. To identify barriers to accessing maternity care in Newcastle from the perspective of women/partners living on low incomes
4. To survey women on the costs of pregnancy and accessing care
5. To develop a toolkit of locally relevant practical changes to improve access to maternity care
6. To share the findings from the Newcastle work with PPI groups in Liverpool (LiLaC), Coventry (PHRESH) and Bristol
7. To develop an application for funding to evaluate the impact of the toolkit on access to maternity care for women living on low incomes.



# Project Overview





# So... why a TDP?



Empirical research methods – ethics, protocol, survey, interviews, mapping



Legal perspectives in practice



Better understanding of public health: acronyms → equality



Networking and future collaborations – extended!

# What am I taking away as an ECR?

- Time

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- Time
- Resilience

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- Time
- Resilience
- Mentoring

# With thanks

*Thank you to Dr Kerry Brennan-Tovey for sharing slides developed for the SEAMS project*

SEAMS website: <https://sphr.nihr.ac.uk/supporting-engagement-with-and-access-to-maternity-services/>

Email: [dafni.lima@durham.ac.uk](mailto:dafni.lima@durham.ac.uk)

