**Project Title:** Helping parents to search for information on their child's medical condition and assess its trustworthiness  

**Code:** CHW16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Host School/Institute</strong></th>
<th>The Children's Hospital at Westmead Clinical School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address:</strong></td>
<td>The Children's Hospital at Westmead, Cnr Hawkesbury Rd &amp; Hainsworth St, Westmead Westmead, 2145</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>URL:</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.paediatrics.med.usyd.edu.au">www.paediatrics.med.usyd.edu.au</a></td>
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**Co-Supervisors:** Associate Professor Patrina Caldwell

**Project Type:** Literature Review, Survey

**Project Category:** Paediatrics/Child Health, Education, Public Health

**Project Keywords:**
1. Health literacies  
2. Parent education  
3. Patient education

**Project Description:**

The internet has enabled the democratisation of health information, with abundant sources of information on an ever-expanding range of medical conditions. Some of these materials are targeted at consumers, while others are aimed at health professionals. Health information can enable parents of sick children to participate in health-care decision-making with health professionals using reliable evidence and through this, regain their role as parents. However, one of the challenges for parents is interpreting health information, especially when it is aimed at health professionals. Parents can also find it difficult to assess information for relevance and trustworthiness, which can be particularly difficult when endeavouring to cope with their child’s serious medical condition, together with family and other responsibilities.

This research project seeks to understand how parents of children at a large paediatric teaching hospital search for health information related to their child’s medical condition. The project includes adolescents who may search for health information on their own medical condition. Just as importantly, the project seeks to understand how parents and adolescents interpret and assess the relevance and trustworthiness of the health information they find.

This summer research scholarship project will begin with a literature search on parental and adolescent search and interpretation of health information, which is an extension of health literacies. Based on the information retrieved in the review, the student will develop a survey for parents and adolescents about their methods of searching and interpreting evidence. The student will administer the survey with adolescent patients and parents of child and adolescent patients at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead, as well as parents and adolescents visiting specialist outpatient clinics at the Hospital. The student will then help to analyse the survey data.