

The paediatric respiratory research group at the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM) Bern focuses on the epidemiology of asthma, cough, and other respiratory problems in children, in close collaboration with clinicians and research groups in Switzerland and abroad.



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The ISPM Bern performs research and teaching in a range of disciplines relevant to public health. Groups cut across divisions, facilitating an interdisciplinary approach to research in the fields of clinical epidemiology, social and behavioral health, biostatistics, and international and environmental health.

Open position for

PhD or MD-PhD student in the field of paediatric pulmonology and paediatric epidemiology / biostatistics

The PhD project will focus on the epidemiology of recurrent cough in childhood. Cough is common in children and contributes significantly to burden of disease, reduced quality of life and healthcare use. There is evidence that children with recurrent cough belong to more than one disease groups or phenotypes, some with life-long consequences leading to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in adulthood. Yet, epidemiological data on cough in children are scarce.

The PhD student will study the literature and analyse original data from cohort studies of >10'000 children in Switzerland and the UK (www.leicestercohorts.org) to:

- summarise the scientific evidence on the natural history of non-specific cough in childhood in a systematic review;
- describe prevalence, risk factors and physiological traits of non-specific cough in children using original data from ongoing cohort studies;
- define different phenotypes of cough using various statistical approaches, and validate findings in independent cohorts.

During the PhD program, the student will:

- gain a broad understanding of the clinical epidemiology of cough and other respiratory problems in childhood;
- learn to use and interpret a variety of statistical techniques;
- write up results and get them published in peer-reviewed journals;
- communicate results at national and international meetings.

Requirements:

- a curious mind, with particular interests in child health, paediatric pulmonology, epidemiology and public health;
- finished studies in medicine (diploma or MD) or an MSc in biology, psychology, biostatistics or similar;
- interest in biostatistics, familiarity with statistical software welcome;
- excellent knowledge of English, additional German or French would be advantageous.

The position is available **from February 2012**. The salary is based on the Swiss National Science Foundation scales. Please address your application to Prof. Dr.med. Claudia Kuehni and send it electronically, including curriculum vitae, until 15.01.2012 to Aníña Pescatore: apescatore@ispm.unibe.ch.