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We are currently recruiting candidates for **student internship positions** at the Department of Psychiatry, University Medical Center Groningen. Our research project focuses on relationships between nutrition and mental health in the general population:

Recent estimates show that the global burden of mental illness equals or exceeds the burden of somatic diseases such as cardiovascular and circulatory diseases. There is evidence for an impact – both in harmful and protective directions – of nutrition on mental health. For instance, epidemiological studies have repeatedly observed associations between a ‘healthy diet’ on the one hand, and the prevalence of psychiatric illnesses on the other. Dietary intervention studies in specific patient populations have shown symptom reductions after the elimination (or supplementation) of specific nutrients or food products. Preclinical studies have shown a relationship between the composition of the microbiome and mental health. Together these studies make a compelling case for a role for dietary patterns in mental health and illness. However, they fall short on specifying the nature of this role. A large group of European researchers (Eat2beNICE) therefore set out to further clarify the relationships between nutrition patterns and mental health. The epidemiology work-package within Eat2beNICE is based in Groningen, and aims to identify specific nutritional factors that have the most harmful or protective effects on mental health outcomes in the general population. We also investigate mediators (e.g. common traits, cognitive functions) and moderators (e.g. age, sex, genetics) of the association between nutritional patterns and mental health outcomes.

We are looking to recruit (research) Master students in the field of Medical Sciences, especially those interested in epidemiology and/or mental health, psychiatry and psychology. The following internship positions are available:

a) Research Internship

You will be based in the Department of Psychiatry for a minimum of six months. As part of the research team, you will choose your own research question (related to nutrition and mental health), aid in data collection, analyse data, interpret results, and write everything up in a scientific report. Projects run from 1 Jan - 30 Jun 2018, 1 Feb - 31 Jul 2018, or 1 Sep 2018 -28 Feb 2019.

b) Literature Review Supervision Scheme

We will coach you and supervise your progress while you write a literature review about a topic related to nutrition and mental health. Our joint goal is to publish your review in an international scientific peer-reviewed journal. Dependent on your time investment, the project may take between 4 and 12 months. Note: you will not be based at the Department of Psychiatry; rather, you will work at your own location/pace and come in for regular progress- and feedback meetings.

c) Summer Science-Taster Project

An intensive six weeks (full-time) science-taster experience between 1 July and 31 August 2018. We will determine realistic individual goals for your project, and work together to achieve them.

To apply for one of these positions, or for more information, please contact Lizanne Schweren (050-3614549 or l.i.s.schweren@umcg.nl)