

# Advisory consultations for PhD Candidates within the confidential setting of the Graduate School

Kirsten Douma, PhD | 22st of March 2019



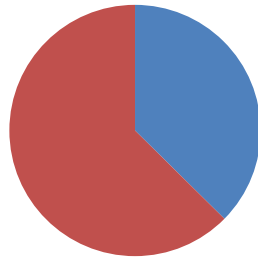


# The AMC Graduate School

1706 AMC PhD candidates

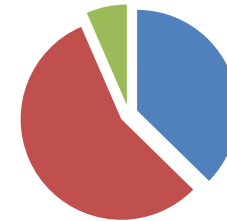


## Gender



- Male
- Female

## MD versus Research trainee



- MD
- OIO
- Other



# PhD Candidate Support

- Peer to Peer Group Coaching
- Support guide
- APROVE: the social and professional network for AMC PhD Candidates
- Monitoring:
  - At start: individual Training and Supervision Agreement
  - Halfway: PhD Track Support
- Individual confidential consultations with the PhD Track Advisor



# Increase in consultations

	2016	2017	2018
Total number	32	55	129
Number of PhD candidates	23	30	63
Mean number of consultations per PhD candidate	1.4	1.8	2.0



# Explanation of increase

- Increase of number of PhD candidates
- Attention for burn-out in scientific world of Dutch media
- Symposium on work-related stress in 2017
- Promoting the PhD candidate advisor



# Policy targets

- Which themes are discussed with the PhD Candidate Advisor?
- What help can be offered by the AMC Graduate School?



# Method

- Consultation report
- Inclusion: all completed advice trajectories between 2016-2018 (n=100)
- Qualitative analyses using MAXQDA software
- Identify themes based on the literature and on the data



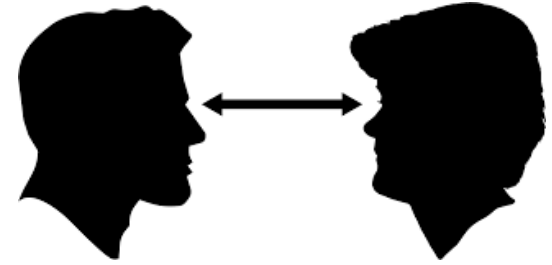
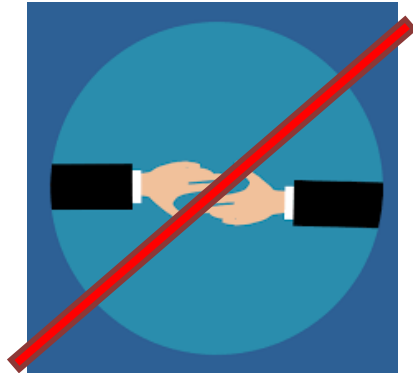
# Themes

Themes	Subthemes	Frequency
Problems with supervision	19	177
Personal factors	9	78
Interference between work and private life	8	55
Feelings of incompetence	9	53
Work pressure	3	34
Lack of social support	2	24
Performance pressure	4	16
Appointment	8	14
Practical research problems	6	11
Practical supervision problems	3	9
Negative career perspective	1	2
Other	6	24





# Problems with supervision





# Personal factors





# Interference work and private life



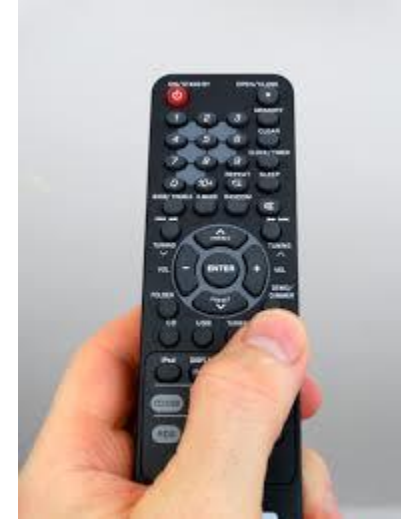


# Feelings of incompetence





# Work pressure





# Progress

		Mean duration in months	Mean duration in years
Still working on PhD	67	n/a	n/a
Completed PhD	10	58.5	4.88
Stopped PhD	20	20.5	1.71

	2016	2017	2018	total
Mean duration at consultation, in months	26.67	21.79	21.64	22.93



# Conclusion (1/2)

- Lack of time and lack of overview by supervisors
- Personal problems correlate with problems mentioned in other themes
- However, not all PhD candidates with other problems have personal problems
- Work overload is the norm



# Conclusion (2/2)

- Need for structured supervision:
  - Work plan
  - Communication
  - Knowledge and time
- Assertiveness training
- Low threshold psychological support is needed
- PhD supervisors should be more aware of the influence of private matters on the work setting
- Tools needed to improve the work culture and to signal burn-out
- PhD candidates should have clear view at the start of what research entails





# Discussion

- Biased?
- Monitoring: lack of individual Training and Supervision agreement or PhD Track Support are red flags
- Responsibility of the supervisors and institute



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Kirsten Douma, PhD

PhD Candidate Advisor

AMC Graduate School of Medical Sciences

E-mail: [k.f.douma@amc.uva.nl](mailto:k.f.douma@amc.uva.nl)

Phone: +31 20 56 66541