Research Assistant – Evidence Synthesis Working Group:
Primary Care Education Research Group

JOB DESCRIPTION

An enthusiastic and able individual is sought for this part-time (0.5 FTE) post as Research Assistant for the Primary Care Education Research Group. The position offers an excellent opportunity to undertake research in the field of primary care evidence synthesis, and to develop a research career. The purpose of the post is to contribute to a multi-centre NIHR School of Primary Care Research (SPCR) funded ‘evidence synthesis working group’ (ESWG) project. The post holder, based at UCL, will be required to conduct systematic reviews including: accurate and relevant searches and screening; retrieval of full texts; data extraction; and evidence synthesis approaches including realist review. The post holder will need to appropriately use a range of software including eppi-reviewer, RevMan, word and excel packages. The post holder will be required to travel to and attend collaborative joint working group meetings, and contribute to publication of findings in oral and written form. The post holder will be invited to contribute to the ESWG ‘capacity development programme’ including delivery of short courses about systematic review methodologies used within the workstream reviews. The department has an excellent track record of enabling research staff to progress to PhD and post-doc opportunities. The post is available for 24 months in the first instance at 0.5 FTE. Opportunity for flexible working can be discussed.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Evidence synthesis working group (ESWG) has been awarded a £2 million NIHR programme grant. The ESWG is a collaboration of over 40 individuals across nine members of the NIHR School of Primary Care Research (SPCR) across the UK. The working group is led by Prof. Carl Heneghan in Oxford. UCL is a ESWG collaborator together with Manchester, Nottingham, Bristol, Keele, Cambridge, Southampton and Newcastle. The project will require an excellent knowledge of systematic review methods, and will also provide the opportunity to use evidence synthesis approaches such as realist review. The post holder will be part of the UCL team which will contribute mainly to Workstream 4: Service redesign in primary care.

Topics for this workstream include:
4.1 What are the effects of telephone triage on workload and quality of care in primary care?
4.2 What is the role of community workers on workload and quality of care in primary care?
4.3 Primary health care community hubs: what do they look like? What are they aiming to do? Are there any data to suggest they are effective in their aims?
4.4 Do early visiting services hubs improve quality of care in primary care?
4.5 What studies have been implemented and shown to be effective in reducing GP workload in primary care?

1.1 The Primary Care Education Research Group (PCERG)

The Primary Care Education Research Group is based at the Royal Free Campus of UCL Medical School and undertakes a range of evidence synthesis, sociological and healthcare research. Projects use methods including qualitative, quantitative, mixed methodology and evidence synthesis. Group members include experienced GP researchers, educators, doctoral students, CLARHC fellows, students and academic specialist trainees. The group is chaired by Dr. Sophie Park.

The group has strong collaborative links with the NIHR School for Primary Care Research (SPCR), Eppi-Centre at IoE, Best Evidence in Medical Education (BEME), Society of Academic Primary Care (SAPC), Higher Education Academy (HEA) and Association for the Study of Medical Education (ASME). Within UCL, the group has cross-disciplinary links with the Academic Centre for Medical Education (ACME) and Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT).
There are a number of active research methods groups within PCPH including PRIMENT. PCPH staff contribute to teaching programmes within the medical school. Many of the ERG members are also part of a large and active primary care education group which have a major input into all levels of the medical school undergraduate curriculum and postgraduate GP training:

http://www.ucl.ac.uk/pcph/research-groups-themes/educational-research

1.2 Research Department of Primary Care and Population Health

The Research Department of Primary Care and Population Health is part of the Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care and is headed by Professor Elizabeth Murray. The Department’s strategic aim is to deliver high quality teaching in community-based primary care and public health and to undertake a programme of internationally competitive multi-disciplinary research addressing the management and prevention of disease in individuals and populations in areas which are of priority to the health of the public.

1.3 Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care

The Institute is part of the Faculty of Population Health Sciences. It comprises four Research Departments – each of which is based at one or more sites across the UCL estate - as follows:

- Applied Health Research [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dahr/](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dahr/)
- Epidemiology and Public Health [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/epidemiology/](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/epidemiology/)
- Behavioural Science and Health [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/iehc/research/behavioural-science-health](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/iehc/research/behavioural-science-health)
- Primary Care and Population Health [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/pcph/](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/pcph/)

Its skills mix of epidemiological, clinical, statistical and behavioural science provides the scientific basis to underpin an internationally competitive research programme focused on:

- Understanding the determinants of health & disease in populations & in patients in clinical settings;
- Evaluating strategies for the prevention & treatment of physical & mental ill health; and
- Teaching and capacity building in population health.

Our work ranges across the life-course from childhood through to old age. Our chronic disease Epidemiology focuses on the social and biological determinants of health, particularly in cardiovascular disease, and its Public Health implications. We undertake research in Primary Care to improve health outcomes. We have strong research and teaching profile in Information and quality management to support clinical practice. We participate in many national and international interdisciplinary collaborations, and have a large portfolio of research linked to UCL’s Global Health Initiative.

IEHC holds an Athena SWAN Charter Silver Award in recognition of its commitment to advancing women's careers in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in academia.

The Institute Director is Professor Andrew Hayward.

Further information on IEHC can be found at: [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/iehc/](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/iehc/)

2. DETAILS OF THE POST

Accountable To: Dr. Sophie Park (SP)

Based At: Research Department of Primary Care and Population Health, UCL Medical School, Royal Free Campus.

2.1 Duties and Responsibilities

- Collaborate with the UCL ESWG Lead (SP) and the research team to successfully complete the systematic reviews.
- Contribute to development of systematic review protocols to be submitted for publication on PROSPERO.
- Effectively and accurately develop, pilot and conduct search strategies in collaboration with SP, the ESWG and an experienced UCL librarian.
- Screen, retrieve and accurately select items at both title and abstract and full-text stages, using appropriate software (e.g. eppi-reviewer or RevMan).
- Identify areas for clarification or discussion where required and refine inclusion and exclusion criteria in collaboration with the team.
• Be able to identify relevant grey literature for inclusion in reviews.
• Citation screening using identified texts, web of science and journal indexes
• Contribute to quality assessment of identified literature, as required for the review research questions and chosen synthesis approach.
• Develop, pilot and use data extraction data sheets to prepare for analysis
• Contribute to evidence synthesis of data, including descriptive summaries, realist, rapid and implementation approaches.
• Contribute to writing of papers and presentations to disseminate findings from the review at ESWG meetings, departmental seminars and following successful submission to conferences.
• Organise and coordinate research management meetings.
• Regularly liaise with SP and the ESWG to communicate updates, progress reports and negotiate ongoing work packages for reviews.
• Contribute to cross-institutional ESWG collaborative ‘capacity development programme’ support and teaching sessions.
• Contribute to evidence synthesis of data, including descriptive summaries, realist, rapid and implementation approaches.
• Contribute to evidence synthesis of data, including descriptive summaries, realist, rapid and implementation approaches.
• Contribute to systematic review methodologies.
• Familiarity with general practice and primary care service re-design policies and research.
• Previous experience of teaching delivery.
• Experience of research dissemination (e.g. oral or written publication).

This job description is not intended to be exhaustive and it is likely that duties and responsibilities may be altered from time to time in the light of changing circumstances, in discussion with the post holder.

3. PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications / Certification</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>ASSESSED</th>
<th>E: essential</th>
<th>D: desirable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Bachelor degree or equivalent in a health-related or educational field.</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Masters degree or equivalent in a health-related or educational field.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Experience / Knowledge</th>
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<td>Understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of major methodologies used within healthcare research.</td>
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<td>Good working knowledge of how to effectively use bibliographic database and spreadsheet software.</td>
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<td>Knowledge and experience of quality appraising research publications.</td>
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<td>Experience of systematic review methodologies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.</td>
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<td>Familiarity with general practice and primary care service re-design policies and research.</td>
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<td>Previous experience of teaching delivery.</td>
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<th>Skills</th>
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<td>Excellent organisational skills</td>
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<td>Ability to develop and conduct an accurate and relevant search strategy.</td>
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<td>Ability to accurately screen and select relevant material for a review.</td>
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<td>Ability to apply agreed criteria to assess quality of identified items.</td>
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<td>Ability to develop, pilot and use agreed data extraction sheets for selected items.</td>
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<td>A methodical and accurate approach to work, with strong attention to detail.</td>
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<td>Ability to synthesise data in relation to the project aims and questions.</td>
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<td>Ability to plan and contribute to dissemination of project findings.</td>
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<td>Ability to organise own time, to prioritise tasks and keep to project milestones, with willingness to work under pressure from time to time in meeting of deadlines.</td>
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<td>Good communication (written and oral) and interpersonal skills.</td>
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• Ability to work independently and collaboratively as member of a team.  
• Excellent and adaptable IT skills in email, spreadsheets, word processing, bibliographic databases, PowerPoint and the internet.  
• Ability to organise and deliver presentations and effective teaching sessions about methods and topics included within systematic reviews. 

Knowledge & Aptitude

• Ability to work collaboratively, and to form good working relationships with members of a team.  
• Commitment to conducting high quality research and to working to a high professional standard, in line with BERA and NHS ethical codes of conduct.  
• Willingness to work across disciplines of educational and healthcare-based research and research communities in order to maximise the strength and potential impact of the review.  
• Commitment to effective use of epip-reviewer software (training provided, if required).

This job description is not intended to be exhaustive and it is likely that duties and responsibilities may be altered from time to time in the light of changing circumstances, in discussion with the post holder. In addition to these duties the post holder will be expected to be flexible in helping his/her colleagues with other aspects of the work of the Research Department of Primary Care & Population Health when required to do so. In addition to the person specification criteria, the successful candidate will need to meet UCL’s expectations of academic excellence, as outlined in ‘Excellence and the UCL community: a shared endeavour’ (http://www.ucl.ac.uk/excellence/). Hard copy of this document is available on request. These will inform the candidate’s induction, probation, and appraisal, in discussion with the Head of Department.

4. CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

Appointment

The salary for this post is Grade 6B currently £30,316 - £31,967 per annum (inclusive of London Allowance of £3,031) pro-rata for part time staff. Funding is available for 24 months in the first instance and is supported by the NIHR. Progression through the salary scale is incremental. Cost of living pay awards are negotiated nationally and are normally effective from 1st August each year.

Terms and Conditions and Staff Benefits

Please follow the links in the advertisement for information on UCL Terms and Conditions for Research and Support Staff and Employee Benefits.

Equal Opportunities

UCL’s equal opportunity policy is that in the recruitment, selection, education and assessment of students, and in the recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, development and promotion of staff, the only consideration must be that the individual meets, or is likely to meet the requirements of the post. Please see http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/equal_opportunity.php for details.

Royal Free Campus

Sharing a modern building with the Royal Free Hospital, the campus is situated in an attractive area close to the shopping centre of Hampstead and conveniently placed for public transport (bus, London Underground Northern Line and London Overground from Stratford to Richmond.) Hampstead Heath is a few minutes walk from the hospital. Facilities on site include dining facilities, a coffee lounge and snack bar, Recreation Centre (with swimming pool, badminton and squash courts), cash point, shop, etc. There are opportunities to share with the students and staff the extra-mural activities of the Medical School and Hospital.

5. HOW TO APPLY

Enquiries / Visits

Informal enquiries should be made to: Dr Sophie Park: sophie.park@ucl.ac.uk Tel: 020 7724 0500 ext. 38815.

Applications

Applications should be completed on line http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/jobs/, however if you are having difficulty accessing the on-line recruitment system please contact Corinne Ward c.ward@ucl.ac.uk for advice.
Those selected for interview will be contacted via email so please ensure your contact details are correct.

**PLEASE NOTE**

- Travel costs will be reimbursed for all interviewees, up to the equivalent of the most economical train/air fare available from the point of entry to the UK.

- All candidates invited to interview will be expected to provide evidence of their right to work in the UK at the time of interview. Evidence may be presented in the form of a British Passport or a Passport or National Identity Card from an EEA country or Switzerland; a passport or other travel document endorsed to show that the holder can stay indefinitely in the UK or that they can stay in the UK and are allowed to undertake the type of work being offered (for further advice please contact Human Resources); or an Application Registration Card issued by the Home Office stating that the holder is permitted to take employment.
INSTITUTIONAL PROFILES

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
A full profile can be found at: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/UCLstandard_information.php

SCHOOL OF LIFE AND MEDICAL SCIENCES
A full profile can be found at: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/slms/about-us

It comprises four Faculties:
- Life Sciences http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lifesciences-faculty/
- Brain Sciences http://www.ucl.ac.uk/brain-sciences
- Medical Sciences http://www.ucl.ac.uk/medical-sciences/
- Population Health Sciences http://www.ucl.ac.uk/populationhealth-sciences

UCL MEDICAL SCHOOL
Further information can be found at: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/medicalschool/undergraduate/about-medicalschool

INSTITUTE OF EPIDEMIOLOGY AND HEALTH CARE
Further information can be found at: www.ucl.ac.uk/iehc