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**Job Description**

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| Job Title: | Research Fellow & Trial Manager (Theme 1: Young people with substance use and mental health presentations) |
| Faculty/Professional Directorate: | Faculty of Health Sciences |
| Subject Group/Team: | School of Psychology & Social Work/ Clinical Psychology |
| Reporting to: | Professor Thomas Phillips |
| Duration: | 1st October 2024 to 30th September 2029 |
| Job Family: | Academic |
| Pay Band: | 7 |
| Benchmark Profile: | Research Band 7 |
| DBS Disclosure requirement: | Yes |
| Vacancy Reference: |  |

**Details Specific to the Post**

**Background and Context**

This is an exciting opportunity for self-motivated and experienced researcher to join a highly experienced research consortium funded by a National Institute for Health Research. Under the leadership of Professor Thomas Phillips, Professor of Nursing in Addiction and Professor Judith Cohen, Hull Health Trials Unit (HHTU) the research team has secured a five-year award, supported by our partners at the University of York and King’s College London, to develop addiction and mental health research based at the University of Hull.

Our area covers a population of 1.7 million people from cities, market towns, rural villages and coastal communities across the Humber and North Yorkshire. It includes areas that experience high levels of unemployment, housing problems and wider health difficulties who have poor access to effective mental health and substance use treatment. We will target national priorities and the mental health needs of our local population, resulting in better access to care and treatment that works. Working closely with health and social care providers as well as patients and the public, we have developed an ambitious programme of research across three themes:

**Theme 1:** **Young people with substance use (SUD) and mental health presentations (MHP)**.

**Theme 2:** **Adults with substance use and mental health presentations.**

**Theme 3:** **Defining the needs of adults with alcohol-related cognitive impairment (ARCI).**

This post will be aligned to Theme 1 which aims to improve care pathways for young people (i.e. 10-18 years) with substance use and mental health problems who often miss out in receiving the help they need.

The National Survey of Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use among Young People (11-15yrs) in England in 2021 identified that 6% (~210,000) of pupils reported drinking alcohol weekly, and 12% reported using any drug in the last year, with 6% reporting drug use in the last 6 months (commonly cannabis and volatile solvents). Of those reporting drinking in the last week, 46% consumed ≥6 alcohol units, with 38% (~120,000) reporting drinking ≥10 units. Those pupils who had recently smoked, drunk alcohol and taken drugs reported lower levels of life being worthwhile (72%), compared to pupils who had only used one substance (39%), or had not used any substances (17%). The Health Survey for England 2019 identified that 7% of those aged 16-24 years reported consuming alcohol 3/4 times each week, with 3% (~180,000) reporting weekly drinking of ≥50 alcohol units, placing them in a very high-risk category for alcohol-related harm. However, <0.5% reported accessing alcohol or drug counselling in the previous 12 months. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (9) identified 18.6% of young people aged 16-24 reported drug use in the last year with 4.7% reporting Class A drug use. Of those reporting drug use in the last year, 8.5% (~96,000) stated they used one or more drugs daily.

When compared to young people with either a MHP or SUD, those with SUD and MHP have greater hospital attendances and admissions, increased self-harm and suicide attempts, relationship difficulties and involvement of criminal justice services (Erskine et al, 2015; Hawton et al, 2013). Coexisting SUD and MHP amongst young people is considered the norm, with affective disorders, conduct disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autistic spectrum disorders, eating disorders and trauma-related disorders reported (Chan et al, 2008). The incidence of SUD in individuals in contact with mental health services is ~70% of young people who report use of one or more substance and high levels of health, social, legal and financial problems (Gao et al, 2023).

Young people with SUD have limited access to effective mental health treatment and have limited engagement with mental health research. Young people with SUD and MHP are hard to engage in treatment, seldom seek professional help and are commonly disadvantaged by developmental problems, poor health, social

deprivation and lower educational engagement; factors that are negatively associated with treatment access and sustained engagement (Anderson et al, 2010; Langenbach et al, 2010; Dixon et al, 2005). A minority of young people need access to specialist care, which offers psychosocial and pharmacological interventions adapted from guidelines for adults, without sufficient evidence of effectiveness. We are planning to address this evidence gap by examining the levels of unmet need amongst young people with SUD and MHP presenting to specialist and non-specialist care, and to deliver a definitive trial of an intervention to support increased access and engagement with treatment.

We seek to appoint a Postdoctoral Research Fellow & Trial Manager to support co-investigators and the wider research team to deliver an integrated mixed methods research programme to examine the levels of unmet need amongst young people with SUD and MHP. You will work closely with the HHTU to ensure the successful management and delivery of a definitive trial, co-ordinating study activity across all aspects of trial set-up, recruitment, close-out, analysis and reporting. We have planned extensive patient, public involvement and engagement (PPIE) throughout the project, that includes the appointment of young people on research internships, to ensure that young people with lived experience are central to the research programme.

**Theme 1 Objectives:**

1. To engage with young people and carers with lived experience of SUD and MHP to inform the research plan at all stages and co-produce research studies and intervention approaches that are acceptable and meet their needs.
2. To engage key stakeholders from a range of services designed to meet the needs of those with SUD and MHP to aid the understanding of how services could be developed and adapted for young people and the implications of changes to services.
3. To further review the evidence base, including recent and emerging work, on effective interventions for SUD and MHP and develop a consensus between service users, carers and professionals on what is likely to work in practice whilst being acceptable to young people.
4. To conduct a three-arm effectiveness and cost-effectiveness randomised control trial encompassing treatment as usual, a brief psychosocial intervention delivered face-to-face with access to tailored individual support on-line, and a more intensive multi-session psychosocial intervention delivered on-line with tailored support.

The Hull, King’s and York research partnership in collaboration with the University of Kent, Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust and Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust are appointing a team of researchers across all three themes who will be based within Faculty of Health Sciences and located within the awarding winning Allam Medical Building, University of Hull. The research team also includes expertise in Data Science, Artificial Intelligence and Modelling (DAIM) (Hull), and health economics (York). The post holder will report directly to both Professor Thomas Phillips and Professor Judith Cohen, Director of the Hull Health Trials Unit (HHTU), a UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC) Registered Clinical Trials Unit co-located within Faculty. The HHTU also manages the University of Hull Data Safe Haven (DSH), which will be used to support the storage, management and analysis of sensitive data obtained for the purpose of the study. Together, the Research consortium provides excellent opportunities for career development in applied health and social care research.

We are seeking an exceptional postdoctoral candidate with experience in conducting and managing complex multi-disciplinary research projects. Experience of working on studies that involve study participants across a range of settings such as substance use services, criminal justice services, child and adolescent mental health services, or education would be invaluable and help to ensure the project timelines are met. The successful candidate will join a thriving community of researchers examining the impact of addiction and mental health problems on health, social care and criminal justice settings. With support from the co-investigators and patient and public contributors the research fellow will take a leading role on developing the overall project plan for the theme and co-ordination of the five-year programme. As research fellow within the programme of research, the post holder will also provide managerial supervision to research assistants employed under theme 1. The ideal candidate will have a track record in conducting clinical research with young people within mental health or addiction specialisms, excellent communication, interpersonal and team working skills, and knowledge of the current regulatory requirements.

**We value diversity and we are committed to recruiting and supporting staff and students from all sectors of society. The University of Hull holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award. We are committed to developing staff and actively encourage and support staff to take development opportunities.**

Please note that the Faculty of Health Sciences and those based within the Allam Medical Building work dynamically and in line with the University of Hull’s ‘agile working’ policy we are very happy to discuss individual requirements around how and where you work.

### Specific Duties and Responsibilities of the post

The successful candidate will support the overall implementation of the research programme and co-ordinate the delivery of the definitive clinical trial. A significant part of the role will comprise project management, ensuring patient and public involvement (PPI) is embedded within all activities, supervision of research assistants and supporting the wider addiction and mental health research group. The initial priority for the successful candidate will be to develop a detail project plan for Theme 1 within 12months of the start of the award.

The post holder will be highly organised and demonstrate effective communication and engagement skills across the partners (University of York and King’s College London) collaborators (University of Kent, Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust and Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust) and participating research sites. Working with the other members of the HHTU team (Trial Coordinators, Data Managers, Quality Assurance) you will deliver high quality and successful clinical research. The ability to draft reports, papers and co-produce and disseminate findings with a wide range of stakeholders, researchers, and individuals with lived experience is also required.

The main duties of the post include:

* Supporting Theme Leads in the co-ordination of project management and operational meetings
* Working closely with the research team’s PPI Co-ordinator and PPI Impact Officer in the development service Lived Experience Advisory Groups (LEAG) of Young People and their carers and key stakeholder groups
* Ensuring the PPI Approach meets the needs of Theme 1 Project Plan: including the appointment of young people to research internships.
* Co-ordinating a multi-centre, three-arm effectiveness and cost-effectiveness randomised controlled trial.
* Conducting study risk assessments and developing risk mitigation strategies
* Delegation of responsibilities to Research Assistants within Theme 1
* Co-ordinating training and supervision of Research Assistants to enable them to work to a high standard
* Submission of regulatory and ethical research applications and amendments via IRAS
* Management of research, sponsor, collaborator, and vendor contracts
* Coordinating collaborators (Kent, Humber Teaching FNHS, HUTH and other sites) and support delivery to project timelines
* Writing and presenting trial progress reports to funders, sponsors, partners and patient groups
* Submitting regulatory reports, ethics committee updates and portfolio
* Management of trial budgets, indemnity, procurement process and equipment distribution
* Undertaking trial quality assurance audits to ensure compliance to regulatory and GCP standards
* Supporting the management team to develop system and processes for study implementation, as required
* Represent the project at national and international conferences
* Supporting the community and development of postgraduate researchers within the addition and mental health group
* Supporting the development of future grant applications and fellowships
* Supporting the set-up and delivery of related projects within the research group as required

In your covering letter please refer directly to the criteria, given in the person specification below.

### Applications are assessed by the selection panel according to these criteria.

**GENERIC JOB DESCRIPTION**

The job duties and responsibilities listed below are intended to describe the general nature of the role. The duties and responsibilities and the balance between the elements in the role may change or vary over time depending on the specific needs at a specific point in time or due to changing needs in the department. Candidates should note that there may not be an immediate requirement to carry out all the activities listed below.

### Overall Purpose of the Role

The researcher at this level will be:

* An experienced and professional researcher and will be a subject specialist, drawing upon knowledge gained from postgraduate research and/or working within a Research Band 6 role.
* Associated with a particular project (or projects) and will contribute ideas, and/or enhancement of techniques or methodologies and be expected to take significant initiatives in their work and consult with the Principal Investigator over the details of the project. They will work under supervision and receive academic, pastoral support and guidance which may include specific training, career opportunities and mentoring.

They may contribute to the Department’s teaching, through supervision of projects, overseeing practical classes, or taking small group tutorial classes.

The main focus of the work will involve conducting individual and collaborative research projects under the general guidance of a senior academic or Principal Investigator using new research techniques and methods, analysing and interpreting data and writing up research for publication.

**Main Work Activities**

1. Conduct individual and collaborative research projects to include:

* Using expertise to carry out projects they are working on.
* Contribute to the preparing proposals and applications for external bodies, e.g. for funding and contractual purposes with appropriate support or contribute to the writing of collective bids.
* Use new research techniques and methods.
* Analyse and interpret research data.
* Write up research work of the project and its dissemination through seminar and conferences presentations and publications.

1. Responsible for the management of projects to include:

* Plan and manage own research activity in collaboration with others.
* Manage administrative activities with guidance if required.
* Plan and monitor the work of the project or projects if applicable.

1. Assist with teaching and learning support in own area of study to include:

* Assist in the development of student research skills.
* Assess student knowledge and supervision of projects.
* Supervise and guide final year students.

1. Develop and initiate collaborative working internally and externally to include:

* Build internal contacts and participate in internal networks for exchange of information and to form relationships for future collaboration and to progress their research.
* Develop links and join external networks to share information and identify future potential sources of funding.
* Work with colleagues on joint projects as required.
* Attend and contribute to relevant meetings.

1. Demonstrate evidence of own personal and professional development to include:

* Continually update knowledge and understanding in field or specialism.
* Appraisal, induction and performance reviews.
* Participate in training and development activity.
* Maintain links with professional institutions and other related bodies.
* Collaborate with academic colleagues on areas of shared research interest.

### Additionally the post holder will be required to:

* Fulfil the employees’ duties described in the University’s health and safety policies and co-operate with the health and safety arrangements in place within the department. May be required to undertake specific health and safety roles on request e.g. Display screen equipment assessor, departmental safety officer, fire warden etc.
* Show a commitment to diversity, equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices this includes undertaking mandatory equality and diversity training.
* Comply with University regulations, policies and procedures.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION – Research Fellow (Band 7): Theme 2: Adults with substance use and mental health presentations**

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| **Specification** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Examples Measured by** |
| **Education and Training**  Formal qualifications and relevant training | * Undergraduate degree 2:1 in relevant subject area * A PhD in a relevant discipline | * PhD thesis relates to substance use or mental health themes/conditions or young people | Application  Interview  Other |
| **Work Experience**  Ability to undertake duties of the post | **Evidence of:**   * An emerging track record in an appropriate research field, including scientific publications, presentations at scientific conferences and contributing to grant applications * Project management experience of complex multi-disciplinary research projects in a related field |  | Application  Interview  Other |
| **Skills and Knowledge**  Includes abilities and intellect | **Evidence of:**   * Contributing to / preparing ethics submissions and associated documentation * Knowledge of the regulatory and governance environment for UK clinical research * Participation in networks that seek to promote research collaboration * Effective management of resources | * Contribution to the supervision of undergraduate project, masters or PhD students or research assistants | Application  Interview  Other |
| **Personal Qualities**  Includes any specific physical requirements of the post – (subject to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010) | * Show evidence of collaborative working, particularly on interdisciplinary activities * Evidence of working in an open and transparent way, providing information and communicating effectively with colleagues * Evidence of Continuous Professional Development |  | Application  Interview  Other |