

**Job Description**

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| Job Title: | Research Fellow (Theme 2: Adults 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 and mental health presentations**.

**Theme 2:** **Adults with substance use (SUD) and mental health presentations (MHP).**

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

This post will be aligned to Theme 2 which aims to improve care for adults who have substance use (SUD) and urgent mental health problems (MHP) at the point of seeking help in crisis but the post-holder will also be required to support the wider programme of work as required. Theme 2 focusses on the improvement of care pathways for adults presenting with SUD and MHP to places of safety including emergency departments.

SUD are common in adults with MHP and the relationship between them is complex. Outcomes are often worse for those with SUD and MHP when compared to those without coexisting problems as those with SUD and MHP as they are often excluded from, or unable to access, services. In a study of people attending a community mental health team, 44% had reported SUD in the previous year. In addition, 85% of those attending an alcohol service had reported suffering from a MHP in the previous year (Weaver et al, 2003). Adults with SUD and MHP have a heightened risk of other health problems and early death (Hayes et al, 2011). Death by suicide is common, with a history of SUD being recorded in 54% of all suicides in people experiencing MHP (Appleby et al, 2023). Despite national guidance supporting mental health and addiction services in providing care to both presenting conditions, these service models are seldom commissioned. We plan to investigate the levels of unmet need amongst people with SUD and MHP presenting to places of safety (PoS) and crisis presentations to ED to expand to pool of people in the study who may become future users of PoS. With the involvement of service users, stakeholders, and examination of routine data sources, we will develop care pathways to support increased access and treatment engagement amongst this vulnerable group. We plan to develop a programme of research that considers a Needs Assessment Approach, which would assist local commissioners to deliver integrated care pathways aligned with Government guidance on providing integrated care for people with SUD&MHP (49).

We seek to appoint a Postdoctoral Research Fellow to work with co-investigators and a wider research team to support the delivery of an integrated mixed methods research programme to examine the levels of unmet need and improve the care pathways for adults presenting with co-existing SUD and MHP to PoS. We aim to better understand the key gaps in service provision from the perspective of service users, carers and key professional groups (Ambulance, Liaison psychiatry, Police, Addiction Services). With the involvement of service users, stakeholders, and examination of routine data sources, we will develop integrated care pathways to support increased access and treatment engagement amongst this vulnerable and underserved group.

**Theme 2 Objectives:**

1. Establish Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) and Key Stakeholder groups (service users, practitioners and commissioners) and engage with them throughout the research.
2. Define the target population – who are the most vulnerable and underserved groups that could benefit from improved care.
3. Assess the prevalence of presentation with SUD and MHP, the needs of service users and gap in current service provision– mapping of current presentation rates to places of safety, review of policies and routine datasets including data linkage across services to describe current care pathways, and health and social care resource use associated with them.
4. Conduct qualitative interviews and focus groups to explore experiences of existing care provision (service users, practitioners and commissioners).

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 individual and collaborative research projects involving qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews with service users of SUD/MHPs, families and professionals. Experience and knowledge of systematic reviews, synthesising existing evidence and involvement in the development and modification of care through co-production with users, professionals and commissioners is required. 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 2 and support qualitative research across all themes as required. The ideal candidate will have a track record in conducting clinical research within the mental health or addiction specialisms, interest and knowledge of crisis care in mental health settings, experience of managing research assistants, possess a relevant portfolio of publications and have experience of presenting at national/international conferences.

**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 for Theme 2 and co-ordinate the delivery of the semi-structured interviews with adult service users of SUD/MHPs, families and professionals, systematic review, modified Delphi process and development of a feasibility study. 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 2 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 the 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 user and care organisation advisory and stakeholder groups; ensuring the PPI Approach meets the needs of Theme 2 Project Plan
* Oversight, implementation and delivery of:
	+ Semi-structured interviews with adult service users with lived experience of SUD and MHPs, families and professionals (Theme 2) and qualitative components across other themes as required
	+ Systematic review of relevant literature to inform topic guides, areas of focus and best practice
	+ A modified Delphi process with service users, professionals and commissioners to inform the development of care pathways
* Planning and co-ordination of a feasibility study
* Managing the efficient set-up of the studies across Theme 2
* Conducting study risk assessments and developing risk mitigation strategies
* Delegation of responsibilities to Research Assistants within Theme 2
* Co-ordinate 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
 | ApplicationInterview Other |
| **Work Experience**Ability to undertake duties of the post | **Evidence of:*** Experience of developing, conducting, interpretating and analysing qualitative interviews as part of a research study
* An emerging track record in an appropriate research field, including scientific publications, presentations at scientific conferences and contributing to grant applications
 |  | ApplicationInterview Other |
| **Skills and Knowledge**Includes abilities and intellect | **Evidence of:*** Conducting systematic literature reviews
* 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
 | ApplicationInterview Other |
| **Personal Qualities**Includes any specific physical requirements of the post – (subject to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010) | * An expectation to positively contribute to University activities and initiatives which may include open days, graduation ceremonies, etc., and have a willingness to undertake administrative activities
* 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
 |  | ApplicationInterview Other |