

**Job Description**

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| Job Title: | Qualitative researcher in clinical trials |
| Faculty/Professional Directorate: | Faculty of Health Sciences, Institute of Clinical and Applied Health Research |
| Subject Group/Team: | ICAHR |
| Reporting to: | LaCeS 2 qualitative lead |
| Duration: | Fixed Term 0.8FTE to 31/12/2025 |
| Job Family: | Academic |
| Pay Band: | 7 |
| Benchmark Profile: | Research Band 7 |
| DBS Disclosure requirement: | not required |
| Vacancy Reference: |  |

**Details Specific to the Post**

**Background and Context**

### This post provides a valuable opportunity for a qualitative researcher to develop expertise in clinical trial methodology and clinical trial recruitment methods. The post holder will be located within the Institute of Clinical and Applied Health Research Methods Hub which is part of the Faculty of Health Sciences. The postholder will sit within the Methods Hub which is headed by Dr Maureen Twiddy, and includes expertise in statistics, epidemiology, qualitative methods, systematic reviewing and clinical trials.

**The LaCeS trial**

### Approximately 30,000 people a year undergo major, abdominal, gastrointestinal surgery, of which 36% are carried out for emergency colorectal pathology. The majority of patients undergo open surgery (laparotomy), which is associated with significant post-operative morbidity and mortality, and has an adverse effect on patients’ well-being and quality of life. There is evidence to suggest the use of laparoscopic (keyhole) surgery in the emergency setting may be associated with improved clinical and patient-reported outcomes. In 2019 we completed a feasibility study which showed it was feasible to recruit to a full trial comparing the two approaches and The University of Hull, in partnership with the University of Leeds has gained funding from the National Institute of Health Research, Health Technology Assessment programme for the LaCeS 2 trial, a multicentre, randomised controlled trial of Laparoscopic versus Open Colorectal Surgery in the Acute Setting.

The complexities of conducting clinical trials in emergency surgical scenarios lie in the delicate balance required to provide prompt, effective medical care while also adhering to the rigorous demands of trial procedures, such as participant recruitment, consent processes, randomisation, and maintaining trial integrity through blinding methods. Despite our feasibility study recruiting well, the follow-up trial failed to recruit as well as expected and has closed to recruitment.

Despite LaCeS 2 premature closure, the research question continues to be of paramount importance within the surgical community, emphasising the need to understand the barriers hindering recruitment to the trial to advance research in this field. Recruitment challenges are a common occurrence in surgical clinical trials. In this study we will examine the factors contributing to non-recruitment to the LaCeS 2 trial through qualitative research conducted with site staff during site closures. These insights will enhance our understanding and provide valuable guidance for the design and conduct of future studies.

The Research Fellow will undertake interviews with sites staff to identify the factors contributing to non-recruitment to the LaCeS 2 trial. The research fellow will work with the research lead Dr Maureen Twiddy, Ms Deena Harji, the Chief Investigator (based at University of Leeds), and Leeds Clinical Trials Research Unit. The Research Fellow will be responsible for data collection, analysis, and write up.

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

### Specific Duties and Responsibilities of the post

Facilitating the engagement of clinicians at sites and participant recruitment

Collecting qualitative research data using semi-structured interviews

Leading the analysis, interpretation and write up of qualitative material in conjunction with the research team.

Contributing to other research activities as required

Liaising with other members of the research team and collaborators so as to facilitate successful team working and delivery of the project in a timely manner

Organising and attending team meetings as required

Preparation of reports for team and other meetings and for NIHR, as well as abstracts for conferences and papers for publications

The post holder will be expected to attend courses provided by the university designed to aid their professional development.

**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 Band 7**

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| **Specification** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Examples Measured by** |
| **Education and Training**  Formal qualifications and relevant training | * A PhD in health or social sciences/psychology or similar experience |  | Application |
| **Work Experience**  Ability to undertake duties of the post | **Evidence of:**   * Expertise in health services research | * Evidence of collaborating with external colleagues * Expertise in clinical trials methods * An emerging track record in an appropriate research field, including scientific publications, presentations at scientific conferences and contributing to grant applications | Application  Interview |
| **Skills and Knowledge**  Includes abilities and intellect | **Evidence of:**   * Effective management of resources * Qualitative interviewing skills * Data handling and qualitative analysis skills * Excellent writing skills | * Surgical trials experience * Participation in networks that seek to promote research collaboration | Application  Interview  References |
| **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 * Evidence of working in an open and transparent way, providing information and communicating effectively with colleagues * Evidence of Continuous Professional Development * Ability to work independently as well as part of a team * Reliable and well organised * Ability to manage time and workload effectively | • Show evidence of collaborative working, particularly on interdisciplinary activities | Application  Interview  References |