Job Description

NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship

Public Health ST1 Theme Mental Health

The University of Sheffield, in partnership with NHS England, has developed an exciting pathway of academic clinical training opportunities which, for the first time in 2026, includes a public health academic training pathway open to both clinical and non-clinical applicants.

Applications are now invited for an Academic Clinical Fellowship in Public Health at ST1 level. This new post has been created as part of the NHS England (NHSE)/National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) programme of Integrated Academic Training and offers candidates a comprehensive experience of clinical academic training, working alongside internationally renowned clinicians, researchers, and public health specialists.

We are seeking highly motivated, enthusiastic individuals with the potential to excel in both their service and academic training and who have the ambition to be part of the next generation of academic public health specialists.

This Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF) programme in Public Health will be run by the Sheffield Centre for Health & Related Research (SCHARR), University of Sheffield, and the NHS England Yorkshire & the Humber Public Health Regional Training Programme.

Academic Clinical Fellowships (ACFs) are 3-year fixed-term national training posts. They attract an NTN(A), and trainees undertake 75% service and 25% academic training over the term of the post. They are employed through the regional training programme and have an honorary contract with the University at which their academic research is supported.

ACF trainees also undertake a Research Training Programme provided by the University for which funding is provided by NIHR. They are also eligible for a £1,000 bursary per year to support research training activity (e.g. to attend academic conferences).

ACF trainees would also normally complete and submit an external funding application for a research fellowship to enable them to complete a higher degree (PhD or research MD) following the completion of their ACF fixed-term post, which would be completed as Out-of-Programme-Research (OOPR).

All Academic Clinical Fellowships are run-through posts, regardless of specialty, except for ‘Medical Education’ ACFs. A trainee entering ACF at ST1 in a specialty with a Core Training period would therefore be guaranteed continued training to CCT in the eventual specialty, as long as they progress satisfactorily through both their academic and clinical training. Run-through status is withdrawn if ACFs do not complete the academic component.

POST DETAILS

Job Title

NIHR Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF) – Public Health Mental Health Theme

Duration of the Post

Up to 3 years (25% academic, 75% service).

Research institution in which training will take place

The Sheffield Centre for Health and Related Research (SCHARR)

Based in the School of Medicine and Population Health at the University of Sheffield, SCHARR brings together a wide range of health-related skills including health economics, operational research, management sciences, epidemiology and public health, medical statistics, and information science. SCHARR is comprised of the sections of Health Economics and Decision Science, Health Services Research, Design Trials and Statistics, and Public Health.

In the 2022 Research Excellence Framework (REF), 91% of SCHARR research was rated as world-leading or internationally excellent, and the SCHARR impact submission was rated 6th nationally. SCHARR employs about 200 multidisciplinary staff and attracts around £10 million per year in external research support. SCHARR is ideally placed to conduct applied and methodological health services research and teaching programmes, having a great diversity of skills and experience and close contacts with the Department of Health and NHS organisations.

Section of Public Health

The post holder will be attached to the section of Public Health within SCHARR. The Section leads a number of research themes and major research programmes. More information is available on the SCHARR webpages:

https://sheffield.ac.uk/scharr/research/public-health

Opportunities in Public Health and Mental Health Research

Sheffield is a leading national and international centre for applied public health research and has particularly strong collaborative links across other academic faculties and disciplines. SCHARR leads in evidence synthesis, addressing policymakers' priorities via the NIHR Public Health Research Review Team and the NIHR Health Services & Delivery Evidence Synthesis Centre. We also lead a research theme in the university's cross-faculty Healthy Lifespan Institute (HELSI) on "Health & Place," and our Sheffield Addictions Research Group (SARG) is an international centre of excellence for public health research on alcohol, tobacco, and gambling, focusing on policy-relevant research that informs evidence-based interventions. SCHARR contributes to national, regional, and local research and evaluation programmes including the School for Public Health Research (SPHR), Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Team (PHIRST Fusion), and City of Doncaster Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC).

Research area:

This post is aligned to the NIHR Mental Health priority theme. Consequently, ACFs will undertake research to improve the experiences and outcomes of care for people with serious mental illness. Potential mental health-related projects for trainees could include for example: maternal mental health inequalities, focusing on participatory research and wider determinants of health; and alcohol research, investigating public health implications of the increased availability of alcohol free and low-alcohol drinks. There are opportunities to develop collaborations with mental health and primary care through the Mental Health Research Unit and the primary care research group in SCHARR.

For further information visit:

https://sheffield.ac.uk/scharr/research/public-health

https://sphr.nihr.ac.uk/

https://phirst.nihr.ac.uk/about-phirst/phirst-fusion/

https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/health-wellbeing/health-determinants-research-collaboration-hdrc-doncaster

https://sheffield.ac.uk/scharr/research/mhru/about-mhru

https://sheffield.ac.uk/smph/research/primary-care

Research Protected Time:

The post will be split so that 9 months (25%) are spent undertaking research-related activities and 27 months (75%) in service work.

Academic Clinical Fellowship Training Programme: Research Component

The research component will be based in SCHARR (https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/cure), where the fellow will be supervised by one of the Professors in Public Health and will have access to methodological expertise in all aspects of public health research.

The fellow will have the opportunity to take modules on the SCHARR MPH. This provides training in quantitative and qualitative research design and analysis, with opportunities for more advanced training in statistics, economic evaluation, systematic reviews, and qualitative research.

The fellow will also undertake a research project aimed at achieving peer-reviewed publication and conference presentation, with the potential to form the basis of a funded doctoral fellowship application. Research projects typically involve analysis of routine data, collection of pilot data, or evidence synthesis.

SCHARR has an excellent track record of supporting doctoral fellowship applications and extensive support for ACFs intending to apply for a doctoral fellowship.

Academic Clinical Fellowship Training Programme: Service Component

Alongside academic training, the fellow will be based at service training locations to complete their public health training, including local authority and other public health organisations (DHSC/OHID, UKHSA, NHS England).

SPECIALTY POSTS

The Public Health Fellow can seek opportunities to work with other relevant clinical medical specialties during their training, including Psychiatry, General Practice, Infectious Diseases, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics, and other clinical specialities, many of which undertake public health and health services research.

Post Details

JOB TITLE: NIHR Academic Clinical Fellow - Public Health

BRIEF OUTLINE:

The programme is designed to provide training from either ST1 or ST3 level for a period of 3 years.

It is anticipated that entry to ACF posts in Public Health will be open to Public Health candidates from a Background Other Than Medicine, provided all relevant eligibility criteria are met.

Further details for the Yorkshire and the Humber training programme are available from the School of Public Health. https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/public-health-2

Objectives of the Training Programme:

1. To undertake public health training with ongoing progression available for completion of specialist training in public health.

2. To undertake relevant training in public health research and knowledge mobilisation methods.

3. To identify an area of research interest upon which to base an application for an externally funded PhD programme.

Successful candidates:

The exit from this post will typically be to an externally funded research fellowship, leading to the award of a PhD and subsequently application either for a Public Health lecturer post or a post-doctoral fellowship.

Unsuccessful candidates:

If the post-holder does not achieve the expected competencies, this will be handled in the same way as for all other trainees in public health.

If the post-holder fails to achieve academic competencies or is unsuccessful in obtaining research funding, they would be anticipated to return to a clinical training post. This will be discussed in good time with the Training Programme Director (TPD) through the system for appraisal and mentoring of academic trainees. Whilst no guarantee of an appropriate post is possible, every effort will be made to accommodate such individuals within the local training schemes.

CONTACTS

Academic Leads and Supervisors for Public Health posts:

Professor Andrew Lee (Academic Training Lead), Professor Liddy Goyder, and Dr Kelly MacKenzie
SCHARR
Regent Court
30 Regent St
Sheffield S1 4DA

Academic Public Health Training Programme Director

Professor Andrew Lee

andrew.lee@sheffield.ac.uk

Clinical Training Programme Director

Dr Val Barker

val.barker1@nhs.net

Academic Training Programme Director

Professor Janet Brown

j.e.brown@sheffield.ac.uk

Further Information

For informal enquiries about the programme, contact

Andrew Lee andrew.lee@sheffield.ac.uk or Liddy Goyder e.goyder@sheffield.ac.uk

For more information on Sheffield, see

https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/medicine-dentistry-health/study/clinical-academic-training

For more information on NIHR clinical academic training, see http://www.nihr.ac.uk/IAT

Because of the nature of the work for which you are applying, this post is exempted from the provisions of Section 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Applicants are therefore not entitled to withhold information about convictions, which for other purposes are “spent” under the provisions of the Act, and in the event of employment any failure to disclose such convictions could result in dismissal or disciplinary action by the University. Any information given will be strictly confidential and will be considered only in relation to an application for positions to which the Order applies.

For further information about the Academic Clinical Fellowship programme, please refer to the NIHR (National Institute for Health Research) Integrated Academic Training (IAT) page on

https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/academy-programmes/integrated-academic-training.htm#one

Person Specification

Note that applicants for this post will be required to meet the relevant specialty eligibility criteria for specialty and level listed at: -

http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/Recruitment/Person-specifications

AND the Academic eligibility criteria listed at:

http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/Recruitment/Person-specifications