1 Advertisement

Post Title: Research Assistant in HIV and Frailty  
School/department: Brighton and Sussex Medical School  
Hours: part time hours considered up to a maximum of 25.5 hours per week. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).  
Contract: fixed term for 2 years  
Reference: 4572  
Salary: starting at £30,046 to £33,797 per annum, pro rata  
Placed on: 16 September 2020.  
Closing date: 16 October 2020  
Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

The HIV group of the Brighton and Sussex Centre for Global Health Research is looking for a highly motivated post-doctoral research assistant to provide high quality expertise into conducting and analysing frailty clinical studies of people living with HIV.

The successful applicant will have:

- An established record of rehabilitation or physiotherapy and experience in the analysis and presentation of clinical research.
- Applicants must have a MSc in a relevant discipline.
- Experience in physiotherapy, rehabilitation or frailty is desirable.
- Similarly, experience in conducting clinical investigations, particularly if relevant to people with frailty and HIV, is highly desirable.

Informal enquiries about the projects should be directed to Dr Jaime Vera Rojas (j.vera@bsms.ac.uk) +441273 523087. Candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the range of research activity undertaken from the HIV group and collaborators within BSMS.

For full details and how to apply see:  
www.sussex.ac.uk/jobs  
www.brighton.ac.uk/jobs  
www.bsms.ac.uk

The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.
HIV Clinical Research Group

Brighton has a high HIV sero-prevalence (13.7% in men who have sex with men) and has one of the largest cohorts of HIV positive individuals in the UK with over 2350 patients currently under follow up. Outpatient services are located at the Lawson Unit and inpatients are currently cared for in a 6-bedded ward – Howard 2. There are strong links with neighboring clinics via the Sussex HIV Network, including those in Hastings, Eastbourne, Crawley, Worthing and Chichester. The department has a large clinical research unit based in the Elton John Centre in Sussex House on the RSCH site. The Unit is nationally and internationally recognized for its contribution to HIV research and participates in a large number of HIV studies, both commercially sponsored and funded by external bodies supporting both local and collaborative studies, PhD students from both GUM/HIV and other disciplines which overlap, an other clinical academic posts. The unit strives to collaborate further and proactively engage a Sussex research network. The department is managed by Lisa Barbour. The pharmaceutical clinical trial portfolio is led operationally by Dr Amanda Clarke, and the academic lead for HIV is Dr Jaime Vera Rojas. More information about the work in HIV and Sexual Health can be found here: https://www.bsms.ac.uk/research/global-health-and-infection/research-areas/hiv-and-sexual-health.aspx

HIV is one of the strongest research areas within the Kent, Surrey and Sussex. The current research portfolio centres around the following areas:

- HIV and ageing
- HIV and the Brain
- Global Health and HIV
- Phase 2/3/4 development of antiretroviral agents
- HIV prevention strategies
- COVID prevention, treatment and vaccine studies

The Global Health and Infection Department
The department works in close partnership with our parent universities (the Universities of Brighton and Sussex) to develop novel opportunities for research in order to help improve health and health equity globally.

We collaborate with the Centre for Global Health Policy at the University of Sussex and with the prestigious Institute of Development Studies (IDS), on the University campus. Sussex, with IDS, was recently ranked the top University in Europe for Development Studies by the QS University World Rankings, second only to Harvard globally. Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues at these institutions are facilitated through a Global Health Network that meets regularly and organises a seminar series and an annual conference.

We also work in partnership with community organisations, universities and non-governmental organisations based locally and internationally. For instance, we have a Health Link with the Medical School and University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, Zambia, which supports educational activities such as staff and student exchanges, and we are now developing a similar link with the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala.

As part of the Brighton and Sussex Centre for Global Health Research we have research partnerships with academic institutions in seven countries
https://www.bsms.ac.uk/research/global-health-and-infection/research-areas/index.aspx

We are responsive to the needs identified by our partners and strive to grow alongside our partners’ in our capacity for research and research management.

THE UNIVERSITY
**Senior leadership and management**

The Vice-Chancellor is the senior academic officer and, as Chief Executive, is responsible to the University Council for management of the University. He is supported by an executive group which includes the three Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Registrar and Secretary, the Director of Finance and the Director of Human Resources. The Heads of the Schools of Studies at Sussex report to the Pro-Vice-Chancellors.

The Registrar and Secretary heads the Professional Services of the University. In addition, under the University Statutes, the Registrar and Secretary is Secretary to the University Council. The Director of Finance reports to the Vice-Chancellor. The Director of ITS reports to the Registrar and Secretary, and the Librarian reports to one of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors.

**The Medical School**

The School is an equal partnership between the Universities of Sussex and Brighton together with NHS staff throughout the South East Region. The arrangements for the School’s governance reflect this approach and students are awarded joint degrees of both Universities.

The School is fully committed to the principles of **GMC: Standards of Promoting Excellence**; it endorses the value of medical education in a multi-professional context, and promotes the highest possible standards in its three pivotal components of teaching, clinical practice, and research (both fundamental and applied).

There is an annual undergraduate intake of approximately 200 students. BSMS has proved exceptionally popular and in recent admissions rounds has continued to achieve one of the highest application rates of any UK medical school. Students spend their first two years primarily on the universities’ campuses at Falmer; thereafter the focus shifts to the associated teaching hospitals in Brighton and the surrounding area. There are purpose-built teaching facilities in all areas.

The curriculum emphasises early clinical involvement, a broad range of experience and a firm foundation in basic science. Led by the Medical Education Unit, there is a wide range of teaching and learning approaches as appropriate for the particular circumstances; we are not
committed to a single method of delivery. Feedback from the National Student Survey has demonstrated an exceptionally high level of student satisfaction, with BSMS being consistently in the top 3 performing schools in the country with scores of over 90%. The BSMS 5 year strategic plan (2009 – 14) placed growth in research capacity as the number one priority. We have made significant investments in research infrastructure, including a world-class Clinical Imaging Sciences Centre (CISC) housing a 3T MRI (Siemens Prisma), 1.5T MRI (Siemens Avanto) and a PET-CT scanner and a Clinical Investigation & Research Unit (CIRU) dedicated to patient orientated research and early clinical trials. There has been a rapid increase in postgraduate research students and research income has more than doubled over the last five years.

Following the appointment of Professor Malcolm Reed as Dean in December 2014, the Medical School has undergone a strategic reorganisation into the following Departments, established from the beginning of the 2016/17 academic year:

Clinical and Experimental Medicine
Global Health and Infection
Neuroscience
Primary Care and Public Health
Medical Education

**Administration.** The Medical School’s Administration is led by Mr Peter Pimblett-Dennis the Medical School Secretary. The School’s 60+ support staff offer support to a range of functions including curriculum development and delivery, admissions, library and IT, communications, student welfare, human resources, research and finance.

**The Universities**

The Universities of Brighton and Sussex have formed a highly effective and successful partnership that has resulted in the creation of this first new medical school in the South East region outside of London. Each institution has its own distinct culture and each is proud of its history and achievements but they have a long and successful history of
Both universities are committed to excellence in teaching and research.

Sussex is a progressive university delivering innovative thought and action, with a worldwide reputation for excellence in research and discovery. Its distinctive approach leads to the development of high quality new research which crosses traditional boundaries, benefits and enriches society, and influences policy at international, regional and national levels. Sussex research has a positive impact on people’s lives. In the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2014-15, Sussex was ranked 4th in the UK and 34th in the world for research influence.

The results of the government-commissioned Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014 show that over 75% of research activity at Sussex is categorised as ‘world leading’ (4*, 28%) or ‘internationally excellent’ (3*, 48%) in terms of originality, significance and rigour, whilst 98% of research activity at Sussex is categorised as either ‘world-leading’, ‘internationally excellent’ or ‘internationally recognised’.

The University of Brighton has a long and distinguished history of applied research. This serves to sustain and nourish its mission to help form professional and vocational careers. Ultimately, the university aims to transform the lives and experiences of people and their environments with research that matters. In the REF2014, 92% of its research was judged to be world-leading or internationally excellent in terms of the impact it makes, putting it in the top 25% for the sector. 38% of the university's work in the Health Sciences was rated as world-leading.

BSMS made a major contribution to its host universities’ submissions in the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF2014). The majority of BSMS staff who were submitted contributed to Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience, and Biological Sciences at the University of Sussex, both ranked 10th, or the joint submission with the University of Brighton (Allied Health Professionals, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy – ranked 27th). A smaller number of academics were
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals (BSUH) is the regional teaching hospital working across two sites: the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton and the Princess Royal Hospital in Haywards Heath. The Brighton campus includes the Royal Alexandra Children’s Hospital and the Sussex Eye Hospital, and the Haywards Heath campus includes the Hurstwood Park Regional Centre for Neurosciences.

In May 2014 the UK Government agreed the release of £420m to redevelop the Royal Sussex County Hospital site. The plans will see the site’s 19th century buildings replaced with new, modern facilities for the delivery of healthcare, for teaching and for research.

We are committed to equality of opportunity

For Academic Teaching/Research posts: The University is committed to equality and valuing diversity, and applications are particularly welcomed from women and black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in academic posts in science and engineering at Sussex.
Job Title: Research Assistant in HIV and Frailty
Division: Infection and Global Health
Section / Unit: HIV

Location: Brighton and Sussex Centre for Global Health

Job Reference: 

Grade: Research Assistant, Grade 6

Responsible to: Dr Jaime Vera Rojas, Senior Lecturer in HIV

Job Title: Research Assistant in HIV and Frailty
Grade: Research Assistant, Grade 6
School: Brighton and Sussex Medical School
Location: University of Sussex campus
Responsible to: Principal Investigator through to Head of School
Direct reports: Dr Jaime Vera Rojas, Senior Lecturer in HIV
Key contacts: Members of research group, members of faculty within the Department, School and University.

Role description/purpose of the post:

Research assistant is an early career-grade research position. Post-holders will be expected to contribute to the work of the HIV research team, and also to develop their research skills with support from more experienced members of staff. Specifically, the post-holder will work
on clinically-oriented research studies that examines the role of frailty in people living with HIV applying qualitative and quantitative methodology

The work is funded by NIHR and will be undertaken within BSMS and Kings College Hospital under the direction of Dr Jaime Vera (Clinical Senior Lecturer in HIV Medicine), Dr Tom Levett (Clinical Senior Lecturer in HIV Medicine) and Dr Katherine Bristowe (Research Associate, Cicely Saunders Institute of Palliative Care, policy & Rehabilitation). The research will capitalise on the technical facilities and expertise offered via BSUH and the Cicely Saunders Institute and on opportunities to access to clinical populations via the HIV clinical research unit in Brighton and King’s College London.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:

1. To contribute to the research activity frailty in people with HIV from study set up, recruitment, data collection and management through to analysis

2. Collaborate with key stakeholders, including the research team in: development and sharing of study materials; delivery of research to deadlines; and dissemination of findings.

3. To develop research funding and knowledge exchange income if possible, individually or in collaboration with others, as appropriate, depending on the size and scope of the bid.

4. Undertake any other reasonable duties that may be requested by the study leads or head of division, as consistent with grade, including assisting with other projects.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Research, Scholarship & Enterprise

1.1 Develop research objectives and proposals for own or joint research, at acceptable levels, with assistance if required.

1.2 Conduct research projects individually and in collaboration with others

1.3 Analyse and interpret research findings and draw conclusions on the outcomes.

1.4 Contribute to the writing of reports and other dissemination activities

1.5 Contribute to the preparation of proposals and applications to external bodies, for example for funding purposes.

1.6 Build internal contacts and participate in internal networks and relevant external networks in order to form relationships and collaborations.
1.7 Continually update knowledge and understanding in field or specialism, and engage in continuous professional development.
1.8 Undertake qualitative interviews with older people living with HIV.
1.9 Undertake transcription and analysis of qualitative interview data supported by NVIVO software for qualitative data analysis.

1. Teaching & Student Support

2.1 Assist in the supervision of student projects and provide guidance to those assisting in the research.

2. Contribution to School & University
   a. Attend and contribute to relevant School and project meetings.
   b. Undertake additional duties, as required by the Principal Investigator and/or Head of School.

3. Role-specific duties

The post provides an outstanding opportunity for a physiotherapist or rehabilitation specialist to apply to undertake clinical research in the area of HIV and Frailty. The post-holder will join a rich research environment within The Brighton and Sussex Centre for Global Health, The HIV clinical Research Unit, Elton John Centre located at the Royal Sussex County Hospital and the Cicely Sanders institute at King College London. She/he will be located at the Research Building of Brighton and Sussex Medical School, University of Sussex Campus at Falmer and the Elton John Centre at the Royal Sussex County Hospital.

The successful applicant will be expected to have an emerging record of qualitative and quantitative research, good understanding of qualitative research methods including interview skills and methods of analysis applicable to qualitative research. Applicants must have as a minimum a MSc in a relevant medical discipline. Relevant research experience, demonstrated by participation in research projects, specifically in HIV, health services research, or a related field is desirable.

The main priorities for the appointment are:

Research
The applicant will undertake research relevant to the specified goals of the HIV group

1. Contribute to, and undertake, HIV and Frailty studies requiring clinical participant recruitment, selection, experimental design, data acquisition and analysis and writing, presentation and publication of findings.

2. Collaborate with other clinical, health services and biomedical researchers within the Medical School and relevant NHS trusts (Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Brighton and Sussex University Hospital Trust and Kings College London NHS trust). The postholder should be able to work closely and co-operatively with other researchers and clinicians, involving them as appropriate in the research projects.

3. To initiate and assist technically in the running and overseeing of specific research studies within The Brighton and Sussex Centre for Global Health

In addition to undertaking HIV and Frailty studies in people living with HIV, the postdoctoral scientist will be expected to assist with aspects of research administration including application for ethical approval of new studies and ensuring compliance with data protection legislation. This will involve the ability to act as an independent agent in setting up appointments and telephone calls and in the general co-ordination of arrangements for research subjects and patients/carers involved in clinical studies.

General

Ensure the highest standard of record keeping, maintaining accurate and appropriate research patient records, including strict confidentiality.

Attend departmental and other meetings as appropriate.

As duties and responsibilities change, the job description may be reviewed and amended in consultation with the post-holder.

The postholder will carry out any other duties as are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job as requested by the line manager (Dr Jaime Vera Rojas).

The postholder will actively follow BSMS policies of the Universities of Sussex and Brighton, including Equal Opportunities policies

This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed.
INDICATIVE PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Pursuing a line of independent research within a research group.
- Publishing research
- Initiating, developing or participating in links between the University and external bodies such as business and industry, the professions, community organisations and policy-makers.
- Undertake research by preparing, setting up, conducting and recording the outcomes.
- Manage and analyse data and prepare written reports and summaries.
- Maintain and store project files and equipment as per health and safety and data regulations.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

1. Educated to MSc, or other equivalent qualification, or appropriate level of experience, as appropriate to the discipline (see role-specific criteria below).
2. A degree in physiotherapy, health or social sciences or similar awarded to a high level
3. Evidence of engagement in high-quality research activity in neuroscience
4. Excellent presentation skills, with the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with students, colleagues and external audiences.
5. Ability to work individually on own initiative and without close supervision, and as part of a team.
6. Ability to exercise a degree of innovation and creative problem-solving.
7. Excellent organisational and administrative skills.
8. Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines.
9. Excellent IT skills.

ESSENTIAL ROLE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA

1. Good understanding of qualitative research methods including interview skills and methods of analysis
2. Excellent research-related computing skills: word processing; reference management databases (Endnote); and packages to support data analysis (e.g. NVIVO, SPSS).
3. Research experience in rehabilitation or physiotherapy
4. Clear understanding of the sensitivities surrounding research with people living with HIV
5. Research experience utilising qualitative method

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

1. Relevant research experience, demonstrated by participation in research projects, specifically in HIV, health services research, or a related field
2. Experience of undertaking research working with people living with HIV and Frailty
3. Experience of working with clinical populations in a research setting.
4. Able to: prioritize competing workloads; grasp new information and learn new skills quickly; and be self-supporting