



**Post Title:** Clinical Research Fellow in Hepatology (ST5 level)

**School:** Brighton and Sussex Medical School

**Hours:** full time or part time hours considered up to a maximum of 1.0 FTE/10 Pas per week. Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).

**Contract:** fixed term for 4 years

**Reference:** 8394

**Salary:** ST5

**Placed on:** 22 June 2022

**Closing date:** 8 July 2022. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

**Expected Interview date:** 22 July 2022

**Expected start date:** September 2022

Applications are invited for Clinical Research Fellow (CRF) in Hepatology at Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS). The post is being offered by BSMS in association with University Hospitals Sussex (UHS) NHS Foundation (Royal Sussex County Hospital) where the successful applicant will hold an honorary consultant contract.

It is open to suitably qualified specialist trainees with prior research experience and or interest

Our preference is to appoint a suitably qualified physician in Hepatology

The appointee will undertake clinical sessions in their specialty at the Royal Sussex County Hospital. They will hold an honorary NHS contract with University Hospitals Sussex Foundation NHS Trust.

There is no specific requirement for provision of Internal Medicine/Gastroenterology on-call/emergency services in this post, but this can be negotiated with the successful candidate and the Trust according to the specialty on appointment.

From an academic perspective, this post will be based in the Department of Clinical & Experimental Medicine (CEM) at BSMS.

Interested candidates are encouraged to discuss the position informally with Professor Sumita Verma, Professor of Hepatology, S.Verma@bsms.ac.uk

**For full details and how to apply visit:**

[www.sussex.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/jobs) [www.brighton.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.brighton.ac.uk/jobs) [www.bsms.ac.uk](http://www.bsms.ac.uk)

***The Universities of Brighton and Sussex are 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, mathematics, medicine and engineering at the universities.*



**Department/Unit:** BSMS /Clinical and Experimental Medicine

**Locations:** BSMS Teaching Building / Royal Sussex County Hospital

**Job title:** Clinical Research Fellow in Hepatology

**Job reference:**

**Grade:** ST5

**Terms and conditions:**

**The post**

The post is being offered by BSMS in association with University Hospitals Sussex (UHS) NHS Foundation Trust where the successful applicant will hold an honorary consultant contract. It is open to suitably qualified specialist trainees with prior research experience and or interest.

**Clinical activities**

The postholder will have the option to undertake clinical sessions (Liver Clinic and or endoscopy once a week) at the Royal Sussex County Hospital.

Where appropriate, matters relating to honorary clinical contracts, accreditation and on-going clinical practice will be discussed with the successful candidate. The postholder will join the BSMS Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine.

**Academic activities**

From an academic perspective, the postholder will be based in the Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine at BSMS, and will undertake a research project supervised by Professor Sumita Verma. Details of the project are given below. The postholder will be expected to register for a PhD through BSMS following the usual project/ supervisor approval and registration processes (see below).

**Research project**

## **Palliative Long-term Abdominal Drains Versus Repeated Drainage in Untreatable Ascites Due To Advanced Cirrhosis: A Randomised Controlled Trial**

**Study acronym:** REDUCe 2 study

**Funder:** Health Technology Assessment Project: National Institute for Health Research 133889

**Funding amount:** £1,936,183

### **Scientific abstract**

**Research question:** Do palliative long-term abdominal drains (LTADs) result in better health related quality of life (HRQoL) in patients with refractory ascites due to end-stage liver disease (ESLD) compared with standard of care (large volume paracentesis, LVP)?

**Background:** Palliative care is suboptimal in ESLD. Refractory ascites confers a median transplant-free survival of six months and needs repeated hospitalisation for drainage (LVP). LTADs allow home drainage but are not routinely used in ESLD due to effectiveness/safety concerns. Our feasibility REDUCe study (LVP vs. LTADs in ESLD) demonstrated feasibility to proceed with a definitive trial. It also informed the recent national ascites guidelines recommending trials assessing LTADs in ESLD.

**Aims/objectives:** To assess whether LTADs result in better HRQoL compared to LVP in patients with refractory ascites due to ESLD.

**Study design:** Multicentre, non-blinded parallel-group randomised control trial with up to 3-months of follow up.

**Methods:** This multicentre trial will recruit patients with ESLD and refractory ascites, randomised 1:1 to either LTADs or LVP. Community nurses will visit LTAD patients at home, 2-3 times a week to perform drainage (1-2 litres per visit). LVP patients will attend hospital every 10 -14 days with 5-15 litres of ascites drainage and receive intravenous albumin. Research staff will visit ALL participants at home fortnightly for 3-months for safety monitoring and questionnaire-based assessments (Ascites Q, SFLDQoL, EQ-5D-5L, CRRS). The primary outcome will be HRQoL assessed by the SFLDQoL questionnaire. An embedded qualitative study will explore perspectives on both LTADs and LVP by patients (n=30), caregivers (n=20) and health care professionals (n=30). The minimal clinically important difference (MCID) is the mean change in HRQoL score for patients reporting a minimal yet perceptible change in HRQoL between baseline and follow-up assessments. We have selected an MCID of 8 points. REDUCe study data showed the pooled baseline mean across SFLDQoL domains (excluding sexual function) was 56.4 (SD=26.1). With 93 participants in each group, we will have 90% power for 5% significance to detect an adjusted difference in mean SFLDQoL scores of 8 points between the LTAD and LVP groups at the end of 3-months (effect size 0.31). We will assume a correlation between baseline and follow-up

measurements of 0.48 (lower bound of 95% confidence interval, REDUCE study data). With an expected 40% attrition, we will recruit 310 patients in total for the trial. Statistical analysis will follow intention-to-treat principles, performing for the primary outcome, a longitudinal analysis of covariance by fitting a mixed effects linear regression model. Qualitative data will be analysed using thematic analysis and triangulation. A probabilistic cost effectiveness analysis will be conducted.

**Delivery timelines:** Study duration will be 57-months: 6-months' set up; 18-months' internal pilot with STOP/GO criteria; 29-months' main trial and 4-months data analysis/dissemination. The pilot will recruit 84 patients from 24 sites. Assuming a successful pilot, 11 further sites will be opened over 5 months', recruiting the remaining 226 patients from 35 sites.

**Impact:** This will be the largest palliative interventional trial in the UK with the potential to improve end of life care for an underserved group.

**Job description: Academic accountabilities and responsibilities**

Within BSMS (Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine) the postholder will be responsible to Professor Sumita Verma for the following:

**Principal accountabilities**

To engage in individual and/or collaborative research activity resulting in high-quality publications; and to develop research funding and knowledge exchange income individually or in collaboration with others, as appropriate, depending on the size and scope of the bid.

To contribute to School teaching activities as time permits.

**Key responsibilities**

**1. Teaching and student support**

- 1.1 Limited undergraduate and/or postgraduate teaching duties, if required, including student support and clinical mentorship.
- 1.2 Assist in the assessment of student knowledge and supervision of student projects if required, in partnership with a senior academic or clinical supervisor.
- 1.3 Assist in the development of student research skills, for example as part of a postgraduate supervision team.

**2. Research, scholarship and enterprise**

- 2.1 Develop research objectives and proposals for own or joint research, at acceptable levels, with assistance if required.
- 2.2 Conduct the supervised research project individually and in collaboration with others working in cognate domains.
- 2.3 Analyse and interpret research findings and draw conclusions on the outcomes.
- 2.4 Continually update knowledge and understanding in specialist field and engage in continuous professional development.

**3. Contribution to school and university**

- 3.1 Attend and contribute to relevant School research and project meetings.

3.2 Undertake additional duties, as required by the Principal Investigator and/or Head of School.

### **Role-specific duties**

The postholder will primarily work out of the specialist Hepatology unit and the Clinical Research Facility at the at the Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton. This is a 4 year post in which the postholder will work with a team of clinicians, research nurses and academics delivering the research project described but also supporting other academically-led research projects and early-phase clinical trials if time allows.

A core component of the post will be the opportunity to register and study for a higher degree (PhD) through Brighton & Sussex Medical School, subject to the submission of an approved proposal to the School.

In addition to their own research the postholder will provide first-line support to Professor Verma working on Hepatology clinical trials conducted at CIRU. In addition the postholder will also be expected to provide medical cover for other CIRU based interventional studies on a rotational basis, not exceeding a frequency of one day/week. This may involve reviewing protocols, assessing patient eligibility for trials and overseeing treatment of research patients. As appropriate, the postholder will conduct regular research clinics to review patients being followed up as part of their research endeavours and/or identify new participants.

### **Indicative performance criteria**

- A full clinical medical qualification recognised by the GMC.
- Full MRCP or equivalent.
- Pursuing a line of independent research leading to the successful completion of an MD degree.
- Evidence of successful engagement in teaching or supervision.

### **Clinical accountabilities and responsibilities**

This a full-time clinical academic post. With regard to any clinical duties and responsibilities the postholder will be responsible to the Medical Director UHS NHS Foundation Trust through the Chief of Medicine.

Provisional timetable:

	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thu</b>	<b>Fri</b>
am	Research	Data entry	Research meeting/Adm in	CIRU Cover	Liver clinic/endo scopy
pm	Research	Literature review/thesis	Research	CIRU cover	Academic afternoon/TMG meetings/Teaching

This is an indicative programme. The fixed session commitments will be agreed with the postholder. Appropriate administrative support and office space will be provided to support the postholder's academic and clinical commitments.

The postholder will develop partnerships and identify opportunities for joint working between BSMS, other academic units within the Universities of Brighton and Sussex and partner NHS Trusts.

An important early role will be contributing to the development of the individual's own research project and establishing appropriate links across BSMS/ UHS NHS Foundation Trust and our partner universities (University of Brighton and University of Sussex).

The postholder will provide specialist services in Hepatology to include outpatient clinics.

It is expected that the postholder will contribute to the relevant departmental/hospital clinical governance programmes and to the teaching of junior medical staff, nursing staff and other paramedical staff and external bodies.

The postholder will have continuing responsibility for patients in his/her care and the proper functioning of the department in his/her charge.

The postholder will be encouraged to utilise the full quota of study leave to pursue his/her continued medical education and will be required to register with the appropriate Royal College for CPD purposes and to assure his/her continued revalidation with UHS Foundation NHS Trust and Registration with Licence to Practise with the GMC.

This job description sets out the duties of the post(s) at the time it was drawn up. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or level of responsibility entailed. Such

variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.

## Person specification

### Essential criteria (both academic and clinical activities)

- Normally educated to Masters/Part 2 MRCP level, or other equivalent qualification, or appropriate level of experience, as appropriate to the discipline (see role-specific criteria below).
- Evidence of some engagement in high-quality research activity.
- Excellent presentation skills, with the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with students, colleagues and external audiences.
- Ability to work individually on own initiative and without close supervision, and as part of a team.
- Ability to exercise a degree of innovation and creative problem-solving.
- Excellent organisational and administrative skills.
- Ability to prioritise and meet clinical and academic deadlines.
- Excellent IT skills.

### Essential role-specific criteria (including clinical criteria)

- NHS Senior specialist trainee in Gastroenterology/Hepatology
- Primary UK medical qualification (or equivalent)
- Appropriate postgraduate medical qualification (e.g. full MRCP or equivalent)
- In current clinical practice and on GMC register with current license to practise.
- Satisfactory enhanced level Disclosure and Barring service check.

## The appointment process

An initial selection of candidates will be made on the basis of applications against the person specification criteria outlined above.

**For purposes relating to the Data Protection Act applicants are asked to complete and sign a 1) Clinical Academic application form if medically qualified or a standard Academic application form if not medically qualified, and forward this document along with their written application.**

Applicants are also invited to submit a written application including: **2)** curriculum vitae, **3)** with supporting statement (as described below), and **4)** to nominate three referees (names, positions and addresses) who are able to comment on the applicant's suitability for the position. One of these referees should be the applicant's current employer.

**Curriculum vitae**

Curriculum vitae should contain at least the following details:

**Personal details**

Name, home and office addresses including telephone numbers and email addresses.

**Higher education**

Name of institution(s) and dates attended, full or part-time attendance, subjects studied, qualifications obtained.

**Institutional or professional membership**

Involvement, institution(s) and date of admission, and positions of responsibility.

**Employment history**

Employment history should be in chronological order. If periods of employment are not consecutive it would be helpful if details of activity in the intervening period could be included even if these have been covered in other sections, e.g. periods of full-time study.

**Research/consultancy**

Interests and outcomes including publications and research funding obtained within the last five years. Please include details of the funding body, the duration of the research grant and the title of the project.

**Teaching experience**

Experience of teaching undertaken within the last five years including the titles and levels of the courses taught and the institutions at which these were taught.

Experience of postgraduate research students supervised including the number of students and their degree outcome.

**Bibliography**

This should list in separate sections:

- (a) papers published in peer-reviewed journals
- (b) review articles and invited submissions
- (c) books and book chapters
- (d) scientific correspondence
- (e) patents awarded or applied for.

Details of abstracts or conference proceedings are not required. Your five most notable publications should be marked with an asterisk.

**Supporting statement**

In a supporting statement of not more than one page, applicants should relate their previous experience to the current post.

**Administrative details**

Your application form should be attached to a written application to assist in administering the selection process. Any additional information

we should be aware of in relation to your application should be supplied by covering letter.

**Enclosures**

- a) [BSMS undergraduate prospectus](#)
- b) Undergraduate prospectuses of the [University of Brighton](#) and the [University of Sussex](#);
- c) [BSMS Postgraduate Taught prospectus](#)
- d) [BSMS magazine](#) (most recent hard copy available on request)
- f) Organisational structure charts for BSMS (available on request)
- g) University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust – Guide to Clinical Services (available on request);
- h) Recruitment monitoring and information pro forma (on application form).

**Brighton and Sussex Medical School and partners**

**Brighton and Sussex Medical School** is an equal partnership between the Universities of Sussex and Brighton together with NHS organisations throughout the South East region. Find out more at: [bsms.ac.uk/about](http://bsms.ac.uk/about)

**The University of Sussex** is a leading research-intensive university near Brighton, currently ranked top 20 in all major league tables. Find out more: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/about/>

**The University of Brighton** is a complex and diverse institution with a long and distinguished history of applied research. Find out more: [brighton.ac.uk/about-us/](http://brighton.ac.uk/about-us/)

**University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust** is the regional teaching hospital working across five sites: the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton, the Princess Royal Hospital in Haywards Heath, St Richards Hospital in Chichester, Southlands Hospital in Shoreham-by-Sea and Worthing Hospital Find out more: <https://www.uhsussex.nhs.uk/>

**Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust** specialises in working with people who are experiencing mental health difficulties and those with learning disabilities, across Sussex, Kent and Hampshire. Find out more: [sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/about-us](http://sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/about-us)

**Submission of applications**

Applicants wishing to discuss the position informally are invited to contact:

Professor Sumita Verma  
Professor of Hepatology  
S.Verma@bsms.ac.uk

Application details and application forms are available from [sussex.ac.uk/jobs](https://sussex.ac.uk/jobs) or by request and should be returned to the Human Resources Division, Sussex House, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9RH. Tel 01273 678706, Fax 01273 877401, email [bsmsrecruitment@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:bsmsrecruitment@sussex.ac.uk).

Details of all vacant posts can be found via the university websites:  
[sussex.ac.uk/jobs](https://sussex.ac.uk/jobs)  
[brighton.ac.uk/jobs](https://brighton.ac.uk/jobs)  
[bsms.ac.uk](https://bsms.ac.uk)

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