

## 1 Advertisement

**Post Title:** Research Assistant in HIV and Social Science

**School/department:** Brighton & Sussex Medical School

**Hours:** part time or full time hours considered up to 36.5 hours per week. Requests for [flexible working](#) options will be considered (subject to business need).

**Contract:** fixed term until 30 September 2022

**Reference:** 8617

**Salary:** starting at £30,497 to £34,304 per annum, pro rata if part time

**Placed on:** 13 May 2022

**Closing date:** 23 May 2022. Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.

**Expected Interview date:** TBC

**Expected start date:** ASAP

***This vacancy is only open to those currently employed by the University of Sussex or the University of Brighton***

The Global Health and Infection Department of the Brighton and Sussex Medical School is looking for a highly motivated research assistant to provide high quality expertise into conducting qualitative methods and analysing qualitative data on patient experiences and perceptions of HIV.

The successful applicant will have:

- An established record of qualitative research experience, preferably in both data collection and analysis;
- Experience of conducting literature synthesis is required, with knowledge of scoping and systematic reviews desirable;
- Applicants must have an MSc or a higher degree in a relevant discipline (e.g. anthropology, sociology, global health, public health);
- The ability to work effectively in a multidisciplinary team;
- Excellent organisational and communication skills;
- Experience in HIV research, advocacy, or support work is desirable.

Informal enquiries about the projects should be directed to Dr Giovanni Villa ([g.villa@bsms.ac.uk](mailto:g.villa@bsms.ac.uk)) or Dr Caroline Ackley ([c.ackley@bsms.ac.uk](mailto:c.ackley@bsms.ac.uk)). Candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the range of HIV research activity undertaken within BSMS and with the HIV context in Brighton more generally.

Please note that this position may be subject to [ATAS clearance](#) if you require visa sponsorship.

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

[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 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. 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, and other clinical academic posts. The unit strives to collaborate further and proactively engage a Sussex research network. 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>

## **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). 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. As part of the Brighton and Sussex Centre for Global Health Research we have research partnerships with academic institutions in seven countries. 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 School / Division - 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](https://bsms.ac.uk/about)

The Global Health and Infection (GHI) Department at BSMS (which is host department to BSMS TRaDiP project investigators) is looking for a UK-based Health Economist to support existing research projects. These include collaboration with University of Surrey on the evaluation of independent prescribing by therapeutic radiographers and supplementary prescribing by dietitians (TRaDiP project). The project will involve a model-based assessment of the cost-effectiveness of implementing the independent and supplementary prescribing. All necessary training will be provided to PDRA to ensure successful delivery of economic evaluation. For more information about the project see: <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/tradip>

Global Health is a cross-cutting theme at BSMS which has been highlighted as a key strength for development in our strategic plan. We work in close partnership with our parent universities (Brighton and Sussex) to develop novel opportunities for teaching and research, a good example of which is the MSc in Global Health. Important Global Health issues permeate the undergraduate curriculum and students get plenty of opportunity to develop their interest through student selected components, individual research projects and the clinical elective.

BSMS has a vibrant Global Health research programme with academic links around the world. Taking a multidisciplinary approach, we work on important health problems including neglected tropical diseases, tuberculosis and non-communicable diseases in low-income settings. The department of Global Health and Infection hosts a NIHR Global Health Research Unit, allowing us to expand our research profile and in turn our contribution towards improving the health of disadvantaged groups around the world, working particularly in partnership with colleagues in sub-Saharan African countries. Global Health research activities extend across the School into wide-ranging disciplines including Biomedical Ethics, Psychiatry and Public Health. Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues from other Schools at both Brighton and Sussex Universities and at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) are facilitated through a Global Health Network that meets regularly. We also work in partnership with community organisation and non-governmental organisation working in global health, many of which are based locally.

**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: [www.brighton.ac.uk/about-us/](http://www.brighton.ac.uk/about-us/)

**Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals Trust** is the regional teaching hospital working across two sites: the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton and the Princess Royal Hospital in Haywards Heath. Find out more: [www.bsuh.nhs.uk/about-us/](http://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/about-us/)

**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)



<b>Job Title:</b>	Research Associate in HIV and Social Science
<b>Grade:</b>	Research Assistant I, Grade 6
<b>School:</b>	Brighton and Sussex Medical School
<b>Location:</b>	University of Sussex campus
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Principal and Co-Investigator through to Head of School
<b>Direct reports:</b>	Dr Giovanni Villa, Clinical Research Fellow in Medicine and Infectious Diseases and Dr Caroline Ackley, Research Fellow in Medical Anthropology
<b>Key contacts:</b>	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 research team, and also to develop their research skills with support from more experienced members of staff. Specifically, the post-holder will work on a qualitative research study that examines patient experiences and perceptions of two and three drug treatment regimens in Brighton and Hove.

The work is funded by ViiV Healthcare and will be undertaken within BSMS and Brighton and Sussex University Hospital (BSUH) under the direction of Dr Giovanni Villa (Clinical Research Fellow in Medicine and Infectious Diseases) and Dr Caroline Ackley (Research Fellow in Medical Anthropology).

#### **PRINCIPAL ACCONTABILITIES:**

1. To contribute to the research activity on patient experiences and perceptions of HIV treatment 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. Undertake any other reasonable duties that may be requested by the study leads or head of division, as consistent with grade.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Research, Scholarship & Enterprise**

- 1.1 Conduct the research project individually and in collaboration with others.
- 1.2 Analyse and interpret research findings and draw conclusions on the outcomes.
- 1.3 Contribute to the writing of reports and other dissemination activities.
- 1.4 Contribute to the preparation of proposals and applications to external bodies, for example for funding purposes.
- 1.5 Build internal contacts and participate in internal networks and relevant external networks in order to form relationships and collaborations.
- 1.6 Continually update knowledge and understanding in field or specialism, and engage in continuous professional development.

### **2. Teaching & Student Support**

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

### **3. Contribution to School & University**

- 3.1 Attend and contribute to relevant School and project meetings.
- 3.2 Undertake additional duties, as required by the Chief Investigator and/or Head of School.

### **4. Role-specific duties**

The post provides an outstanding opportunity for a researcher in the field of social sciences/anthropology to undertake research in the area of HIV and patients' reported outcomes of treatment. 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 Sussex Beacon. They will be located at the Medical Research Building of Brighton and Sussex Medical School, University of Sussex Campus at Falmer.

The successful applicant will be expected to have an emerging record of qualitative research, and experience 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 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 research project

1. Recruitment of participants, data acquisition via interviews and focus group discussions, data analysis, writing, presentation and publication of findings.
2. Collaborate with other clinical, health services and researchers within the Medical School and relevant NHS trusts (Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Brighton and Sussex University Hospital Trust and the Sussex Beacon). The postholder should be able to work closely and co-operatively with other researchers and clinicians, involving them as appropriate in the research project.
3. To initiate and assist technically in the running and overseeing of a specific research study within The Brighton and Sussex Centre for Global Health.

In addition to undertaking qualitative research on reported treatment outcomes in people living with HIV, the research associate will be expected to assist with aspects of research administration including application for ethical approval 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 the study.

## **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 managers (Dr Giovanni Villa and Dr Caroline Ackley). 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 PhD, or other equivalent qualification, or appropriate level of experience, as appropriate to the discipline (see role-specific criteria below);
2. A degree in medical anthropology, health or social sciences or similar awarded to a high level;
3. Evidence of engagement in high-quality research activity in qualitative methods and analysis;
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. Experience of qualitative research methods including interview skills and methods of analysis;
2. Excellent research-related computing skills: word processing; reference management databases (Endnote, Zotero); and packages to support data analysis (e.g. NVIVO);
3. Research experience in health sciences;
4. Clear understanding of the sensitivities surrounding research with people living with HIV;
5. Research experience utilising qualitative methods.

### **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 working with clinical populations in a research setting;
3. Able to: prioritize competing workloads; grasp new information and learn new skills quickly; and be self-supporting.