Job Title: Research Associate
Salary: £38,205 to £44,263 per annum, pro rata if part-time
Grade: 7
Department: Department of Population Health Sciences
Hours/Contract: Full-time, part-time (minimum 0.8FTE, 30 hours per week) or job share, fixed term contract till 31 March 2026
Job Family: Teaching and Research
Job Reference: 10305

Role Purpose

You will work collaboratively and independently as part of a research team to achieve defined milestones and produce high quality research for a project on healthcare workforce wellbeing within the implementation theme of the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration East Midlands.

The wellbeing of the healthcare workforce is critical – when staff are well they are less likely to be off sick or leave the organization, and patients receive safer care and have a better experience in hospital. Despite these links, workforce wellbeing within the NHS is poor, particularly psychological wellbeing, with record rates of stress, anxiety and burnout.

Staff wellbeing interventions have been shown to improve staff's psychological wellbeing and increase rates of compassion. However, we do not know enough about how services prioritize and implement such interventions and how this can be optimized. This includes how different interventions are prioritized, and the processes involved in trying to make them a success, particularly in clinical areas which are short staffed and under pressure.

Through qualitative methodology, the project will:

- Review existing research related to workforce wellbeing intervention implementation

- Explore the experiences of individuals tasked with implementing such interventions

- Understand how they prioritize interventions and the barriers and enablers to the successful implementation of interventions

The project will help to understand how to make wellbeing interventions a 'normal' part of practice, sharing findings across practice, policy, and academic audiences. Improving access to interventions for staff will help to improve their experiences of work and their wellbeing, and have a positive impact on patient experience, outcomes and on broader service delivery.

Main Duties and Responsibilities
Research - To undertake a specific role in the research project, taking responsibility for some element(s) of the planned research. - To lead in the collection, evaluation and interpretation of the research data and work autonomously to attain project milestones. - To contribute to the development of the choice of techniques, critiques, approaches, models and methods.

- To contribute to the overall research programme using innovative research models, novel approaches and techniques.

- In agreement with the line manager, liaise with project collaborators to progress the research.

- To lead in writing up research findings for dissemination amongst the research team and broader international community, and develop ideas and contributions for future grants, technical outputs.

- To represent the research group by disseminating results/findings at national and/or international conferences and broader community.

- To contribute to research outputs as a co-author to e.g. journal articles, technical papers, monograph, book chapter.

- To develop and carry out a plan to extend an area of personal research, or contribute as a team member to the development of a broader programme, this may include contributing to the writing of research bids/grants.

- With the support of colleagues, identify opportunities to apply for fellowships and/or further project grants.

- To provide guidance to other staff and students (involved in the research programme).

Professional Development

- Duties and opportunities to engage in work that support your own professional development.

Impact and Knowledge Exchange

- Network and contribute to the maintaining and furthering of the wider research programme and research area.

- To contribute to collaborations.

- To consult effectively on own specialism directly with people external to the University.

- To engage positively and pro-actively in research impact.

Leadership and Citizenship

- Guidance to other team members, both research staff and students.

- Pro-actively build networks and collaborations.

- Providing mentoring and coaching to Early Career Researchers and research students.

Internal and External Relationships

- Regular meetings with members of the relevant research group

- Meeting members of the department for critical discussion of the research and exchange of new ideas and approaches that might benefit the research

- NHS staff

- Liaison with external collaborators

Planning and Organising

You will be required to effectively manage your time to plan your research activity and to deliver on the priorities of the project:

- Prioritize tasks within agreed work schedules.

- Plan for specific aspects of research incorporating issues such as deadlines, project milestones and overall research aims.

- Adapt daily and weekly plans to accommodate new developments and be flexible to the changing priorities of the research project.

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- PhD or equivalent in an appropriate discipline (e.g. health, social science, psychology) or the equivalent professional qualification and experience *

- Evidence of a contribution to peer-reviewed journal papers or equivalent*

- Evidence of proven analytical problem-solving capability *

- Expertise in qualitative methodology *

Desirable

- Experience of research in a healthcare context

- Expertise in wellbeing and/or implementation science

Skills, Abilities and Competencies

Essential

- Willingness and ability to work with internal and external stakeholders*

- Evidence of continued development of subject expertise*

- Excellent communication skills – written and verbal evidenced by the ability to communicate complex information *

- Evidence of working effectively as part of a team and the ability to work independently *

- Working towards independence and ability to be involved in collaborative research

- Evidence and commitment to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for yourself, and encourage commitment to learn and develop in others

- Collegiate member of a research team

Desirable

- Budget management skills

*Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview

Reason for Fixed Term Contract

The reason for the fixed term contract is stated in section 1.9 in the summary of contractual terms in your contract of employment.

NHS Research Governance Requirements

Where it is determined that the duties of this post for the purposes of research involve work with the NHS, it is necessary to ensure that the performance of the duties attached to the post are covered by NHS research governance arrangements and the appointee must comply with all such arrangements, which may include occupational health clearance and DBS clearance.

Criminal Declaration

If you become an employee, you must inform your manager immediately, in writing, if you are the subject of any current or future police investigations/legal proceedings, which could result in a criminal office, conviction, caution, bind-over or charges, or warnings.

Supporting University Activities

As a University of Leicester citizen, you are expected to support key university activities such as clearing, graduation ceremonies, student registration and recruitment open days. We expect all staff as citizens to work flexibly across the University if required.

University Values

Inclusive - We are diverse in our makeup and united in ambition. Our diversity is our strength and makes our community stronger.

Inspiring - We are passionate about inspiring individuals to succeed and realise their ambitions. We challenge our community to think differently, to get involved, and to constantly embrace new ideas.

Impactful - As Citizens of Change we will generate new ideas which deliver impact and empower our community

Equity and Diversity

We believe that equity, diversity and inclusion is integral to a successful modern workplace. By developing and implementing policies and systems that challenge stereotypes across all aspects of our work, we have a culture that recognises and values the diverse contributions of our staff which benefits everyone. Our strong values of inclusivity and equity support our efforts to attract a diverse range of high quality staff and students, and identify our University as a progressive and innovative workplace that mainstreams equity, diversity and inclusion.