Research Fellow in Evidence Synthesis
Centre for Reviews and Dissemination

Closing date: 5 January 2018
Interview date: TBC
Vacancy reference: 6218
INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) is a research department that specialises in evidence synthesis across a range of areas to provide best evidence to inform health policy and practice. Established in 1994, the Centre has played a key role in developing underpinning methods and in establishing the value of evidence synthesis in health decision-making. In alignment with a new University research strategy, and with University backing, CRD is extending the scope of its research both within and beyond health. We have recently been awarded a number of new contracts and projects and are seeking to build capacity and expertise across health, social care and public policy (e.g., housing, transport) and are looking to recruit an additional Grade 6 Research Fellow in evidence synthesis to join our expanding team.

Applications are welcome from candidates with a first degree and a relevant Masters level qualification in a health, science or social science subject. Candidates will preferably have a PhD in a relevant topic. The successful candidate will have a good understanding of systematic review and prior experience of health related research. You will have the opportunity to work across programmes of research, and projects will be aligned with skills and experience and, wherever possible, with area of interest. We are keen to receive applications from those with knowledge, qualifications or experience of medical statistics, diagnostic research, individual participant data synthesis, qualitative research, rapid review or knowledge translation.

Salary: £31,604 – £38,832 a year. The post is available immediately and appointments will be made for an initial fixed-term period of three years.
Main purpose of the role

CRD Research Fellows work as part of multi-disciplinary teams to deliver systematic reviews and other evidence synthesis projects, often to tight deadlines. Each project team is headed by an experienced Research Fellow, who oversees the project and manages the team. All members of staff have a line manager who provides guidance and mentorship.

Research Fellows contribute to all aspects of systematic review including screening articles for inclusion, quality and risk of bias assessment, data extraction, data collection, data management, data synthesis (quantitative and qualitative), interpreting results and writing research reports and papers. Research Fellows with appropriate skills contribute to other types of synthesis including individual participant data and network meta-analyses, and work with health economists to build decision models. They may also work on developing methods both within reviews and as standalone projects.

Grade 6 Research Fellows mainly work under the supervision of a project manager, taking responsibility for agreed sections of a project. They actively contribute to team meetings and communicate effectively with other team members.

Presentation of project findings at internal and external meetings and at conferences is an expectation of the role.

We offer external training courses in evidence synthesis and Research Fellows are encouraged and supported to contribute to this activity.

Key responsibilities

(Role holders will be required to undertake some or all of the duties below)

- Undertake evidence synthesis projects (as part of a team or individually) according to expertise, experience and need within CRD. These may include:
  - Systematic review
  - Rapid synthesis
  - IPD meta-analysis
  - Methodological projects

- Depending on the type of project this may require the ability to:
  - Critically review relevant literature
  - Identify, collect and manage data
  - Undertake quantitative analysis including network meta-analysis
  - Undertake statistical analysis using IPD from trials and observational studies
  - Undertake analysis of qualitative data

- Write or contribute to writing reports and academic papers
- Present and disseminate research findings
- Help devise and plan research projects
- Assist in developing grant and funding applications
- Contribute to the development and delivery of short courses and other training events, as required
- Contribute to knowledge translation activity, as required
- Undertake administrative duties and roles within CRD, as assigned.
## PERSON SPECIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First degree in a relevant health, science or social science subject</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant Masters-level qualification</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD or equivalent relevant experience</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principles and methods of systematic review and meta-analysis</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed understanding of the methods of at least one of the following: health technology assessment reviews, rapid reviews, public health reviews, diagnostic reviews, reviews of qualitative studies, IPD reviews, medical statistics</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Skills, abilities and competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills, abilities and competencies</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong skills in quantitative or qualitative analysis</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to develop research ideas, projects and proposals, with supervision if required</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent writing and presentation skills</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good IT skills</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good communication and inter-personal skills</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to select appropriate methods and apply the principles of evidence synthesis in practice</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to engage and communicate with non-researchers</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivering work to agreed deadlines</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematic review or meta-analysis (eg study selection, critical appraisal of research studies, synthesis)</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using systematic review software (e.g. Eppi Reviewer, RevMan)</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using statistical software packages (e.g. SAS, SPSS, r)</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertaking network meta-analysis and/or statistical analysis of IPD</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing and/or presenting teaching materials</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing or contributing to research proposals</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal attributes</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An interest in and enthusiasm for evidence synthesis and/or knowledge translation</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to work constructively as part of a team</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to work on own initiative</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention to detail and commitments to producing high quality outputs</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to solve problems and innovate</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to developing new skills and personal development</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to undertake administrative responsibilities</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have the ambition to build a career in evidence synthesis</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (https://www.york.ac.uk/crd) is a research department that specialises in evidence synthesis, characterised by high quality and strong methodological underpinning. The Centre contributes to the University of York’s outstanding track record in delivering policy relevant health research that achieves significant national and international impact. We do this as part of a network of departments engaged in health research, including the Centre for Health Economics (CHE), the Department of Health Sciences, the Social Policy Research Unit (SPRU) and the Hull York Medical School (HYMS) – a broad, multi-disciplinary grouping that includes academic public health, primary care, and secondary health service expertise as well as strengths in epidemiology, trials, evidence synthesis, informatics, bioethics and social policy research.

The world leading research undertaken by CRD, CHE, the Department of Health Sciences and HYMS has been recognised by the University of York’s ranking as equal 7th for Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care in the 2014 UK Research Excellence Framework and joint first for research environment. The results show that 83% of our research was rated as “world leading” or “internationally excellent”.

As well as the TAR programme, CRD hosts an NIHR HS&DR Evidence Synthesis Centre, the Cochrane Common Mental Disorders Review Group, a Cochrane programme grant and partners in the Department of Health Policy Reviews Facility and the Policy Research Programme Public Health Research Consortium.

CRD currently has 39 members of staff consisting of researchers, clinicians, information specialists, administrative staff and postgraduates, including NIHR Academic Clinical Fellows. We also host Visiting Academic Fellows. Our HTAs, systematic reviews and other synthesis projects are performed in multi-disciplinary teams involving health researchers, statisticians, health economists, information specialists and clinical and topic experts. We collaborate widely with colleagues in other University departments, with relevant groups in the UK and internationally, and have strong links with both the Cochrane and Campbell Collaborations and with the Society for Research Synthesis Methods.

Current areas of research

Our current research activity spans health technology assessment, public health and policy and service delivery and organisation, all underpinned by a programme of methodological development and knowledge translation activity, funded mainly by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).
THE DEPARTMENT

**Health Technology Assessment**

Our largest programme is in health technology assessment. This includes Technology Assessment Reviews (TAR) funded by the NIHR Health Technology Assessment Programme, which are undertaken in collaboration with CHE. We undertake systematic review, synthesis and decision modelling under the Multiple Technology Appraisal process and the Diagnostic Assessment Programme, and carry out critical reviews of manufacturer submissions under the Single Technology Appraisal process, for NICE.

Outside of TAR, we undertake systematic reviews and economic evaluations of benefits, harms and costs of a range of healthcare interventions. Current work includes:

- NIHR Cochrane Programme of nutritional interventions to promote optimal growth and development in preterm infants
- NIHR Postdoctoral Fellowship to assess strategies to rationalise antibiotic use in children with cancer
- Patient Centred Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) funded IPD meta-analysis of progestogen for prevention of preterm birth
- NIHR funded systematic review of interventions for complex trauma
- NIHR HTA funded IPD meta-analysis of applied behavioural analysis (ABA) interventions in children with autism spectrum disorder

**Public health and policy**

CRD has a track record of undertaking systematic reviews to address important public health questions. As a collaborator in the DH Policy Research Programme (PRP) funded Public Health Research Consortium we are undertaking a programme of work on multiple risk behaviours.

We work in partnership with the EPPI-Centre, London and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine to provide the Department of Health (DH) Policy Reviews Facility that supports national policy development and implementation, develops improved methods for evidence synthesis and promotes global awareness of the importance of reviews in decision-making.

**Service Delivery and Organisation**

CRD hosts one of the NIHR Health Services and Delivery Research (HS&DR) Evidence Synthesis Centres. We provide timely and contextualised access to the best evidence on topics of key importance to the NHS, which inform the organisation and delivery of health services. We synthesise the evidence and summarise our evaluation of the quality and strength of findings, producing targeted outputs in
THE DEPARTMENT

appropriate formats that provide clear messages in complex areas. The programme is led by CRD in collaboration with SPRU and CHE.

Cochrane Common Mental Disorders Review Group

CRD hosts the Common Mental Disorder (CMD) Group which is one of 52 Cochrane review groups worldwide. CMD is an international network of individuals and organizations committed to preparing and disseminating systematic reviews on the prevention and treatment of common mental disorders such as depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, somatoform disorders and suicide. Cochrane systematic reviews are published in The Cochrane Library. Cochrane reviews are recognised as the gold standard in evidence-based health care.

Underpinning methods of synthesis

Methodological development underpins all of our research and we have particular interests in network meta-analysis and IPD synthesis including enhancement of statistical models, risk prediction and combining observational with experimental data. We are involved in developing approaches to utilise trial data and information increasingly being released under open data and data sharing initiatives and are defining methods and approaches to “rapid evidence synthesis” and “living systematic reviews”. We are active in producing methodological guidance and reporting guidelines including CRD’s handbook on undertaking systematic review and the PRISMA extensions for protocols and for systematic review and IPD meta-analysis, and with the MRC Social and Public Health Sciences Unit at the University of Glasgow we are developing reporting guidelines on the methods of narrative synthesis.

Knowledge Translation

Active dissemination and knowledge transfer is integral to CRD research and we aim to communicate research findings in ways that maximise usefulness, uptake and use in practice. Effectiveness Matters is a CRD bulletin that provides concise summaries of reliable research evidence for practitioners and decision makers in the NHS and public health.
Founded on principles of excellence, equality and opportunity for all, the University of York opened in 1963 with just 230 students. In 2017 it is the home of more than 17,000 students across more than 30 academic departments and research centres. Since opening over fifty years ago, we have become one of the world’s leading universities and a member of the prestigious Russell Group.

We are consistently recognised as one of the leading Higher Education Institutes and one of just six post-war universities which appear in the world top 100 (2013-14) and 15th in the Times & Sunday Times league table (2016). The University of York has won six Times Higher Education (THE) Awards and five Queen’s Anniversary Prizes.

The University is proud of its association with Athena SWAN, holding 12 awards in support of gender equality, representation and success for all, with gold awards for Chemistry and Biology and a University-wide bronze award.

Of 154 universities that took part in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014, The University of York ranked 14th overall and 10th for the impact of our research. The University is consistently in the top ten UK research universities and attracts over £60m a year of funding from research alone.

Our vision is to make the University of York a world leader in the creation of knowledge through fundamental and applied research, the sharing of knowledge by teaching students from varied backgrounds and the application of knowledge for the health, prosperity and well-being of people and society.
Attractive workplace

Centred around the picturesque village of Heslington on the edge of the city of York, our colleges are set in an attractive landscaped campus. York enjoys a safe, friendly atmosphere with facilities including bars, shops, theatres and concert halls all within easy walking distance.

The University has undergone an unprecedented period of expansion and renewal since 2000. We have invested in twenty new buildings on the original campus and have completed the first and second phases of a £750m campus expansion. Our investment in new colleges, teaching and learning spaces, laboratories, research facilities and a new sports village mean there has never been a better time to join us.

During this period of change we’ve worked hard to retain our friendly, informal and collegiate atmosphere, which is important to our core values of inclusivity and interdisciplinarity.

We have a thriving international community and are committed to providing staff moving to York with as much support as possible through our Relocation Package and Welcome Officers.

The University aims to offer a nurturing and supportive environment as an employer. Flexible working hours, nursery facilities, childcare vouchers, cycle to work scheme, generous holidays and an attractive pension scheme all make the University of York one of the region’s leading employers.

For further information please visit our employee benefit pages.
THE CITY AND THE REGION

The City of York

Internationally acclaimed for its rich heritage and historic architecture, York's bustling streets are filled with visitors from all over the world. Within its medieval walls you will find the iconic gothic Minster, Clifford's Tower and the Shambles - just a few of the many attractions.

But York isn't just a great place to visit - it's also a great place to live and work. While nourishing a vibrant cosmopolitan atmosphere, York still maintains the friendly sense of community unique to a small city.

Visit www.visityork.org for more information on the city of York.

Shopping, culture and entertainment

York boasts specialist and unique boutiques but also all the high street stores on its busy shopping streets. Alongside them you will find cinemas, theatres, an opera house, art galleries, a vast range of restaurants, live music venues and clubs. York is particularly renowned for its multitude of pubs and bars, from the modern to the medieval.

Housing and schools

Whether you choose to live close to the city, in one of the surrounding villages or further afield, you will find a wide range of housing within comfortable distance of York and the University. For families, the area has a range of excellent schools both in the state and independent sector.

Great location

York is one of Britain's best-connected cities. Halfway between London and Edinburgh on the East Coast mainline, on intercity trains you can reach London King's Cross in less than two hours and Edinburgh in two and a half hours. York is also well served by road links, and it is easily accessible from the A1, M1 and the M62.

For those travelling from overseas, Manchester Airport is two hours away and Heathrow Airport just three and a half. Flights from nearby Leeds Bradford Airport provide easy access to mainland Europe. By Eurostar from London St Pancras, Paris is just over six hours away.

Yorkshire

The Lonely Planet guide recently declared Yorkshire the third best region in the world to visit. There is something to cater to every taste, whether it be the rugged landscapes of the Moors or the Dales, the picturesque seaside towns of Scarborough and Robin Hoods Bay, the gothic architecture of Whitby or the vibrancy of cosmopolitan Leeds.
Apply online

- Go to https://jobs.york.ac.uk
- Find this job using reference 6218
- Complete the online application form

You will need to submit your completed application by midnight (local UK time) on 5 January 2018.

What will I need?

You will need to upload:
- your CV
- a letter describing how you meet the requirements of the job

You will also need details of 2 referees.

Help and assistance

Direct any informal queries to Vanda Castle at vanda.castle@york.ac.uk

If you have any questions about your application, contact the HR Services team:

recruitment@york.ac.uk
+44 (0)1904 324835