Research Associate

**Department:** Social Policy and Social Work

**Hours of work:** Full time, 37 hours per week

**Contract type:** Fixed-term for 9 months

**Salary:** Grade 6, £32,817 a year
Introduction

This is an exciting opportunity to join a growing and friendly research group in the International Centre for Mental Health Social Research in the Department of Social Policy and Social Work. We are looking for a skilled and versatile Research Associate to work on a study, which aims to develop and test a new standard of the Triangle of Care. This will aim to ensure unpaid carers receive appropriate support when the person they provide care for is on leave from hospital during compulsory detentions under the Mental Health Act 1983 (MHA).

The study will involve multiple research methods. It began with a systematic scoping review of peer-reviewed papers reporting studies about support provided to carers of people with mental health problems during hospital admissions. This informed the development of a new s.17 standard for the Triangle of Care, which is being co-designed with carers and practitioners in interviews and Theory of Change workshops. The new s.17 standard of the Triangle of Care will then be tested for signals of efficacy in a non-randomised controlled pre-post study. We will support the implementation of the new s.17 standard in inpatient wards and community mental health teams within two sites and compare outcomes with sites where the s.17 standard will not be introduced. Outcomes for carers will be evaluated using structured telephone interviews at baseline after the hospital admission, two weeks following the first period of home leave under s.17 MHA and six months later. A process evaluation will explore carers’ experience of support provided and the practicality of the implementation of the new s.17 standard for mental health services.

Funded by the NIHR School for Social Care Research for 9 months maternity cover from mid-May 2021, the post holder will have experience of using multiple research methods, an excellent knowledge of social care and mental health services and a passion for undertaking impactful research. The post holder will receive support and mentorship from Professor Martin Webber and colleagues in the International Centre for Mental Health Social Research.

Main purpose of the role

- To conduct research under the supervision of senior colleagues and to contribute to the production of research
- To assist in the identification and development of potential areas of research and the development of proposals for independent or collaborative research projects

Key responsibilities

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

- To conduct individual and collaborative research projects, duties to include: participant recruitment and data collection; use of appropriate research techniques and methods; analysis and interpretation of research data; writing up of research results and dissemination through publications, seminar and conference presentations and public engagement and outreach activities; contributing to the identification of possible new areas of research
- To contribute to the preparation of research proposals and applications to external bodies
- To undertake appropriate organisational and administrative activities connected to the research project, including conference organisation, and the development of promotional or educational material including website maintenance and development
- To develop and initiate collaborative working internally and externally, duties to include: the building of internal contacts and participation in internal networks; collaboration with colleagues on joint projects as required; participation in and identification of external networks in order to share information and identify potential opportunities for collaboration and possible sources of funding; attendance at and contribution to relevant meetings
- To provide guidance to other staff and students, as required, as well as coordinating the work of small research teams
- To assist with undergraduate teaching in own area of expertise.
## Person specification

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<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Essential / Desirable</th>
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<tr>
<td>First degree in a social science or health science subject</td>
<td>Essential</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhD in a social science or health science subject or equivalent experience</td>
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**Knowledge**

- Knowledge in mental health social care to engage in high quality research    | Essential             |
- Knowledge of a range of research techniques and methodologies                | Essential             |
- Has research expertise in an area that will complement and enhance the department's research strategy and goals | Essential             |
- Knowledge of UK mental health services and needs of unpaid carers             | Essential             |
- Knowledge of the processes involved in developing and evaluating social interventions | Essential             |

**Skills, abilities and competencies**

- Ability to work with agility and flexibility with team members, research participants and other stakeholders | Essential             |
- Ability to work collaboratively with service users, carers and practitioners  | Essential             |
- Highly developed communication skills to engage effectively with a wide-ranging audience, both orally and in writing, using a range of media | Essential             |
- Ability to write up research work for publication in high profile journals and engage in public dissemination | Essential             |
- Ability to develop research objectives, projects and proposals for own and joint research, with the assistance of a mentor if required | Essential             |
- Competency to conduct individual and collaborative research projects          | Essential             |
- Ability to identify sources of funding and contribute to the process of securing funds, with collaborators if required | Desirable             |
- Competency to make presentations at conferences or exhibit work in other appropriate events | Essential             |

**Experience**

- Experience of carrying out both independent and collaborative research       | Essential             |
- Experience of writing up research work for publication                      | Essential             |
- Ability to work as part of a team and also to work independently using own initiative | Essential             |
- Experience of conducting research in mental health or social care services  | Essential             |

**Personal Attributes**

- Attention to detail and commitment to high quality                          | Essential             |
- Collaborative ethos                                                         | Essential             |
- Interest in and enthusiasm for the subject matter of the project(s)          | Essential             |
- Positive attitude to colleagues and students                                | Essential             |
- Willingness to work proactively with colleagues in other work areas/institutions | Essential             |
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<td>Ability to plan and prioritise own work in order to meet deadlines, including using initiative to plan research programmes</td>
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<td>Commitment to personal development and updating of knowledge and skills</td>
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<td>Ability to travel throughout England as required by the project</td>
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