Job Description

Job Title: Research Assistant in Mental Health
Job Ref: HED371
Campus: Hendon
Grade: Grade 6
Salary: £31,834 - £36,508 (Inclusive of Outer London Weighting)
Period: 36 months
Reporting To: Dr Tim Weaver

Job Holder: None

Role Summary
The role will be held by a graduate, postgraduate or post-doctoral researcher.

Job Purpose
To contribute to an NIHR funded research programme. (Open Dialogue: Development and Evaluation of a Social Network Intervention for Severe Mental Illness - ODDESSI). Open Dialogue (OD) is a new method for working with people in crisis. An OD team works with the service user from initial crisis and beyond, organising treatment and longer term care to prevent crises recurring. The ODDESSI programme is designed to support and monitor the implementation of OD in UK mental health services, design and pilot the methodology for its evaluation and ultimately conduct a randomised controlled trial which measures its effectiveness.

The post-holder will provide research and project support to senior researchers throughout the programme initially focusing on an assessment of implementation against fidelity criteria, then supporting a feasibility study before working on a process evaluation alongside the proposed trial. The postholder will be required to work co-productively with both practitioner researchers and service user researchers.

Main responsibilities:

Research

- Individually or with others, contribute to the research project through undertaking fieldwork and/or focus groups, using both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies
- To undertake literature reviews and contribute to the production of research reports, conference papers, and peer-reviewed journals where appropriate.
- To liaise with project and programme partners internally and externally to support the delivery of the research project and/or programme
- To liaise with all practitioners (including peer support workers) in mental health services to ensure the smooth and efficient completion of research procedures
- To support the development of qualitative and quantitative research methodology that;
  - provides a clear description of the implementation and practice of open dialogue,
enables the feasibility of a cluster randomised controlled trial of OD to be assessed, and,
provides a framework for a process evaluation that describes the conduct of the cluster randomised controlled trial, and assesses the influence which contextual factors have upon trial implementation and treatment outcomes.

- To plan, conduct, analyse qualitative interviews and focus groups with mental health practitioners (including peer support workers) who deliver OD, and service users and carers in receipt of OD.

- Work supportively and flexibly with service user researchers undertaking fieldwork.

- To co-ordinate the collection and analysis of quantitative data relating to OD team activity, and the attitudes and experience of study participants.

- Continually update own knowledge in the field of specialism

Administration

- Support the Lead Researcher with the coordination of research activity, as agreed

- Provide administrative support to the project to include but not limited to the organisation of fieldwork, project meetings events and the dissemination of information to stakeholders.
PERSON SPECIFICATION

Post Title: Research Assistant in Mental Health

Essential requirements

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- Appropriate academic qualifications and experience (normally a postgraduate degree or equivalent)

- Understanding of research methods and research designs including an understanding of randomised controlled trial methodology.

- Experience of using a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods and data analysis techniques

- Experience of working and communicating with mental health service staff and the users of mental health services OR the ability to demonstrate understanding of the issues involved in working with these groups

- Evidence of ability or aptitude to undertake research interviews with mental health service users, carers and practitioners

- Understanding of, and a commitment to service user involvement in research and an appreciation of the value of experiential knowledge in research.

- Evidence of ability or aptitude to work with service user researchers.

- Proven computer literacy in standard office software applications

- Ability to communicate effectively within a team and externally, in writing and orally

- The ability to work as part of a team but also organise and undertake a schedule of work on his/her own initiative.

- Evidence of work directly relevant to supporting the production of research reports within an academic environment

- Willingness to travel and undertake extensive fieldwork

Hours: You will be expected to work hours as are reasonably necessary in order to fulfil your duties and responsibilities.

Leave: 30 days per annum plus eight Bank Holidays and seven University days taken at Christmas (pro rata for part-time staff) which may need to be taken as time off in lieu.
**Flexibility:** Please note that given the need for flexibility in order to meet the changing requirements of the University, the duties and location of this post and the role of the post-holder may be changed after consultation. The balance of duties may vary over time and will be reviewed as part of the appraisal process.

**No Parking at Hendon campus:** There are no parking facilities for new staff joining our Hendon campus, except for Blue Badge holders. If you are applying for a post at our Hendon Campus please ensure you can commute without using a car.

Information on public transport to Hendon can be found here: [http://www.mdx.ac.uk/aboutus/Location/hendon/directions/index.aspx](http://www.mdx.ac.uk/aboutus/Location/hendon/directions/index.aspx)

We offer an interest-free season ticket loan, interest-free motorbike loan, and bicycle and motorbike parking and changing facilities.

Flexible working applications (including part-time working) will be considered.

**Closing date** for receipt of applications: Please see job advertisement

Interview date: Please see job advertisement

**What Happens Next?**
If you wish to discuss the job in further detail please contact Dr Tim Weaver, Associate Professor of Mental Health Research ([t.weaver@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:t.weaver@mdx.ac.uk) / 0208 411 6065) If selected for interview, you will hear directly from someone in the School/Service/Campus, usually within 3 weeks of the closing date.