



NIHR | Global Health Research Centre
for Non-communicable Disease
Control in West Africa

Call for Applications Research fellow based in the GCPS

17 October 2022

INTRODUCTION

Full time Post-doctoral researchers /research fellows in the disciplinary areas of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Health Economics and Health Social Science are sought for the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons (GCPS) for an initial contract period of one year from 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023. The contract is renewable annually up to 30th September 2027, subject to satisfactory performance

OVERVIEW OF STOP NCD

STOP NCD is a five-year UK NIHR funded project that will run from 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2027. West Africa faces a rising burden of non-communicable diseases (NCD) such as hypertension, diabetes, and co-existing mental health disorders (stress, anxiety and depression). Disease control priorities have been traditionally driven by the burden of communicable diseases, such as malaria. The region has been slowly responding to the increasing NCD burden, and most interventions addressed individual diseases rather than focus holistically on people. There is an urgent need for capacity to conduct high-quality research to inform effective, evidence-based, and people-centered approaches to NCD control, adapted to West African settings.

We aim to improve health and wellbeing of populations in West Africa by developing capacity for high-quality research to inform improved prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of inter-connected NCDs (hypertension, diabetes, and co-existing stress, anxiety, and depression).

To do this we will:

- Work in three West African countries (Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Niger) with varying ethnic-socio-cultural-economic environments to develop, implement and evaluate ways of improving control of hypertension, diabetes and related stress, anxiety, and depression.

- We will start by analyzing roles of key stakeholders (patients and communities, health workers, managers, policymakers) in the development, provision, and use of NCD policies, programmes, and services in each country, using appropriate methods such as analysis of available data, observations and interviews.
- Working closely with those stakeholders, we will co-produce packages of interventions for improving NCD control. This package will include adapting international guidelines to local contexts and supporting healthcare workers in implementing these, and establishing a community-based prevention, early-detection and management of NCDs;
- We will implement and rigorously evaluate the interventions packages for their costs and effectiveness, assess their potential for wide-scale application, and will identify transferable lessons for improving NCD control beyond these three countries.

Throughout these steps, we will:

- strengthen individual skills and expertise, organisational systems and processes and system-wide networking capabilities and leadership of researchers (to conduct high-quality research), local communities (to engage with, and understand, how to enable healthy lifestyles) and policymakers and practitioners (to implement evidence-based NCD interventions);
- engage with key stakeholders (patients, health workers, managers) for consulting on their views, preferences and expectations, sharing results as they emerge and facilitating uptake of research results into their decisions and practices;
- maintain equitable international partnerships, through shared leadership involving both senior and earlier-career staff, and equally distributed management responsibilities.

Promoting the findings

Networking, prolonged engagements with, and deep understanding of, local communities and other stakeholders (for example, health workers, policymakers) will help promote research dissemination, communication, and uptake. This will include understanding stakeholder perspectives and proactively involving them in co-production, implementation, and evaluation of interventions packages. We will share research results with different audiences, through easy-to-understand leaflets, briefs, audio-visual materials, adapted guidelines, policy dialogues, academic publications, and conference presentations.

The Position

The position is a full time one and the applicant must be able to start work in the position with effect from 1st January 2023. Candidates must be resident in Ghana for the full five-year duration of the project and able to travel to Burkina Faso and Niger periodically as required. The position is based in Ghana College of Physicians Surgeons (GCPS) Accra Ghana but requires work with colleagues in Ashesi University in Ghana, LASDEL (Research Organization) in Niger, Catholic University of West Africa Bobo-dioulasso (UCAO-UUB) in Burkina Faso and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) in the UK. The

ability to communicate reasonably well in French though not mandatory will be an advantage.

The research fellow / postdoctoral researcher will work with the Senior Researchers and other team members to execute the project. They must be able to function somewhat independently and participate in conceptualization, design, organization and conduct of the STOP NCD research project. This includes assisting with developing and submitting protocols for ethical clearance, desk reviews such as scoping reviews, systematic reviews, and qualitative synthesis, implementing research using established scientific protocols and procedures; summarize findings and publish results in international peer reviewed research journals. They must also be able to provide supervision and guidance to clinical and public health research interns, master's level researchers, students and research assistants. Given capacity building is an important component of this project, they must also be willing to support the research capacity building and teaching programs as relevant.

All applications must be sent to nea_enyimayew@gmail.com. / gevaye@gcps.edu.gh with a copy to iagyepong@gcps.edu.gh

Applications must be received before midnight (12.00amGMT) on Sunday 20th November 2022. Shortlisted applicants must be ready and able to participate the online interviews that are part of the stage two of the selection process. There will be a final screening process involving face to face interview. Successful applicants must be able to start work effective 1st January 2023.

Applications must include:

- A cover letter explaining the candidate's interest in the position and which of the following post-doctoral /research fellow positions they are interested in:
 - Biostatistics /Epidemiology
 - Health Economics
 - Health Social Sciences
- An up to date CV that contains information on:
 - Educational training and qualifications with names of institution and dates of graduation
 - work experience
 - Any publications including masters and doctoral thesis dissertations. Also include a link to the publications that can enable a reviewer to read and evaluate them
 - Age and Sex
 - Languages spoken, written and fluency
 - Current residence
 - Names, Email and Telephone contact of 3 references of whom:
 - one must have supervised the applicant in an academic capacity
 - one must have supervised the applicant in a work /professional capacity
 - the third can belong to any of the first two categories

- Please make sure you inform any references you name on your application since we will contact them directly if you make it to the short list
- Copies of certificates and academic transcripts for undergraduate and post graduate courses

A copy of the detailed job description to guide applicants is as attached.

Job description – Post doctoral research fellow STOP NCD West Africa

Position Summary

The postdoctoral researcher will work with the Senior Researchers to execute the project. They must be able to function somewhat independently and participate in conceptualization, design, organization and conduct of the STOP NCD research project. This includes assisting with developing and submitting protocols for ethical clearance, implementing research using established scientific protocols and procedures; summarize findings and publish results in international peer reviewed research journals. They must also be able to provide supervision and guidance to master's level researchers and students and research assistants.

Reports to:

- The post holder will report technically (research outputs) to Prof Irene Agyepong co-lead based in GCPS and administratively through Prof Irene Agyepong to the GCPS administration,
- They will also be technically accountable for research outputs to Prof Tolib Mirzoev co-lead based in LSHTM.

Supervises:

- Clinical and Public Health Research Interns
- Pre-Doctoral and Masters level researchers
- Research Assistants

Relates with (colleagues)

Other doctoral / post-doctoral researchers on the project in the institutions of the NIHR West African NCD research centre i.e. GCPS, LSHTM, UCAO-UUB Burkina Faso, Ashesi University Ghana, LASDEL Niger)

Specific Duties

- Assist with the design and implementation of research protocols;
- Assist with preparing protocols for and obtaining ethical clearance
- Assist with preparation of grant proposals and technical reports
- Assists with Collection, and analysis of research data; keep a detailed field notebook / maintain a computer database of research data as relevant
- Analyze and present data for presentation in research conferences and for manuscript preparation and publication
- Supervise pre-doctoral researchers and research assistants on the project
- Participate in training of research assistants, students and field workers as needed.
- Search / Assist with literatures, systematic and other desk reviews

- Assist with ordering and procurement of supplies and equipment for research
- Troubleshoot and customize research tools to respond to research questions
- Collaborate resources to complete research plan.
- Generate clear and timely records of research work.
- Present research results at meetings and engage in result publication / Develop figures and manuscripts for publications
- Attend research seminars and research new articles at Principal Investigator's request.
- Communicate ideas and results with members.
- Understand relevant scientific literature.
- Oversee team's junior members.

Minimum Qualifications

- Post graduate training in a relevant field depending on the research track applied for i.e.
 - health social science e.g. Medial Sociology, Medial Anthropology, Psychology,
 - Health Economics
 - Biostatistics and Epidemiology
- Ideally a Ph.D. is an advantage and preferred
- We will however also consider applicants with a strong research masters in the and related research and publication experience
- 0 – 2 years of relevant experience in a research environment.
- Demonstrated ability and interest in scientific writing, publication and analysis
- Fluency in written and spoken French will be an advantage but does not exclude a candidate from consideration

Location of Project Office

Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons, Public Health Faculty

Conditions of Service

Attractive. Depends on qualification and experience. Will be discussed with candidates who make it to the short list