

Job Description

Job title	Research Assistant
Directorate	PEOPLE : Children and Adults
Division	Public Health
Range	MPR 3
Reports to	Principal Research Officer

Main purpose of the job:

Support the NIHR Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) Medway team in the development of research capacity and capability in the council. This includes supporting the synthesis and use of existing research evidence, the development of research projects and seeking opportunities for research funding. This is essential to the prevention of ill health, health improvement and reducing health inequalities.

Carry out a range of administrative tasks to support HDRC research activities such as organising and supporting meetings, taking minutes, managing the research team electronic files and verbal and written communications.

Liaise with stakeholders in a way that promotes the [One Medway Council Plan](#) and embeds our [values and behaviours](#).

Accountabilities and outcomes:

Assist in qualitative and quantitative research including helping to prepare, setup, conduct research and contribute to writing research project reports to support the delivery of business objectives.

Assist in the undertaking of high-quality research products including evidence syntheses, rapid reviews, database searches, research skills training programmes and projects that align with research priorities.

Assist in the development and management of council-led or co-led research studies and funding

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opportunities to support the council to be research active and evidence-led.

Use standard research techniques and methods to deliver robust research products that help the council deliver excellence to Medway's communities.

Proactively problem solve so that research products are delivered according to objectives and deadlines.

Conduct analysis and interpretation of research that help the council deliver excellence to Medway's communities.

Engage with the public to ensure the involvement and engagement of the public and patients in research and associated activities to ensure the public voice throughout all research products.

Build and maintain positive relationships at all levels, including with the public to ensure effective service provision and achievement of corporate objectives.

Keep abreast of relevant changes in legislation, good practice and policy, initiating changes to working practices as required to ensure that services can be effectively delivered.

At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time be agreed, consistent with the nature of the job described above.

Key Corporate Accountabilities:

To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives and targets.

To understand and actively keep up to date with GDPR responsibilities, including completing regular refresher training.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: all employees are required to act in such a way that safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

As a corporate parent, all council employees are responsible for ensuring the well-being and positive outcomes of Medway's care-experienced children and young people.

To participate in the Performance Appraisal process and contribute to the identification of own and team development needs utilising the Career Progression Framework.

Work in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and improving the quality of life and opportunities for everyone living and working in Medway.

To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

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To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder.

Promote the Medway Carbon Neutral by 2050 commitment; supporting the Council action plan to ensure we play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

Medway Council is a Category One responder in relation to the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and as a result all staff working for the Authority may be asked to carry out Category One response duties or stand into the role of another member of staff who is responding to a Major Civil Incident.

Organisation:

This role reports to the Principal Research Officer.

The post holder will not be required to line manage others but may be required to direct, coordinate or train other employees.

The post holder will be required to liaise with all stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.

Working Style:

HYBRID - a flexible working arrangement whereby an employee can undertake their work either in the office and/or partially or mainly from home on a temporary or permanent basis.

Person specification

All criteria at level A are considered essential unless stated otherwise.

Qualifications

Level A

Undergraduate qualification

or

2 year's equivalent relevant experience, reflecting good research skills

A minimum of 5 GCSE at Grade 4-9 including in English & Maths or equivalent Level 2 qualification

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

Evidence of continuous professional development relating to the role requirements.

Knowledge

Level A

Knowledge of the wider determinants of health.

Knowledge of research methods and techniques such as evidence synthesis, rapid reviews and how to conduct database searches.

Knowledge of research analysis and interpretation.

An understanding of ethical considerations in conducting research.

Knowledge of regulatory requirements and best practices for maintaining confidentiality and integrity in research.

An awareness of GDPR legislation and its importance when handling data.

An understanding of equal opportunities and treating others with dignity and respect.

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

Knowledge of health inequalities and inequities.

Knowledge of the most effective methods of involving and engaging the public, internal and external stakeholders in research activities.

An understanding of the HDRC priorities and how this role contributes to these priorities and can explain this to others.

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An understanding of funding processes and the organisations that provide this.

An understanding of the research ethics process.

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

Comprehensive knowledge of a range of research methods and techniques.

An understanding of public health principles and practices and the breadth and complexity of Public Health, NHS and local government operations.

An understanding of Medway Council's priorities and how the HDRC contributes to these priorities.

Knowledge of how research and evidence inform council decision-making.

Knowledge of how local research contributes to the regional and national landscapes (e.g. ARC KSS, other HDRCs).

An understanding of the local data protection (DPIA) and Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) processes.

Experience

Level A

Experience of using quantitative and/or qualitative research methods.

Experience of communicating research findings to a variety of audiences.

Experience of being able to write clearly, concisely and accurately including about potentially complex issues.

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

Experience of working in research in public health in any setting.

Experience of supporting the completion of literature reviews.

Experience working within recognised procedures which leave some room for initiative, including lone working.

Experience of responding independently to unexpected problems and situations and referring to a supervisor/manager when appropriate.

Experience of proactively seeking out new and emerging academic literature and policy documents to keep up to date in key areas.

Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

Experience of working in research in public health in a local authority setting.

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Experience analysing quantitative and qualitative data.

Experience of contributing to the development of research projects, funding bids and research protocols.

Experience of taking the initiative in situations.

Skills

Level A

Able to synthesise literature on a given topic.

Research and communication skills (verbal and written) and a willingness to learn new skills and methods.

Able to organise and have an eye for detail with the ability to handle competing deadlines.

Ability to build and maintain supportive and empathetic relationships at all levels, including with the public.

Ability to work in a team towards project aims, objectives and associated deadlines and to monitor progress against project plans.

Commitment to equality and diversity accepting differences and treating everyone fairly.

Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office applications including Word, Excel, Outlook, Teams and OneNote.

Ability to model high levels of professionalism and professional standards.

Level B (in addition to level A criteria)

Ability to interpret research data, summarise findings and prepare reports.

Able to accurately synthesise literature on a given topic and draw evidence-based conclusions.

Ability to communicate research findings to a variety of audiences and in different formats.

Ability to critically appraise and summarise public health and other literature.

Ability to manage deadlines, interruptions or conflicting demands.

Able to communicate and develop professional relationships with colleagues across different teams within the organisation and stakeholders.

Able to act as a role model to promote equality and manage diversity in the workplace and service provision, ensuring everyone has appropriate and fair access and support.

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Level C (in addition to levels A and B)

Ability to apply qualitative and quantitative research skills to research projects.

Ability to use own judgement and creativity to assess situations, solve problems and adapt to new ways of working.

Ability to use well developed communication skills to present complex/sensitive information in an understandable way, to a range of audiences.

Demonstrate excellent organisational skills by effectively managing own workload and working independently on set tasks and responsibilities.

Ability to start to use negotiation skills.

Ability to involve the public in research with an understanding of equality and diversity.

Ability to use data analysis software packages.

Able to identify own development needs.

Able to advise and work with others to share best practice and new knowledge.