Clinical Research Fellow in Gastrointestinal Cancer

INSTITUTE OF APPLIED HEALTH SCIENCES,
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, MEDICAL SCIENCES & NUTRITION

Closing date: 02 March 2024
Interview date: To Be Confirmed
Reference number: IHS155R
INTRODUCTION

As part of an initiative to consolidate the Aberdeen Clinical Academic Training pathway, an opportunity has arisen for talented clinical trainees to undertake a clinical PhD programme in Health Services Research (focussing in an aspect of gastrointestinal cancer) of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition at the University of Aberdeen.

The aim is to enable clinical trainees to gain research experience under the academic supervision of recognised leaders in the field in areas of research priority within the School.

This 3 year post is suitable for clinicians training in gastrointestinal medicine or surgery, imaging, pathology, genetics and oncology and will provide an opportunity to work with a number of internationally renowned researchers in Health Service Research. As a Clinical Research Fellow this post will allow the development of research skills at PhD level, and the generation of new understanding in translational medicine. This will ultimately lead to the submission of a thesis supporting the award of a PhD degree.

Although research will form the major component of this post, limited participation in clinical duties capped at an average of half a day a week, will be encouraged and help will be given to facilitate this.

JOB DESCRIPTION

MAIN PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

The Clinical Research Fellowship is a 3 year post for an enthusiastic clinical trainee with academic aspirations. The research area will align with the strategic research priorities of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, supported by an academic supervisor with expertise in Health Service Research with a strong research track record. Strategic research priorities include, but are not limited to, clinical research, evidence synthesis, outcome development, clinical effectiveness of medical and surgical interventions e.g. robot-assisted surgery, patient-related research.

The research will be undertaken in The Institute of Applied Health Sciences [https://www.abdn.ac.uk/iahhs/] within the School (see below) and will be supported by a range of research support and facilities relevant to the focus of the study.

Research Training
Travel to collaborating sites may be required. The Clinical Research Fellow is encouraged to attend workshops and training in generic transferable skills organised by the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition.

Higher Degrees
Clinical Research Fellow will undertake study towards PhD at the University of Aberdeen. In addition to academic supervisors, postgraduate research students will have an independent adviser.

Clinical Work
An appropriate honorary grading will be sought from NHS Grampian. Clinical activities may be limited to those required for research training. However, limited additional clinical work is possible, subject to the agreement of the supervisor and NHS Clinical Director. Where any clinical activities of a service nature extend beyond the usual working week, confirmation in advance of any such responsibilities and agreement on additional payments must be obtained from appropriate NHS Services management. The individual will have a contract with NHS Grampian via the appropriate directorate/division, which will specify the agreed amount of clinical work and the level of remuneration.

**Funding Sources**

This post will be funded by philanthropic donations to the School of Medicine Medical Sciences & Nutrition. It will be awarded on the basis of individual career achievement to date. Commitment to a clinical academic career and the likelihood of the Fellow contributing to an effective, existing research team.

The funding covers salary costs, tuition fees plus £5K towards research costs and training. As part of their research training, the applicant will be expected to apply to other funding sources for their research costs and help will be given to do this.

**Teaching**

There will be no regular commitment to teaching but research fellows are encouraged to contribute to both problem-based learning and clinical teaching sessions for undergraduate medical students when research commitments allow.

**Assessment of Progress**

All those matriculated for Higher Degrees will be subject to the Postgraduate School for progress monitoring.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Plan, design and implement an appropriate research project, in conjunction with relevant investigators and collaborators leading towards a PhD.

- Manage data handling and interpretation of research results and take the lead in writing papers for publication in appropriate peer-reviewed journals.

- Accumulate a significant body of data, and working with the supervisory team, participate in the generation of new knowledge and understanding, at the standard required for submission for examination for a PhD.

- Collaborate with colleagues and participate in team meetings/discussions and departmental research group activities.

- Keep up to date with recent literature and advances in the field.

Updated October 2022
Present work at internal and external seminars and national/international conferences as appropriate to enhance the profile of the research group.

Write and submit applications for Ethics and Research Management approval, as appropriate and in conjunction with principal investigators (PIs).

Undertake clinical work under an NHS honorary contract, as detailed below.

Engage in continuous professional development.

**Candidate Background**

We seek individuals who welcome the opportunity to be involved with research within a vibrant, world-leading, research-led unit.

**Knowledge/Qualifications**

**Essential:**
A1. Primary medical qualification.
A2. GMC registration and licence to practice.
A3. Evidence of achievement of Foundation competences.
A4. Hold a training position (not necessarily with a training number).
A5. Demonstrable interest in one of the areas of research priority of the School
A6. If relevant, NHS Deanery approval to undertake out of programme activity

**Desirable:**
B1. Possess National Training Number (NTN).
B2. BSc or equivalent intercalated degree (e.g. population science).
B3. Evidence of distinction in career to date, e.g. prizes, awards, bursaries.

**Skills**

**Essential:**
C1. Ability to interrogate data relevant to the research.
C2. Appropriate IT skills.
C3. Capacity for originality and innovation.
C4. Excellent communication skills (both written and oral).
C5. Good interpersonal skills and ability to work constructively with staff at all levels.
C7. Self-motivation and the ability to work as part of a team and independently.
C8. Ability to manage research projects.

**Desirable:**
D1. Ability to deliver research that can be published in leading academic publications.
D2. Successful record of writing and presenting research.
D3. Proactive and efficient administrative ability.
D4. Experience of statistical analysis

**Experience**

Updated October 2022
Essential:
E1. For fundamental science projects, evidence of some previous research experience
E2. Experience and/or interest in clinical research.
E3. Ability to contribute to a defined project and develop research potential

Desirable:
F1. Experience in undergraduate teaching or postgraduate teaching.
F2. Publication record
TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Salary will be at the appropriate point on the Clinical scale for Academics below level of Consultant, £43,504 - £76,942 per annum, and negotiable with placement according to qualifications and experience.

Any appointment will be made subject to satisfactory references and probation period.

For further information on various staff benefits and policies please visit www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here

This role is based in the UK and as such the successful candidate will be required to live and work in the UK.

Should you require a visa to undertake employment in the UK you will be required to fulfil the minimum points criteria to be granted a Certificate of Sponsorship under the requirements of the Skilled Worker visa. At the time an offer of appointment is made, you will be asked to demonstrate that you fulfil the criteria in respect of qualification and competency in English. For research and academic posts, we will consider eligibility under the Global Talent visa. Please do not hesitate to contact Grant Rae, HR Adviser (e-mail: grant.rae@abdn.ac.uk) for further information.

AT A GLANCE

SALARY:
Clinical scale for Academics below level of Consultant
£43,504 - £76,942 per annum

HOURS OF WORK:
Full-time, 40 hours per week

CONTRACT TYPE:
Funding-limited for three years

LOCATION:
Aberdeen
## PERSON SPECIFICATION

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<th>Education/Qualifications</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL</th>
<th>DESIRABLE</th>
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| Academic, technical and professional education and training | • Primary medical qualification  
• GMC registration and licence to practice  
• Evidence of achievement of Foundation competences  
• Hold a training position  
• Demonstrable interest in research  
• If relevant, NHS Deanery approval to undertake out of programme activity | • Possess National Training Number (NTN)/Run-through training number.  
• BSc or equivalent intercalated degree (e.g. population science).  
• Evidence of distinction in career to date, e.g. prizes, awards, bursaries |

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<th>Work and Other relevant experience (including training)</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL</th>
<th>DESIRABLE</th>
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| e.g. Specialist knowledge, levels of experience, supervisory experience, research | • Evidence of previous relevant research experience  
• The funding covers salary costs, and the PhD tuition fees plus £5K per annum to contribute towards consumables or other costs. Any other research funds required for the project will have to be applied for from other funding sources and help will be given to do this.  
• Experience and/or interest in clinical research  
• Ability to contribute to a defined project and develop research potential | • Experience in undergraduate or postgraduate teaching  
• Publication record |

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<th>Personal qualities and abilities</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL</th>
<th>DESIRABLE</th>
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| e.g. initiative, leadership, ability to work on own or with others, communication skills | • Ability to work as part of a team  
• Appropriate IT skills  
• Excellent communication skills  
• Good interpersonal skills and ability to work constructively with staff  
• Proven academic track record  
• Enthusiasm for research  
• Self-motivation and the ability to work as part of a team and independently | • Enthusiasm to develop an academic career |
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<td>• Ability to manage research projects</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>e.g. special circumstances (if any) appropriate to the role such as unsocial hours, travelling, Gaelic language requirements etc.</td>
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<td>• Able to work outside normal working hours on occasion as experiments or deadlines require</td>
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<td>• Willingness to travel to collaborators laboratories and scientific meetings etc. as required.</td>
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UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others

The University of Aberdeen is a broad based, research intensive University, and we put students at the centre of everything we do. Outstanding in a wide range of discipline areas, Aberdeen is credited for its international reach and commercialisation of research ideas into spin out companies. The University has over 16,000 matriculated students and 3,600 staff representing 130 nationalities. We encourage bold thinking, creativity and innovation, and we nurture ambition with many opportunities for professional and personal development in an inclusive learning environment which challenges and inspires.

CURRENT CONTEXT

The University continues to uphold the principals of the foundational purpose. We remain committed to delivering positive change both locally and globally. We work together and with our partners in an interdisciplinary way, catalysing world-leading research in our areas of strength: Energy Transition; Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity; Environment and Biodiversity; Data and Artificial Intelligence; and Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing. We are investing in our future and have committed £100m to upgrading our campus, including the new fully digitised Science Teaching Hub, the regeneration of the historic King’s Quarter and a new Business School building. Our commitment to our students, campus and community has led to us being named a Top 20 UK institution in two major league tables** and 4th in the UK for overall student satisfaction**.

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** The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023 and the Guardian University Guide 2023

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1 The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023 and the Guardian University Guide 2023
2 National Student Survey (NSS) 2022

Updated October 2022
ABERDEEN 2040

On our 525th anniversary as a University we launched Aberdeen 2040, our strategic vision for the next 20 years. Four strategic themes will shape our learning and discovery, underlined by 20 commitments we have made against each theme:

- **Inclusive**
  We welcome students, staff and partners from all backgrounds, organisations and communities. We value diversity.

- **Interdisciplinary**
  We innovate in education and research by generating, sharing and applying new kinds of knowledge. We learn together.

- **International**
  We connect with others and extend our networks and partnerships around the world. We think across borders.

- **Sustainable**
  We understand and nurture our environment, and take care of our resources, including our people and finances.
  
  We work responsibly.

OUR EDUCATION

Recognised as the Scottish University of the Year in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2019, we remain true to our roots as an ancient Scottish university, combining breadth and depth in our degree programmes and drawing strength from the quality of our research. Our flexible curriculum encourages students to grow as independent learners and therefore to thrive as graduates in the diverse workplaces of the future. Our education is open to all and we are setting ambitious targets to further widen access.

OUR RESEARCH

Researchers at the University of Aberdeen have been at the forefront of innovation and excellence throughout the centuries, generating insights in medicine, science, engineering, law, social sciences, arts and humanities. This research has contributed to five Nobel prizes as well as other awards such as the Queen’s Anniversary prize. Our research is intellectually rigorous working within our established areas of excellence as well as new methods of enquiry. We will continue to generate new knowledge addressing economic and societal issues with ambition and imagination, ensuring that it is globally excellent and locally relevant.

INTERNATIONAL

Aberdeen is increasing its international presence, positioning the University as a global organisation and building on established global partnerships around the world, including Qatar, China, North America, Europe. We feature in the top 50 institutions worldwide for international students.¹

² Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2021

Updated October 2022
IMPACT

In 2020 the University signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals accord, solidifying our commitment to developing the world in a sustainable way. In 2022 we were listed in the global Top 100 for 8 of these goals.

Our highly cited work in zero-carbon technology and global outlooks makes us Scotland’s best institution for environmental research.
THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, MEDICAL SCIENCES & NUTRITION

The School (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/smmn/index.php) encompasses all of the disciplines that underpin today’s medicine, including biomedical sciences, health sciences, nutrition and medical, medical science and dental education and these are organised into five Institutes. The largest school in the University, the SMMSN has five Institutes: the Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS), the Institute of Applied Health Sciences (IAHS), the Rowett Institute, the Institute of Education in Healthcare and Medical Sciences (IEHMS) and the Institute of Dentistry, comprising all of our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and our own graduate entry Dental School.

Staff are line managed and research opportunities are supported through our institutes which work together in an integrated and coordinated way to deliver research and teaching across the School, details of which can be found on their websites as below.

- The Institute of Applied Health Sciences https://www.abdn.ac.uk/iahs/
- The Institute of Medical Sciences http://www.abdn.ac.uk/ims/
- The Rowett Institute http://www.abdn.ac.uk/rowett/
- The Institute of Education in Healthcare and Medical Sciences https://www.abdn.ac.uk/IEHMS/
- The Institute of Dentistry https://www.abdn.ac.uk/dental/ https://www.abdn.ac.uk/dental/

Within the IMS, our scientists are working towards the creation of effective therapies for patients with a range of debilitating and life-threatening conditions. Current research areas include: arthritis and musculoskeletal medicine; cell developmental and cancer biology; immunity, infection and inflammation; metabolic and cardiovascular health; microbiology and translational neuroscience.

Within the IAHS, research is focused on improving health and health care delivery. It is home to a multidisciplinary grouping of around 100 university academic staff who conduct population and clinically-orientated health research and hosts the Health Services Research Unit (HSRU) and Health Economics Research Unit (HERU), both funded by the Chief Scientist’s Office (CSO) of the Scottish Government.

As well as being the organisational home to the teaching scholarship staff and responsible for oversight of the UG and PGT programmes offered by the School, the IEHMS promotes and supports excellence in medical education through research and development, with a focus on conceptually and theoretically robust research and development which has strong potential for reaching international recognition. The highly regarded University of Aberdeen MBChB programme and several postgraduate programmes including a Masters in Clinical Education are delivered by IEHMS.

The Dental Institute runs an undergraduate BDS programme and a growing suite of masters programmes for professional development.
We have a number of specialist Centres representing areas of particular research strength and capacity within the School all of which are willing to support colleagues on projects in their areas. More information is available at the following websites.

- The Centre for Healthcare Education Research and Innovation (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/cheri/)
- The Centre for Health Data Science (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/achds/)
- The Aberdeen Cardiovascular & Diabetes Centre (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/acdc/) and
- The Aberdeen Centre for Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Health (https://www.abdn.ac.uk/acamh/)

The School is home to over 800 staff and 2000fte students. It is located on the Foresterhill site, shared with our main clinical partner, NHS Grampian, with whom we work in close collaboration at primary and secondary care levels.

This is one of the largest integrated healthcare delivery, training and research sites in Europe and has rich assets including state-of-the-art academic (research and teaching) and clinical buildings. Excellent infrastructure is also provided through core facilities for biomedical science including flow cytometry, proteomics, microscopy and genome sequencing, support for data health science projects and clinical trials.

The last major academic capital development was the opening of the Rowett Institute, occupied in March 2016, whose staff undertakes nutrition research to help improve people’s lives through the prevention of ill-health and disease. Their new £40M building has provided the University of Aberdeen with a facility with unique capabilities for human nutrition and metabolic research.
ABERDEEN AND ABERDEENSHIRE

Scotland’s third largest city, Aberdeen sits on the coast between the mountains of Aberdeenshire and the stunning North Sea coastline. The Aberdeen City region is a can-do place that is actively investing, at scale, in its future.

Renowned as a Global Energy Hub, Aberdeen is a vibrant, entrepreneurial region, home to a unique mix of business opportunities and specialist skills across various sectors including energy, technology, life sciences and food & drink. More than 20% of Scotland’s top businesses are located in this region which is taking great strides to ensure that it continues to compete on a world stage. Investments of more than £10 billion of public and private infrastructure is due to be delivered before 2030, marking an exciting time to be part of a genuine world-class location.

Built from sparkling local granite Aberdeen has earned the name of the Silver City. As the energy capital of Europe, Aberdeen nevertheless retains its old-fashioned charm and character making it an attractive place in which to live, work and study. Due to its global business and international energy industry credentials, Aberdeen is well served by local and national transport infrastructure with excellent rail networks that run both North and South of Scotland and the rest of the UK. It also acts as an international travel hub. Flying time to London is just over one hour with regular daily flights and serves international travel to European centres such as Amsterdam (Schiphol) and Paris (Charles de-Gaulle) as well as flights to other European destinations.

The City and the surrounding countryside provide a variety of urban, seaside and country attractions. Aberdeen has first class amenities including His Majesty’s Theatre, Music Hall, Art Gallery, the P&J Arena, Museums, and Beach Leisure Centre. The City is framed by its accessible beach front which is within a short walk of the city centre and there are an array of activities available across the region such as hill walking; mountaineering; sailing; surfing; salmon, trout and sea fishing; golf; sailing; surfing and windsurfing. The surrounding countryside, known as Aberdeenshire, is also one of Scotland’s most appealing regions. Royal Deeside and the Cairngorms National Park are within easy access of the city, and there are a variety of towns and villages scattered along the coastline.

The city and the surrounding area have ranked consistently highly in nationally recognised quality of life surveys, coming out top 10 as one of the best places to live in Scotland in 2020 in the annual Bank of Scotland survey.

To find out more visit www.visitabdn.com
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The University values and celebrates a diverse working and learning environment and recognises the richness this brings, both in terms of contributing to the success of the University and creating safe and inclusive cultures. The University welcomes applications from individuals with diverse lived experiences.

The University supports flexible working, including hybrid working arrangements, and has policies in place to facilitate this where it is appropriate. The policies can be found at https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/flexible-working--5607.php.

The University is committed to progressing gender equality across all its functions and has been a proud member of the Advance HE Athena Swan Charter, achieving an institutional Bronze award, one Silver departmental award for the School of Psychology and eleven departmental Bronze awards. LGBTQ+ equality is championed through the University’s membership of the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme, where the University has achieved a Silver award in the Workplace Equality Index. The University is on a continual journey to respond to, and combat, GBV in our community and beyond. We are proud to be working towards the EmilyTest Charter, in partnership with the charity, EmilyTest. We all have a role to play in knowing how to signpost colleagues and students to support for gender-based violence, and training and support is available to all staff on this topic.

The University is signed up to Advance HE’s Race Equality Charter, affirming the University’s commitment to the Charter’s aim of improving the representation, progression and success of staff and students who identify as belonging to a racialised group. The University launched its Antiracism Strategy in 2022, representing a bold framework for progress on race equality. Recognising the importance of addressing the under-representation of racialised groups in the senior team, the University’s new Recruitment and Selection Policy embeds specific positive action measures to address this.

The University is delighted to be accredited as a Disability Confident employer and strives to ensure that disabled staff and students have the opportunity to work and study in an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment. The University’s Wellbeing Strategy commits it to progressing work to tackle stigma related to mental health and action to promote and improve health and wellbeing for staff and students. Candidates who are British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us directly by using contact SCOTLAND-BSL.

The University’s work on equality, diversity and inclusion is supported by a range of networks and engagement activities, designed to provide safe spaces and raise awareness of the support available and the steps everyone can take to create inclusive campuses.

www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/equality-and-diversity-277
HOW TO APPLY

Online application forms are available at www.abdn.ac.uk/jobs

The closing date for receipt of applications is 02 March 2024

Should you wish to make an informal enquiry please contact:

Professor Siladitya Bhattacharya, Head of School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition (s.bhattacharya@abdn.ac.uk).

Please do not send application forms or CVs to Professor Bhattacharya.

Please quote reference number IHS155R on all correspondence