Academic Clinical Fellowship in Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Description of ACF Programme:

Title: Academic Clinical Fellow, Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Duration: 3 years

Lead NHS Hospital/Trust and contact details:

Princess Anne Hospital
Coxford Road
SOUTHAMPTON
SO16 5YA
023 8077 7222

Research Institution in which training will take place:

Academic Unit of Human Development and Health,
Faculty of Medicine,
University of Southampton
University Road
Southampton
SO17 1BJ

Arrangements for protected research time:

It is envisaged that all 3 years will be spent in Southampton so that the trainee can maintain project continuity and close contact with the academic supervisors. The proposal would be for ‘day release’ across the 3 years, rather than block release, as this will fit best with the trainees ongoing clinical commitments.

The academic clinical fellow will therefore have protected time for research training during all three years of the Academic Clinical Fellowship programme, and this will be permitted by modifying weekly clinical activities accordingly. There would be considerable flexibility in allocation of sessions within the training programme, in discussion with the trainee’s clinical supervisors, so that a gradually increasing emphasis on research training as compared with clinical service training can be accommodated as the fellowship progresses, particularly into the third year.

Research Objectives:

The objectives of the training programme are for the trainee, over three years:

1. To undertake the equivalent of 0.75 full-time specialist training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology focused on the Princess Anne Hospital in Southampton and Human Development and Health within the Faculty of Medicine, University of Southampton.
2. To undertake generic research methods training through a programme run by the School of Medicine’s Postgraduate School, including training in research design, methods and systematic review.
3. To develop a research proposal to be undertaken within one of the School’s Divisions (most likely in the Academic Division of HDH) and to submit applications for Clinical Training Fellowships in national competition to the MRC, Wellcome Trust or the Department of Health. These may be in partnership with the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

Description of research component of programme:

Of all 25 million women in the UK population that have children, 8-10% are affected by significant pregnancy-associated complications, such as gestational hypertension, miscarriage, preterm birth and placental disorders. Accumulating evidence now demonstrates that women who experience one or more of these complications are more likely to have chronic adult disease such as heart disease and stroke in later life. Vice versa, it is likely that successful pregnancy depends on the presence or absence of common maternal physical, social and gynaecological risk factors, e.g. uterine and peritoneal disorders, obesity, smoking and high blood pressure, around the time of conception and early placental development. The research programme will focus on interdisciplinary work across School for Public Health and Biostatistics, Faculty of Medicine, Electronics and Computer Science, and the Institute for Life Science. Projects can vary from molecular experimental science to novel translational interventional clinical trials. Studies will involve state-of-the-art computational predictive modelling, reconstruction and risk stratification to develop an improved monitoring tools and diagnostics for the management of infertility, early and late pregnancy complications. The project will provide a basis to apply for further funding to complete a PhD. This post offers an exciting opportunity to develop cross disciplinary research experience at a leading edge of Reproductive Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Description of clinical component of programme:

The trainee will join the Wessex Specialist Training Programme in Obstetrics and Gynaecology for 3 years, which is co-ordinated through the Wessex Deanery. Experience offered will cover the training needs of future consultants in all aspects of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, as well as academic career development. The post will contribute to CCT in Obstetrics and Gynaecology with an established interest in one of its subspecialties.

The Obstetrics and Gynaecology clinical services in Southampton are divided into clinical groupings (Reproductive Medicine, Urogynaecology, Gynaecological Oncology, Fetal Medicine, General Obstetrics and Gynaecology) with University academic involvement in each. There is a consultant complement of 26 of whom one full time academic Professor in Reproductive Medicine, and 2 NIHR Clinical Lecturers. Training will involve the multidisciplinary management of Obstetrics and Gynaecology patients. It is anticipated that the academic trainee will remain on the acute rota for the whole period in post, and that the post will be compliant with the New Junior Doctors’ Contract.

The clinical programme will include fixed sessions plus on call, with 0.25 time (on average over the 3 years) devoted to research, research training and other academic activities. The clinical programme will vary depending on the appropriate subspecialty interest being undertaken.

Training and supervision to develop appropriate skills to independently produce high-quality research output, including training in state-of-the-art statistical techniques, scientific writing and presentation.

Specific Support provided to Trainee; Milestones and timing of achievement of academic and clinical competences

Year 1
  • Clinical: Initial clinical training in the general Obstetrics and Gynaecology and passing the relevant MRCOG exams depending on level of ST at entry.
  • Attendance at the autumn introductory course provided by University of Southampton School of Medicine.
  • Complete literature review, completion of outline study design.
  • Finalisation of research questions and writing of proof-of-concept paper for local database project.
  • Identification of specific learning needs for the project and commencement of appropriate courses.
• Obtaining Ethical Committee and NHS Research & Development

Year 2
• Continuing Clinical training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology in appropriate accredited posts.
• Obtaining Ethical Committee and NHS Research & Development proposals for project where required.
• Attendance at relevant internal and external training courses.
• Predictive modelling and data analysis for large-scale national database project.
• Identifying funding opportunities for PhD.

Year 3
• Continuing Clinical training in appropriate accredited posts.
• Completion of data analysis and writing up main research outcomes.
• Submission of Clinical Training Fellowship application to external funding agencies.

It is envisaged that a successful Fellowship application will lead to a further three years funding culminating in a PhD. There would be a natural progression to a lecturer or clinician scientist position for subsequent post-doctoral training. In the unlikely event of failure to obtain a Research Training Fellowship, the trainee will continue in the specialist training programme within the Wessex rotation and either submit a DM dissertation or make further attempts to obtain substantive funding.

How post links in to the NIHR approved Research Training Programme at your locality:

The post holder will be supported through all the local NIHR approved training programme necessary for the learning and development of researchers and health care professionals in Hampshire namely, learning about GCP, MHRA regulations, information systems training and access to resources to support Informed, voluntary consent to participate in research which is a fundamental principle of ethical research practice. In addition, the post holder can also access the University of Southampton’s post graduate teaching, training and research resources as an honorary fellow.

Trainee centredness:

Throughout the 3 years of the post, mentorship will be provided and progress monitored in order to optimise the chance of all aims being met. Account will be taken of the individual circumstances and interests of the ACF in designing the research programme.

Quality assurance of the programme:

The research methods training will be provided through the established postgraduate team in the School of Medicine and through accredited Masters level modules which are all quality assured through the QAA process. The academic supervisor has successfully supervised 14 PhD projects and the School have established training mentors for PhD and postdoctoral fellows.

The Wessex Specialist Training Programme in Obstetrics and Gynaecology has been successfully training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology for 20 years. It incorporates all of the acute NHS Trusts within the region and is nationally renowned as being a well supervised and innovative training programme. The University of Southampton has a long tradition of providing research training for a succession of trainees and clinical academics. In the past many of these trainees have undertaken DM programmes but more recently a high proportion undertake PhDs.

Mentoring Arrangements:

Mentorship will be provided by the academic and clinical supervisors to the Fellow. This will be co-ordinated by Professor Ying Cheong (academic lead), who is the Chair in Obstetrics and Gynaecology; and the Associate Dean for Enterprise, University of Southampton, and has extensive experience in the supervision of trainees and PhD students. Further mentorship and supervision will be undertaken through the clinical and educational supervisors in the Princess Anne Hospital and using established governance arrangements for postgraduate research. This will include mentorship through supervision.
of emerging PhD programmes, and senior authorship of Research Fellowship applications to major funding agencies.

**Academic Lead (University) for the IAT Programme:**

Name: Professor Elaine Dennison  
Position: Professor of Musculoskeletal Epidemiology

Address: Faculty of Medicine, University of Southampton,  
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Highfield Campus,  
Southampton,  
SO17 1BJ  
Telephone: 023 8070 4021  
Email: emd@mrc.soton.ac.uk

**Academic Supervisor (University) Details:**

Name: Professor Y Cheong  
Position: Chair in Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Address: Human Development and Health,  
Faculty of Medicine  
Princess Anne Hospital,  
Cowford Road,  
SOUTHAMPTON,  
SO16 5YA  
Email: Y.Cheong@soton.ac.uk

**Education Supervisor (Trust) Details:**

Name: Dr Sarah Walker,  
Position: Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist and College Tutor

Address: Princess Anne Hospital,  
Cowford Road,  
SOUTHAMPTON,  
SO16 5YA  
Email: sarah.walker@uhs.nhs.uk

**Clinical Supervisor(s) Details:**

TBC by Dr Sarah Walker

**Deanery Programme Training Director Details:**

Name: Dr Katharine Backhouse,  
Position: TPD ST1-2 Wessex O&G  
Email: katharine.backhouse@salisbury.nhs.uk

**Deanery Programme Manager Details:**

Name: Mrs Sue Ksous  
Position: Programme Manager for Anaesthetics and Intensive Care
Confirmation that ACF posts attract an Academic NTN (ACA):

This post will attract a National Training Number with a specialty component of ACA to identify as an Academic.