Job Description of RA META-SMI Project

Title of Position: Research Assistant for the Global Health Research on Mental and Physical Comorbidity
Location: Institute of Psychiatry, Benazir Bhutto Hospital Rawalpindi
Hours of work: Full-time (40 hours per week)
Duration of Contract: 1 year (initial 3-month probation period), with the possibility of extension
Salary: PKR 60,000-70,000
Reports to: Project's Research Fellow

Overview:
We are seeking a motivated Mixed Method Research Assistant to join our research team at the IMPACT Research Office at the Institute of Psychiatry, Rawalpindi. The Research Assistant will join the Global Health Research Team on Mental and Physical Comorbidity working on multiple projects in collaboration with the University of York, UK. S/he will primarily contribute to the Metformin Trial for Antipsychotic-Induced Weight Gain (AiWG) in Individuals with Severe Mental Illness in Pakistan (META-SMI).

We are seeking a motivated Mixed Method Research Assistant to join our research team at the IMPACT Research Office at the Institute of Psychiatry (IOP), Rawalpindi. IOP is an academic unit of Rawalpindi Medical University (RMU) and a tertiary mental health care facility at the Benazir Bhutto Hospital, Rawalpindi. The IOP has multiple collaborations with national and international organizations in various mental health projects. The Research Assistant will join the Global Health Research Team on Mental and Physical Comorbidity working on multiple projects in collaboration with the University of York, and Hull York Medical School, UK and will be working primarily on the project called "Metformin Trial for Antipsychotic-Induced Weight Gain (AiWG) in Individuals with Severe Mental Illness in Pakistan (META-SMI". This randomized controlled trial aims to investigate the effectiveness of metformin in addressing weight gain caused by antipsychotic medication in patients with severe mental illness. This role offers the opportunity to contribute to groundbreaking research aimed at improving the lives of individuals with severe mental illness by addressing a significant side effect of their treatment.

Job Responsibilities:
The job responsibilities will include but will not be limited to:

1. Assisting in the preparation of research proposals, research tools, and applications to external bodies such as ethics review boards and drug regulatory authorities.
2. Collaborating with research staff to conduct comprehensive quantitative research, including data collection, analysis, and support in clinical trials.
3. Working closely with research fellow to assist in participant recruitment, enrollment, and maintaining communication, ensuring adherence to ethical guidelines and study protocols.
4. Collecting data and keeping in contact with the the study participants.
5. Supporting the monitoring of both the control group and the intervention group to ensure adherence to the study protocol.
6. Assisting in the management, distribution, and tracking of metformin and placebo medications to ensure accurate dosing and compliance.
7. Developing, adapting, translating, and reviewing resource materials for the trial, including participants' information sheets, promotional materials, consent forms, case report forms, and other relevant documents.
8. Assist in collecting and processing biological samples as required by the study protocol.
9. Systematically capturing, storing, and managing all project data, contributing to data collection and analysis efforts.
10. Collaborating with the program manager and research team to employ appropriate research techniques, analyze research results, and contribute to publications, seminar presentations, and outreach activities.
11. Working to meet project timelines, progress, planning activities, and providing reports to supervisors at the Institute of Psychiatry, Rawalpindi, and the University of York, UK.

12. Upholding office decorum and adhering to ethical codes of conduct.
13. Undertaking additional responsibilities within the scope of the position, as allocated by supervisors or investigators.

Eligibility and Specifications:

Qualifications	
First degree in **the relevant field Bachelor's degree in a relevant field (e.g., Psychology, Allied Health Sciences, Biomedical Sciences).**	Essential
Knowledge	
Knowledge of applied health research methods relevant to both mental and physical health	Essential
Knowledge of pharmacological interventions and their mechanisms of action	Essential
Understanding of drug trial protocols and regulatory requirements	Desirable
Knowledge of common mental disorders	Desirable
Knowledge of non-communicable diseases	Desirable
Skills, abilities, and competencies	
Highly developed communication skills to engage effectively with a wide-ranging audience, both orally and in writing, using a range of media	Essential
Ability to conduct research with patients, carers, and healthcare staff	Essential
Capacity to accept, give and build on feedback for personal development	Essential
Skill in writing research work for publication and engage in public dissemination mentorship if necessary.	Essential
Competency in developing healthcare research objectives, projects, and proposals with the mentorship if necessary.	Essential
Proficiency in MS Office, Statistics and Conferencing software (Zoom)	Essential
Competency to conduct individual and collaborative research projects	Essential
Proficiency in managing and tracking medication distribution and adherence	Essential
Ability to ensure the blinding process in clinical trials	Essential
Competency in monitoring and managing control and intervention groups	Essential
Capacity to contribute to the writing of research grant applications if required	Desirable
Experience	
Experience in carrying out both independent and collaborative research	Essential
Experience in writing up research work for publication	Essential
Experience in conducting research with patients, carers, or healthcare staff	Essential
Experience in a relevant health area such as mental health	Desirable
Experience in conducting a clinical (Placebo-Controlled) trial	Desirable
Personal attributes	
Attention to the ethical considerations specific to pharmacological trials Essential	Essential
Commitment to high quality	Essential
Attention to detail	Essential
Collaborative ethos	Essential
Interest in and enthusiasm for the subject matter of the project(s)	Essential
Positive attitude to colleagues and others involved in the project in any capacity	Essential
Willingness to work proactively with colleagues in other work areas/institutions	Essential
Ability to plan and prioritize own work to meet deadlines	Essential
Commitment to personal development and updating of knowledge and skills	Essential
Willingness to respect equality & diversity	Essential
Ability to accept, give and build on feedback for personal development	Essential

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Application Process:
To apply, please submit the following documents through email to administrator_rgmo@rmur.edu.pk with the Subject: *Candidate Name* **RA-META Application**.

- A cover letter outlining your interest in the position and relevant experience
- An updated CV/resume
- Application form downloaded from the RMU website (job sections: https://rmur.edu.pk/jobs/)
- Contact Information of 3 references

Application Deadline:
The Institute of Psychiatry will accept applications submitted by midnight Friday ***2nd August 2024***.