

NIHR ARC-GM/Greater Manchester Adult Social Care Transformation Team Research Champions

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Is there any restriction upon where the applicant works i.e. geographical area?**
Applicants must be working in a role which delivers services in the Greater Manchester footprint. There are sometimes instances where employing organisations are located outside Greater Manchester, or where services are commissioned by an organisation outside of Greater Manchester – the key requirement is that the applicant delivers services in the Greater Manchester region.
- **Is there any restriction upon and nature of the employing organisation?**
Applicants may be employed by any organisation that funds or delivers Adult Social Care services in Greater Manchester.
- **Is professional registration required and/or minimum length of service?**
Applicants are not required to be professionally registered. This is to allow a broad range of applicants to apply, including those who may have a key role in services but who do not require professional registration.
- **Are part time employees eligible?**
Yes, part-time employees are eligible, but the expectation would be that a minimum of half a day (up to one day) per week would be dedicated to the Research Champion role.
- **Are there any other restrictions such as employer/NIHR priorities?**
Part of the role of the Research Champion will be to identify local priorities in Adult Social Care (i.e. in the Greater Manchester region) which would benefit from research. This may involve consulting local stakeholders and drawing on existing strategies. Applicants may wish to identify priorities that have already been identified by their employer, by organisations such as NIHR or by the local Integrated Care Partnership, and include this information in their application. They may also draw on their own work which has identified such priorities.
- **Do you have an example of what projects a previous/current Research Champion has contributed to?**
The Research Champion posts in Social Care are a new opportunity which aim to respond to the needs of the Social Care system in Greater Manchester. Projects will be developed by the Research Champions identifying priorities that are important to the Adult Social Care system. Research Champions will work with their colleagues in the system to do this by raising awareness of research and its potential to answer some of the key questions relating to these priorities. Some of this may involve holding events to encourage others working in Adult Social Care to get involved in research. Examples of larger studies undertaken by researchers in ARC-GM include an investigation into the variation in pay for staff in adult social care and an evaluation of a digital tool to track the symptoms of COVID-19 in care homes – although these projects have not had the input

of Research Champions, the hope is that Research Champions via this new programme will be a key part in shaping new studies.

- **Which colleagues/teams would a Research Champion work with?**

Research Champions will work with staff in the Adult Social Care system across Greater Manchester. They will be expected to utilise links with existing organisations, such as the Adult Social Care Transformation Team, the Greater Manchester Social Care Academy, the North West Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (NW ADASS) and others. Research Champions will also be linked with researchers in ARC-GM and the Greater Manchester Universities, who they will be expected to build relationships with to support developing future research. Research Champions will also identify opportunities to work with users of Adult Social Care services to ensure that their needs and perspectives are incorporated.

- **When might a successful applicant be expected to start?**

Research Champion posts will be available for successful applicants to take up as soon as possible. There will be a requirement for contracting arrangements to be put in place prior to Research Champions starting officially in post, which may mean exact starting dates are negotiable.

- **Are the opportunities open to those working in Higher Education Institutions?**

Research Champion posts are intended for those working in the Adult Social Care system. However, that does not exclude those who may have a dual role, for example those who work within a Higher Education Institution for teaching or research purposes alongside their role within Social Care.

- **What knowledge, skills and prior experience are you looking for in potential applicants?**

A key quality of a successful candidate will be a high-level knowledge of the Adult Social Care system in Greater Manchester which will allow them to lead change. It is not expected that applicants will have a great deal of hands-on research experience, but they should be able to demonstrate an appreciation of the need for research, how they will identify priorities for future research and who the key stakeholders/organisations in the region are. Research Champions should be able to work with these stakeholders to set up and facilitate engagement events to showcase the value of research and research career options for social care professionals.

- **What do you consider the high priority areas are for adult social care in GM?**

Part of the role of the Research Champion will be to identify the areas of high priority in Adult Social Care which would benefit from research. This may involve drawing together existing sources of information where priorities have already been flagged, as well as seeking further input from the Adult Social Care workforce and researchers. Research Champions will work closely with researchers to assimilate various sources of information to determine high-level research questions.

- **What outcomes and outputs are you hoping the champion to achieve in the 12 month period?**

There are various outcomes that could be achieved by the Research Champions. These include, but are not limited to: identifying a list of high priority areas for Adult Social Care; designing and delivering a small feasibility project (e.g. survey); co-developing research funding applications or publications; holding engagement events to showcase the value of research and research career options for social care professionals.

- **What support and opportunities for development would be provided to the successful candidate?**

Successful candidates will be supported by a range of individuals and organisations. The Adult Social Care Transformation Team will provide an overall coordinating function, in partnership with the ARC-GM Capacity Building Team and staff from Greater Manchester Higher Education Institutions. ARC-GM will provide networking and research training opportunities in line with the needs of the Research Champion, and opportunities to link with researchers with specific methodological expertise that can be applied to social care research. Training in Public and Community Involvement and Engagement is also available. Where there is a requirement for training to be provided externally, there are some opportunities for Research Champions to access funding. Research Champions will have access to online training material hosted by The University of Manchester and other organisations such as the NIHR.