# Job Description

# NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship

# General Practice ST1 (ST2\*), ST3 entry (1 post) Theme - Mental Health

The University of Sheffield, in partnership with Health Education England Yorkshire and the Humber and the Sheffield GP Vocational Training Scheme, has developed an exciting pathway of academic clinical training opportunities.

Applications are now invited for an Academic Clinical Fellowship in General Practice at ST1, ST2 or ST3 level with an integrated clinical and academic training scheme through to ST4. This post is being offered under the NIHR theme of Mental Health.

**Please Note:-**

**ST1 applicants who do not already hold a National Training Number (NTN) or Deanery Reference Number (DRN) in the GMC specialty to which they are applying for will be required to undertake the national clinical recruitment process and attend an assessment/interview for that GMC specialty as appropriate.**

**\*(Applicants wanting to commence the General Practice ACF post at ST2 are encouraged to apply to this vacancy; however they must currently hold an NTN in General Practice. If successful your experience can be assessed upon commencing in post enabling you to work at the appropriate level.)**

This new post has been created as part of the Health Education England (HEE)/National Institution for Health Research Trainee Coordinating Centre (NIHRTCC) programme of Integrated Academic Training and offers candidates a comprehensive experience of clinical academic medicine working alongside internationally renowned clinicians, researchers and GP Undergraduate Medical Educators.

We are seeking highly motivated, enthusiastic individuals with the potential to excel in both their clinical and academic training and who have the ambition to be the next generation of academic clinicians.

This Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF) programme in General Practicewill be run by the University of Sheffield, the Sheffield GP Training Scheme and Health Education England Yorkshire and the Humber.

General Practice Academic Clinical Fellowships (ACFs) at ST 1, ST2 or ST3 entry are fixed-term national training posts. They attract an NTN(A).

Trainees undertake the usual 100% clinical rotations through General Practice and hospital specialities in ST1 and ST2 years. Then trainees undertake 50% clinical and 50% academic training in ST3 and ST4.

Trainees are employed by the NHS Trust and have an honorary contract with the University at whose Medical School their academic research is supported.

ACF trainees also undertake a Research Training Programme (RTP) which includes a

choice of appropriate research modules depending on prior research training. This ‘ClinRes’ course is funded by the NIHR and run by the Sheffield School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR). In addition the trainee will receive bespoke research training and mentorship within the Academic Unit of Primary Medical Care according to their interests and experience. There is access to additional research training opportunities within the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health. The trainee is also are eligible for a £1,000 bursary per year to support research training activity (ie to attend academic conferences).

The first two years of the training programme involve standard full time clinical GP training in general practice hospital training posts in South Yorkshire, although we encourage the fellows to attend local and national NIHR trainee conferences and the AUPMC away days if possible and to plan their academic training programme early in the post with their academic supervisor. The Academic Clinical Fellow will have a senior Academic Supervisor allocated for the entire ST1 or ST2 to ST4 training post in addition to their Educational and Clinical Supervisors

In years 3 and 4, trainees are attached to a GP training practice with 50% of their time devoted to clinical training and 50% to research training and carry out a supervised project. In addition to completing their supervised project for publication, trainees will be supported by their Primary Medical Care Academic Supervisor. The academic supervisor will be a senior clinical academic (Professor Burton - head of unit, Drs Mitchell or Dickson) from the AUPMC, depending on the research topic). The AUPMC has an active Clinical Postgraduate Research group and weekly seminar programme.

The Academic Clinical Fellow will be supported and trained to develop a distinctive research project to publication and conference outputs and write grant applications. ACF trainees would also normally complete and submit an external funding application for a NIHR In-Practice training fellowship or clinical research fellowship to enable them to complete a higher degree (PhD or research MD) following the completion of their ACF fixed-term post.

All General Practice Academic Clinical Fellowships are run-through posts and would therefore be guaranteed continued training to CCT as long as they progress satisfactorily through both their academic and clinical training. Run-through status is withdrawn if ACFs do not complete the academic component.

The Academic Unit of Primary Care has an excellent record of attracting high quality academic trainees and enabling progress to Doctoral Awards, Clinical Lectureships and senior posts. <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/medicine/research/research-themes/primary-medical-care>

We welcome informal enquiries about the post:

Professor Burton [chris.burton@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:chris.burton@sheffield.ac.uk), Head of Academic Unit of Primary Care

Dr Caroline Mitchell GP, Senior Clinical Lecturer, Deputy CAT Programme Director (supports academic trainees across all specialities at the UoS) [c.mitchell@sheffield.ac.uk](about:blank) - general enquiries about the themed CAT scheme and the GP post.

# POST DETAILS

## Job Title

NIHR Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF) – General Practice

## Duration of the Post

ST1 and ST2 100% Clinical; ST3 and ST4 50% Clinical/ 50% Academic.

ST1 entry to the ACF post is 4 years’ duration.

ST2 entry to the post is 3 years’ duration.

ST3 entry to the post is 2 years duration

## Lead GP Scheme in which training will take place

Sheffield GP Training Scheme ACFs will be based at the Academic Unit of Primary Medical Care, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health, University of Sheffield, Sam Fox House, Northern General Hospital, Herries Road, Sheffield S5 7AU. The office administration for the Sheffield specialty training scheme contact is: Sarah Cuckson

[**sarah.cuckson@nhs.net**](mailto:sarah.cuckson@nhs.net)

## Research institution in which training will take place

The Academic Unit of Primary Medical Care,

The Medical School, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health,

University of Sheffield, Sam Fox House,

Northern General Hospital,

Herries Road,

Sheffield S5 7AU.

General Practice (GP) is a shortage clinical academic specialty[[1]](#footnote-1) and nationally there is an expectation that Medical Schools should aim for half of graduates pursuing a career in general practice. In our strategy we recognize the importance of building academic capacity not just for future researchers and teachers, but for GPs who will go on to take up clinical leadership roles. This is particularly relevant in general practice because of the shorter clinical specialist training, often with little direct exposure to academic environments.

The Academic Unit of Primary Medical Care (AUPMC) conducts research and teaching in relation to delivery of healthcare to individuals and populations in the community. It has recently undergone substantial investment by the university with a new professor, Professor Chris Burton, in addition to two senior Clinical Lecturers (Mitchell, Dickson), to deliver new programmes of research. The recent refresh of senior investigators within AUPMC places the unit in an excellent position to support new fellows.

The ACF will join a postgraduate clinical academic near peer group of NIHR ACFs (4), NIHR Clinical Lecturers (2), PhD and MD students. AUPMC works closely with ScHARR, a globally leading health services research centre ensuring that fellows experience a highly interdisciplinary environment.

AUPMC has a strong track record in recruiting and developing early career academic GPs and has demonstrated a successful pipeline of ACF and In Practice Training Fellowships (IPTF) leading to Clinical Lecturer (NIHR awards x5 since 2012), a University matched Senior Clinical Lecturer post (Dr Dickson, previous NIHR CL) and a Welcome PhD fellowship in the National School of Primary Care, co-supervised with Keele (Twohig). Professor Burton brings a significant track record of supporting ACFs to doctoral and other fellowships in his previous posts in Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

Sheffield is an excellent centre in which to conduct primary care clinical research: academic excellence in AUPMC is combined with close collaboration with ScHARR and other groups, including a Global Health materno-foetal research team within the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.

There is a supportive network of GP practices, with links from the department to three NIHR Clinical research networks and a strong track record of carrying out research in, for, and with under-served populations (‘Deep End Yorkshire Humber’). AUPMC also contains senior medical educators in primary care, as part of the Academic Unit of Medical Education and provides opportunities for educational innovation and research. This integration with co-located research and teaching GPs ensures that ACFs conduct and report their research in ways which are always close to the interface of research, teaching and service development. The continuing University and local HEE support for a strong Academic Unit of Primary Medical Care in Sheffield is part of a regional strategy to promote General Practice as a vibrant, attractive and scholarly specialty and encourage medical students and foundation doctors to choose General Practice as a career.

**THE RESEARCH COMPONENT OF THE SPECIALTY SPECIFIC PROGRAMME**

The post-holder(s) will be supported to identify and conduct projects linked to departmental strengths, including ‘Underserved populations’ including global maternofoetal health in LMIC (Mitchell), ‘Translational neuroscience’ (Burton, Dickson); Data for Healthcare Delivery (all investigators) and medical educators (all investigators in collaboration with the Academic Unit of Medical Education). Within these broad topics we use a wide range of methodologies and the post-holder will be encouraged to use and understand a range of qualitative and quantitative methods. All investigators are also members of themed groups within the Faculty of Medicine and ScHARR, providing additional opportunities to supervise NIHR academic clinical trainees on projects directly linked to strong interdisciplinary programmes of work .

We encourage early career fellows to experience different skills and approaches at this stage, in order that they develop a broad theoretical base. We aim to match their clinical interests to existing programmes in order that they work within an expert team. Our aim is that by the end of the fellowship, fellows can make informed choices about their preferred methodologies and topic and are well placed to take these forward into a doctoral fellowship.

This post is being offered under the NIHR theme of Mental Health. Examples of possible research projects are:

Exemplar ACF Project 1. **Improving physical and mental health outcomes in people with SMI.** Proposed Supervisors: Mitchell/ Weich ( ScHaRR Professor of Psychiatry )

Intervention development and testing for co-morbid mental and physical illness. An ACF will join a current the University of Sheffield work programme (linked to the previous CLAHRC and now ARC group in Yorkshire and Humber and ‘Closing the Gap’ research network) to co-produce and evaluate innovative implementation projects which deliver integrated mental and physical health interventions, for example social prescribing interventions to improve access to primary care, increased physical activity and supported self-management for people living with severe mental illness (SMI) and multiple physical health problems (including COPD and Diabetes). <https://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/closing-the-gap/>

Exemplar ACF Project 2. **Improving mental health outcomes through better use of routine data**. Proposed Supervisors: Burton and Weich

People with serious mental illness (SMI) are disproportionately heavy users of acute and urgent care, and most of these presentations are potentially avoidable. The aim of this work is to identify and evaluate interventions to reduce avoidable use of emergency health care through mental health service informatics. This work will focus on large-scale routine data to model trajectories and outcomes among users of secondary care mental health services and acute and urgent pre-hospital and hospital care, including ambulance services and Emergency Departments.

Exemplar ACF Project 3. **Mental health and neurological symptoms.** Proposed Supervisors: Reuber and Dickson

Research carried out by an ACF in Neurology appointed to this cross-disciplinary program could build on existing research collaborations reaching across traditional speciality boundaries. Examples of this include research on functional neurological disorders (relationship with emotion regulation, and the way patients with these disorders present and are managed in differently i.e. presentation acutely to primary care or emergency services in Accident & Emergency). We are also interested in how patients with comorbid mental health disorders and neurological disorders are managed – and in exploring how to reduce the gaps between service for physical and mental ill health, as well as between primary and secondary care services (often leading to unnecessary hospital admissions and inappropriate treatment of people with mental health or personality disorders).

Exemplar ACF Project 4. **Persistent “medically unexplained” physical symptoms**. Proposed Supervisors: Burton

Persistent physical symptoms which are disproportionate to current physical disease are extremely common and management of these in primary care remains challenging. Mental health problems are a risk factor for PPS and are commonly present along with them. Current health services tend to treat symptoms as medical until no cause is found then as psychological, with or without referral to primary care psychological therapy services. Prof Burton, in a series of studies has developed and evaluated approaches to bridge this divide between the physical and the mental. This project will support the trainee – either in general practice or psychiatry – to work on either analysis of consultation transcript data from the current Multiple Symptoms Study 3 (NIHR funded 2018-22) or on newer work to develop interventions which address both physical and mental health for patients with persistent physical symptoms

Exemplar ACF Project 5. **Early intervention in mental and physical comorbidity.** Proposed Supervisors: Weich and Burton/Mitchell

Research addressing the complex needs of children and young people who experience childhood adversity and trauma and who develop problems associated with emotional dysregulation. Identification of emotional dysregulation in patients presenting with mental health problems. This work will link to the development of preventive interventions and improved public mental health.

## Research Protected Time:

In ST3 and ST4 the ACF will have 50% Academic time and 50% Clinical General Practice training. We have examples of the timetables of our latest two NIHR ACFs which show the appropriate balance of individual study time, Clinical or Research sessions and practice based tutorials (0.5 sessions weekly over two years) and AUPMC supervision sessions (0.5 sessions weekly over two years)

## Academic Clinical Fellowship Training Programme: Research Component

The ACF will meet the AUPMC Unit Head Professor Burton who, with the Educational/ Academic Supervisor, Senior Clinical Lecturer (Dr Caroline Mitchell), will help clarify their integrated academic and clinical training needs and identify additional potential GP/ Academic mentors within the department, the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry and Sheffield School of Health and Related Research.

They will commence academic support in the form of scheduled 6 monthly meetings during ST1 and ST2 and contact as needed in between these meetings during the first two, mainly hospital-based, years subject to the requirements of their clinical duties. The scheme has three objectives:

1. To provide high-quality clinical vocational training and prepare trainees to pass the MRCGP examination and gain specialist accreditation.
2. To support trainees in undertaking an individualised academic training programme with additional flexibility for those who already have a Masters or Doctoral level degree in order to translate prior research experience to a primary care setting.
3. To support trainees in conference presentations, publishing scientific papers and, for those wishing to continue in academic general practice, to apply successfully for a Clinical Research Doctoral Fellowship and project research grants.

The AUPMC Academic training programme (ATP) comprises: senior clinical academic supervision, a weekly seminar programme and a regular postgraduate peer learning group with oversight of the individualised training programme and progress by the Academic and Educational Supervisors. The ATP provides an opportunity to develop new and joint research proposals, progress writing for publication, fellowship and grant applications, with additional support from the University of Sheffield Clinical Trials Research Unit (CTRSU), the Research Design Support Unit (RDSU) and the Faculty Research Information Service (RIS).

Research academic clinical fellows are expected, within their protected academic time, to:

1. Prepare for academic 1:1 supervision
2. Undertake a research project as agreed with their academic supervisor, with additional support as needed within our clinical interdisciplinary research networks and including co-supervision with appropriate research and career mentors
3. Undertake the lead and co-authorship of research publications
4. Participate in and present at the weekly seminar
5. Prepare and lead / co-author academic presentations to regional and national Society for Academic Primary Care conferences.
6. Participate and prepare for the monthly peer led research meetings in AUPMC
7. Gain experience in grant applications as lead or co-applicant

Details about Academic Clinical Fellowships in General Practice can be found at:

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/faculty/medicine-dentistry-health/graduateschool/clinical-academic/acf/general_practice>

More details about AUPMC can be found at: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/medicine/research/aupmc>

Specific enquires about this integrated academic clinical training post Sheffield post should be directed to Professor Christopher Burton, as Academic Supervisor ([chris.burton@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:chris.burton@sheffield.ac.uk)) and Dr Caroline Mitchell (GP Senior Clinical Lecturer, HEE–YH Deputy Director Clinical Academic Training Lead, Educational Supervisor) at [c.mitchell@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:c.mitchell@sheffield.ac.uk)

## Academic Clinical Fellowship Training Programme: Clinical Component

# The first two years of the training programme (ST1/ST2) involve standard full time clinical GP training in general practice and hospital training posts in South Yorkshire, although we encourage the fellows to attend local and national NIHR trainee conferences and the AUPMC twice yearly away days if possible and to plan their academic training programme early in the post with their academic supervisor.

# In years 3 and 4 (ST3 and ST4), trainees are attached to a single GP training practice with 50% of their time devoted to clinical training and 50% to research training.

# Review of Clinical and Academic Progress within the NIHR Academic Clinical Fellow integrated Clinical and Academic Training programme

# The programme of clinical and academic training undertaken is in accordance with the requirements for speciality training including satisfactory progress at ARCP as required by the Royal College of General Practitioners. A Personal Development Plan will be agreed with your clinical and educational supervisors alongside demonstration of academic progress throughout the scheme as agreed with your academic supervisor.

# CONTACTS

## Academic Lead (University) for the IAT Programme

Professor Dilly Anumba

Chair of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Honorary Consultant in Obstetrics & Gynaecology/Subspecialist in Fetomaternal Medicine

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## Academic Supervisors (University)

Professor Christopher Burton

Professor of Primary Medical Care and General Practitioner

Academic Unit of Primary Medical Care

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Dr Caroline Mitchell

Clinical Senior Lecturer Academic Unit Primary Medical Care

GP Trainer, Woodhouse Health Centre

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## Educational (Specialty Clinical training scheme and Academic)

Dr Caroline Mitchell

Clinical Senior Lecturer Academic Unit Primary Medical Care

GP Trainer, Woodhouse Health Centre

Deputy Clinical Academic Training Programme Director (NHS HEE YH)

Academic Unit of Primary Medical Care

Sam Fox House, Northern General Hospital

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## Clinical Supervisor

This will vary according to the practice in which the trainee is based.

Dr Alan Shirley

Flowers Health Centre

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1. http://www.medschools.ac.uk/AboutUs/Projects/Documents/2014-Clinical-Academic-Survey-Medicine-July-2013-data.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)