### ROLE PROFILE

**Job Title:** Research Assistant  
**School/Department:** School of Medicine, Division of Epidemiology & Public Health  
**Job Family and Level:** Research and Teaching, level 4a  
**Contract Status:** This is post will be offered on a fixed term contract until 31/08/2021  
**Hours of Work:** Full-time role (36.25 hours per week) or part time to a minimum of 80% FTE  
**Location:** City Hospital, Nottingham  
**Reporting to:** Research Fellow

**Purpose of the New Role:**

The role holder will join the UK Centre for Tobacco and Alcohol Studies (UKCTAS) group in Nottingham. The purpose of this role will be to assist and support the Research Fellow in carrying out a Cancer Research UK (CRUK) funded mixed methods research study.

Prisoners experience huge health inequalities, and their exceptionally high smoking prevalence (five times the national average) contributes significantly to their high mortality. Since the introduction of smoke-free polices across Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) in England and Wales, prisoners are now obliged to abstain from smoking while held in prison. This represents a unique opportunity to promote lifelong cessation in this highly disadvantaged and marginalised group. However, evidence suggests most prisoners intend to resume smoking as soon as possible after release. A systematic review of prison smoke-free polices worldwide concluded that there was a need for new research to identify effective strategies to reduce relapse in these individuals.

The primary objective of this study will be to develop and pilot test the feasibility and acceptability of an intervention to help prevent prisoners relapse to smoking after release. The study will work in accordance with the Medical Research Council (MRC) framework for developing and evaluating complex interventions. The Preventing Relapse TO Smoking among PrisonErs after Release (PROSPER) study consists of three key Phases:

1. Document the support provided to manage nicotine addiction during imprisonment and in the periods immediately before and after release; establish the extent to which prisoners intentionally resume or unintentionally relapse to smoking after release; and obtain views on how relapse might be prevented.  
2. Drawing on current literature and findings from Phase 1, develop and design an prototype intervention to prevent smoking relapse after release.  
3. To pilot the designed prototype intervention and conduct a process evaluation to inform the development of further work in this area.

The research will be carried out in three prisons in the East Midlands. The main duties will include recruitment of participants (HMPPS staff members and prisoners), data collection, data analysis, assist with intervention development and refining related intervention materials/resources, co-facilitate Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) groups, contribute to the ethical application for the pilot intervention, and preparation of manuscripts for peer-review publication.
Main Responsibilities

1. **Research:**
   - To undertake supervised research which may include planning, preparing, setting up, conducting and recording the outcome of experiments and fieldwork, developing questionnaires and conducting surveys within the framework of an agreed programme.
   - To conduct literature and database searches and carry out analyses and/or tests and/or critical evaluations using specified and agreed techniques, approaches and/or models and document findings.
   - To work in conjunction with others in the research team to achieve the research project objectives within the required timeline.
   - To co-facilitate PROSPER Steering group meetings and Patient and Public Involvement groups.
   - To assist with gaining and maintaining relevant ethical and research governance approvals.
   - With the Research Fellow, attend follow-up interviews with prisoners in the community who have successfully remained smoke-free after release.
   - To adhere to the study protocol and ethical principles relating to the recruitment of research participants and data collection.
   - Any other duties relevant to the role within the grade necessary. This may include support of other areas of the research programme.

2. **Engagement and Communication:**
   - To contribute to the production of research reports and publications and prepare and present papers on research progress and outcomes to relevant groups including external bodies.
   - To communicate information and ideas to students and advise and assist other staff/students with in area of expertise.
   - To build relationships with internal and external contacts to develop knowledge and understanding and form relationships for future collaborations.
   - To build and maintain effective relationships with the prison study sites and probation services.
   - To participate in internal and external meetings, training and other events relating to the study.

3. **Development:**
   - To continue to develop skills in and knowledge of research methods and techniques and contribute to the development of/or choice of techniques, models, methods, critiques and approaches.

Knowledge, Skills, Qualifications & Experience

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<th>Qualifications/Education</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Degree or equivalent in relevant subject area. Or Vocational experience in a relevant field (e.g. health or prison service).</td>
<td>Master’s Degree, or equivalent in relevant subject area.</td>
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<th>Skills/Training</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to communicate with clarity on complex information. Evidence of sufficient breadth or depth of research methodologies and techniques to work in research area. Developing research skills. Ability to contribute to method improvement.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a desire to further develop skills and knowledge of research methods and techniques. Knowledge of tobacco control, smoking cessation, intervention development or other area relevant to the post. Experience of working with prisoner populations.</td>
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<td>Analytical ability to facilitate conceptual thinking, innovation and creativity. Ability to build relationships and collaborate with others, internally and externally. Ability to relate well to others and with sensitivity in order to establish trust, respect and rapport with participants. Ability to cope with emotional situations and work in stressful environments. Ability to be highly organised, manage project activities with minimal supervision and work effectively on several tasks simultaneously. Proficient computer skills (email, internet, Word and Excel).</td>
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<td>Experience</td>
<td>Experience and or knowledge of working within healthcare, prison or research environments. Experience of working with participants from disadvantaged/marginalised/hard to reach groups. Experience of working with all levels of staff to develop effective networks and alliances.</td>
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<td>Some practical experience of applying the specialist skills approaches and techniques required for the role. Evidence in use of research methodologies and techniques to work within research area Experience of working with and recruiting participants in prison settings. Experience of undertaking one-to-one qualitative interviews and analysing qualitative data e.g. thematic or framework analysis. Experience of using SPSS, STATA and Nvivo.</td>
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<td>Statutory/Legal</td>
<td>Satisfactory Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance and Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) vetting.</td>
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<td>Awareness of ethics and governance requirements for health research.</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>Willingness to adopt the Ethos and Principles of the School of Medicine. Possess high levels of initiative, and commitment to deadlines. Be flexible in working hours (e.g. weekday evenings) to meet the needs of the study as appropriate. Prepared to travel to prison sites throughout the East Midlands. Full driving license and access to own vehicle for work purposes.</td>
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The University of Nottingham strongly endorses Athena SWAN principles, with commitment from all levels of the organisation to ensure equal opportunity, best working practices and fair policies for all.

The School of Medicine holds a Silver Athena SWAN award in recognition of our achievements in promoting and advancing these principles. Please see http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/medicine/about/athena-swan.aspx