



Adult Social Care Practitioner Internship Awards 2022

Guidance Notes for Applicants

Internship Overview

The internships provide award holders with an introduction to essential aspects and roles within practitioner research from research design and data management through to undertaking research. They are designed to provide dedicated time to enable interns to gain a broad understanding of the world of social care research and thereby help them to determine if this is an avenue for their further personal and professional development. They provide a unique opportunity to enable award holders to 'dip their toes' into practitioner research, often referred to as research into practice or practice-based research.

The Programme content will be informed by the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) developed by VITAE, the empirically validated theoretical framework used extensively within higher education to provide a sound underpinning to the development of any academic or practice-based researcher. The Programme will adapt and enrich the method previously developed and now used extensively by NHS R&D NW on behalf of Health Education England (HEE) across the North West to support the research career development of nurses, midwives and allied health professionals

The internships comprise of 30 days of release from award holders' substantive roles. The equivalent of a further 6 days will be spent participating in a structured educational programme with other interns in which the nature of practice-based research roles are explored in more depth. This will be delivered by NHS Research and Development North West and its associates.

The funding available to each intern will cover the costs of salary backfill and associated costs. £7,000 is payable to the award holder's employing local authority along with an additional £1,000 to cover costs of supervision and mentorship payable to a host organization, normally a local university.

What are the aims of the internships?

The principal aims of the internship are to:

- provide you with the opportunity to develop your skills and expertise in essential aspects of practitioner research
- further enhance social work and social care practice skills
- enable you to apply your new research skills and become a research champion in your employing organisation
- enable you to make an informed decision about the future of your practice-based research career
- enhance your ability to apply successfully for further research training opportunities

What is involved in the internships?

There are 2 components to the internships:

- supervised research experience and mentorship
- a structured group educational programme

Research Experience.

Rather than locating the internship programme within a single university or other research organisation, the internship programme has been designed to enable you to negotiate the timing and nature of your placement within a research group relevant to your area of research interest.

This provides you with the opportunity to identify a relevant host organisation and make contact prior to application for the internship. ***(Please note that if you are unable to identify suitable supervision, NHS R&D NW will assist you in this.)*** This supervision will provide you with both the opportunity to begin to share your research ideas with experienced researchers but also the opportunity to begin to develop relationships with supervisors and mentors. These may continue beyond the period of the internship.

Once you have identified a supervisor, it will be up to you and your supervisor to agree a programme of work for the duration of your internship. It is expected that you will gain exposure to working within an academic research environment to increase your knowledge and understanding of research skills such as:

- structured literature review
- methods of data collection and analysis
- project development and design including matters relating to ethical approval and costing strategies
- oral presentation, writing for publication and other communication skills

Being located within an academic research environment will enable you to increase your understanding of the differing research roles within research teams and the interface between academia and professional practice.

Within the time frame of 30 days, it may not be possible for you to work on an empirical research project but under the guidance of your research supervisor, it may be possible to engage in an aspect of a study that is already in progress.

30 days have been assigned to this aspect of the internship and as long as they are completed before the end of November 2022 these days can be configured to meet the needs of the intern, the employing organisation, the host organization and the programme of work. For example, this could become dedicated time of 1 day a week over 30 weeks or in blocks of time as necessary.

Who can supervise my internship?

The supervisor will work with you to develop your personal learning plan for the duration of the internships and support you throughout your internship.

The person who supervises your internship must

- be actively involved in research and hold a **minimum** of a Masters degree in or by Research or hold an equivalent qualification
- have experience of supporting and supervising Masters degree (by research) or PhD students to completion
- commit to your supervision and line management throughout the internship
- accept the responsibility for coordinating your placement including facilitating access to the wider academic research community

- commit to meeting with your line manager at the start and end of the internship
- sign off the final report

We recommend the supervisor meets with you and your line manager, either in person or via an online platform both at the start of the internship to agree your learning plan and at the end to review your learning. The primary purpose of this is to explore how your learning can be transferred into practice and to consider how your future research career can be progressed.

Structured Educational Programme.

During the internship, you will come together with the other interns on 3 occasions. The dates are provided below, and you will be expected to participate in all aspects of the educational programme.

The focus of the workshops will be upon;

- the consolidation of learning from the placements,
- your personal development and research career progression.

The educational programme will comprise of 3 x 2-day residential workshops to be held in the North West. There will be one at the beginning of the programme, one at the mid-point and one at the end.

Alongside the residential workshops you will also be required to take part in group coaching calls between the residential workshops and a final call 3 months after completing the internship.

By coming together in these ways, we also hope that you will develop as a community with the potential to continue beyond the duration of the internships. NHS R&D NW will facilitate this.

What will I be required to produce at the end of the internship?

At the end of the internship, you will be required to;

- deliver an oral presentation of your project during the final residential
- produce a 3,000 word reflective log
- present a poster summarising your internship at a forthcoming research event to be confirmed

Who can apply?

To apply for an internship, you must:

- Be employed by a local authority or employed in an organisation that is commissioned by a local authority in the North West.
- Be an adult social care professional registered with Social Work England or occupational therapist employed by a local authority and registered with the Health and Care Professions Council.
- Have no prior formal research qualification such as a Master degree by research (nb a social work qualification at master's level is acceptable), MPhil, PhD or professional doctorate.

- Have clear potential for engaging in research that will be of benefit to service users and/or the public. This could include reviews of adult protection processes, the use of advocates, promoting equality and social justice in adult social care, the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, to name but a few examples.

What is involved in preparing an application?

It is essential that you obtain support from your line manager/employer from the outset and as part of this, identify any potential areas of skills development or service improvement that could be addressed during the internship.

You should then identify a suitable academic supervisor and agree an outline programme of work to be undertaken during the internship.

If you currently have no supervision arrangements in place, NHS R&D NW will provide assistance to help identify a suitable supervisor.

Your completed application must therefore be signed by your line manager and internship supervisor (if identified).

To inform potential applicants about the programme and the application process, we will be holding 2 online Q&A sessions open for anyone to join who wishes to know more about the scheme and raise any questions. These will be an hour in duration, 12pm – 1pm, and held on MS Teams, the dates of these sessions are:

2nd March 2022

23rd March 2022

Those wishing to join these online sessions can do so [here](#).

Assessment of Applications;

Following the submission deadline, all applications will be checked for completeness and eligibility and eligible applications will be shortlisted for interview.

- Deadline for applications **Friday 1st April 2022**
- Interviews will be held on **Tuesday 12th April 2022** (these will be face 2 face OR online)
Date of first 2-day residential **18th & 19th May 2022** at Lancaster House Hotel, Lancaster

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application via email. It can take up to 10 working days for application outcomes to be issued. Feedback can be made available to unsuccessful applicants on request.

If you require further information please contact Jo-Anne Simpson joanne.simpson@researchnorthwest.nhs.uk.

Please submit completed application forms to joanne.simpson@researchnorthwest.nhs.uk.