

ACF (General / Colorectal Surgery) Programme Details in conjunction with University of Liverpool

Post availability

There is one post available in Colorectal Surgery

Overview

You can find generic information about Academic Clinical Fellowships in the North West plus links to the National Institute for Health Research's guidance via <https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/nihr-academic-clinical-fellowships-glance>

This ACF combines high-quality clinical training within the Northwest with protected academic development at the University of Liverpool (UoL). In keeping with the NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship model, 25% of the fellow's time will be dedicated to research and/or research training. The post is designed to provide the skills, experience, mentorship and preliminary data required to develop a competitive application for doctoral-level research funding, while maintaining progression towards clinical competencies in General Surgery.

The Mersey region boasts exemplary training through multiple trusts and the tertiary centre that is Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LUHFT). LUHFT has developed a unique, forward-looking and progressive Colorectal Department which now has a robust research program with three research fellows enrolled in PhD at UoL. LUHFT also has high volume pancreas, liver, oesophagogastric centralized services, alongside major trauma service based at Aintree University Hospital. The region also has several excellent breast surgery units and a transplant training program combined with the Manchester deanery. The Northwest deanery has an excellent rapport with Mersey, allowing inter deanery training tailored to individual trainee needs. As a trainee in the region, due consideration will be made to personal training needs and specialty exposure.

The General/ Colorectal Surgery ACF will primarily be supervised by Mr. Muhammad Ahsan Javed (MAJ) Senior Lecturer / Associate Professor (Institute of Systems, Molecular and Integrative Biology), supported by Professor Marta Garcia-Finana (Institute of Population Health, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences) and Professor Shakil Ahmed (Colorectal Surgery) as secondary supervisors. Trainees will be exposed to all aspects of upper and lower gastrointestinal surgery, both elective and emergency, with active participation in

the acute general surgical on call, gaining crucial experience and training in general surgery and colorectal surgery.

Academic Training

The ACF will join a supportive multidisciplinary clinical academic environment spanning LUHFT and UoL. Academic training will be tailored to the fellow's previous experience and career goals and include structured supervision, research methods training, critical appraisal, scientific writing, presentation and grant-development skills. The fellow will be encouraged to develop an individual research programme and to work towards peer-reviewed publications, national and international presentations, and a competitive application for a PhD or equivalent doctoral fellowship. Opportunities are available to develop skills in clinical and translational research, clinical trials, health data science, artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced statistical methodology, supported by relevant University research groups and collaborators.

The primary supervisor (MAJ) being an alumnus of ACF scheme (2010) is well acquainted with the requirements of the program and has a close working relationship with Professor Garcia-Finana who is an experienced academic. As a member of the ACPGBI and World Gastroenterology Organisation AI taskforces, MAJ will get trainee involved in any ongoing collaborative research projects. Further mentorship will be provided by Mr Dale Vimalachandran, who is a well-established Reader in Surgery and successfully supervised many academic trainees.

The aim is to develop and nurture a well-rounded clinical academic equipped to lead Digital research programmes, secure independent funding, ultimately advancing patient care in Surgery and be a future leader in the field.

Research Areas / Research Environment

This ACF in Digital Health uniquely combines expertise in health data science, colorectal surgery and AI.

The fellow will be embedded within a strong and expanding colorectal research environment linking LUHFT with the UoL. Research opportunities span colorectal cancer, rectal cancer, translational oncology, surgical outcomes, clinical trials, precision medicine, health data science and artificial intelligence. The programme benefits from close multidisciplinary collaboration between academic surgeons, oncologists, pathologists, radiologists, basic and translational scientists, statisticians and health data scientists. The University's Statistical and Computational Modelling Theme provides expertise in prediction modelling,

model validation and clinical utility, causal inference, Bayesian methods, longitudinal and time-to-event modelling, feature selection and machine learning. This breadth creates an excellent environment in which an ACF can develop a clinically relevant project while gaining rigorous methodological training and experience of interdisciplinary research.

Professor Marta García-Fiñana leads a highly collaborative and methodologically strong research environment within the University of Liverpool's Department of Health Data Science and Statistical & Computational Modelling Theme. Her Multivariate Data Modelling Group has particular expertise in the development and validation of clinical prediction models, classification methods, longitudinal and multilevel data analysis, feature selection, Bayesian computational approaches, and the integration of large datasets from multiple sources. The wider research environment provides complementary expertise in machine learning and artificial intelligence, causal inference, joint longitudinal and time-to-event modelling, statistical genetics and clinical trials methodology, creating an excellent setting for interdisciplinary clinical data science research. A particular strength is the emphasis on translating methodological innovation into clinically meaningful and reproducible tools, supported by strong collaborations with clinicians and healthcare researchers and a track record of research funded by NIHR, MRC, CRUK, Wellcome and other major funders. This combination of advanced quantitative expertise, access to multidisciplinary health data science researchers, and experience in clinically applied prediction modelling provides an outstanding environment in which to develop rigorous, interpretable and clinically applicable AI approaches for personalised cancer care.

Our wider research team includes Professors Yalin Zheng (AI in Healthcare), Iain Buchan (CHIL) and Dr Samuel Ball (Mathematics, AI and Health Sciences). These interdisciplinary collaborations can lead to innovative projects with the potential to transform management of rectal cancer with novel personalised healthcare solutions.

Research Facilities

The fellow will have access to the research infrastructure of the UoL and its NHS partners, including specialist clinical research support, clinical trials expertise, health data science and statistical support, shared research facilities and established multidisciplinary cancer research networks. The Royal Liverpool University Hospital is a regional centre for colorectal and anal cancer and sits within Liverpool's developing Academic Health Sciences Campus alongside the University and The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre, facilitating clinically embedded, multidisciplinary and translational research. The University also provides researcher-development support, library and digital resources, and access to

methodological expertise through the Institute of Population Health and the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences.

Clinical Training

Clinical training will be undertaken within the Northwest General Surgery training programme, with the post based principally at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital. The fellow will participate in supervised clinical activity appropriate to their stage of training and curriculum requirements, with exposure to a high-volume tertiary colorectal service including colorectal and anal cancer, benign colorectal disease, emergency general surgery and multidisciplinary cancer care. Clinical and academic supervisors will work together to ensure that protected academic time is maintained and that academic development is integrated with satisfactory progression in clinical training.

You can find out more about the clinical training programmes in the Northwest via the following link - <https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/specialty-schools>

Clinical person specifications can be found via the following link - [Person Specifications | Medical Hub](#)

Useful Links

<https://www.oriel.nhs.uk/Web/Vacancies>

<https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/nihr-academic-clinical-fellowships-glance>

<https://medical.hee.nhs.uk/medical-training-recruitment/medical-specialty-training/person-specifications/person-specifications-2025>

<https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/specialty-schools>

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