

Job Description for NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship in Paediatrics, Imperial College London – Prevention and Public Health ST1/2/3/4

1. Job Title.

Academic Clinical Fellow in Paediatrics at Imperial College London

Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF) in Paediatrics at ST1-4 level. Successful candidates will be expected to be able to demonstrate their commitment and potential for a clinical academic career, and alignment of their research interests with research strengths at LSHTM.

2. Duration of post.

The ACF post is for the equivalent of three years whole time equivalent (WTE), or until transfer to a research fellowship, whichever comes first. Thereafter, trainees will continue with Paediatric training.

3. Research institutions in which training will take place

The post-holder will be affiliated with Imperial College London at any of its sites and, as for all ACF positions, will be employed by the NHS Trust providing training in each part of the programme. Research work will be based at one or more locations as required by the nature of the project including if appropriate one of the many internationally renowned non-clinical sites affiliated with Imperial College.

4. Timetabling of clinical and research time

The post starts at ST1 – ST4 level of Paediatric training

The ACF training time is divided between:

- 25% of the time is in academic training (ie equivalent to 9 months full-time)
- 75% of the time is in clinical paediatric training

There is flexibility to organise the clinical component to suit the specific training needs of the successful applicant which is coordinated by the clinical academic training programme director. The appointee will have on-call clinical commitments which will vary depending upon the varying shift systems and training/service requirements. The exact division of research time will be guided by the proposed research project however, typically, these posts are divided into a 6-month research block and a 3-month research block which can be taken together or as two separate blocks. Academic training time must be agreed, prior to the commencement of training, with the training programme director as well as the academic supervisor. Academic blocks are undertaken in ST2+. It is expected that the successful candidate will be meeting with their chosen research supervisor regularly during the first year of the ACF in order to use the protected time productively.

5. Description of research component of programme

OVERVIEW

We offer a wide variety of training opportunities for the next generation of academic leaders in Paediatrics by combining the clinical and research excellence available at Imperial College London and associated hospitals. The programme for Academic Clinical Fellows will combine core clinical training in NW London with formal academic studies at Imperial College. During their protected time for research, they will gain a competitive academic edge that will increase their chances of success in Research Training Fellowship applications.

The appointee will have access to generic skills training through a wide number of Imperial College departments including the Statistical Advisory Service, and to the transferable skills programme run by the Imperial College Graduate School of Life Sciences. They will be well supported by our dedicated Clinical Academic Training Office.

This post is advertised **within paediatrics under the Prevention and Public Health theme, and candidates must develop a research project that falls within this theme**, either within the Imperial College School of Public Health, or with another Imperial College academic department.

The following descriptions provide a succinct and by no means exhaustive synopsis of the research strengths within academic paediatrics and epidemiology/public health at Imperial College:

In August 2020, the College launched the [Centre for Paediatrics and Child Health](#) together with a the [Mohn Centre for Children's Health and Wellbeing](#). The Mohn centre is a centre of excellence addressing childhood physical and mental health challenges and inequalities in the urban environment. Its research is community-led, cross-disciplinary, holistic and translational. These two centres bring together Academic Paediatrics at Imperial College, which has an international reputation for basic and translational research, and the College's world-renowned [School of Public Health](#). Together, they facilitate a huge breadth of research with a strong translational angle currently being undertaken both in Paediatrics, but also specifically with a public health and epidemiological focus, to improve child health at the population level.

The Public Health theme seeks to bring together clinicians, researchers, scientists, policy-makers and other stakeholders interested in improving our understanding of population child health, in order to achieve better population child health, whilst training the next generation of public health leaders and influencing health policies and programmes in the UK and around the world. Imperial's expertise focuses on translational science to improve the life course of children living in urban environments. The [Child Health Unit](#) focuses on research to improve child health through preventive primary care. An important part of our work is to use 'real-world-data' that is routinely collected to carry out national or large-scale population-based research without selection bias. This includes the use of the [National Neonatal Research Database](#), the Department for Education's National Pupil Database, WSIC, DISCOVER-NOW, and the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), mortality registrations, cancer registrations, birth registrations, terminations data, and Data by National Congenital Anomaly and Rare Disease Registration Service (NCARDRS) via the [Small Area Health Statistics Unit \(SAHSU\)](#). We work closely with the [Child and Adolescent Mental Health](#) and [Global Health](#) themes, particularly to reduce health inequalities and on challenges that cross-national borders.

Potential research areas

There is a wide choice of potential research topics for ACFs and applicants are encouraged to discuss with the PIs prior to application to identify projects which fit with their interests and research training needs. The successful trainee can then confirm the project which is best suited to their goals. For instance, a project could be linked to any of the Mohn Centre themes or affiliated groups. Whatever project is selected there will be strong support from staff across the programme, to enable development of additional laboratory skills, bioinformatics and statistical methods. See section 9 for contacts

There is a strong track record of career development, with many examples of paediatricians who have started or developed their research interests in our department going on to become leading clinician scientists with a focus on paediatric epidemiology and 'big data' analysis.

Some examples of potential research areas/projects within the programme are listed below.

- i. Genetic and early life environmental origins of multi-factorial diseases and disorders, in close collaboration with many international institutions, groups and networks. Perinatal epidemiological

studies exploring environmental, socioeconomic and intra-uterine milieu on fetal organ development and brain injury.

- ii. Childhood obesity studies
- iii. Policy-based research within school networks to improve child health
- iv. Impacts of air pollution on neonatal and child health
- v. Use of 'real-world-data' that is routinely collected to carry out national or large-scale population-based research without selection bias. This includes the use of the [National Neonatal Research Database](#), the Department for Education's National Pupil Database, WSIC, DISCOVER-NOW, and the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), mortality registrations, cancer registrations, birth registrations, terminations data, and Data by National Congenital Anomaly and Rare Disease Registration Service (NCARDRS) via the [Small Area Health Statistics Unit \(SAHSU\)](#).
- vi. Exploration of biomarkers of early life environmental exposures and neurodevelopmental outcomes in the Breast Milk, Environment, and Early-life Development (BEED) birth cohort study.
- vii. Exploration of how the digital environment might affect brain development, risk behaviours, cyberbullying and mental health in adolescence/early adulthood in the SCAMP cohort (<https://www.scampstudy.org/>), specifically for discovery and development on the roles played by a) physical health, e.g. physical inactivity and adiposity; b) cognition, c) pubertal hormones; and d) genetic risk factors in the pathways linking digital technology use and mental health, leaving certain groups more vulnerable to possible adverse effects.
- viii. Prediction of neonatal brain injury before birth using machine learning approaches; disease stratification using host gene-expression profiles; prognostication using magnetic resonance imaging and spectroscopy; and evaluation of new therapies for hypoxic-ischaemic encephalopathy, including large multicountry clinical trials of neuroprotection through the Consortium for Time-Critical Neonatal Encephalopathy Neuroprotection Trials (CONNECTIONS) (Prof. Thayyil and Dr Montaldo) <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/perinatal-neuroscience/comet-trial/>
- ix. Impact of (second-hand) tobacco or vape exposure on clinical and biomarker responses to CFTR modulator drugs in children, adolescents and young adults with cystic fibrosis (Prof J Davies).

6. Description of clinical training component of programme

The Paediatric ACF will undertake training in the London School of Paediatrics (LSP). ACFs will undertake the same clinical programme as other Paediatric trainees. Progression is competency-based, which means that ACFs are expected to incorporate the academic blocks without falling behind their non-ACF peers in clinical progression. The paediatric curriculum (Progress + <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/education-careers/training-assessment/progressplus>) developed by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) consists of 11 curriculum domains, such as procedures, communication, leadership and team working. There is a learning outcome for each domain, with learning objectives defined for the core and specialty stages of paediatric training. These define the standard the trainee must meet to progress satisfactorily. It captures the skills, knowledge and behaviours required, including the General Medical Council's (GMC) Generic Professional Capabilities for all doctors in training. The standards of assessment at each level of training are all mapped to Good Medical Practice.

The [RCPCH Trainee toolkit](#) is written for trainees by trainees and covers the essential elements on what to expect from a training post. Less than fulltime training guidance can be found [here](#).

The purpose of the assessment system is to reassure the individual, the profession and the public as well as employers and regulatory bodies that a trainee is fit to practice. Workplace based assessments (also known as supervised learning events) will be used at regular intervals throughout training. Attainment of the MRCPCH theory exam will be mandatory for progression beyond ST3, with attainment of full MRCPCH (passing the clinical exam) by the end of ST4. Individual trainee e-portfolios and trainer's reports must also be provided. RCPCH requires all new specialty registrars (StRs) to register as junior members of the RCPCH

in order to access the new GMC approved Assessment System for Paediatric Training which is mandatory for progression through training, and to be able to use the e-portfolio.

There are 30 training sites in London, divided into 3 sectors – NW, NE and Central, South. For LSHTM ACFs their Level 1 training will be based in the NW sector. More information in training in London can be found on the [LSP website](#):

Please note – these posts offer only general paediatric training and do not guarantee progression into specialty training. This is particularly relevant for those wishing to train in areas such as Paediatric Cardiology or Genetics – candidates still have to compete for these places, because the ACF offers academic rather than clinical training in these specialties.

ACF applicants need to either hold a National Training Number in paediatrics, or if they do not currently hold an NTN to successfully complete benchmarking.

7. Academic Programme Directors for paediatrics:

Jane Davies, Professor in Professor in Paediatric Respiriology & Experimental Medicine, Imperial College (Brompton campus)

j.c.davies@imperial.ac.uk Phone 020 7594 7973
Secretary – Gina Rivellini g.rivellini@imperial.ac.uk

Jethro Herberg, Professor in Paediatric Infectious Disease (South Kensington campus)
j.herberg@imperial.ac.uk

Sudhin Thayyil, Professor of perinatal neuroscience (Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital)
s.thayyil@imperial.ac.uk

8. Clinical Programme Director name

Prof Chris Gale, Academic TPD, Christopher.gale@imperial.ac.uk
Prof Cally Tann, Academic TPD, Cally.Tann@lshtm.ac.uk

9. Programme contact for further information (phone or email)

Candidates are welcome to contact the Academic Programme Directors or research leads below to have an initial conversation to help identify potential suitable contacts depending on their interests. **Dougal Hargreaves** (details below) invites applicants to contact him to help clarify projects of interest and key contacts.

Contact details for **Child Public Health / Population Health**:

Dougal Hargreaves, Professor of Paediatrics and Population Health (School of Public Health)
d.hargreaves@imperial.ac.uk.

Prof. Mireille Toledano, Mohn Chair, Population Child Health and Director of the Mohn Centre.
m.toledano@imperial.ac.uk

The range of paediatric research at Imperial College can be explored at the Centre for Paediatrics and Child Health website at: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/centre-for-paediatrics-child-health>. Contact details for suggested researchers in other departments are listed below – note that this is not a full list of potential supervisors, but suggests starting points for further exploration

Allergy

Professor Adnan CUSTOVIC, Imperial College (St. Mary's Campus) a.custovic@imperial.ac.uk
 Dr Robert BOYLE, Reader in Paediatric Allergy, 020 331 27754. r.boyle@imperial.ac.uk
 Dr Paul TURNER, Reader in Paediatric Allergy, p.turner@imperial.ac.uk (020 3312 7754)

Child Public Health / Population Health:

Dr Dougal HARGREAVES, Reader in Primary Care and Public Health, School of Public Health, d.hargreaves@imperial.ac.uk

Critical Care

Dr Padmanabhan Ramnarayan, Reader in Intensive Care Medicine, p.ramnarayan@imperial.ac.uk

Gastroenterology

Dr Jenny EPSTEIN, Consultant in Paediatric Gastroenterology, j.epstein@nhs.net

Genomics

Dr Vanessa Sancho-Shimizu, Reader in Human Genetics of Infectious Diseases; v.sancho-shimizu@imperial.ac.uk

Immunology

Prof Petter BRODIN, Garfield Weston Chair of Neonatology, p.brodin@imperial.ac.uk

Infectious Diseases

Prof Aubrey CUNNINGTON, Section Head and Reader, a.cunnington@imperial.ac.uk
 Dr Jethro HERBERG, Reader in Paediatric Infectious Diseases, j.herberg@imperial.ac.uk

Intensive Care

Dr Padmanabhan Ramnarayan, Reader in Intensive Care Medicine, padmanabhan.ramnarayan@nhs.net

Neonatal Medicine:

Prof Chris GALE, MRC Clinician Scientist, Reader and Hon Consultant in Neonatal Medicine, Imperial College London, Chelsea and Westminster campus; 0203 3153519; christopher.gale@imperial.ac.uk
 Professor Neena MODI, Chelsea and Westminster campus; n.modi@imperial.ac.uk

Respiratory Medicine:

Prof Jane DAVIES, Professor of Paediatric Respiriology, Royal Brompton Hospital. 020 7594 7973. j.c.davies@imperial.ac.uk
 Prof Sejal SAGLANI, NIHR Career Development Fellow, National Heart & Lung Institute, Imperial College London. 020 7594 3167. s.saglani@imperial.ac.uk

Neonatal Brain Research:

Prof Sudhin THAYYIL, Professor of Perinatal Neuroscience, Director of the Centre for Perinatal Neuroscience, Department of Brain Sciences. s.thayyil@imperial.ac.uk; 07912 888 700

10. NHSE contact:

Specialty Team <https://lasepgmdesupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/home>
 Recruitment Enquiries - <https://lasepgmdesupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/home>

11. Useful websites for further information [IAT Guide](#) | [NIHR](#)

<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/academy-programmes/integrated-academic-training.htm>

12. Confirmation that the post attracts an NTN (A)
Confirmed

This job description was prepared on 14 August 2026