The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine is a world-leading centre for research and postgraduate education in public and global health. Our mission is to improve health and health equity in the UK and worldwide; working in partnership to achieve excellence in public and global health research, education and translation of knowledge into policy and practice.

Founded in 1899 by Sir Patrick Manson, the School has expanded in recent years at its two main sites on Keppel Street and Tavistock Place. The School’s multidisciplinary expertise includes clinicians, epidemiologists, statisticians, social scientists, molecular biologists and immunologists, and we work with partners worldwide to support the development of teaching and research capacity.

Research income has grown to over £85 million per year from national and international funding sources including the UK government, the European Commission, the Wellcome Trust and philanthropic sources.

Education programmes have grown to more than 1,000 London-based Master's and Research students, 2,900 studying Master's by distance learning and 1,000 on short courses and continuous professional development. We have also launched a series of free online courses, and more than 15,000 people registered on the first of these, Ebola in context. Our staff, students and alumni work in more than 150 countries in government, academia, international agencies and health services.

The School is highly ranked in various university league tables. It was named the world’s leading research-focused graduate school in the Times Higher Education World Rankings in 2013. In 2014, it was ranked in the top 10 universities in the world for citation rate by the new EU-supported U-Multirank database, fourth in the world for impact in medical sciences by the Leiden Ranking and third in the world for social science and public health in the US News Best Global Universities Ranking. According to the results of the UK government’s Research Excellence Framework, published in December 2014, the School was ranked second overall (after the Institute for Cancer Research) on the key measure of impact.

Faculty of Infectious and Tropical Diseases

The Faculty of Infectious and Tropical Diseases encompasses all of the laboratory-based research in the School as well as that on the clinical and epidemiological aspects of infectious and tropical diseases. It is headed by Brendan Wren, who is Professor of Microbial Pathogenesis. The range of disciplines represented in the faculty is very broad and inter-disciplinary research is a feature of much of our activity. The spectrum of diseases studied is wide and there are major research groups with a focus on malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, vaccine development and evaluation, and vector biology and disease control. The Faculty is organised into four large research departments comprising: Pathogen Molecular Biology, Immunology and Infection, Disease Control, and Clinical Research. There is close interaction between scientists in different research teams. The Faculty has strong overseas links, which provide a basis for field studies and international collaborations in developed and developing countries. The teaching programme includes MSc courses, taught in-house and by distance learning, which are modular in structure, a variety of short-courses and an active doctoral programme (PhD and DrPH). For further information on the Faculty see: http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/itd/index.html.

Department of Disease Control (Head: Professor Joanna Schellenberg)
This multidisciplinary Department includes epidemiologists, entomologists, anthropologists and social scientists, clinical scientists, public health engineers and geographers. This range of expertise provides us with a battery of tools for focusing on the control of diseases that are insect-borne, water-borne or associated with poor hygiene – mostly in developing countries. Much of the research can be categorised as: evaluating disease control interventions; investigating implementation strategies - including working with the private sector; understanding the factors underlying household behaviour in relation to family health; or determining how control resources can be targeted most efficiently. Particular attention is paid to research directed at current health policy issues, including the gap between policy and practice.

The Department's Environmental Health Group plays a leadership role in research and operational support for hygiene behaviour change, household water supply and sanitation. Three key programmes which contribute to the work of the Group are the DFID funded consortium Sanitation and Hygiene Applied Research for Equity (SHARE), the Hygiene Centre (Unilever) and the improved sanitation randomised, controlled field trial jointly funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie).

The Department houses the largest research group in LSHTM working on malaria control. Ongoing projects include: research capacity strengthening in Africa through the work of the Malaria Capacity Development Consortium (MCDC); novel approaches to combating malaria in pregnancy (MiP) in both Africa and India; a number of projects which develop and evaluate delivery mechanisms to improve ACT access, targeting, safety and quality, all funded by the ACT Consortium. In addition, staff are involved in studies of Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) in West Africa and are supporting work on the large Phase 3 clinical trial study of the RTS,S malaria vaccine in children.

The Department is world-leading in applied entomology and insect borne diseases, and has provided a testing service for control products for over 20 years. The Arthropod Control Product Test Centre Arctec provides access to the Department’s valuable mosquito colonies and in-house facilities for testing of repellents, insecticides and after-bite treatments. Its entomological field sites in Tanzania, Benin, The Gambia and Kenya are involved in a variety of vector borne disease control trials. The PAMVERC alliance between LSHTM and African partners work in partnership with WHO and the manufacturing industry on product development and evaluation under laboratory and semi-field conditions and in community trials.

Staff from the Department lead on studies investigating how meningococcal meningitis is spread in Africa and the impact of a new serogroup meningococcal A vaccine on reducing transmission (MenAfriCar Consortium). Staff are also assisting in the evaluation of the impact of introduction of a pneumococcal conjugate vaccine into the routine EPI programme of The Gambia and in the initial testing of a new pneumococcal protein vaccine in the same area.

Also based with the Department is the IDEAS (Informed Decisions for Actions) project, which aims to improve the health and survival of mothers and babies through generating evidence to inform policy and practice. The Department also includes a major grouping of researchers using spatial analysis in public health.

**Teaching**

The School offers 19 one year full-time taught courses leading to the Master of Science (MSc) degree of the University of London and the Diploma of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (DLSHTM). The Faculty of Infectious and Tropical Diseases runs or contributes substantially to ten of these courses and the "Immunology of Infectious Diseases" course is run from within the Department of Immunology and Infection. In addition, the Faculty is responsible for the three-month Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (DTM&H), the Diploma in Tropical Nursing and offers a range of specialist short courses lasting usually one or two weeks. Five MSc courses are also offered by Distance-based Learning, including one on Infectious Diseases.
Teaching requirements

For Research Assistants and Research Fellows:

To contribute to the Faculty teaching programme, up to 10% of your time per annum, subject to the policy of any funding agency (by agreement, some staff may make a greater contribution than this).

Research Training

The School offers two doctoral training programmes. The MPhil/PhD degrees are designed for those who wish to go on to a full time research career. The DrPH is directed towards those who expect their careers to be more in the practice of public health.

Project information

The target for elimination of Visceral Leishmaniasis (VL), or kala-azar, as a public health problem (annual VL incidence below 1/10,000 people per block) on the Indian subcontinent (ISC) is 2020. Whilst some areas have achieved this goal already (notably Nepal and Bangladesh), others have not (notably blocks in northern Bihar), and yet others have seen a recent resurgence of disease incidence (notably blocks in southern Bihar). There are still approximately 620 blocks (20% of the total) that have incidence above the target threshold.

The overall aim of the research is to develop a consensus on the additional knowledge required to ensure that VL transmission is successfully interrupted and that elimination is sustained through a programme that ensures rapid diagnosis, treatment and vector control in new or recurring foci.

This project has two main purposes. The first is to support the development of an Indian-led and Indian-based forum for constructive discussion around the transmission dynamics of VL, bringing together the international, scientific, logistic and practical expertise. The second is to use this forum to define the gaps in our understanding that threaten elimination and its sustainability, and to develop protocols and initiate operational research that can rapidly provide the missing information for timely incorporation into the National Programme. The intention is that this multidisciplinary operational research will be focused in scope and based on carefully defined, purposive, fieldwork addressing the identified gaps, and that it will involve modelling of data to drive the research questions.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post: Research Assistant (BMGF Sustaining Visceral Leishmaniasis Elimination)

Grade: Academic Pathway Grade 5

Responsible to: Mary Cameron

Dept: Department of Disease Control

The research assistant will work full-time on the project: Breaking transmission of VL in India: progressing beyond elimination as a public health problem

The position will be based in London but the post-holder will have an opportunity to gain experience working as part of a multi-disciplinary research network of national and international scientists during consortium meetings held in India. The post-holder will act as an interface between researchers in London and India involved in the consortium to sustain elimination of VL in India.

Specifically, the research assistant will:

- Identify and engage with a broad network of relevant stakeholders in India. These are expected to include members of the National Programme, research groups, implementing partners, donors and others,
- Identify the key operational research gaps which could be addressed with support from LSHTM research team and/or other external partners,
- Lead in setting up a website platform for the consortium,
- Coordinate the aggregation of relevant VL transmission data and, where feasible, routine health information system data, to feed into transmission modelling being conducted by consortium partners,
- Facilitate identification and flow of data and analyses from owners to the National Programme, and disseminate the results of analyses back to them.
- Lead the writing of an epidemiological profile for VL transmission in India incorporating the results of the analyses produced during the project.
- Support the development of a technical plan of action to sustain VL transmission in India, based on the epidemiological profile,
- Co-ordinate the preparation of research proposals relating to the activities of the consortium,
- Co-ordinate the preparation of research papers relating to the activities of the consortium,
- Contribute to the Faculty teaching programme, up to 10% of your time per annum, subject to the policy of any funding agency (by agreement, some staff may make a greater contribution than this).

PERSON SPECIFICATION CRITERIA

ESSENTIAL
- An MSc in epidemiology, public health or other subject relevant to the position.
- First-hand experience of quantitative data analysis or disease modelling
- A broad understanding of current issues in VL transmission or operational research in India.
- A proven ability to manage competing work priorities and to meet deadlines.
- A proven ability to write technical reports in English and to summarise key information.
- A proven ability to communicate complex issues orally to a wide range of audiences.
- The ability to work in a multi-cultural environment.
- The ability to work in a team and on your own initiative.
- The ability and willingness to travel to India twice a year.
- The ability to work independently with direction from manager
- Experience of using quantitative research software

DESIRABLE
- Experience of setting up and maintaining websites.

SALARY AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

The post is currently funded until 30 April 2018. The appointment will be made on the Academic Pathway Grade 5 £33,006- £37,889 (per annum, inclusive of London Weighting). The post will be subject to the LSHTM terms and conditions of service. Annual leave entitlement is 30 working days per year for all staff (pro-rata for part-time staff). In addition, staff are entitled to public holidays and Director’s days on which the School is closed.

ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION

The School will comply with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, which requires all employees to provide documentary evidence of their legal right to work in this country prior to commencing employment. Candidates will be required to bring their passport (and visa if applicable) to interview so that it can be copied and verified.

Applications from candidates who require sponsorship to work in the UK will be considered alongside other applications. Applicants who do not currently have the right to work in the UK will have to satisfy UK Visas & Immigration regulations before they can be appointed.

Further information about Certificate of Sponsorship and eligibility to work in the UK, can be found at: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/employers/points