Job Description for NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship in
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
ST1 - ST4

1. Job Title.
NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

2. Duration of post.
The ACF post will last for three years and will be appointed at ST1-ST4 level with run through to Specialty Training in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. In addition to their clinical training, the post-holder will undertake research and receive both scientific and practical assistance in applying for a subsequent research fellowship. If successful, the Department would expect to provide ongoing support in terms of research supervision, additional training in specific scientific and transferrable skills, and practical support, including financial support for basic research expenses ordinarily covered by academic departments.

3. Research institutions in which training will take place
The academic component will be based in the Pears Maudsley Centre for Children and Young People, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience (IoPPN) at King's College London. The IoPPN is a leading centre for mental health and neuroscience research in Europe. We produce more highly cited outputs (top 1%) on psychiatry and mental health than any other centre internationally (SciVal). Our world-leading research has made, and continues to make, an impact on how we understand, prevent and treat mental illness and other conditions that affect the brain. The new Pears Maudsley Centre is the largest academic centre devoted to child and adolescent research in Europe. It brings together academic and clinical excellence in the field of child and adolescent mental health, providing an essential link between state-of-the-art science and translation into Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to benefit young people.

4. Timetabling of clinical and research time
The CAMHS Clinical Academic Group (CAG) has a strong track record of ensuring protected time for clinical academics in training. For this post, protected time will be managed through a timetable agreed by academic and training programme directors, and will be monitored for compliance. There is an expectation that protected research time will be used via block release (usually 6 months and 3 months); however day release (or a combination) is negotiable based upon the needs of the trainee and their proposed research.

5. Description of research component of programme
The ACF will receive training in generic and specific research skills tailored to their needs. They will join a research group and receive mentoring and peer support from a range of early-senior academic colleagues all undertaking clinically orientated child and adolescent mental health research. At any one time the Department hosts between 6-8 IAT clinical researchers (ACFs, Clinical Research Fellows, ACLs).

The ACF will undertake a research project specifically orientated to support applications for externally funded research training fellowships leading to a PhD. Our Child and Adolescent Psychiatry ACF programme has been highly successful in supporting clinical researchers to achieve such positions (7 from the last 8 posts).

Potential research projects
The ACF will have a unique opportunity to develop their interests across a broad range of potential topics. They will have access to an exceptionally diverse interdisciplinary group of senior academics, with expertise across psychiatry, developmental and social psychology, psychopathology, personality and

cognitive traits, genetics, neuroimaging, and artificial intelligence. Supported by experienced academics, the ACF will define a distinct area of study and use the unique resources at the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry[1] within the Pears Maudsley Centre for Children and Young People,[2,3] as well as the Maudsley Biomedical Research Centre[4] and Social Genetic Developmental Psychiatry Centre.[5] The ACF will also have opportunities to develop interdisciplinary collaborations with the Department of Women and Children's Health,[6] where experts in obstetrics, gynaecology, biomedical imaging and neonatology address a range of maternal and paediatric disorders. The ACF will plan and undertake a project to help initiate their research training, career development, and first steps to independent research.

Example research topics include:

- Analysing large-scale electronic mental health records (CRIS)[7,8] and data linkages to study patterns of morbidity, risk factors, and impacts of child and adolescent mental health problems, and the provision and effects of healthcare interventions
- Investigating the risk of recurrence and relapse of major depressive disorder in children and adolescents and the factors influencing depression trajectories
- Examining naturalistic wearable measures of activity level and brain state measures of attention in children with emerging ADHD, to explore the use of new outcome measures in trials of interventions and identify new mechanisms for targeted treatment
- Investigating whether an imbalance of neuronal excitation (mediated by glutamate) and inhibition (GABA) acts as a risk factor for the onset of childhood neurodevelopmental conditions, particularly ADHD, and its persistence into adolescence
- Identifying distinct profiles of clinical, cognitive and neural-circuit differences that predict response to different treatments for childhood ADHD and adolescent mood disorders
- Supporting clinical trials of alternative non-drug treatments for ADHD including non-invasive brain stimulation (TNS and TMS) and digital sleep interventions
- Normative modelling to identify predictors of individual deviation from age-expected brain maturation trajectories after pre-term birth e.g. the Human Connectome programme
- Assessing shared genetic aetiology between childhood irritability and psychiatric disorders

The above examples are not exhaustive, and the ACF will be supported to develop novel research projects aligned with their own interests, drawing on the many outstanding research resources available at King's. These resources include a wide range of cohorts, datasets, and collaborative research programmes that can support new research questions, with illustrative examples including the Born in South London birth cohort,[9] the Twins Early Development Study (TEDS),[10] and the AIMS-2-TRIALS.[11]

The post is particularly well aligned with the NIHR Maternal and Child Health research theme, with opportunities to investigate developmental pathways from early life through childhood and adolescence, and to translate research findings into improved mental health outcomes for children and young people.

1. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/academic-psychiatry/about/departments/child-adolescent-psychiatry
2. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/pears-maudsley-centre
3. https://kingsmaudsley.org/
4. https://www.maudsleybrc.nihr.ac.uk
5. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/psychology-systems-sciences/about/departments/social-genetic-and-developmental-psychiatry
6. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/slcps/our-departments/department-of-women-childrens-health
7. https://www.maudsleybrc.nihr.ac.uk/facilities/clinical-record-interactive-search-cris/
8. https://www.camhsdlab.co.uk/
9. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/elixir-1
10. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/teds-study

11. https://www.aims-2-trials.eu

6. Description of clinical training component of programme

The clinical components of the ACF will be within the South London and Maudsley Rotational Training Scheme. This scheme has a long-standing reputation as a top UK psychiatry training scheme, and has trained the UK's leading clinical academics in psychiatry. At CT1-3 level, there are ~80 posts in South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM). ACFs undertake the same clinical programme as other trainees, leading to Membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (MRCPsych). Training covers core aspects of general adult, old age, child and adolescent, forensic, learning disability psychiatry, and psychotherapy. ACFs must meet ARCP criteria for progression through training. For ACFs appointed at ST1-3, progression to ST4 is dependent on success in the MRCPsych and the ARCP process.

Specialty Training in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry is led by SLaM and the IoPPN Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry – a department with a pre-eminent international reputation, that has long been recognised as the leading UK centre for training a cadre of world-leading clinical academics in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. SLaM provides the widest range of children's mental health services in Europe. We serve a local population of 1.3 million in South London and provide multiple national specialist services for children and young people from across the UK (https://slam.nhs.uk/specialist-outpatient-camhs). The Child and Adolescent Psychiatry training scheme is one of the largest in the UK, with over 20 trainees, including Academic Clinical Lecturers. Training placements include community-based CAMHS services, inpatient units, national and specialist outpatient clinics. More that 20 different placements are available. During their three years, trainees rotate through a selected mix of placements in order to achieve comprehensive training, and to meet the requirements of the competency-based curriculum for specialist training.

Trainees contribute to the provision of On Call services within SLaM. This is undertaken on a shift system with appropriate banding.

Trainees receive support and guidance throughout their training from a range of clinical supervisors for specific placements, and an educational supervisor who retains this role throughout a trainee's higher training period.

7. Academic Programme Director name

Prof Johnny Downs – Co-Lead for IAT in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Dr Stephanie Lewis – Co-Lead for IAT in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

8. Clinical Programme Director name

Dr Dan Hayes – Training Programme Director for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

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

Prof Johnny Downs johnny.downs@kcl.ac.uk
Dr Stephanie Lewis stephanie.j.lewis@kcl.ac.uk
Dr Dan Hayes Daniel.Hayes@slam.nhs.uk

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)
Yes

This job description was prepared on 31-July-2026