Research Assistant – SPOR Networks Process Analysis

Organizational Background

The Maternal Infant Child Youth Research Network (MICYRN) is a federally incorporated, nonprofit charitable organization that joins 21 maternal-child health research member organizations with over 25 affiliated practice-based perinatal and pediatric research networks. MICYRN's principal role is to improve the quality and impact of research through the provision of a coordinated infrastructure that supports research teams working across Canada and beyond. To that end, MICYRN works with leadership representatives from our member sites to identify and implement shared priorities toward developing this infrastructure, which will support clinical investigations, with an emphasis on multi-centre observational studies and clinical trials.

Insufficient integration of research into clinical practice and a lack of sustainable clinical research infrastructure are among the challenges and barriers impeding the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of clinical research in Canada. Research institutes, disease-oriented research networks, and provincial Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) units currently play an important role in generating evidence and implementing innovation; however, they often operate in relative isolation and do not benefit from the range of expertise available across Canada. Most publicly-funded research studies must be conducted across multiple provinces which adds the additional burden of jurisdictional regulatory and other process hurdles. Coordinated policy change and financial aid at both federal and provincial levels are required to facilitate the long-term sustainable transformation that is needed in order to integrate research results into the health care system and clinical practice. The path to a "Learning Healthcare System" starts with a comprehensive, objective analysis of cost and inefficiencies in the current model to support the case for change. To that end, MICYRN intends to collect and leverage process data related to study planning and conduct, as well as patient-partner engagement data from select SPOR networks and clinical trials teams to identify trends in the data that describes common barriers and enablers to implementing pan-Canadian, child health patient oriented Research. This "lessons learned initiative" will provide a foundation upon which to develop and implement strategies to enhance MICYRN's ability to better support research communities and patient partners, as well as advocate for changes in national infrastructure models, with the aim to conduct more inclusive, streamlined, efficient, and healthcare system-integrated research in children.

MICYRN is seeking an experienced, full-time individual to help achieve the specific goal of first conducting an analysis of the process enablers and barriers with subsequent development of an improvement road-map. Given the distributed model of the MICYRN Coordinating Centre, the incumbent need not be physically based at the Vancouver office and can be part of the virtual team for a two-year period with the possibility of extension. The nature of this role will appeal to individuals seeking to broaden their clinical experience to a national focus and would benefit an organization looking to support the development of an existing employee beyond their current responsibilities.

Nature of the Work

Under the direction of the associate director of clinical trials (ADCT) and Scientific Director of MICYRN, this position is primarily responsible to complete a comprehensive analysis of the research projects undertaken by the SPOR network/teams. The aim of the analysis is to understand the specific enablers and barriers by obtaining objective data on the efficiencies and challenges encountered in the planning, development, and execution of patient oriented child health research projects.

This position has a term of two years, with the possibility of extension (grant-dependent) and generally reports to the local host research organization administratively and to MICYRN functionally.

Research Assistant Duties

- Performs literature and scoping reviews
- Supports the ADCT to develop project plans and protocols
- Organizes and prepares data collection forms
- Conducts qualitative interviews with appropriate study team members
- Performs data collection and database entry as necessary
- Compiles data and performs basic data analysis (graphs, common themes, reports)
- Coordinates and attends meetings with appropriate team members for study related projects

Qualifications and Expertise Required

- Bachelor's degree in a health-related field
- Minimum of two years of clinical trial coordination experience
- Experience with contractual/legal agreement, REB, familiarity with ICH-GCP, FDA and TPD regulatory requirement
- In-depth knowledge of clinical trial methods, conduct, and challenges pertaining to mothers and children in trials
- Facilitation skills, including demonstrated ability and comfort in supporting decision making, coaching and teaching, and the ability to motivate, inspire and build confidence in others to achieve common goals
- Excellent organizational and interpersonal skills with strong ability in building relationships and maintaining networks
- Superior communication skills: written and oral
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple projects and cross-functional teams, set priorities and meet deadlines
- Ability to work independently and be accountable for delivery of results, sometimes under time pressure
- Intermediate computer experience: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook; data management experience or knowledge is essential

Individuals that are interested in this position are invited to send an email to the Associate Director of Clinical Trials, Breanne Stewart (breanne1@ualberta.ca) with their expressed interest and CV by March 25th, 2022.