ACF (Cardiology) Programme Details in conjunction with University of Manchester

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

Academic Training

NIHR ACFs are part of the Integrated Clinical Academic Training (ICAT) Pathway in England, established in order to promote academic medicine and dentistry, and to provide a clear route for doctors and dentists interested in an academic career. An NIHR ACF post is intended to support medical and dental trainees who are at the early stages of specialty training and who wish to develop an academic career alongside their clinical training. Posts have 25% protected academic time for trainees to develop their academic research skills and prepare an application for a Fellowship award to undertake a higher research degree or if candidates already hold a PhD acquire further competencies in order to apply for a clinical lectureship.
The successful candidate will be able to choose how to organise the 25% protected academic time.
Following appointment the successful candidate, with the help of the ICAT lead for Cardiology (Dr Hutchings), will identify an academic supervisor and an academic advisor.
The academic supervisor will welcome the successful candidate into his research group and supervise the candidate research project.
The academic advisor will support the candidates to enable him/her to acquire all the academic competencies in the ACF curriculum.
All NIHR ACFs must attend the Research Training Programme (RTP) provided by the University of Manchester.
The aim of the RTP is to provide ACFs with generic research training. NIHR stipulates that the RTP covers at least the following areas, although not all will be equally relevant to all ACFs:
• Statistics, bioinformatics, clinical trial design
• Epidemiology
• Ethical aspects of clinical research
• Project design, planning, costing and management
• Research governance and the regulatory framework for research
• GCP

• Patient and public involvement in research
• Refereeing of papers and grant applications
• Diversity and equal opportunities in research, and cultural competence
• Time management and personal effectiveness
• Leadership: Practitioner, Partner and Leader role

The most complete package for research training is the MRes in Medical Sciences, which is fully funded within the ACF and undertaken part-time over 2-3 years.
In addition, the division of Cardiovascular Sciences runs a monthly seminar programme with international speakers. This will offer the unique opportunity to interact with world class scientists and network within the division.

Research Areas / Research Environment

The University of Manchester is the largest single-site university in the UK with around 38,000 students and more than 11,000 staff. The Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health is comparable in size to a medium-sized UK university. Thirty undergraduate and 90 postgraduate programmes offer our students opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge they need for a successful career.
At the centre of cardiovascular research conducted in Manchester is the Division of Cardiovascular Sciences which is part of the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health. Our mission is to carry out cardiovascular research which is of international standing and which will have an impact upon patient care, either now or in the immediate future. The Division of Cardiovascular Sciences is recognised as an area of research strength by the Faculty and its mission is to be an international centre for research into diseases of the heart and circulation. Research activity in the Division is supported by several major awards since 2018 including: 1) NIHR BRC funding supporting a cardiovascular theme; 2) A prestigious BHF Centre of Excellence Award (commenced 2024); 3) BHF infrastructure award for a state-of-the-art MRI scanner in the BHF Manchester Centre for Heart and Lung Magnetic Resonance (opened 2021, director Prof Miller); 4) Current major personal awards and grant funding from the British Heart Foundation, NIHR, Stroke Association, MRC, Leducq Foundation, Department of Health,

The division has a wide research portfolio which embraces laboratory-based studies and clinical research programmes.
Area of basic science research include: Heart failure & arrhythmia mechanisms and therapeutics (Prof. Trafford, Prof. Eisner, Prof. Dibb, and Prof. Cartwright) obesity and heart failure (Prof Kitmitto, Prof Wang, Dr Liu) , cardiac regeneration (Prof Oceandy), genomics of cardiovascular disease (Prof. Keavney, Dr Eales, Dr Talavera and Prof. Tomaszewski), disease mechanisms

and novel therapies for arrhythmias & inherited cardiac conditions (Dr Venetucci and Dr Hutchings), cardiovascular mechanisms of Dementia (Dr Greenstein and Dr Pritchard) and the role of perivascular adipose tissue on vascular structure and function (Prof Heagerty and Dr Saxton).
The main areas of clinical research are: Heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (Prof Miller), Inflammation and cardiovascular disease (Prof Buch), hypertrophic cardiomyopathy and coronary microvascular dysfunction (Prof Crean and Dr Motwani), and Stroke (Dr Parry-Jones and Prof C Smith).
Further information is available from the Division website https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/organisations/division-of-cardiovascular-sciences

Research Facilities

Our discovery science research labs are based on the main university campus in our core facilities, known as the Biomedical Corridor, which comprises the Core Technology Facility (CTF), AV Hill and Michael Smith Buildings. This means you will be immersed in a thriving environment consisting of contiguous, flexible lab space, state-of-the-art equipment, conferencing facilities and dedicated write-up areas.
Clinical research programmes are based in the three teaching hospitals in Manchester: Wythenshawe Hospital, Manchester Royal Infirmary and Salford Royal.
All three hospitals have dedicated clinical research units with research nurses and research administrators. The BHF Manchester Centre for Heart and Lung Magnetic Resonance research is based at Wythenshawe hospital.

Clinical Training

The Specialist training Programme in Cardiology in the North Western Region is supervised by Dr Matthew Luckie. Training programmes are devised to rotate through district general hospitals and Tertiary Cardiac Centres. There are twelve district centres and 3 tertiary hospitals in the rotation. Trainees would spend half of the 5 years of the training program in each setting. Training is provided in all aspects of Cardiology and is designed to offer a comprehensive exposure to allow StRs to pursue career aspirations in Academic Cardiology as well as all sub-specialties (such as PCI, Electrophysiology, Devices, Heart failure, Non-invasive Imaging or Inherited Cardiac Conditions). In recent years a number of trainees have successfully completed ACF programs before moving on to Academic Clinical Lecturer posts and Consultant appointments. Already the programme offers opportunities for doctors who wish to train flexibly, which can be adapted to provide protected time for academic training and research. Dr David Hutchings is the ICAT (Integrated Clinical Academic Training) lead for Cardiology.

You can find out more about the clinical training programmes in the North West via the following link - https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/specialty_schools

Clinical person specifications can be found via the following link - https://medical.hee.nhs.uk/medical-training-recruitment/medical-specialty-training/person-specifications/person-specifications-2026

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-2026
https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/specialty_schools

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