**Funded opportunity for early career researchers:**

**Salary Bursary up to £8000**

**Research Placement (secondment) – addiction research**

We are delighted to invite expressions of interest to undertake a research placement within the Inclusion Service at Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT). The aim of this placement is to provide an opportunity of working closely with addiction services to develop an interest and understanding of the opportunities for research in this field.

Please note you **must** be employed by a HEI organisation to apply for this placement. This position will be hosted by MPFT for the duration. We anticipate the placement to start as soon as possible but there is some flexibility around the duration of the project with scope to complete the project over a shorter period. We will subsidise costs for your salary up to £8,000.

Inclusion provides specialist addiction services including community drug and alcohol services. MPFT’s Research & Innovation Department has a long-established reputation for research excellence, with a strong track record in partnership working between its services and academic partners, driving collaborative research that addresses the priorities of those with lived experience of our services.

This placement opportunity is funded by the NIHR Mental Health Research Incubator (Placement Award – NIHR Addiction Misson NIHR:200172) and has arisen out of the close working relationship between Inclusion and the Trust’s R&I team to drive evidence-based practice into treatment, recovery and harm prevention. This placement will provide the time and connections to experience a specified piece of research (please see project brief) working closely with people with lived experience of services, addiction services practitioners and the research and innovation (evaluation) team.

The post will be supported by the Trust’s evaluation team, clinical leads and Keele University’s academic lead for Inclusion research.

Hybrid working: The post will be based at St George’s Hospital, Stafford. Work from home will be supported in agreement with the project team. It is expected that the postholder will be able to visit any of the Inclusion Services where research is being undertaken (note Inclusion Services cover from the Isle of Wight to the Northeast of England). Transport costs will be reimbursed.

Application is by way of provision of a supporting statement. **In preparing your supporting statement application, please refer to the below expected duties of the role and please ensure you have your line manager’s/institution approval to apply for this opportunity.**

If you have any queries relating to this role please contact Tim Lewington on Tim.Lewington@mpft.nhs.uk

If you are interested in this role, please complete the supporting statement below, and return to helen.duffy@mpft.nhs.uk via email **by 5pm 19th September 2025.**

It is anticipated that interviews will be held via Teams on 1st October 2025.

**Project brief**

Time-released, or Long-acting Buprenorphine is used for the treatment of addiction to opioids. Research suggests that psychological factors, including feeling coerced, uninformed, and rushed influence (non-)commencement and (dis-)continuation of injectable buprenorphine/Buvidal.[1][2] Provision of effective, well-designed psychosocial support during assessment, transition and maintenance has potential to optimise uptake and continuation[3] and subsequently improve outcomes. This project will explore staff attitudes towards and recipients’ experience of psychosocial support while being considered for and receiving Buvidal. The aim will be to generate an understanding of what the psychosocial assessment and intervention package should be to support people to successfully achieve their goals. The project will involve (i) secondary qualitative analysis of data already collected for the evaluation and (ii) a rapid scoping review of the existing literature in the area. Dependent on project timings, there may be an opportunity for the researcher to undertake additional qualitative interviews, with associated coding and thematic analysis. The researcher will be supported to write-up the findings to inform practice development and preparation of applications for further research funding. The project would be conducted over a maximum period of one year.

References:

1. Johnson et al. 2022. Patient perspectives on depot buprenorphine treatment for opioid addiction – a qualitative interview study. Subst Abuse Treat Prev Policy https://doi.org/10.1186/s13011-022-00474-2

2. Clay et al. 2023. ‘I just thought that was the best thing for me to do at this point’: Exploring patient experiences with depot buprenorphine and their motivations to discontinue, Int J Drug Policy <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2023.104002>

3. Simon et al. 2022. Understanding the psychological needs of people using buvidal (long-lasting buprenorphine) opiate substitute treatment: a service evaluation. Poster presented at the Traumatic Stress Wales Conference, 22-23 March 2022. https://traumaticstress.nhs.wales/events/poster-competition-2022/

**Key duties and responsibilities:**

* Conducting remote qualitative interviews with MPFT clinicians experienced in administering Buvidal and those accessing services
* Undertaking thematic analysis of new and already obtained qualitative data relating to the psychosocial element of opioid treatment with substitution therapies
* Developing various written materials in preparation for external funding bids and materials specified by the post funder (a short report and blog entry)
* Design, analyse, project manage and report on research and evaluation projects. Take an active role in producing reports as and when required.
* Assist managers and academic clinicians with tasks relevant to research and evaluation activity, in particular writing protocols, supporting submissions for regulatory approvals, managing and cleaning datasets, supporting statistical and qualitative analyses, reviewing research and policy literature and writing proposals.
* To effectively manage workload and designated tasks by demonstrating commitment to reaching successful completion of goals; seeking supervision/training where appropriate.
* Undertake any other duties deemed relevant to the post.
* Required to provide and receive complex information and to communicate information effectively, both internally and externally.
* To produce timely and informative reports for members of the Trust.

**Knowledge, skills and experience**

* Knowledge of statistical methods and software (e.g. SPSS).
* Knowledge of qualitative methods and software (e.g. NVivo).
* The post holder is required to have moderately advanced computer skills, e.g. data handling in Excel.
* The post holder is required to have experience of a range of research methods which may include qualitative interviewing, questionnaire design, data handling, use of statistical methods and analysing using a range of methods.
* The post holder is required to have experience of conducting research and evaluation within a healthcare environment, including communication and negotiation, clinical and research governance, production of written reports and monitoring activities, and design, analysis, and interpretation of appropriate research methods.

A bespoke support programme will be developed to meet the successful applicant’s research needs and ambitions, exposing them to different aspects of the research process, a range of projects and various partners including people with lived experience of addiction.

Opportunities will include:

• Dedicated clinical and academic supervision meetings MPFT

• Attendance at internal meetings, e.g. addiction research group, LENSE

• Training (in-house courses)

• Site visits

• Mentoring/shadowing/buddying opportunities including with members of the wider R&I, evaluation, library and lived experience teams

• Introduction to our wider networks, e.g.: NHS Addictions Provider Alliance, SSA, Royal College of Psychiatrists’ and British Psychological Society’s Faculties of Addictions

**Supporting Statement**

Name:

Supporting statement (please provide a summary of your qualifications and any relevant work experience and an explanation of **why you are applying** for this placement by linking the placement with your continued professional development goals) **Word count n=1000**. Please attach a copy of your CV to this expression of interest supporting statement and return to helen.duffy@mpft.nhs.uk by 5pm on the 19th September 2025.