



UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH GROUP

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post:	Research Officer - Electromagnetic fields (EMF), childhood leukaemias and other tumours
Grade:	Grade 7 (£25,889 - £31,840) with discretionary range up to £34,793
Hours:	Full-time – 36.5 hours per week
Tenure:	Funded until 31 st December 2010 in the first instance
Responsible to:	Director

Background to the CCRG

The Childhood Cancer Research Group is currently based at 57 Woodstock Road, Oxford. The group was established in 1975 and is affiliated to the University Department of Paediatrics. The National Registry of Childhood Tumours (NRCT) is maintained at the CCRG and includes records for nearly all children with cancer and leukaemia in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (currently approximately 80,000 records). The group comprises about 20 staff, one third of whom work part-time, and is funded mainly by the Department of Health and Scottish Executive Health Department, with additional funding from cancer charities particularly Children with Leukaemia. For more information, please visit our web-site at www.ccrq.ox.ac.uk.

Cancers occurring in children are notified to the NRCT by regional and national cancer registries throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, from the register of patients under the care of clinicians in the Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Group (CCLG), from entries to clinical trials and from death certificates. Additional information is collected from the National Health Service Central Registers (NHSCR) so that any further cancers and deaths occurring among these patients can be ascertained.

The records held by the NRCT are central to the CCRG's research including analyses of patterns of occurrence of childhood cancer, methods of treatment and their adverse consequences, and survival rates. Much assistance is also provided to other research workers and clinicians. The NRCT data also make possible detailed research into some specific issues. One of these is the question of whether EMF are linked to the occurrence of childhood cancer.

The post

This full-time research officer (RO) post is funded through a Programme Grant to CCRG from Children with Leukaemia. The appointment is to 31/12/2010 in the first instance, though the agreed funding will permit extension to 2012 after the project commences. The field of research is the investigation of the possible relationship between EMF and occurrence of childhood cancer (particularly leukaemia). Specifically the RO will concentrate on the power-frequency electric and magnetic fields generated by overhead and underground powerlines, and their possible relation to a distance effect from overhead power lines on the occurrence of tumours amongst children exposed to EMF in this way, but responsibility for/participation in other related studies will occur. The RO will work with a project management group constituted principally from within the CCRG. Beyond this, the appointed RO will be encouraged to engage in as many other aspects of the CCRG's work, outside the specific EMF research, as time and resources permit. Clerical and computing support will be available as needed from within the CCRG.

The person

We are seeking to appoint someone with doctoral level experience of epidemiological research. The successful candidate may hold a PhD in epidemiology or a related subject or have other higher degree qualifications together with substantial practical research experience. In either case evidence of substantial personal contribution to publications must be evident and preferably also experience of contributing to the raising of funds for research. In the event that someone without a doctoral qualification is appointed, there may be the possibility for pursuit within the confines of the EMF research programme of a DPhil at the University of Oxford.

Duties

- These will involve liaising with organisations outside the CCRG, and also within the CCRG since the successful completion of the project depends on both kinds of effective cooperation. Some travel around the UK will be necessary.
- Much of the work would involve the use of case-control designs, similar to those the CCRG has used previously in assessing the EMF/tumour relationship. The NRCT will continue to act as a source of new cases, and the RO will extend previous analyses using both new cases the NRCT has accumulated and more detailed categorisations of them by tumour type, as well as exploring further the issues of socioeconomic and area confounding.
- In conjunction with the project management group, the RO will liaise with the National Grid and the Electricity Distribution Network Operators, who have already committed to cooperate, to obtain additional information on higher and lower voltage overhead transmission powerlines as a possible source of exposure to EMF.
- In conjunction with the project management group the RO will obtain from the National Grid and the Electricity Distribution Network Operators, additional information on underground power cables, as a contrasted source of exposure.
- The RO will liaise with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and General Register Office (Scotland) (GRO(S)) to obtain updated and additional sets of control residential information to assess whether the social and residential characteristics of cases are unusual, and to perform matched and unmatched analyses.

- For the same cases and controls described above, the RO will conduct a study of paternal (and perhaps maternal) exposure to EMF, estimated from the application of an existing job exposure matrix to job titles provided at birth registration. Occupational coding will be necessary (cross-checked independently) and these data will also underpin the adjustment for socioeconomic confounding mentioned above.
- The RO will collaborate with others outside the CCRG to achieve several systematic review/pooled analysis objectives in the field of EMF exposure and childhood cancer occurrence.

Selection criteria

The person appointed will need to have shown that they have the following abilities and experience:

Essential

- Educated to higher degree level in epidemiology or a related field
- Practical experience of epidemiological research
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office and at least one standard analytical computing package
- Excellent analytical, reporting, presentational and communication skills and evidence of substantial personal contribution to publications
- Ability to work with a high degree of independence but also as part of a project team and take overall day to day responsibility for the design, analysis and interpretation of studies
- Willingness and ability to travel within the UK as necessary

Desirable

- Specific interest in cancer epidemiology/observational studies
- Familiarity with processes of cancer registration in the UK
- Experience with Geographical Information Systems packages
- Knowledge/ experience of radiation epidemiology work
- Experience of contributing to the raising of funds for research

Pay and benefits

The salary offered for a full-time appointment to this job will be in the range £25,889- £31,840, University grade 7, depending on qualifications and experience. If you are appointed at a salary below the top of this range, your salary will automatically be increased each year until you have reached the top point. Increases beyond this point may be available in certain cases (with a discretionary range up to £34,793). There is also an annual 'cost-of-living' salary review, which normally takes place in summer each year. Pay and benefits for part-time appointments are worked out on a 'pro rata' basis.

For a full-time appointment, the annual holiday entitlement will be 38 days (including 8 public holidays). The hours of work are 36.5 hours per week, Monday to Friday. Starting and finishing times each day by agreement with your line manager.

The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a 6-month probationary period, during which the notice period will be 1 month(s) on either side. Once the appointment has been confirmed, the notice period will be 3 month(s) on either side.

This position is a fixed-term appointment and unless terminated earlier by notice or under the provisions of the University Statutes, it will expire on the date stated on the letter of appointment and carries with it no commitment to a subsequent career appointment within the University. Vacancies for such appointments are open to competition from within and outside the University.

The post is pensionable and the post holder eligible for membership of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), a contributory scheme to which members currently pay 6.35 per cent of annual salary. Subject to the Statement of Pensions Policy, which will be issued to the successful candidate, the appointee will be deemed to be in membership of the above pension scheme until such time as he/she gives notice in writing to exercise the right not to be a member of the scheme. The University's normal retirement age is 31 July preceding the 66th birthday.

The University has a generous maternity leave scheme and also offers paternity leave to expectant fathers and partners, and adoption leave. It offers subsidised nursery places, a holiday playscheme, and tax and National Insurance savings schemes. For further information see www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/child.

How to apply

To apply, please write a letter of application and fill in the enclosed application form (you may enclose a detailed CV if you wish) and return it to:

Karen Hollick
Group Administrator
Childhood Cancer Research Group
57 Woodstock Road
Oxford
OX2 6HJ

by no later than Friday, 15th June 2007. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

The list of duties and the 'selection criteria' for this job describe the sort of skills, experience, knowledge or abilities which we are looking for. We will interview those whose applications

best meet these criteria, so it is very important that you should use your application to explain how you can match them. Remember that you will have gained abilities, experience and skills from many aspects of your life; some may come from education or work, and others from home or community life. Tell us about which schools or colleges you went to and any qualifications you have. List employment, voluntary work, hobbies, or family responsibilities which help to show how you meet the selection criteria.

Please give the names, addresses and telephone numbers of two people who are prepared to give you a reference for this job. If you have previously been employed, your referees should be people who have direct experience of your work through working closely with you for a considerable period, and at least one of them should be your formal line manager in your most recent job. Otherwise they can be people who know you from recent college, school, or voluntary experience. It is helpful if you can tell us briefly how each referee knows you (e.g. 'line manager', 'work colleague', 'college tutor').

Your referees will be asked to look at the job details and tell us if, in their opinion, you could do the job. We will assume that we can approach them at any stage unless you tell us otherwise when you apply. So, if you wish us to ask for your permission before approaching a particular referee, or to contact them only under certain circumstances (for example if we are calling you for interview, or if we have made you a conditional offer), *you must state this explicitly alongside the details of the relevant referee(s).*

Your appointment will be subject to (i) the return of a completed medical questionnaire which is acceptable to the University, (ii) the provision of original documentation which indicates your right to work in the UK, and (iii) the completion of an initial probationary period of 6 months.

The University reserves the right to screen individuals for employment. Any such screening would be discussed with an individual in advance of its taking place.

Equal opportunities at the University of Oxford

As an Equal Opportunity employer, we positively encourage applications from people of different backgrounds. All our jobs are filled in line with our equal opportunities code of practice, which helps us make sure that men and women, people of different races, and those with disabilities are all treated fairly.

POLICY STATEMENT

The policy and practice of the University of Oxford require that all staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment. Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another because of his or her gender, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion of belief, racial group, age or disability.

The full policy can be viewed at: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/policy/index.shtml>

If you have any questions about equal opportunities at the University of Oxford, please visit our web-site at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop.

Data protection

All data supplied by applicants will be used only for the purposes of determining their suitability for the post, and will be held in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University's Data Protection Policy.

Working for the University of Oxford

At the University of Oxford, we're naturally very proud of our outstanding reputation for scholarship and research. But we're also proud to say that we're one of the region's biggest and best-established employers, with a real diversity of staff helping to sustain our success. Join us, and you can expect to find yourself working in a friendly, open-minded atmosphere where your ideas will be welcomed.

As well as pay and other benefits such as generous holidays and an excellent pension scheme, we may be able to help you with:

- **Training** – We train our staff, both in the skills needed for starting the job, and to help them develop afterwards.
- **Working hours** – We may be able to be flexible about working patterns to help you combine work with responsibilities at home. Even for full-time jobs, we can often adjust starting and finishing times, or even sometimes consider term-time-only working.
- **Disability** – If you have a disability, we have specialist staff who can help you to start and stay in work.
- **Childcare** – We have several subsidised nurseries for under-fives, a childminding network, a holiday play scheme, tax and national insurance savings schemes. However, please note that there is a long waiting list for nursery places. It is particularly important to refer to the website www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/child for further information including up to date information about the length of the waiting list and alternative sources of information about childcare in the Oxford area.
- **Parenting** – As well as providing childcare facilities, we have generous maternity, paternity and adoption leave schemes to help new parents on our staff.
- **Cultural and religious needs** – We respect the cultural and religious lives of our staff. If you need time away from work, or special facilities, and can give plenty of notice for arrangements to be made, this will always be considered.
- **Travel arrangements** – We offer an interest-free season ticket loan scheme for bus or train season tickets. Annual passes for Oxford Bus Company routes are available at discounted rates.
- **Use of University facilities** – All University staff can use the study facilities provided by University libraries and museums; join the University Club, a sports and social club which has its own bar, café, and reading room; and make use of the University Sports Complex and the Pulse fitness centre.
- **Discounts** – A number of discounts are available to University staff e.g. for insurance, holiday travel, and computer equipment.
- **No smoking** – The University has a no smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted within the Childhood Cancer Research Group.

The range of benefits is continuously reviewed and extended. For further information see www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/staff/benefits/

If you come from outside the area, you may be interested to know that as well as the famous tourist attractions such as the 'dreaming spires', the river, and a number of parks and gardens, Oxford also has a busy shopping centre and a lively nightlife. Housing is relatively expensive within the city, but nearby areas such as Didcot or Bicester are more reasonably priced. Although car parking is difficult during the day, there are good train and bus services, including several 'Park and Ride' routes; and, of course, lots of cycle paths.