

## Department of Public Health, Policy, & Systems (Institute of Population Health)

### *Background information for academic placements*

#### **Departmental context**

The University of Liverpool campus is in the centre of the city. The University is one of the largest local employers and has ~29,700 registered students. Founded in 1881, it was one of the first civic universities and was the original 'redbrick' university (because of its redbrick Victoria Building, opened in 1892). It has a particular emphasis on 'education for the professions'.

Public health in Liverpool has a long and influential history, including the appointment of England's first Medical Officer of Health, Dr. William Henry Duncan, in 1847. Dr. Duncan was followed by a number of eminent medical officers who, reflecting their strong links with the University, were also professors here. The Department is home to a multi-disciplinary team drawn from a range of subjects including medical and health sciences, epidemiology, sociology, psychology, anthropology, community development, policy analysis, statistics, civic design, ethics, and history. Located within the Institute of Population Health (IPH) within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, the Department has close working links with many other disciplines across the University and in the wider public health community. It is actively involved in research, education, and health service work related to promoting the health of the public.

The Department contributes to the improvement and maintenance of the health of people, locally, nationally, and internationally, through:

- ❖ excellence in education and research
- ❖ the development of a learning environment that encourages staff and students to fulfil their potential
- ❖ the formation of constructive links with the local and wider community, contributing to local, regional, and national developments

The social model of health unifies and underpins Departmental research, education, and service work and informs how that can be applied to address inequalities in health and in health care.

#### **Research**

Research in the Department focuses on services and systems for health and well-being at the community and population levels. It therefore covers healthy members of the public as well as patients, seeking to understand how to improve the systems that society must put in place to: promote, sustain, and protect health; prevent disease; and care for the sick. Research themes include:

- ❖ Policy research on social determinants and health inequalities: *Elucidating and evaluating pathways, policies, and preventive interventions*
- ❖ Energy, air pollution, and health: *National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) CLEAN-Air (Africa) Global Health Research*
- ❖ Non-communicable disease (NCD) prevention and food policy
- ❖ Health systems and the impact of community health interventions

Such research aims to:

- ❖ Increase understanding of the pathways leading from society to good/ill-health and from ill-health to social and economic consequences, especially concerning the generation of inequalities in health and in access to health services.
- ❖ Assess the impact of interventions at the community and population levels to reduce the identified inequalities in health and in health services and to promote health and wellbeing.



## **Education and learning**

Departmental staff contribute to the School of Medicine-managed undergraduate MBChB programme, leading on public health, psychology and sociology, ethical and professional development, and communication skills for medical students. At postgraduate level, the Department directs the on-campus Master of Public Health (MPH), which is internationally respected for its multidisciplinary focus and links to World Health Organization (WHO) Health For All principles.

## **Service to public health, the public health profession, and local practitioners**

Besides providing the MPH programme, staff contribute to the North West NHS Postgraduate Specialty Training Programme in Public Health by acting as academic tutors and educational supervisors for specialty registrars, hosting academic placements, and supervising academic posts. **There are many opportunities for public health specialty registrars to work with the Department on mutual interests.**

Staff are actively engaged with the public health community in the NHS and beyond, within the City of Liverpool, across Merseyside and the North West Region, and nationally with the Department of Health, Faculty of Public Health, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), and Public Health England (PHE). Staff have been particularly active in working with the City Council and other local partners within and beyond the University on analysing and tackling the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Local partnerships with the National Health Service**

There are strong partnerships with the local NHS including the Royal Liverpool University Hospital and Alder Hey Children's Hospital, which are NHS Digital/NHS England Global Digital Exemplars.

## **Research collaborations and initiatives**

The Department leads and participates in many collaborations and initiatives such as:

- *NIHR School for Public Health Research (SPHR)* through LiLaC (Liverpool and Lancaster Universities Collaboration for Public Health Research). LiLaC has been a member of SPHR for its first five years (2012-2017) and its next five years (2017-2022).
- *NIHR Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) North West Coast*, aimed at contributing to reducing health inequalities. The Department co-leads the Public Health programme working with ten North West local authorities to increase resilience in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.
- *UK Public Health Research Consortium (was one of 11 higher education institutions (HEIs))*, funded by NIHR, leading projects on employment and health, control in the living environment, and child health inequalities.
- *Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) NW Doctoral Training Partnership*, delivered by Liverpool, Lancaster, Manchester, and Keele universities.
- *Social Science in Health and Medicine Collaborative*
- *The Governance of Health: Medical, Economic and Managerial Expertise in Britain since 1948*

## **International collaborations**

The Department is a designated WHO Collaborating Centre for Policy Research on Determinants of Health Equity, working with WHO Headquarters, WHO Europe, and other such centres worldwide.



We have a longstanding collaboration with the Department of Public Health Sciences, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, which includes joint research grants and exchange of researchers.

Our international collaborations on research projects and publications span countries in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Australasia.

Further details are on the Department's website:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/population-health-sciences/departments/public-health-and-policy/research-themes/> [under reconstruction following Faculty re-organization]

***If specialty registrars are interested in working with this Department, they should discuss possibilities with their academic tutor and educational supervisor.***