Vacancy notice

Consultancy: Clinical Researcher & Guideline Methodologist

The WHO Department of Reproductive Health and Research (RHR) seeks an experienced clinical researcher and guideline methodologist in maternal and perinatal health to appoint to this newly created position. The consultant will support the Maternal and Perinatal Health and Preventing Unsafe Abortion (MPA) team on two primary research projects and a normative guidance project for continuous evidence retrieval, synthesis, quality appraisal, and updating of recommendations on issues related to maternal and perinatal health.

The purposes of this consultancy are to co-ordinate and provide technical support for the conduct of these three MPA team projects on research and knowledge synthesis. Under this contract, the consultant will also contribute to RHR/MPA’s meetings related to the execution of tasks related to the projects.

The consultancy requires a medical degree, a doctoral degree (in public health, epidemiology, social sciences or other health related field), a minimum of seven years of experience, experience in conducting randomised clinical trials, systematic reviews, developing normative guidelines, and excellent scientific writing skills. The work also requires an individual with the capacity to work with minimal supervision, work well with a range of international collaborators and teams, efficiently meet deadlines and produce results.

This consultancy will be performed remotely by the successful applicant. There will be occasional travels to WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland to work with the responsible officer; and to study sites for monitoring.

Please submit (i) a letter of motivation, and (ii) your curriculum vitae to oladapo@who.int, indicating “Clinical Researcher & Guideline Methodologist: Maternal and Perinatal Health” in the subject line. All applications received will be acknowledged. Closing date for applications is 31 May 2018.

Terms of reference

Organizational Background

The Department of Reproductive Health and Research (RHR) works to enable people to protect their own health as it relates to sexuality and reproduction and to receive quality health care in matters related to sexual and reproductive health. To achieve this, the Department advocates and promotes sound public health strategies, sets norms and standards, engages in technical cooperation activities, and supports research. RHR’s overall strategic framework is provided by the WHO Global Reproductive Health Strategy approved by the 57th World Health Assembly in 2004. More information about RHR can be found at http://www.who.int/reproductive-health.

RHR includes the UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP). HRP is the main instrument within the United Nations system for promoting, conducting, evaluating and coordinating interdisciplinary research on sexual and reproductive health; for collaborating with countries in enhancing national capacities to conduct this research; for promoting and facilitating the use of research results in policy-making and planning for sexual and reproductive health care; and for the setting of standards and guidelines, including technical and ethical guidelines, in the field of sexual and reproductive health research. More information about HRP can be found at http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/hrp.
Summary of duties:

Under the guidance of the Medical Officer (MPA), the Consultant will:

1. Manage research activities related to the implementation of the WHO ACTION I (Antenatal CorTicosteroids for Improving Outcomes in preterm Newborns) trial for early preterms.
2. Manage research activities related to the implementation of the WHO ACTION II (Antenatal CorTicosteroids for Improving Outcomes in preterm Newborns) trial for late preterms.
3. Coordinate evidence retrieval, synthesis, and quality appraisal to update or revalidate prioritized maternal and perinatal health recommendations in the context of RHR/MPA living guidelines project.
4. Support project management and research implementation activities for the WHO-led Umbiflow™ International Study.
5. Complete organization of meetings and technical consultations for the above activities.

The individual will work as a part of a team of experienced and skilled staff, consultants and other guideline methodologists dedicated to generating and using evidence to improve global sexual and reproductive health.

Duration of contract

The contract spans a period of 18 months (July 2018 - December 2019). Minimum contractual period for successful candidate is 6 months.

WHO Competencies

1. Producing results.
2. Technical expertise.
3. Building and promoting partnerships across the organization and beyond.

Essential knowledge and skill

1. Excellent written English.
2. A demonstrated ability to retrieve, synthesis, grade, and interpret research evidence on issues related to maternal and perinatal health.
3. Exceptional analytical skills.
4. Strong planning and organizational skills, demonstrated ability to manage converging priorities and deliver high-quality products under tight deadlines.
5. Ability to establish and maintain good working relations with colleagues, including WHO staff and with international partners.
6. Tact and sensitivity in dealing with sensitive topics.

Essential educational qualifications

This work requires a medical degree and a doctoral degree (in public health, epidemiology, social sciences or other health related field).
Essential relevant experience

At least 7 years of experience combining:
1. Proven competencies in conducting randomised trials and systematic reviews in reproductive, maternal and newborn health.
2. Experience in using the GRADE approach for grading of evidence quality; and development of health-related guideline, including the development of GRADE Evidence-to-Decision (EtD) frameworks.
3. Experience in synthesising and interpreting evidence from qualitative and quantitative systematic reviews.
4. Excellent scientific writing skills as evidenced by publication record in peer-reviewed articles.

Desirable experience

1. Research experience working in low- and/or middle-income countries
2. Strong planning and organizational skills, demonstrated ability to manage converging priorities and deliver high-quality products under tight deadlines.

Language Skills

Essential: Excellent knowledge of English

Other Skills

1. Exceptional analytical skills.
2. Strong planning and organizational skills, demonstrated ability to manage converging priorities and deliver high-quality products under tight deadlines.
3. Ability to establish and maintain good working relations with counterparts, with WHO staff and with the international partners.
4. Tact and discretion in dealing with sensitive topics.
5. Skills required to use e-mail, PowerPoint, Excel, Meta-analysis software (including Review Manager), and Word processing softwares independently and efficiently.