Vacancy notice

Consultant Maternal and Perinatal Health Evidence Synthesis and Research Methodologist

The WHO Department of Reproductive Health and Research (RHR) seeks an experienced evidence synthesis methodologist to appoint in this position. The consultant will support the Maternal and Perinatal Health and Preventing Unsafe Abortion (MPA) team on projects related to evidence retrieval, collation, synthesis, quality appraisal, synthesis on issues related to maternal, fetal and perinatal health as well as protocol preparation and research implementation. The consultant will report to a Medical Officer on the MPA team.

The purpose of this contract is (1) to consolidate quantitative and qualitative research evidence for the purpose of advancing the evidence base on the use of caesarean section to improve quality of intrapartum care and (2) to contribute to the development of protocols for research projects. More specifically to support the methodological and operational activities linked to the QUALI-DEC project (Appropriate use of caesarean section through QUALity DECision making by women and providers). The QUALI-DEC project is an implementation research aiming to design and evaluate a strategy to roll out non-clinical interventions targeted simultaneously at clinicians, women and health organization in order to reduce unnecessary caesarean sections in Argentina, Burkina Faso, Thailand and Vietnam. Under this contract, the consultant will also contribute to RHR/MPA’s meetings related to the execution of tasks related to the relevant projects.

The consultancy requires a doctoral degree in public health, epidemiology, social sciences or other health related field, a minimum of ten years of experience in reproductive health research, and experience in conducting randomised clinical trials, systematic reviews, developing normative guidelines, and excellent scientific writing skills. Experience in conducting research on the area of caesarean section would be an asset. The work also requires an individual with the capacity to work with initiative and minimal supervision, work well in different teams, efficiently meet deadlines and produce results.

This position will not be based in Geneva, Switzerland and may require travels to Geneva as required by work demands. In addition, this position will require travel to countries participating in the relevant research projects. The duration of the contract will be approximately 1 year with possibility of extension.

Please submit (i) a letter of motivation, and (ii) your curriculum vitae to betrana@who.int, indicating “Consultant Maternal and Perinatal Health Evidence Synthesis and Research Methodologist” in the subject line. All applications received will be acknowledged. Closing date for applications is 25 November 2019.

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), as a part of a team of experienced and skilled staff, the Consultant will:

1. Contribute to the conduct of systematic reviews prioritized by RHR/MPA, including a global mixed-methods review on preference for mode of delivery among stakeholders.
2. In the context of the QUALI-DEC project (Appropriate use of caesarean section through QUALity DECision making by women and providers), the Consultant will:
   a. Support the WHO project coordinator to ensure the smooth day-to-day management of the relevant activities;
   b. Support the conduct of the baseline formative research at the sites, interpretation and dissemination of findings;
   c. Support and development of the methodology and research protocol for evaluating the outcomes and processes related to women;
   d. Contribute to the preparation of study reports and scientific manuscripts for publication.
3. Support the development and dissemination of the Global interactive on-line Robson Classification Platform which is an initiative of the Department of Reproductive Health and Research to increase access and expand the use of the Robson Classification system.
4. Contribute to RHR/MPA's meetings related to the execution of tasks linked to the planned studies.
5. Support other research activities as required.

WHO Competencies

1. Technical expertise
2. Communications
3. Producing results

Essential knowledge and skill

1. Faultless written English.
2. A demonstrated ability to retrieve, synthesis, grade, and interpret research evidence on issues related to pregnancy and childbirth
3. Strong 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, with senior WHO staff and with the international constituency with which the project relates.
6. Tact and sensitivity in dealing with sensitive topics.

Essential educational qualifications

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

At least 10 years of experience combining:
1. Proven competencies in conducting randomised trials and systematic reviews in reproductive, maternal and newborn health
2. Experience in synthesising and interpreting evidence from qualitative and quantitative systematic reviews
3. Excellent scientific writing skills; scientific publications.

Desirable experience

1. Clinical experience working in low- and/or middle-income countries.
2. Experience conducting international research projects.

Language Skills

Essential: Excellent knowledge of English.

Other Skills

Skills required to use e-mail, PowerPoint, Excel, Meta-analysis software, GRADEpro software for grading quality of evidence, and word processing software independently and efficiently.

Place of Assignment

Home based.

Travel

Travel will be required as work demands.