Cumberland Council

Post Specification

Date	**June 2026**
Post Group Number	**tbc**
Post Title	**HDRC Research Practitioner**
Job Family	**Organisational Support**
Job Family Role Profile	**OS11**
Final Grade	**11**

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile

Service Area description

Cumberland Council has been awarded £5 million by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to become a 'Health Determinants Research Collaboration' (HDRC), as part of a wider £50 million investment from the NIHR for a selected number of local authorities across the country to build capacity and capability to conduct high quality research to address health inequalities and improve health outcomes. The HDRC will shape Cumberland Council into a modern empowering council underpinned by research and evidence-based practice. Becoming a centre of excellence for sustainable Local-Authority and community-led health determinants research and experts in health inequalities in coastal, rural and dispersed communities.

The HDRC will substantially increase the Council's monitoring and evaluation capacity, enabling us to measure what works in addressing the wider determinants of health. The new HDRC will enable a culture change whereby our departments and staff are aware of the importance of the wider determinants of health and are confident in using, sharing and creating new research evidence. As a result of the HDRC, staff will be equipped and inspired to be innovative in their thinking, to develop research questions and seek support from the HDRC for research grant applications. Finally, the HDRC will engage communities, supporting them to have a clear voice throughout everything this research collaborative seeks to achieve.

Purpose of this post

Develop new knowledge on the determinants of health in Cumberland, and Build sustainable research culture and activity in Cumberland Council by developing and delivering research. Promoting and contributing to research, analysis, and evidence-building activities within and by Cumberland Council.

Build sustainable evidence user capability in Cumberland Council by promoting the knowledge and skills needed to choose and use rigorous evidence across our workforce through a research training programme.

Deliver, support, and embed a sustainable research-informed, data-driven culture across Cumberland Council. Enable all colleagues to become 'evidence confident.'

Key job specific accountabilities

1. To manage the delivery a portfolio of research culture programme.
2. To ensure appropriate evaluation and monitoring of the staff research culture programme.
3. To contribute to the 'Community of Researchers,' a community of colleagues interested in research within the council, making better use of evidence and analysis within their roles, including supporting the developing of a CPD programme.

4. To contribute to a comprehensive offer to improve staff opportunities to develop research skills and experience including, secondments, honorary contracts, access to academic courses, support for postgraduate study.
5. To develop inhouse ability to access research and evidence such as peer-reviewed journals, open-source software to support research activity, training, and analysis.
6. To develop and maintain relationships with academic partners and others in order to deliver research
7. To collaborate with partners across the system, including academics, NHS, community, and voluntary sector to develop the research capacity, capability, and activities of Cumberland Council.
8. The successful candidate, although supported, will be able to undertake the duties and responsibilities of the role with a high degree of autonomy, using independent thinking and reasoning. They will be conscious of the links of this role to others across the HDRC and work in a holistic manner.
9. To promote and establish the HDRC team across Cumberland Council and to external organisations, in relation to its aims and objectives, raising awareness and protecting its reputation.

Cumberland Council is totally committed to continuous organisational and employee development. The post holder is required to participate fully in all initiatives that facilitate continuous improvement in both service quality and employee development and performance.

Please note annual targets will be discussed during the appraisal process

Key facts and figures of the post

Budget Responsibilities	• No direct responsibility for budget management, however the successful candidate will have a responsibility for efficiently deploying finite resources to support the effectiveness of the role • To suggest proactive and innovative ideas for efficiencies in the resources required to undertake the post holders' role as well as remit of the wider team.
Staff Management Responsibilities	• No direct line management responsibility • Horizontal and vertical impact across Cumberland Council and other organisations involved in the HDRC, e.g., NHS, Universities and VCSE • Influence and persuade others internally and external of Cumberland Council of the importance and relevance of building and developing research capacity, skills, and analysis. • Responsible for content of internal and external communications such as newsletters and the reputational risk associated with these • Reporting and networking across the other authorities that are NIHR-funded HDRCs, collaboration and sharing of findings and best practice.
Other	

Essential Criteria - Qualifications, knowledge, experience and expertise

Qualifications:

- Relevant degree, or higher-level qualification, or relevant equivalent knowledge and experience gained in the workplace.

Experience:

- Experience of developing, and conducting research at an undergraduate or higher level or the equivalent within a workplace environment.
- Experience of implementing and evaluating a change management project or programme that has involved seeking to influence and change culture.
- Experience of supporting others to upskill / achieve their goals and ambitions in either a formal or informal pathway.

Skills and Knowledge:

- Knowledge and experience of conducting research with a wide range of stakeholders including those in local government and voluntary sector.

- Knowledge and experience creating and maintaining active and effective networks of enthusiasts and/or practitioners in an area of common interest and leading through influence to ensure the networks progress to achieve common goals.
- Able to work effectively with a wide range of colleagues (and other stakeholders) within the organisation and in partner organisations and the general public.
- Managing a contract within its associated budget and collaborating effectively with an external contractor to achieve the contractual objectives.
- General awareness of research, for example, types of research (quantitative/qualitative), research methods, evaluation of services.
- Able to influence people to effect change across both internal and external stakeholders and external groups.
- Uses a range of specialist ICT systems across own work area and or across other areas of work.
- Uses, interprets, analyses, communicates complex information.

Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS Checks

- This post does not require a DBS check.

Job working circumstances

Emotional Demands	Minimum exposure
Physical Demands	Normal effort required
Working Conditions	You will take a hybrid approach to working, attending relevant meetings in person as required

Other Factors

- UK driving licence is desirable due to the geographical footprint of Cumberland and Cumbria