**Job description**

**Job title:** Senior Research Manager – Improving Service Delivery

**Accountable to:** Assistant Director of Research

**Salary:** L18 - £63,099 - £65,657 per annum

**The Health Foundation**

We are an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK.

Our aim is a healthier population, supported by high quality health care that can be equitably accessed. We learn what works to make people’s lives healthier and improve the health care system. From giving grants to those working at the front line to carrying out research and policy analysis, we shine a light on how to make successful change happen.

We make links between the knowledge we gain from working with those delivering health and health care and our research and analysis. Our aspiration is to create a virtuous circle, using what we know works on the ground to inform effective policymaking and vice versa.

We believe good health and health care are key to a flourishing society. Through sharing what we learn, collaborating with others and building people’s skills and knowledge, we aim to make a difference and contribute to a healthier population.

**Background**

The Foundation achieves its objectives through a combination of traditional grant-making activity, commissioning of research and fellowships, and a range of related activities to support individuals stay well, to support staff in the service to improve care and support policy-makers to make better policy decisions. Our 2015-18 strategic plan sets out our ambitions:

- to improve health service delivery;
- to make health policymaking more effective; and
- for people in the UK to live healthier lives.

Our operational budget is in the region of £30m per year - of this approximately 82% is directly spent on charitable objectives. Direct spend includes expenditure on grants for projects to improve service delivery of health and care services across the UK, related research, and fellowships to boost skills in improvement and change management methods in healthcare.

**Research**

Research is central to the work of the Health Foundation. We are running a varied and ambitious research programme with a budget of around £5 million per year, across the strategic areas of improving service delivery, improving health policymaking and people living healthier lives. We aim for the research and evaluation work we commission to influence the future direction and planning of the Health Foundation’s work and to have a
wider impact on policy and practice. The portfolio encompasses grant funded programmes of original research, independent evaluations, evidence reviews and commissioned studies to help us develop the Foundation’s work programmes.

**Job Purpose**

The role of the Senior Research Manager – Improving Service Delivery is to provide expert level leadership to the key areas of research relevant to this strategic objective. The Senior Research Manager will contribute to the Foundation’s strategic work by developing our approach to evaluation of complex interventions, working with senior staff in the Improvement and Data Analytics Directorates. The Senior Research Manager will lead the design and development of thematic programmes of research on how to improve the delivery of health and care services, developing a significant personal profile as an outward facing leader in the health services research community. In addition, the role will have a particular focus in ensuring wider system level impact from the research that we commission and support through grant funding. The role will also require development and management of the Foundation’s Research governance agenda, including transparency of our funding, peer review and patient and public involvement in research and research funding activities of the Foundation.

This will involve leading engagement at senior level with colleagues, internally in the Health Foundation and with external stakeholders in the fields of academia, health care practice and policy. The Senior Research Manager is expected to represent the work of the Research Directorate and the wider Foundation to a diverse audience including leading academics and senior figures in national agencies.

**Key tasks and responsibilities:**

*To lead the development of a research programme under the strategic aim ‘to improve health service delivery’, together with responsibilities across the Foundation’s research portfolio*

1. Work closely with the Director of Improvement, Director of Data Analytics, other senior colleagues in these directorates and with external partners, to take ideas from concept to securing Director or Board level support, and on to implementation, by leading the scoping, designing and commissioning of research, including evaluations of complex interventions, which further the strategic priority ‘to improve health service delivery’.

2. Provide expert level input for significant research and evaluation projects, both to the internal project team in the scoping phase and to the external research team during the study. In the post-study dissemination stage, work with colleagues in the Foundation’s communications team to formulate key messages arising from the research and to agree the dissemination plan for the outputs from the research.

3. Lead the development of the Foundation’s approach to mixed methods evaluation of complex interventions for service improvement, working across the Foundation as required, to contribute to the design and planning of work that involves research and evaluation components, to achieve objectives across the Foundation’s strategic priorities.

4. Take a leading role in liaison and working with the new Improvement Research Institute that the Foundation is funding, to be established at a leading UK university. This will involve keeping in touch with the development team and director designate at the host University as plans for the Institute develop. Once it is established, the Senior Research Manager will work in liaison with the Institute’s research team on specific research studies that are of strategic importance to the Foundation and ensure that the Institute is
kept abreast of the Foundation’s research interests and developing plans for commissioned studies and evaluations in the area of improvement research.

5. Lead the development of key relationships and communication with internal and external colleagues to ensure that the Foundation’s research programme is at the cutting edge of research in the field and that we are aware of the funding programmes and priorities of other research funders, to ensure that our contribution is complementary. It is expected that the Senior Research Manager will set up and maintain a regular programme of information exchange meetings with senior colleagues in appropriate organisations.

6. Make an expert contribution to internally conducted research for particular projects. This might include methods appraisal, evidence analysis, questionnaire design and analysis, and/or participant interviews, to contribute to research publications.

7. Contribute to the work of the research team as a whole, adopting a flexible approach to the role and its responsibilities, including input to research projects linked to other strategic aims and offering support to colleagues where required, to help manage fluctuations in workload across the Research Team’s portfolio of projects.

To work with colleagues to ensure that the Health Foundation maximises the use of knowledge generated internally and externally

8. Work closely with colleagues from across the Foundation to provide strategic leadership for a portfolio of activities relating to improving the delivery of health services.

9. Work with colleagues in the Improvement Directorate and Data Analytics Directorate to synthesise the learning from different sources, such as research carried out internally by Foundation staff, research and evaluation studies funded by the Foundation, other published research, research reported at conferences and seminars – so that key findings are made available to support the organisation’s decision-making and planning.

10. Work with the senior staff across the Improvement and Data Analytics directorates to develop a coherent narrative and strategy that maximises the synergy of the Foundation’s various projects and programmes related to improving service delivery across health and care services.

11. Be a spokesperson in the media and through other routes for the Health Foundation’s work on improving service delivery and the development of evaluation approaches for complex interventions [and more generally] as required. Presenting insights from our work in the news and digital media, journals, conferences, exhibitions and other public fora.

Contribute to leadership within the Research Team and more widely across the Foundation

12. Line-manage members of the Research Team: including Research Manager(s), Q Evaluation and Insight Manager, Assistant Research Manager, Research Officer and Intern(s) working on improving service delivery (as and when appointed). The Senior Research Manager will have particular responsibility for designing and delivering developmental training and mentoring for Assistant Research Manager(s).
13. Develop strong working relationships with Directors, other Senior Fellows, Assistant Directors and Heads of Programmes/ Services across the Health Foundation.

14. As a senior member of the team, the post holder will be expected to actively contribute to strategic and organisational development, effective business communication and be a champion of our values and ways of working.

15. Undertake any other duties that may reasonably be required in furtherance of the objectives of the Foundation.
Person specification

Knowledge & Experience

1. A good first degree, ideally in a subject directly relevant to health services research, health care or quality improvement.

2. A significant track record and personal profile in designing and leading research, or research funding/ commissioning/ or management related to health services research, or quality improvement in health services.

3. Proven strategic and practical ability to design and lead on a programme of policy and practice relevant work, with a high degree of autonomy, being a self-starter with a track record of generating momentum for the work.

4. Experience of commissioning, managing or undertaking evaluations of complex interventions, with understanding of a broad range of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

5. Experience of undertaking a leadership role within a complex organisational setting, including staff management.

6. Experience of developing organisational strategy in a health care setting, health-related organisation, or other relevant charity, or voluntary organisation.

7. A post-graduate qualification in an area relevant to health services research, improvement research or health policy. (Desirable)

8. A track record in writing to publication standard, academic or otherwise.

Skills & Abilities

1. A detailed and comprehensive understanding of the UK health system, particularly with regard to issues such as commissioning and provider roles, as well as roles that ‘system stewards’ play in improving quality and performance of healthcare and the ways in which research in these areas can help to shape policy and practice.

2. Good facilitation, networking, project management and line management skills. Proven ability to sustain a programme of activity requiring extensive collaboration with managerial interests, academic bodies and policy stakeholders.

3. A track record of developing partnerships with other bodies to further organisational objectives, with experience of managing complex relationships and influencing to achieve results without reliance on formal line-management authority.

4. Excellent analytical skills with a good understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methods, together with tools and approaches such as literature searching, software for data analysis, models for evaluating complex interventions and how to use evidence effectively.

5. Highly developed communication skills, both written and oral, to facilitate effective advocacy for the Health Foundation and to convince through personal credibility.
6. Confidence and resilience to engage in robust debate about policy and priorities internally and externally. (Desirable)

7. A commitment to diversity and equal opportunities in employment and service delivery.

December 2016