



Job description

Job title:	Quality Improvement Clinical Fellow for National Cancer Audit Collaborating Centre (NATCAN)
Grade:	Pay scales for junior doctors in England up to ST5 (£40,257 to £51,017, plus London weighting) in a full-time position or from ST6 to ST8 (£58,298 pro rata plus London weighting) in a part-time position, depending on qualifications and experience.
Department:	NATCAN based in the Clinical Effectiveness Unit (CEU)
Responsible for:	n/a
Accountable to:	NATCAN's Clinical Director and ultimately the Director of Clinical Effectiveness Unit (CEU)

Job summary

This post offers a unique role to work within the [National Cancer Audit Collaborating Centre \(NATCAN\)](#). [NATCAN](#) is a new national centre of excellence overseeing the 10 National Cancer Audits in England and Wales aiming to strengthen NHS cancer services by looking at treatments and patient outcomes across the NHS. NATCAN is the largest centre evaluating cancer services in the UK, with 25 staff members, employed at the RCS or the LSTHM, from a wide range of backgrounds (medicine, statistics, epidemiology, data science, quality improvement, project management).

The successful candidate will work in partnership with the Clinical Director of NATCAN, the Director of Operations and the NATCAN Executive team. The main roles will include the strategic mapping of current quality improvement initiatives in the UK across the nine cancers and all three main treatment modalities (surgery, radiotherapy and systemic therapy) which NATCAN evaluates, the evaluation and potential development of quality improvement methodologies that can be translated across the cancer audits as well as supporting the individual cancer audit teams with supporting the development and implementation of their individual quality improvement plans.

A particular focus will be on the four new cancers which have recently started (Kidney, Pancreatic, Ovarian and Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma) with close working with the existing breast, bowel, prostate, oesophago-gastric and lung cancer teams. The Audit uses very rich linked national datasets which include all newly diagnosed patients in the NHS in England and Wales and uses performance indicators to identify variation in the quality of care which forms the basis for quality improvement. An exciting innovation is that NATCAN will receive quarterly cancer data updates. This will reduce the time lag between patients receiving care and audit feedback to six months, which will inform quality improvement initiatives that aim "to close the audit cycle".

You will work in a vibrant audit and research environment, putting you at the heart of a national team that plays a key role in improving the care that patients with cancer receive in England and Wales. It will provide you with the opportunity to contribute to high-profile peer-reviewed papers, which could lead to obtaining a PhD. The PhD research will aim to strengthen the relevance and robustness of the Audit's outputs. It will study determinants of variation in practice and outcomes, develop methods for quality assessment, and evaluate the impact of quality improvement initiatives.



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This is a unique opportunity to participate in a national quality improvement and national transformational change role centred around nine major cancers and which includes all NHS providers in England and Wales.

We would expect the Clinical Fellow to build skills in design and implementation of quality improvement strategies which consider all modalities of cancer treatment. The role will likely form the basis for future NHS leadership roles in cancer care for the successful candidate.

Further details about the National Cancer Audit Collaborating Centre and the Clinical Effectiveness Unit are available at the bottom of the job description.

Specific duties and responsibilities

1. *Quality Improvement*

- To work closely with the NATCAN Clinical Director (Prof. Ajay Aggarwal) and Director of Operations (Dr Julie Nossiter) as well as NATCAN team members based in the CEU in developing the Audits. This work will include:
 - Strategic mapping of current quality improvement initiatives in the UK across the nine cancers and all three main treatment modalities (surgery, radiotherapy and systemic therapy) which NATCAN evaluates
 - Developing and evaluating of quality improvement methodologies that can be translated across the cancer audits.
 - To engage with cancer alliances, integrated care boards and local Trusts to support implementation of NATCAN Quality Improvement activities & initiatives.
 - To engage with Professional bodies and Royal Colleges to support implementation of NATCAN Quality Improvement activities and initiatives
 - Reporting the results and impact of this work in reports and peer-reviewed publications. Supporting the individual cancer audit teams with the development and implementation of their individual quality improvement plans.
 - Evaluating determinants of variation in practice and outcomes by analysing national datasets on hospital care, surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy from NATCAN's data providers in England (National Disease Registration Service, NHS England) and Wales (Wales Cancer Network, NHS Wales Health Collaborative) to support specific quality improvement plans.

2. *Communication*

- To report results of the NATCAN quality improvement initiatives in reports and papers for peer-reviewed publications.
- To present findings at conferences.
- To liaise with professional bodies, charities and other stakeholders in order to publicise and support the work of NATCAN.
- To contribute to developing and implementing plans for NATCAN healthcare improvement activities including: improvement events, workshops and webinars.
- To promote engagement with trainee networks, professional bodies and patient panels.
- To contribute to NATCAN communications (newsletters, emails, social media, website).



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3. Collaboration with NCRAS, NHS England and Wales Cancer Network, NHS Wales Health Collaborative and other relevant organisations to improve quality and timeliness of data, and increase the engagement of staff within NHS hospitals

- To liaise with NCRAS, NHS England and Wales Cancer Network, NHS Wales Health Collaborative in order to support project management and data collection.
- To liaise with staff in participating NHS hospitals in order to publicise the findings of NATCAN audits.
- To liaise with all professional bodies involved in the management of patients with cancer, and to represent NATCAN at regional and national meetings.

4. Other

- To undergo further training in statistics and audit / research methodology including implementation science.
- To maintain the confidentiality of data at all times and to ensure that the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) are met throughout the project.
- To ensure that the data collection, analysis and reporting is carried out to the highest professional standards.
- To carry out other occasional duties within NATCAN and the Clinical Effectiveness Unit, e.g., contributing to training workshops.

There will be no clinical duties or on-call commitments but there is flexibility to allow the post-holder to maintain some clinical practice.

We encourage trainees to reach out to Professor Ajay Aggarwal, NATCAN Clinical Director with any queries natcan@rcseng.ac.uk

This job description will be subject to review in the light of changing circumstances and may include other duties and responsibilities as may be determined. It is not intended to be rigid or inflexible but should be regarded as providing guidelines within which the individual works.



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Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Membership / Fellowship of a relevant Royal College	
Experience and skills including technical competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relevant clinical experience• Experience in analysing clinical data• Familiar with software for data management and statistical analysis• Good numeracy (e.g., good pass at A level or equivalent)• Good understanding of health-related research methods• Good understanding of basic statistical principles• Evidence of NHS based quality improvement in a cancer or non-cancer discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence of peer-reviewed publications• Evidence of presenting research at professional conferences• Understanding of epidemiological research (study design, data collection and analysis)/• Understanding of implementation research/Quality improvement methods• Good understanding of national clinical audit programmes
People and interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excellent verbal and written communication skills• Good organisational skills• Ability to think systematically and critically• Computer literate and proficient with office software• Ability to work independently• Ability to work in a small team	



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The post holder will also need to demonstrate the following values:

Collaboration	We embrace our collective responsibilities working collaboratively and as one college.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We work together, using our collective expertise and experience to effect positive change• We are open, honest and transparent, straightforward in our language and actions, acting with sincerity and delivering on our commitments• We take our responsibilities to each other, to patient care and to the environment seriously and we act with this in mind across our work
Respect	We value every person we come into contact with at the College as an individual, respect their aspirations and commitments in life, and seek to understand and meet their physical and wellbeing needs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We treat everyone we meet with kindness and integrity, and we seek to promote these behaviours in others• We actively seek a range of views and experiences across our work, and we listen to, and make everyone feel, a valued part of the team
Excellence	We aspire to excellence and success. We share learning from our experiences, apply feedback into practice, and commit to continual improvement.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We work hard to be the best at what we do, recognising and celebrating effort and achievement, and reflecting on our work, so we can learn and improve• We value and invest in research, education and training to drive excellence and put improvements in surgical practice, dentistry and patient care at the heart of our work• We always seek to learn and discover more, valuing knowledge and scientific evidence, basing our decisions on insights, fact and experience

The Royal College of Surgeons of England is an Equal Opportunities Employer. We are open to all talent and we actively ensure that all qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regards to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.



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National Cancer Audit Collaborating Centre

Evaluating and where necessary improving the treatment for cancer patients is a key priority for the NHS Cancer Programme, and the Quality Statement for Cancer Wales. The Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership, on behalf of NHS England and the Welsh Government, has commissioned the development and establishment of a new centre of excellence for national cancer audits.

NATCAN is part of the National Clinical Audit and Patient Outcomes Programme (NCAPOP). NATCAN is home to all ten national cancer audits. This includes new audits in breast cancer (primary and metastatic), ovarian, pancreatic, non-Hodgkin lymphoma and kidney cancer. In addition, this includes to existing clinical audits in [prostate](#), [lung](#), [gastro-oesophageal](#) and [bowel](#) cancer. These audits have helped to identify and address variations in cancer care across England and Wales and improve outcomes for patients. They have also promoted quality improvement initiatives within NHS cancer services and identified best practice.

NATCAN aims to:

1. Provide regular and timely evidence to cancer services of where patterns of care in England and Wales vary.
2. Support NHS services to identify the reasons for the variation in care in order to guide quality improvement initiatives.
3. Stimulate improvements in cancer detection, treatment and outcomes including survival.

[NATCAN](#) began on the 1 October 2022 in the CEU, a collaboration between the RCSEng and LSHTM. NATCAN collaborates closely with professional groups, clinicians and patient charities to ensure that all relevant stakeholders inform the quality improvement goals of each audit. NATCAN has approximately 25 staff from a range of disciplines including statistics, data science, health services research, epidemiology, healthcare quality improvement and clinical audit management. It is led by Dr Julie Nossiter, Director of Operations, NATCAN; Prof Ajay Aggarwal, Clinical Director, NATCAN; Prof David Cromwell, Director of the CEU and Professor of Health Services Research, LSHTM; Prof Kate Walker, Professor of Medical Statistics, LSHTM; and Prof Jan van der Meulen, Professor of Clinical Epidemiology, LSHTM.

NATCAN will be a key source of information that supports various quality assessment and improvement activities, both at a local level (by NHS trusts and boards, Cancer Alliances, Integrated care Systems) and at a national level (e.g., CQC inspection and regulatory work). The activities of NATCAN and the individual audits will drive quality improvement across the country aiming to help cancer services reach the highest standards possible.



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Clinical Effectiveness Unit

The [CEU](#) is a collaboration between the RCSEng and the Department of Health Services Research & Policy of the LSHTM.

The work of the CEU involves carrying out national clinical audits, developing audit methodologies and producing evidence on clinical and cost effectiveness. An essential element of the CEU's strategy is that it considers audit projects as *epidemiological studies* of the quality of hospital care. Epidemiological methods are used to generate high quality evidence on the *processes* and *outcomes* of hospital care as well as on their *determinants*. Another important feature of the CEU's strategy is the emphasis it gives to joint clinical and methodological leadership.

The CEU has 30 staff members, of whom 6 are academic staff members of the LSHTM. The background of the staff demonstrates the multidisciplinary character of the Unit (medicine, health services research, medical statistics, epidemiology and public health). The Unit's Director is Professor David Cromwell.



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