EMPLOYMENT/CAREER OPPORTUNITY

The Unit is an internationally recognised centre of excellence with dominant research themes in the areas of HIV and emerging infections, vaccines and immunity, and chronic diseases and cancer. Through a multidisciplinary approach, intersecting basic science, epidemiological research, social-behavioural research and the conduct of new intervention evaluation studies, the Unit contributes knowledge on changing epidemics and diseases, the evaluation of innovative health care options, treatment and prevention and the development of health policy and practice in Africa and worldwide. Following the signing of strategic transfer agreements between the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and the Medical Research Council (MRC UK), the Unit formally joined LSHTM on 1st February 2018. The exciting new partnership will boost research capacity into current and emerging health issues in Africa and throughout the world. The Unit is based at the UVRI Entebbe campus with established outposts in Kalungu, Masaka, Wakiso and Kampala Districts. The Unit is now seeking an enthusiastic and experienced individual to fill the following position:

Head of Clinical Laboratory Services (01 Position)

Position Code: HCDLS-820
Reports to: Chief Operating Officer
Duty station: Entebbe
Contract Duration: 2 years, renewable subject to performance and availability of funds
Start Date: As soon as possible

Overall Job Purpose: The Head of Clinical Laboratories leads the Clinical Diagnostic Laboratory Services (CDLS) and Frozen Specimen Archives (FSA) departments which operate across the Unit’s urban and rural sites in Uganda, including Entebbe, Kampala, Masaka and Kyamulibwa. This role includes overseeing the Unit’s Hematology, Biochemistry/Serology, Microbiology and Molecular Diagnostics laboratories. The post-holder also oversees the Unit’s Frozen Specimen Archives/Biorepository which is a collection of biological specimen of human and non-human origin.

The Head of Clinical Laboratories reports to and works closely with the Unit Chief Operating Officer to ensure the service provided supports the Unit’s scientific and operational strategy. They hold responsibility and overview of the Unit’s Clinical Diagnostic Laboratory Services, ensuring health and safety of employees, students and visitors to the department. In addition, the post-holder ensures value-for-money is achieved in all areas and a viable business model for CDLS is maintained and operates smoothly through interactions with the Unit’s Research Support Office, Human Resources, Procurement, Finance departments and Principal investigators. The post-holder is expected to collect and present reliable performance data for CDLS and FSA/biorepository in the form of formal reports or ad hoc updates to inform the
Unit’s senior management’s decision making. The post-holder will manage and develop the CDLS team to ensure that a first class, compliant service is provided to its stakeholders.

Key Responsibilities

The principal duties of the post-holder are to support the delivery of the Unit’s scientific strategy and objectives by ensuring the Unit’s laboratory services operate at accredited standards and deliver a cost-effective and timely service to Unit research projects through the following;

1. Clinical Diagnostic Laboratory Service (CDLS)

Main Accountabilities

- Provide clinical diagnostic testing services that support the Unit’s research portfolio across all Unit sites.
- Manage the Unit’s clinical laboratories which include the following: Haematology, Biochemistry/Serology, Microbiology and Molecular Diagnostics.
- Manage department activities in line with budget and operate an effective cost-recovery model from research projects and partners (with support of Finance department).
- Oversee procurement and stock levels of laboratory supplies ensuring that value-for-money is achieved and that wastage is minimized (with support of Procurement and Stores).
- Oversee testing capacity and forecast demand for clinical laboratory testing and put in place appropriate laboratory staff levels accordingly (with support from HR and Unit COO).
- Ensure national clinical laboratory accreditation is upheld and renewed as required; liaise with regulatory bodies and agencies as required.
- Ensure laboratories are working towards international standards and requirements and that staff have the required certification to work in a clinical diagnostic laboratory.
- Ensure quality control systems are implemented across all clinical laboratories, including execution of regular External Quality Control (EQA) for specific tests.
- Identify and maintain relationships with appropriate referral laboratories as needed.
- Ensure quality and security of clinical test data meets sponsor, donor and regulatory requirements.
- Support the Unit’s Clinical Trial portfolio in compliance with international standards (GCP, GCLP) and Sponsor requirements.
- Ensure the Unit complies with and maintains accreditation with ISO15189, including the specific requirement of continuous process, quality and service improvements.
- Maintain an effective complaints and corrective actions procedure for the clinical laboratory services.
- Provide external services to third parties for laboratory media, tests and diagnostic services and ensure such arrangements are formalized through service agreements (with support of the Procurement department).
- Develop and keep updated business continuity plans for the laboratories; support Unit/LSHTM business continuity activities as needed.
- Ensure CDLS policies and SOPs are up-to-date and fit for purpose.
- Overseeing work of third-party collaborators and contractors on Unit projects within CDLS and ensure contractual obligations are met.
- Advising principle investigators and other research staff during research proposal development regarding laboratory requirements and appropriate costing of tests and sample storage.
• Ensure testing activities are recorded in the applicable databases and provide monthly reports to Finance and RSO to allow correct and timely charging of sample testing, processing and storage fees to research projects.
• Oversee laboratory assets and maintain asset records that are continually updated.
• Produce an annual budget for CDLS to be presented to and agreed with the Unit COO.
• Take responsibility for managing, monitoring and controlling the CDLS budget.
• Ensure laboratory installations and equipment are all working and are fit-for-purpose.
• Oversee preventative maintenance and servicing schedules for CDLS installations and equipment.
• Ensure specimen storage, including liquid nitrogen (LN2) plants and freezer rooms, are functioning as expected and that emergency back-procedures are in place and regularly tested.
• Oversee and advise on the development of new assays within the different platforms in collaboration with the Heads of Programmes, PI’s and Managers of the individual research laboratories that form part of the platform.
• Identify capital investment needs to ensure CDLS services meet current and future requirements; support internal annual capital request submission exercise.
• Liaise with the Estates department on minor laboratory refurbishment projects, including adapting existing space and new build, identifying the requirements to be considered with respect to laboratory management and ensuring minimal disruption.
• Ensure shipment of Unit samples is conducted in compliance with IATA and other legal requirements.

Service Delivery

• Ensure that safe working practices within the CDLS and FSA/biorepository team are adhered to at all times.
• Ensure that the team operates within a secure and legal environment at all times, working towards the requirements of all Ugandan and UK acts, regulations and laid down codes of practice and guidance.
• Ensure the team adheres to the National, Unit’s and LSHTM’s Health & Safety policies and procedures.
• Manage the day-to-day Health & Safety of laboratory staff and visitors.
• Take a lead role in the arrangements in Health & Safety management at the Unit.
• Ensure risk to CDLS operation is identified and appropriately managed in the relevant areas.
• Retaining formal records of key documents and data for management and audit purposes.
• Minimising planned equipment and service downtimes.
• Ensuring fire safety installations are maintained and appropriate, in collaboration with Unit Health & Safety and Estates departments.
• Keeping oversight and auditable records of the inventory of materials and equipment.

Managing Staff

• Continuously develop professional capacity of department staff in line with the Unit’s capacity building mandate and scientific strategy of the Unit, through on-the-job training, coaching, mentoring and formal trainings via the Unit’s Training department.
• Conduct annual appraisals for direct reports and ensure all other CDLS and FSA department staff are appraised annually by their respective line managers.
• Ensuring all activities are carried in line with LSHTM’s Health & Safety expectations and statutory Health & Safety requirements.
Research

- The post holder is encouraged to explore research opportunities within CDLS and involving CDLS staff, taking into consideration that these need to be fully funded and not interfere with providing a cost-effective clinical diagnostic services to the Unit.

2. Quality of Service

It is important that the Unit’s diagnostics and other CDLS services are delivered in a customer-oriented fashion. This post-holder ensures the department is;

- Responsive.
- Promptly communicating to users’ new developments such as new services, changes to services, service disruptions etc.
- Pro-actively resolving issues.
- Upholding high standards of professionalism.
- Ensure laboratory services are effective across all field stations, which requires regular direct interactions with staff outside Entebbe.
- Take responsibility for the overall quality of the service delivery.
- Lead the team’s self-assessment process supporting the team in setting targets and agreeing performance indicators for improvement.

3. Financial Management & Cost Recovery

General financial management of the department include the following activities:

- Accountability for and close monitoring of department expenditure and recoveries.
- Adherence to and effective utilization of CDLS and FSA budgets in keeping with the Unit’s/LSHTM’s delegated authority scheme.
- Working with Procurement to ensure value for money is achieved when procuring services or items.
- Support the delivery of capital projects and associated reporting within spending timeframes.
- Support of internal and external audits.

The post-holder ensures that core expenditure recovery from externally funded research grants is maximized. This includes the following activities:

- Cost of services are regularly reviewed and need for adjustment discussed with Unit COO.
- Instructions for project charges are communicated to the Finance department in a timely manner.
- Follow-up of outstanding recoveries to avoid loss of Unit income.

4. Line Management Responsibilities

The post holder is responsible for managing a dynamic multidisciplinary team including team of more than 20 staff. As such, the Head of Clinical Laboratory Services is responsible for ensuring the following:

- Staff are enabled to perform their assigned duties as expected.
- Staff professional development is nurtured in line with the Unit’s and LSHTM’s capacity building goals.
There is a positive and supportive work environment in the department. Staff feel included and valued and their professional feedback and proposals are heard and considered. Staff expectations are clearly communicated. Staff performance is regularly monitored. Potential conflicts are resolved promptly and decisively, involving HR support where needed. Formal appraisals are conducted within the departments in line with the Unit’s schedule. Applicable LSHTM and Unit HR policies are being followed at all levels. Participate in the development of equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion.

5. **LSHTM Integration**

The Unit transferred to LSHTM in 2018. The post-holder is expected to support the further integration of the Unit into the School by;

- Engage constructively with departments across LSHTM, as needed.
- Harmonize CDLS Policies and Procedures with wider LSHTM policy framework.
- Capitalize on new opportunities that result from the transfer to improve staff training, quality of work and operational efficiency.
- Develop proposals to harmonize workflow between London and the Unit.
- Undertake any other duties within the grade as required by the Unit.

6. **Environment**

- Develop strategies to reduce adverse environmental impact of CDLS and FSA operations.
- Participate in carbon emission reduction activities across the Unit and wider LSHTM, coordinate the development of the Units Energy Carbon Management Plan.
- Act as an advocate for the responsible and efficient use of resources.

**Specifications:**

- MSc degree in Science, or equivalent experience, from an accredited University, research institute or similar employer with experience in management of clinical and research laboratories.
- PhD Degree in Science, or equivalent experience, from an accredited University with experience in management of clinical and research laboratories is desired.
- Significant experience of active work in a research/clinical laboratory environment.
- Possession of significant experience in conducting and supervising an area of independent research is an added advantage.
- 5 years or more experience in a laboratory management role.
- Should have experience in implementing International Laboratory Accreditation standards.
- Should possess experience in implementing change management, for example implementing new ways of working, approaches etc. which support and ensure quality improvement around laboratory output, practices and safety.
- Experience managing biological sample collections, including pathogens and human tissue, in a safe and legally compliant way.
- Experience in the application and management of a broad range of research and clinical laboratory technologies.
• Experience in the safe shipment of clinical samples and infectious organisms plus familiarity with laboratory management or bio banking software.
• Experience in training laboratory-based staff and developing and executing competency-based training plans.
• Should have excellent knowledge of Good Clinical Practice (GCP), Good Clinical Laboratory Practice (GCLP) and expertise in implementing ISO15189 quality standard.
• Excellent spoken and written command of English with excellent communication skills with individuals at all levels of the organization.

How to Apply

Follow the link below to fill a form and submit your application documentation:

https://redcap.link/HeadOfCDLS

*Filling the form more than once will lead to automatic disqualification. High level of integrity while filling the form is required and will be considered during shortlisting.*

Deadline for application is **Friday 21st August 2020**. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interview. Strictly follow the application procedure as failure to do so will lead to automatic disqualification.

**The applications should be addressed to:**

The Head of Human Resources,
MRC/ UVRI and LSHTM Uganda Research Unit,
P.O. Box, 49,
Entebbe, Uganda.

Consider your application unsuccessful if not contacted within eight (8) weeks after the closing date of the advert. Any form of lobbying at any stage will lead to automatic disqualification. By submitting your personal information, you consent to the MRC/ UVRI and LSHTM Uganda Research Unit holding and using it in accordance with its recruitment policy and procedure. The Unit reserves the right to verify documents attached with the relevant awarding institutions to authenticate their validity.

*MRC/UVRI and LSHTM Uganda research Unit is an equal opportunity employer committed to having a diverse work force and does not ask for money at any stage of recruitment.*