

PERSON SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF ROLE: THEME LEAD: PALLIATIVE AND END OF LIFE CARE THEME NIHR ARC EAST OF ENGLAND

Background

The NIHR Applied Research Collaboration for the East of England (NIHR ARC EoE) is a collaboration between Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (the Host Trust), and the University of Cambridge, University of East Anglia, University of Hertfordshire, University of Essex and Anglia Ruskin University, working in partnership with other health and care organisations throughout the region.

At NIHR ARC EoE we are committed to improving health and care services by working together on priority health and care problems, training people to design and conduct innovative research, and putting findings into practice regionally and nationally.

NIHR ARC EoE is funded for a five-year period from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2031.

The opportunity

Theme Leads play a critical strategic leadership role within NIHR ARC EoE. They are responsible for shaping and delivering a coherent programme of applied health and care research aligned to regional and national priorities, and for fostering a collaborative, high-performing research environment across partner organisations.

We are seeking expressions of interest from established researchers with a strong track record of leadership in applied health and care research, and experience of working across organisational and disciplinary boundaries.

What this role entails

Expressions of interest are invited for the Palliative and End of Life Care theme.

The Theme Lead will provide strategic direction and leadership for the theme and be accountable for delivery of the theme's objectives in line with ARC priorities and NIHR expectations. They will lead a programme of work that brings together researchers, practitioners, and partners across the East of England and nationally, including collaboration with other ARCs. Theme Leads will work within the existing ARC strategic framework and NIHR contractual expectations, while contributing to the ongoing development and refinement of theme activity.

The Theme Lead will be responsible for fostering a strong and inclusive research culture, supporting the development of researchers (including Co-Leads and wider theme members), and ensuring effective engagement with stakeholders, including patients, the public, and health and care organisations.

The post holder will attend monthly Team Strategy and Operations Group (TSOG) meetings, contribute to annual reporting, and participate in biannual theme review meetings.

Key responsibilities

Leadership

- Provide strategic leadership and direction for the theme, ensuring alignment with ARC priorities and overall accountability for delivery of its objectives.
- Lead the development of a coherent programme of research and funding applications aligned with the theme.
- Foster collaboration across universities, health and care organisations, and wider partners.

- Support the development of researchers within the theme, including mentoring Co-Leads and emerging leaders.
- Promote and embed principles of inclusion, diversity and equality across all theme activity.
- Work with ARC Knowledge Mobilisation leads to ensure effective implementation and impact of research.

Governance and reporting

- Take overall responsibility for NIHR reporting requirements for the theme.
- Work with the ARC core team to develop communications and outputs relating to the theme's work.

Essential requirements

- Applicants must hold an employment contract with the University of Cambridge, University of East Anglia, University of Hertfordshire, University of Essex, or Anglia Ruskin University. Honorary or affiliate appointments alone are not sufficient, due to contractual arrangements relating to ARC funding.
- An established researcher with a strong track record in applied health and care research, including leadership of significant programmes of work
- A PhD or equivalent experience in a discipline relevant to palliative and end of life care, health and care services research, or a related field, with a research track record aligned to the theme's area of focus. Please refer [here](https://arc-eeo.nihr.ac.uk/research-implementation-knowledge-mobilisation/research-themes/palliative-and-end-life-care) for the themes area of focus (<https://arc-eeo.nihr.ac.uk/research-implementation-knowledge-mobilisation/research-themes/palliative-and-end-life-care>).
- Demonstrable experience of securing research funding and leading successful funding applications
- Demonstrable experience of strategic leadership and delivery of significant research programmes
- Strong understanding of knowledge mobilisation, implementation, and public involvement and engagement
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to build and sustain collaborative partnerships across a range of stakeholders
- Knowledge of NIHR infrastructure

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Time commitment

The role requires an average commitment of 1 day per week, including attendance at monthly TSOG meetings. It will primarily be based at the post holder's employing organisation, with occasional travel across the East of England. Appointment to this role is subject to agreement from the applicant's employing organisation, including support for the required time commitment.

We are committed to inclusive recruitment and welcome applications from individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Applicants are encouraged to let us know if they require any reasonable adjustments at any stage of the process, and these will be accommodated wherever possible.

The role will be funded by NIHR ARC East of England via the employing university and administered by the host organisation, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust. This will be a fixed-term role available until 31 March 2031.

Expressions of interest

Please send a CV and a letter of application to Emma Dickerson, Associate Director of Operations, NIHR ARC East of England, via email at Emma.Dickerson@cpft.nhs.uk. Please ensure your letter outlines how your skills and experience meet the requirements of

the role and demonstrates how your track record aligns with the advancement of the theme. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an online interview.

Please submit your CV and letter of application by the 21 of October 2026

Online interviews will be held on the 23 and 24 November 2026.

Informal enquiries are welcomed by ARC Co-Director, Alex Flores, via his Assistant Hannah Smith (h.smith25@herts.ac.uk)

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