

## Zambia Hub – Summer 2020 Student Opportunities

Due: Friday, January 31, 2020

### Zambia Hub

To give more focus to the School's global work, we are establishing a small number of geographic hubs to increase students' skills. A consistent presence at particular sites, working with a select group of partners, will allow us to provide quality experiences and deliver on strategic themes to improve public health. For summer 2020, we are pleased to partner with UNC Global Projects Zambia, UNC School of Medicine's Office of Global Health Education and the Institute for Global Health and Infectious Diseases to offer up to seven placement opportunities for **UNC Gillings residential MPH students** and **UNC School of Medicine first year students**. We expect to award up to \$5,000 per student (final amount TBD).

**Project description:** Treatment of postpartum depression to improve HIV treatment outcomes

**Number of positions:** 1

**Short project description:** Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide. In Lusaka, Zambia, where our group has worked since 2001, as many as 1 in 5 pregnant and recently postpartum women meet criteria for perinatal depression (PND). As combination antiretroviral therapy (ART) has become available to an ever-growing number of pregnant women around the world, perinatal HIV transmission rates have plummeted. But, in order for infants of HIV-infected women to safely breastfeed, their mothers must adhere to their prescribed antiretroviral therapy. It is estimated that postpartum depression may affect as many as 25% of Zambian women. Many of the hallmark features of depression, such as sadness, fatigue, and withdrawal, may work against a woman's ability to adhere to her prescribed medication and keep her appointments.

We are studying the feasibility of treating PND among HIV-infected women at one public sector facility in Lusaka, Zambia. The trial is screening women with an Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) and randomizing those with clinically confirmed PND to either antidepressant medication (ADM) or interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT). A total of 100 women will be enrolled and followed for 24 weeks. The primary objective of this research will be to demonstrate feasibility of a larger trial, which is expressed quantitatively in 4 objective measures: willingness to be screened for PND, prevalence of PND, willingness to participate in the trial, and retention of those enrolled. We will also measure preliminary efficacy of ADM and IPT in this population by comparing improvement in EPDS scores at study completion.

**Roles and responsibilities of student:** The successful candidate will be expected to assist in data management and data preparation for analysis. This may include quality control activities, data export, data cleaning, and preliminary data analysis. The student will report to in-country and UNC supervisors weekly to describe their planned approach and progress.

**Expected outputs:** Presentation to co-investigators of a data preparation and preliminary analysis plan and accompanying SAS or Stata files for implementation. If feasible (depending on study progress), a clean dataset with data from the feasibility trial would be expected by the end of the practicum.

**Skills or experience required:** Experience with Redcap and SAS/Stata

**In-country supervisor:** Bridget Spelke (please note that in-country supervisor may be out of the country for several weeks in July)

**Location:** Lusaka, Zambia

**Minimum duration (minimum 8 weeks):** 8 weeks

**How to apply:**

***If you are applying to multiple positions, please do not apply until you have ALL cover letters written and ready to upload for each position.***

1. Fill-out the [online application form](#) and upload the materials below to the form:
  - o Cover letter for *each position* you are applying (*If applying to multiple positions, please write a cover letter for each position*)
  - o CV/Resume (*If applying to multiple positions, only upload it once*)

2. Faculty Evaluation: Please identify a UNC Gillings faculty member who is able to evaluate you on the specific skills listed in the position description(s) you are applying for. Please tell the faculty member which position(s) you are applying for. *If applying to multiple positions, the faculty member only needs to complete one evaluation form (they will evaluate you for all your positions on one form).*

Send the Faculty Evaluation Form link to the faculty member:

[https://unc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cMfN7vun0ORYWdD](https://unc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cMfN7vun0ORYWdD)

**Questions?**

Please contact Naya Villarreal, MPH, at [naya@unc.edu](mailto:naya@unc.edu).