



Terms of Reference
Research Assistant/Nurse
To Coordinate Activities Associated with The Implementation of the National COVID-19
Research Agenda, LONG COVID Project

1. Background

The Coronavirus disease outbreak has quickly grown from a localized issue in China, to a public health challenge in approximately two hundred countries and territories. The World Health Organization declared coronavirus disease a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020, and the COVID-19 outbreak was characterized as a pandemic on March 11, 2020¹. The first case of coronavirus disease in Jamaica was confirmed on March 10, 2020.

Despite the global spread and breadth of cases, much remains unknown regarding the disease. This includes but is not limited to: (a) the proportion of pre-symptomatic individuals as well as asymptomatic cases in the population,^{2,3} (b) the spectrum of disease severity and risk factors for severe illness and death,^{4,4} (c) the level of co-infection,³ (d) the period of infectiousness and transmissibility,^{4,5} (e) the extent of viral shedding in the population,³ (f) the level of survival of the virus outside the body,⁴ (g) the efficacy of antiviral drugs and other treatments⁵ and (h) the validity of serological and other tests.⁴ The evaluation of the success of quarantine strategies and their acceptability⁴ will also be important. It will also be critical to evaluate the level of responsiveness of the health system to the outbreak, and assess the impact on the economy and on various sectors.

The Essential National Health Research Committee (ENHRC) of the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) has begun to formulate a National COVID-19 Research Agenda to provide data to guide the COVID-19 outbreak response.

The purpose of the COVID-19 Research Roadmap is to provide an integrated framework to guide the coordination, implementation and utilization of research pertaining to COVID-19 to

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- ¹ WHO. Rolling updates on coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Updated 18 April 2020: World Health Organization; 2020 [Available from: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/events-as-they-happen> accessed 21/04/2020 2020.
- ² Vetter P, Eckerle I, Kaiser L. Covid-19: a puzzle with many missing pieces. *BMJ* 2020;368:m627. doi: 10.1136/bmj.m627 [published Online First: 2020/02/23]
- ³ Bedford J, Enria D, Giesecke J, et al. COVID-19: towards controlling of a pandemic. *Lancet* 2020;395(10229):1015-18. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30673-5 [published Online First: 2020/03/21]
- ⁴ Lipsitch M, Swerdlow DL, Finelli L. Defining the Epidemiology of Covid-19 - Studies Needed. *N Engl J Med* 2020;382(13):1194-96. doi: 10.1056/NEJMp2002125 [published Online First: 2020/02/20]
- ⁵ He F, Deng Y, Li W. Coronavirus disease 2019: What we know? *J Med Virol* 2020 doi: 10.1002/jmv.25766 [published Online First: 2020/03/15]

inform the national response in the mitigation and/or management of the current outbreak and future activities.

The objectives of the National COVID-19 Research Agenda are to:

1. Support the generation of evidence needed to strengthen clinical management, public health guidance and actions essential for mitigating the impact of COVID-19 disease on the population of Jamaica
2. Determine the impact of COVID-19 on various sectors in Jamaica to provide information for action
3. Coordinate efforts across Government, academia, the private sector, development partners and other stakeholders to optimize research efforts and outcomes in a whole-of-society response to producing data.
4. Support the development of the research for health enterprise to be better prepared for the next emerging and re-emerging disease outbreak.

Research activities will be undertaken by six Research Working Groups and will include implementation of three clinical trials, a case control study, a cohort study, a sero-epidemiological survey, two large household surveys, two large scale establishment surveys, a case study and a mixed method study, among other research activities. The Ministry of Health and Wellness seeks to identify a suitable candidate for the position of Project Coordinator to oversee implementation of selected research activities across different working groups.

2. Job purpose

To assist the Project Coordinator with the implementation of the National COVID-19 Research Agenda, LONG COVID Project. The Research Assistant/Nurse will perform the day to day field/research activities associated with implementation of this project, and is responsible for collection and storage of data and sample, as well as clinical measurements in support of the implementation of research activities associated with the project.

3. Key Outputs

- A. Database of consisting of clinical measurements, survey and sample data
- B. Workplan of research activities based on protocol and situational analysis report.
- C. Progress reports on research activities
 - i. Progress reports on field activities
- D. Preliminary analysis reports of survey data
- E. Final Technical Reports

4. Responsibilities of Research Assistant/Nurse

Monitor and support implementation of research project activities

- A. Perform the field work associated with the implementation of Research Project consisting of collection of survey data, clinical measurements and collection of biological samples as per workplan

- B. Assist with the procurement of goods and equipment needed to conduct research studies.
- C. Assist in the development of training materials and training modules for field staff and study personnel
- D. In conjunction with the Principal Investigators, assist in the preparation of survey instruments
- E. Assist in the preparation progress reports on the proceedings of the project in adherence with Government of Jamaica and donor requirements when necessary
- F. Assist in the performance of routine audits of data collected
- G. Provide updates on field/study activities at the following time-points:
 - a. Completion of staff training
 - b. Completion of data collection
 - c. End of project
- H. Assist in the cleaning and verification of the survey data, and the writing of project reports and policy memos

Cooperation with counterparts

- A. Follow up on the implementation of research project activities with relevant parties
- B. Provide daily coordination between the research project team and counterparts, ensuring that concerns are effectively communicated between parties, flagging emerging issues that may be of potential concern to parties, and ensuring that effective and productive collaboration is maintained;

Dissemination of Findings

- A. Assist with the dissemination of project findings and other deliverables to relevant partners and stakeholders
- B. Organize activities relevant to the research project such as lectures, panel discussions and workshops; produce event summaries

5. Responsibilities of the Ministry of Health and Wellness

The Ministry of Health and Wellness will furnish the Project Coordinator with the relevant information and materials to facilitate completion of assigned tasks.

6. Reporting relationships

The Research Assistant/Nurse will have a direct reporting relationship to the Principal Project Coordinator, National Epidemiologist (Chairperson, ENHRC). He / She will also interact with the Director, ERDAU, as well as members of the Essential National Health Research Committee (ENHRC) COVID-19 Research Working Groups.

7. Key Deliverables

The deliverables under this consultancy are specified in the table below all documents submitted must be in conformance with the agreed format or templates to be specified and agreed on by the Ministry of Health

No.	Deliverables / Milestone Activities	Performance Standard
1	Inception Report & Work plan	Inception report and work plan submitted in agreed format
2	Survey Plan (including survey instruments and budget)	Survey Plan completed in agreed format and timeline
3	Field Staff Training Report	Training Report completed in agreed format and timeline
4	Sample Frame characterized	100% of sample enrolled with 80% retention at 1 year
5	Project Database created	Timely input of survey and sample data (minimum of 90% of available data entered and verified per month)
6	Monthly Progress Report on Field Activities , data collection and data quality	Monthly Progress report submitted to the Principal Medical Officer, National Epidemiologist in the agreed format
7	Preliminary Report (Data cleaning & verification	Preliminary Report (Data cleaning and verification) completed as per agreed format and timeframe
8	Final Technical Report	Final Technical Report completed as per agreed format and timeframe
9	End of Project Report	End of Project Report completed as per agreed format and timeframe

8. Schedule of Payment

Payments will be as follows:

No.	Deliverables / Milestone Activities	Percentage Payment
1	Inception Report & Work plan	5%
2	Survey Plan (including survey instruments and budget)	5%
3	Field Staff Training Report	5%
4	Sample Frame characterized	5%
5	Project Database created	5%
6	Monthly Progress Report on Field Activities , data collection and data quality	55% (3% monthly for 18 mths.)
7	Preliminary Report (Data cleaning & verification	5%
8	Final Technical Report	10%
9	End of Project Report	5%

9. Eligibility Requirements

The Project Coordinator should satisfy the following conditions:

1. Have a Master's Degree in Public Health/Epidemiology/Social Sciences/Statistics/Other science-related field
2. Have a minimum of five years' experience in the implementation of research projects
3. Have experience in project management
4. Have experience in writing of project and scientific reports
5. Have experience with phlebotomy, sample handling and storage
6. Demonstrate knowledge and experience of working in or with the public sector

10. Funding

Funding for the contracted service will be supported through the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) budgetary allocation to the Ministry of Health.

11. Duration of Project

The duration of the Consultancy will be twenty-four months commencing June 2023