

Project Officer, Knowledge Mobilization

Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging

Posting Date: September 17, 2018

Closing Date: October 8, 2018

JOB DESCRIPTION

Reports to: Director of Research Coordination and Research-Practice Integration

Terms: 2 x 18-month full-time contracts

Location: Centre of Excellence for Innovation in Aging | Waterloo, ON (www.the-ria.ca)

BACKGROUND

The Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA) is a charitable non-profit organization that partners with the University of Waterloo, Conestoga College, and Schlegel Villages to enhance the care and quality of life for older adults. Through collaborations with key partners and stakeholders, RIA supports practice-relevant research and knowledge mobilization. Research evidence is used to inform programs, education and training, and influence practice and policy. The RIA team consists of 10 research chairs, 5 specialists, affiliate researchers, and staff members with a commitment to improved quality of life and care across the continuum of care.

RIA's Research and Development sites include 19 long-term care and retirement communities, operating as Schlegel Villages (www.schlegelvillages.com). Approximately 4,500 residents live in Schlegel Villages (SV), and their needs are supported by roughly 4,500 team members. The RIA team works with researchers, village team members, and residents to coordinate research within SV, enabling innovations to be trialed in these sites before being disseminated broadly to benefit older adults everywhere.

One of RIA's core mandates is to be a leader in knowledge mobilization (KMb) in the field of aging, with the ultimate objective of enhancing quality of life and care for older adults. RIA defines KMb as the process by which research and the real world connect to each other, and includes dissemination and implementation activities informed by intentional interactions with stakeholders to ensure that scientific knowledge is practice-informed and practice and policies related to aging are evidence-informed. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to, older adults, researchers, formal and informal care partners, policy makers, students, and innovators.

PRIMARY PURPOSE

The *Project Officer, Knowledge Mobilization* is responsible for coordinating research-to-practice projects within SV. He/she will provide coordination and communication supports to project teams (including

research teams and knowledge users) at all stages of the research process (e.g., research coordination, piloting/implementation, scale, spread), including dissemination of results and development of KMb tools and resources. He/she will strive to engage stakeholders (e.g., older adults, researchers, formal and informal care partners, policy makers, students, innovators) throughout the process to ensure that relevant questions are investigated, key learnings are shared in meaningful ways, and opportunities to develop collaborative partnerships among stakeholders are recognized and pursued.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Research Project Management

The Project Officer, Knowledge Mobilization will:

- Manage the proposal submission process, and review project proposals against set criteria
- Work with researchers to clarify any ambiguity in the design of the study, and work with village teams to assess readiness and feasibility of hosting proposed projects
- Make recommendations to the Research Coordination Executive Committee about what projects should proceed in SV
- Engage with researchers and SV teams to formulate practice relevant research questions, and develop project implementation/evaluation plans
- Coordinate project meetings, by setting clear agendas, taking minutes, setting expectations and establishing role clarity for all stakeholders
- Develop project charters to set and manage expectations, and establish role clarity for all stakeholders
- Support and provide recommendations to project teams about pragmatic data collection methods that can be efficiently integrated into existing processes at Schlegel Villages
- Use critical thinking to solve problems to facilitate projects through various phases of implementation, spread, scale and dissemination

2. Knowledge Translation

The successful candidates will:

- Support the execution of RIA's Knowledge Mobilization strategy to build RIA's reputation for high quality KMb products and services
- Seek out creative opportunities to develop KMb products, tools and resources that may inform policy and program development
- Work closely with the RIA team and other experts to develop content for these products
- Facilitate the dissemination of project information, research findings, and KMb tools and resources
- Assist in creating and testing a process model and guiding principles for implementation and commercialization in collaboration with RIA researchers and knowledge users
- Assist in the development of evaluation plans, and carry out evaluation activities to demonstrate the impact of RIA's KMb products, resources and services

3. Communication with stakeholders

The successful candidates will:

- Build context around key messages/research results by collecting, reviewing and summarizing information from various sources, including connecting with project teams, researchers, village teams, residents, and family members
- Update RIA's project database and develop reports as necessary to communicate the extent of RIA's activities to key stakeholder groups
- Tailor messages for different audiences, such as explaining complex scientific concepts in plain language

4. Development of a culture of innovation and inquiry in Schlegel Villages

The successful candidates will:

- Develop and enact strategies to raise RIA's profile and promote RIA's activities within SV, including developing collaborative relationships between village teams, residents, family members, and researchers
- Provide leadership to the engagement of knowledge users throughout the research-to-practice process within SV (e.g., development of a network of "innovation champions", etc.)

5. Teamwork and Consultation

The successful candidates will:

- Work as a collaborative member of the Research Coordination and Practice Integration team at the RIA
- Work closely with researchers to support their knowledge mobilization needs
- Work closely with Schlegel Villages teams and residents to support the implementation of applied projects and development of KMb tools and resources
- Collaborate closely with other RIA team members to support ongoing RIA initiatives

6. Other duties as assigned

The successful candidates will:

- Take on a variety of RIA projects and activities, as they arise.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

Education:

The successful candidate's educational background will include:

- University degree (Master's level preferred) in health sciences or a related area
- Training in Implementation Science and/or Knowledge Mobilization, preferably in the healthcare field
- Training in evaluation and research design (not required, but would be an asset)

Experience:

The successful candidate will have:

- Approximately 5 years of experience supporting and leading Knowledge Mobilization activities, preferably in a healthcare context
- Experience working with researchers, health care providers, and older adults
- An understanding of long-term care and retirement living operations as well as the needs within the long-term care and retirement living sector in Ontario

SKILLS:**Research project management**

The successful candidates will:

- Demonstrate experience in coordinating research projects in complex healthcare environments
- Have experience engaging members of a vulnerable population in the research process
- Have a strong working knowledge of research design and research ethics

Knowledge translation

The successful candidates will:

- Demonstrate experience in all aspects of knowledge mobilization, including:
 - Developing and implementing knowledge mobilization products (e.g., implementation guides, plain language summaries, newsletters, presentations, reports);
 - Supporting and implementing evidence-based programs;
 - Applying best practices in knowledge exchange (e.g., communications, education/training, toolkit development, stakeholder engagement, co-creation of products);
 - Communicating with diverse stakeholders and tailoring messaging for different audiences;
 - Consulting with relevant stakeholders using surveys, focus groups, social media, etc.
- Be able to assess and make judgements about appropriate implementation frameworks and approaches for different contexts and settings
- Be committed to staying abreast of best practices in knowledge mobilization to inform activities
- Gather and use quantitative and qualitative feedback on programs and products to improve the quality of implementation to support dissemination and adoption.

Communication with stakeholders

The successful candidates will:

- Have experience working with healthcare practitioners, researchers / academics, government officials, administrators and residents to develop relationships and achieve shared goals

- Have experience coordinating stakeholder meetings, work groups and events (e.g., developing agendas, taking minutes, coordinating meeting logistics and moving strategic objectives forward)
- Be fluent in written and spoken English (fluency in French is an asset but not required)
- Have strong writing skills and a demonstrated ability to write in plain language, including experience writing grant applications, evaluation reports, and research summaries

Development of a culture of innovation and inquiry in Schlegel Villages

The successful candidates will:

- Have an interest in, and passion for enhancing older adults' quality of life and care
- Have familiarity with the long-term care and retirement living sector

Miscellaneous

The successful candidates will:

- Have excellent planning and time management skills, be able to manage multiple tasks and competing priorities in an organized, efficient, and detail-oriented manner
- Have expertise in using Microsoft software (e.g., Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook)
- The successful candidates will be required to obtain a police background/criminal record check for working with vulnerable populations.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- **Interpersonal Skills:** Communicate with RIA team members, researchers, representatives from all levels within Schlegel Villages, and older adults to ensure the effective coordination of research activities and implementation of knowledge mobilization strategies; Develop trusting relationships with all stakeholders; Represent RIA in a professional manner at all times.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Responsible for ensuring effective research coordination and knowledge mobilization practices in a way that maintains the integrity of the RIA.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Identify successes and challenges while coordinating research projects and knowledge mobilization activities; engage in problem-solving with team members to optimize success and efficiencies; seek appropriate support for decision-making as needed.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment; periods of extensive sitting at a desk and in meetings and concentrated use of visual senses; substantial repetitive keyboard/mouse movement; high sensory demands because of required concentration and attentiveness to detail and regular distractions and interruptions.
- **Working Environment:** Much of the time is spent sitting in a comfortable position with frequent opportunity to move about. Office is located in a comfortable indoor area. The work is varied and assignments may change frequently. Work will involve regular interaction with RIA and SV team members, researchers, and external partners/stakeholders. There are deadline pressures,

while at the same time there is a demand for thoroughness and accuracy. Occasional travel is required.

HOW TO APPLY:

RIA invites applications (cover letter and resume) by October 8, 2018. Please submit your application in one document by email to Susan Brown, Director of Research Coordination and Research-Practice Integration (susan.brown@uwaterloo.ca).

RIA welcomes applications from all qualified persons. RIA is an equal opportunity employer and is pleased to accommodate individual needs in accordance with the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). If you require accommodation, please let us know in advance.