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Post of Research Assistant -(03 vacancies)

Project: Recruitment of Three Research Assistants for the implementation of the National Youth Health Survey-2025

Background

Adolescence spans the period from 10 to 19 years of age, while youth is considered to be between 15 and 24 years. Collectively, those aged between 10 and 24 are referred to as young persons. Globally, there are over 1.8 billion young people today, with 90% residing in developing countries (UNFPA, 2016).

The 2012 census in Sri Lanka indicates that out of a total population of 20.4 million, 4.8 million are young people, and 3.3% are adolescents (Department of Census and Statistics, 2016). The mortality rates for adolescents and youth 2010 were 66 and 166 per 100,000, respectively (Department of Census and Statistics, 2016).

Adolescence is a transitional phase where individuals are no longer children but not yet adults. During this time, rapid development occurs, presenting both opportunities for progress and risks to health. Investing in today's youth paves the way for tomorrow's global growth. Therefore, addressing adolescents' health and developmental needs is crucial (WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, 1997). Investing in the health and well-being of young people is vital, as these issues can have long-term effects on their lives and future generations. To ensure that young people have the necessary knowledge and skills to promote their health, Sri Lanka has established a specific healthcare delivery system for adolescents and youth through the Yowun Piyasa initiative.

The National Strategic Plan (NSP) on Adolescent and Youth Health (2018-2025) was developed by building on Sri Lanka's policies related to the health of young people and school health. It incorporates interventions outlined in the WHO global strategy for women, children, and adolescents, as well as the AAHA! Framework. Implementation of the said NSP was externally evaluated with support from WHO in 2024.

Since the Validity of the AYH NSP is ending in 2025 – It is high time to review and revise the NSP for the period 2026-2030. This updated plan will address emerging challenges, incorporate new evidence, and ensure that the health and well-being of adolescents and youth continue to be prioritized in Sri Lanka's public health agenda.

In the process of development of NSP, it is essential to assess the risk behaviours and health issues among youth in the community covering non-school going adolescents addition to school going adolescents and youth

One significant gap identified in the current landscape is the lack of recent data on adolescent and youth health. The last national youth health survey was conducted in 2012, and since then, there have been significant changes in societal dynamics, health trends, and risk behaviours among young individuals after the COVID-19 pandemic and the present economic downturn. To bridge this gap, the Global School Health Survey is being implemented in 2024 end, while steps are planned to implement the 2nd National Youth Health Survey in 2025.

The NYHS survey will focus on identifying health issues and risk behaviours among in-school and out-of-school students. These activities are critical to guide the Next NSP and programme implementation, allowing for the formulation of targeted strategies that address the unique challenges faced by diverse youth populations in today's context.

Scope of Work

Under the Supervision of the National Program Manager (Adolescent and Youth Health Unit of the FHB), the research assistants will perform the following.

1. Literature Review
2. Preparation, field coordination
3. Compilation of NYHS activities
4. Data collector training and supervision
5. Coordination on field activities and documentation of findings
6. Data entering and compilation
7. Assist in data analysis and report writing

8. Develop IEC materials (videos, infographics, posters) on Adolescent and Youth Health and assist with operating, managing and uploading content to the Yowun Piyasa platform
9. Carry out any other technical and academic tasks related to Adolescent and Youth Health as assigned by the Unit Head.

Selected research assistant will be posted to the Adolescent Health Unit of the Family Health Bureau.

Duration

For three to four months (06 days a week from 8.30 am-4.15 pm)

Desired qualification and experience for the post

- Pre- intern Medical officer with MBBS qualifications
- Previous experience in conducting scientific research, including data collection, entry, and analysis
- Good command of English and Sinhala or English and Tamil languages
- Ability to work with Microsoft Office applications (word/Excel/ PowerPoint/ SPSS /etc.)
- Ability to work with Canva and other video production software for managing and creating content on the web-based platform
- Excellent communication skills

Monthly Allowance = RS.86180/=

A Research Assistant is not entitled to any other privileges or claims other than the benefits specified above from the Ministry of Health & Mass Media.


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Director
(Maternal and Child Health)

Dr. Chiranthika Vithana
MBBS, MSc, MD Community Medicine
Director, Maternal and Child Health
Family Health Bureau


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Dr.P.V.S.C.Vithana
Coordinating Consultant

Dr. P.V.S. Chiranthika Vithana
MBBS (Sri Lanka) MSc MD (Community Medicine)
S.L.M.C. No. 15965
Consultant Community Physician
Family Health Bureau

Terms of reference (TOR) for Recruitment of Three Research Assistants for the implementation of the National Youth Health Survey-2025

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Candidates are requested to provide a completed CV, including copies of relevant documents and contact details before 28/09/2025 to Adolescent and Youth Health Unit, Family Health Bureau, 231.de Seram place, Colombo 10. (Tel -011 2699341, Email ayhunitfhh@gmail.com).