Research Assistant for Social Science of HIV Cure Research Project

Deadline for applications: September 20th, 2015

Proposed Start Date: October 10th, 2015

Position Summary: Curing HIV is now a priority for both the US National Institutes of Health and the International AIDS Society.  But there is limited social science and community engagement research that is essential for moving forward cure HIV research.  Our UNC Chapel Hill team led by Joe Tucker and Stuart Rennie have an NIH R01 grant focused on social science HIV cure research in the US, South Africa, and China (study website [here](http://searchiv.web.unc.edu/)). The research assistant (RA) will undertake anthropological and community engagement research related to HIV cure efforts. This will include qualitative research related to ongoing HIV cure clinical trials as well as the development of strategies to enhance community engagement. We are recruiting one RA who will be based part-time in Guangzhou, China at the Guangzhou Eighth People’s Hospital.

Work Location: Guangzhou Eighth People’s Hospital; Guangzhou, China

Duration: 12 months

Educational Requirements: Coursework in medicine or public health is required; preferred to have some background in HIV research

Qualifications and Experience: The ability to work independently and as part of an interdisciplinary team are required. Excellent written and verbal English communication skills are required. Interest in social science research is required, but not necessary to have social science research experience

Application: Send English cover letter, CV, and list of three references to Wu Feng at 631478617@qq.com

Contact: Contact Wu Feng at (631478617@qq.com).

Unintended and Intended Implications of Curing HIV: Social Science and Ethical Analysis

Thirty years ago, HIV was a death sentence with no vaccine, no treatment, and no cure. Its high morbidity and association with stigmatized sexual and drug-use behaviors led to the rise of HIV exceptionalism, the tendency to treat HIV differently from other diseases. Over time, a culture of HIV exceptionalism has profoundly shaped public perceptions, law, policy, advocacy, funding priorities, and the structure of health service delivery. A potential HIV cure signals a new chapter in this complex global story. The history of HIV shows that the social meaning of a disease – including how it is represented and policies surrounding its treatment and control – changes dramatically when it transitions from an untreatable disease to a treatable chronic condition. A further transformation of HIV from a treatable chronic condition to a curable disease will not only potentially decrease morbidity and mortality and contribute to epidemic control, but also alter how HIV is experienced, perceived and approached. Curing HIV is a strategic priority of the International AIDS Society and the NIH. Although HIV cure research is at an early stage, this is a critical time to conduct social and ethical research in order to inform subsequent research and ultimately guide pilot implementation of programs. HIV cure research will have unintended positive and negative implications that should be proactively explored. Some HIV control strategies such as male circumcision have been implemented with minimal research into their likely social and ethical implications, resulting in suboptimal uptake and missed public health opportunities. HIV cure clinical trials will predictably raise fundamental social and ethical questions. Anticipating the implications of HIV cure requires input from a diverse group of stakeholders who have the capacity to better understand unintended implications in order to prevent negative implications and expand positive ones. Building on strong links to

ongoing cure research, social science/ethics research expertise, and global stakeholder links, we propose the following aims: (1) Develop a theoretical framework about HIV cure research and early implementation using historical, conceptual and ethical data; (2) Determine HIV cure stakeholder perspectives on cure research and early implementation in Cape Town, South Africa, Guangzhou, China, and Chapel Hill, USA; (3) Develop and assess the feasibility of an online forum to promote stakeholder engagement focusing on the social and ethical implications of HIV cure research. The inclusion of three sites creates an opportunity for powerful cross-cultural comparisons, helping us to identify cross-cutting themes about unintended implications. This research will provide a strong foundation for subsequent HIV cure research and early implementation in a number of settings across the world.