

**PROFESSIONAL POSITION DESCRIPTION**

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| **Position Title:** | Research Associate I |
| **Division:** | Population Health and Health Policy |
| **Department:** | Muskie School of Public Service  |
| **Location:** | Wishcamper Building, Portland |
| **Schedule:** | 40 hours per week, flexible start and end times |
| **Reports to:** | Senior Research Associate |

**STATEMENT OF THE JOB:**

The Research Associate I is responsible for directing, coordinating, and conducting health policy and data collection and analyses using large and small healthcare datasets and providing technical assistance to state agencies. Specifically, the Research Associate I contributes to and/or leads quantitative health care policy analyses in the areas of patient safety and healthcare quality performance measurement (e.g. Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs) and Antibiotic Resistance (AR)), Medicaid and Medicare value-based purchasing, aging, disability and long term care policy, and/or public health policy and prepares reports of findings for dissemination. For smaller policy projects, the Research Associate I provides independent project direction. The Research Associate I also conducts quantitative data analyses to support implementation, research and evaluation of healthcare, public health, disability and aging and other policy initiatives as needed.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:**

1. Develops project design and work plan for health policy data analyses and implements major project components and monitors project activities for compliance with timeframes and deadlines. Manages components of quantitative policy work plans under supervision of the Project Directors or, for small to medium projects, provides independent project direction.
2. Major responsibility for data collection and database management of small datasets in support of analytic activities and/or overseeing and coordinating with other project staff including providing technical support in the design and development of user-friendly database applications for data collection and end-user software applications for the automated data management and reporting and/or designing and coordinating other survey data instrument development and collection as needed.
3. Identifies, collects and develops internal databases to analyze healthcare quality measurement data from hospitals and other healthcare providers, prepares and updates technical documentation of data collection processes, and provides technical assistance to hospital and nursing facility-based infection preventionists and other healthcare professionals on how to interpret the specifications, or how to correct data reporting errors;
4. Designs and develops analytic files, survey analysis, geographic information systems analysis, complex relational databases, and end-user database applications.
5. Performs descriptive and multivariate statistical analyses. Works directly with data analysts to ensure consistent methodology, interpretation, and timely completion of activities.
6. Coordinates and provides technical assistance for external committees and boards: Convenes, coordinates and provides staff support to project planning and advisory groups. Staffs and prepares meeting materials and technical analytic support for state agency committees; and monitors related national and other state policies.
7. Authoring new or updating existing technical specifications and documentation manuals for healthcare quality indicator data collection and reporting.
8. Interprets study findings, prepares and produces analytic results and writes interim and final reports for state and granting agencies (e.g. the State of Maine's Healthcare Associated Infection Annual Report) including designing user-friendly quality charts, tables and geographic data maps.
9. Coordinates and manages production of project briefs, newsletters, websites and/or presentations. Also assists in the preparation of articles and other material for scholarly publication and professional presentation of the results of projects at regional and national conferences.

## Development and grant writing: Identifies new contracts and grant opportunities and secures funding for small to medium-sized projects. Writes proposals for smaller grants including the formulation of project design, literature review, policy analyses, data methods, project work plan, and project budget. Provides support to the writing of larger proposals including writing technical methods sections.

**SPECIAL ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES\*:**

*(Eliminate any that do not apply)*

* Responsible for adherence to the Institute’s data confidentiality policies and procedures as well as those contained in specific data use agreements.
* Work on federally funded projects.

**SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Supervision or within project oversight and coordination of work of policy analysts, research assistants and/or graduate assistants in database management and data analyses.

**BUDGET RESPONSIBILITIES:**

## For small or medium-sized projects, directs staff, manages budget and monitors progress. In larger projects, assists project director in coordinating staff, monitoring project budgets and production scheduling.

**PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO JOB PERFORMANCE:**

* Presents and prepares reports, policy briefs, to state agencies and stakeholder workgroups, at state and national professional conferences or forums and peer reviewed journals.
* Provides technical assistance to community agencies, legislators, state agency staff or others on issues related to his/her project activities;
* Involved in state or national professional associations

**INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONTACTS:**

**Internal:**

1. Provides technical assistance to, Cutler Institute staff, USM faculty, and subcontracting organizations/consultants.

**External:**

* Maine Quality Forum, Maine Health Data Organization and its contractors, Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services, MaineCare and private foundations (e.g. Maine Health Access Foundation). Also provides technical support to project stakeholders and state advisory committees.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:**

* Knowledge and understanding of health policy, health systems, healthcare quality management, healthcare financing, administrative claims systems and health care management, and quality assurance systems.
* Strong quantitative research skills including knowledge of and experience using SAS, SPSS and/or other statistical software for descriptive and multivariate analyses.
* Knowledge and experience with quantitative data collection and database management for program support, evaluation, research or delivery system design projects.
* Strong oral and written communication skills and demonstrated ability to write and/or publish reports.
* Demonstrated ability to communicate and work with broad spectrum of health care practitioners, policy makers and other professionals in the health policy and health services research field.
* Ability to work in a flexible work environment on multiple projects with multiple project directors and teams.
* Knowledge and understanding of IRB requirements, and HIPAA and other data confidentiality and data security policies and requirements.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Required:**

* Masters degree and 3 years of relevant experience in the health and human services field and emphasis in health policy analysis; or Bachelor’s degree and 5 years experience in a relevant field.
* Knowledge of and experience using SAS, SPSS and/or other statistical software.
* Knowledge of Excel (including VBA programming), Word, PowerPoint, , and/or other spreadsheet, word-processing, presentation software.

**Preferred:**

1. Knowledge and understanding of federal and state health policy, patient safety/healthcare quality management and oversight, healthcare financing, and health care management and quality assurance systems.
2. Knowledge of Microsoft SQL Server, Microsoft Access (including Microsoft Visual BASIC for Applications (VBA) programming), other relational database and/or GIS (e.g. ArcGIS) software.
3. Familiarity and experience using federal data resources including CMS Data.Medicare.gov, the U.S. CDC's Annual HAI Progress Report and National Healthcare Safety Network, the National Quality Forum's quality measure search tool, and Medicaid claims systems.
4. Familiarity and experience using federal survey data (e.g. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, Public User Microdata Sample (PUMS) files, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), NPI Database).

**License/Certifications:**

* None

***\*NOTE****: All individuals who are recommended to fill and subsequently offered a position with* ***special essential responsibilities*** *as checked above, or other licensure or certification, shall have the following additional applicable background screening completed (in addition to regular and standard background screening) based on the responsibilities of the position: Credit history screening, and/or Sex offender registry screening, and/or Federal criminal history screening and/or License/certification verification.*

**Date Approved: 10-2020**

**Date Revised:**

**Job Family: 5**

**Salary Band: 104**

**Unit: UMPSA**

**CUPA code:**

**Employee: vacant**

**Position #: 00024675**