

**UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO
ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA**

JOB DESCRIPTION

ROLE TITLE:	Assistant Research Fellow
DEPARTMENT:	Centre for International Health
SCHOOL / DIVISION:	Health Sciences
REPORTS TO:	Dr Sherly Parackal
DIRECT REPORTS (FTE):	Nil
INDIRECT REPORTS (FTE):	Nil

1. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

To contribute to the development of culturally appropriate, evidence-informed lifestyle health messages for South Asian populations by conducting literature synthesis, analysing findings from prior research projects, and supporting the development of theory-informed, culturally tailored health communication outputs.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES:

Research Activities

- Conduct a scoping review of methodologies used in the development of culturally tailored health messages.
- Synthesise findings from four completed research projects examining diet and physical activity barriers among South Asian populations.
- Map behavioural barriers onto established behaviour-change theories and frameworks.
- Develop a theory-informed bank of culturally appropriate lifestyle health messages.
- Support the research team with documentation, data organisation, and preparation of summaries and findings.

Professional Conduct

- Meet all compliance, ethics, and reporting requirements.
- Work collegially and collaboratively with staff, students, and external partners.
- Maintain accurate research records.
- Teaching is not expected in this role.

3. KEY RELATIONSHIPS:

Dr Sherly Parackal (Principal Investigator), Dr Joby George and Prof Philip Hill, alongside the wider research team.

4. QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE:

Essential:

- A completed Master's degree in Human Nutrition, Public Health, Health Psychology, Behavioural Science, Health Communication, or a related discipline.
- Experience conducting literature reviews (systematic, scoping, or narrative).
- Qualitative research skills and familiarity with thematic analysis.
- Excellent academic writing, critical analysis, and communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and manage workload effectively.

5. TECHNICAL SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE:

- Competence in literature review methods, including database searching, screening, data extraction, and synthesis.
- Working knowledge of qualitative data analysis software or willingness to learn.
- Familiarity with behaviour-change frameworks and health communication theory.
- Ability to translate research findings into practical, culturally sensitive communication messages.
- Understanding of equity, cultural safety, and the social determinants of health.
- Competent in Microsoft 365 (Word, Excel, Teams), reference management tools (e.g., EndNote, Zotero).
- Ability to follow structured research protocols and maintain organised records.

6. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Nil

7. DIRECT BUDGET ACCOUNTABILITY:

Nil

8. MĀORI STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

Act in a manner consistent with the principles and implications, as well as the University's commitment to the Treaty as articulated in the Māori Strategic Framework.

9. PACIFIC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

Act in a manner consistent with the strategies and goals contained in the University's Pacific Strategic Framework, role-modelling and promoting Pacific values, equity and diversity principles and cultural safety practices.

10. HEALTH & SAFETY:

Act and work in a manner compliant with current health and safety at work legislation and University procedures, frameworks and guidelines. Role model safe behaviour and practices, share the responsibility to prevent harm and contribute to a safe campus and work environment, including raising workplace health and safety concerns for self, students, visitors and other staff.

11. SUSTAINABILITY:

Act in a manner consistent with the University's sustainability commitments; role-modelling sustainable practices, with a particular emphasis on minimising the environmental impact of day-to-day activities.