Position description

Burnet
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NATNAT Epidemiologist/Senior Trial Coordinator

Salary: **Attractive salary package,** Housing and relocation provided.

Contract type: 24-month Fixed term

Time fraction: 1.0 FTE

Location: Madang, Papua New Guinea

Reports to: Technical: Professor Leanne Robinson & Dr Maria Ome-Kaius;
Madang-based Trial Oversight & day-to-day reporting: Dr John Bosco Keven

Working Group: Vector-Borne Diseases and Tropical Public Health

Discipline: International Development

Direct reports: PNGIMR NATNAT study field staff and project data team

Last updated: Aug 2026

Position snapshot

The NATNAT Epidemiologist/Senior Trial Coordinator will play a central role in the implementation, coordination and data quality of a large cluster randomised controlled trial evaluating the effectiveness of spatial emanators for malaria control in Madang, Papua New Guinea (PNG). Specifically, this role will oversight the implementation of the epidemiological cohort of children underpinning the primary endpoint of the NATNAT WinMal trial.

The WinMal trial is part of the NATNAT (Newly Adapted Tools and Network Against mosquito-borne disease Transmission) project, which is evaluating complementary vector control tools to support malaria control in PNG. The NATNAT project supports PNG research expertise, leadership and advocacy, aiming to generate evidence for PNG and the wider malaria-endemic parts of the Pacific region. Spatial Emanators are a priority vector control tool that the NATNAT project has been evaluating in series of semi-field and field studies.

This is a field-based leadership role responsible for coordinating trial activities across multiple sites, ensuring high-quality data collection, and managing a multidisciplinary field team. The role combines epidemiological oversight, data governance, operational logistics, staff management, ensuring adherence to study protocols, ethical standards, and good clinical practice.

Key responsibilities

Epidemiological Cohort Technical Oversight

- Provide technical oversight and leadership for the day-to-day implementation and coordination of participant recruitment, enrolment, follow-up and retention across multiple teams and multiple field sites.
- Mentor and support multidisciplinary field teams, including research clinicians (HEOs, nurses), laboratory technicians, field officers and community-based health workers.
- Coordinate with laboratory teams to ensure timely sample collection, processing and transport.

- Ensure standardised implementation of cohort procedures across all sites and identify risks to data completeness or validity.
- Work closely with investigators and trial biostatistician to optimise data collection systems, processes and field operations.

Trial Coordination, Training and Protocol Compliance

- Coordinate day-to-day implementation of the study across study sites
- Ensure all activities are conducted in accordance with approved study protocol, ethical approvals, good clinical practice and regulatory standards
- Provide operational support to Principal Investigators, Project Managers and partners in trial implementation, troubleshoot field challenges, and ensure milestones and deliverables are met
- Directly manage and supervise a multidisciplinary team including research nurses, laboratory technicians, field officers, community-based health workers and data collection staff
- Plan and coordinate with operations manager for field logistics, including transport to remote sites, supply chain management and equipment maintenance
- Coordinate with Community engagement Lead and work with local community leaders and health authorities to facilitate study implementation, support community engagement and participant retention
- Assist in development of standard operating procedures and training materials
- Support and/or provide training of study staff and foster a culture of scientific rigour, accountability and continuous quality improvement
- Facilitate collaboration between study teams

Data Quality and Oversight

- Lead implementation of data quality assurance systems across trial activities
- Oversee data collection systems and field monitoring processes
- Conduct regular reviews of data completeness, consistency and timeliness
- Develop dashboards, quality metrics and monitoring reports
- Support data cleaning, validation and preliminary analysis
- Work closely with data management and statistical teams to resolve data queries and maintain database integrity
- Ensure robust audit trails and documentation are maintained throughout the trial

Research Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

- Build strong relationships with local communities, health authorities and research partners to support participant engagement and project outcomes
- Support preparation of ethics reports, donor reports and scientific outputs
- Prepare regular reports on recruitment and follow-up, data quality and completeness and logistical and operational challenges
- Ensure culturally appropriate communication of study processes and results
- Promote knowledge transfer between international and local teams
- Contribute to technical reports and support development of academic outputs
- Attend and participate in meetings/conferences representing study team

Additional responsibilities / People leadership

- Ensure participation of all staff in the Performance Development Cycle to enhance performance and identify training, professional development and career coaching needs.
- Ensure compliance within the group in relation to all required compliance training including online and face to face training.
- Manage leave and other HR issues with the support and guidance of HR as needed.
- Coach and support staff and students.

Training

- Responsible for completing all required training in line with the position / role

Key selection criteria

Qualifications / experience / knowledge / attributes

1. Postgraduate (PhD or MPH) qualification in Epidemiology, Public Health, or related discipline (essential)
2. Demonstrated experience in conducting epidemiological studies , clinical trials or implementation research in resource-constrained settings (essential)
3. Experience working in remote or resource-constrained environments or cross-cultural contexts (essential)
4. Experience with data collection systems (REDCap) and data quality assurance processes. Proficient in Microsoft computer software. (essential)
5. Proven ability to manage multidisciplinary teams. Strong organisational and logistical coordination skills (essential)
6. Experience coordinating clinical trials, cluster RCTs, or large field-based studies (desirable)
7. Experience working in Papua New Guinea or the Pacific region (desirable)
8. Experience working in malaria research or vector control interventions (desirable)

About Burnet Institute

Burnet Institute is one of Australia's leading medical research and public health institutes.

We believe all people should have access to medical research and health programs, no matter who they are or where they live.

Since our beginnings at the Fairfield Hospital in 1986, we've developed our expertise in life sciences, public health and international development to drive better health outcomes for communities near and far.

Today, we're working for a future where diseases are eliminated, where mothers and children are thriving, where the world is better prepared for health challenges, and where people are supported to reduce harms to their health.

Learn more about our strategy for greater impact in a rapidly changing world.

View our health themes, core programs and flagship initiatives.

Our vision

A more equitable world through better health.

Our purpose

To create and translate knowledge into better health, so no-one is left behind.

Our values

Respect, equality, inclusiveness, diversity.

Where we work

Burnet has offices in Papua New Guinea, Myanmar and Vanuatu, and also contributes to research and public health programs in many other countries across Asia, the Pacific, Africa, Europe, and North America.

Australian Institute for Infectious Disease (AIID)

The AIID aims to protect Australia and the wider Asia-Pacific region against major global health issues and pandemics. Its formation maximises the strength of partners and provides enhanced capabilities across research and its translation, public health, and education. The AIID is a collaborative initiative of foundation partners Burnet Institute, the Doherty Institute and The University of Melbourne, with funding from the Victorian Government.

Occupational health and safety

Burnet has a commitment to providing a safe and healthy workplace in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004. All staff are obliged to take all reasonable care to ensure that their actions do not place themselves or others at risk and to adhere to relevant policies, procedures and safe work practices thereby contributing to a safe, healthy and respectful workplace for all employees, contractors and visitors

Other requirements

Burnet is a child safe organisation. The incumbent of this position will be required to undergo a Police Check and possibly a Working with Children Check as a condition of employment. The types of contact with children can be viewed here. This position involves the following contact with children (any individual aged under 18 years):

Contact type: Direct Contact – Working with Children

Enquiries

For enquiries, please contact Paul Daly (Senior Research Officer & Project Manager) paul.daly@burnet.edu.au