

Speech-language therapy for child social communication disorder

Submission date 19/12/2016	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	☒ Prospectively registered ☐ Protocol
Registration date 10/01/2017	Overall study status Completed	☐ Statistical analysis plan ☒ Results
Last Edited 30/09/2020	Condition category Mental and Behavioural Disorders	☐ Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Children who have social communication disorder (SCD) find it hard to understand and use language, especially in social situations. They may also show some mild features of autism (a condition that affects the way that a person communicates and relates to others). This can affect how well they learn at school, their friendships and emotional/mental health as they grow up. This has a substantial impact on families and is expensive for the NHS and social services. An effective communication intervention may be able to prevent some of these problems but there is currently no research to support this. Previously, the research group has developed a new speech and language therapy programme called the Social Communication Intervention Programme (SCIP) to children who have SCD in their schools. Parents and teachers felt that the intervention led to improvements in social communication. A bigger study with more children and NHS speech and language therapists (SLTs) is now needed to show if SCIP really does work. The aim of this study is to find out whether it would be feasible to conduct a large study looking at the effectiveness of SCIP.

Who can participate?

Children aged between six and ten who have social communication problems as observed by a speech and language therapist (SLT)

What does the study involve?

Children take part in the SCIP programme with a specially trained SLT. This involves working through a number of exercises from the SCIP manual over the course of 20 face to face sessions these sessions may take place over a period of 10 weeks or 20 weeks, dependent on need. At the start of the study and then after the programme has ended (at 10 or 20 weeks), children complete a range of assessments to see if their social communication problems have improved.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Participants may benefit from improvements to their social communication problems which could help them perform better in the classroom. There are no notable risks involved with participating.

Where is the study run from?

1. Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy, Salford Royal Foundation Trust (UK)
2. Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy, Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (UK)
3. The University of Manchester (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

July 2016 to April 2018

Who is funding the study?

National Institute for Health Research (UK)

Who is the main contact?

Dr Catherine Adams

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Contact information

Type(s)

Scientific

Contact name

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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number

33162

Study information

Scientific Title

A new speech and language therapy intervention for children who have Social Communication Disorder: feasibility and acceptability to service users and practitioners

Study objectives

The principal aim of this study is to assess the feasibility of conducting a substantive randomized controlled trial of a new speech and language therapy intervention (SCIP) for children who have Social Communication Disorder (SCD) in routine clinical practice.

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

North West - Liverpool Central Research Ethics Committee, 04/08/2016, ref: 16/NW/0500

Primary study design

Interventional

Study design

Non-randomised; Both; Design type: Treatment, Psychological & Behavioural, Cross-sectional

Study type(s)

Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Specialty: Children, Primary sub-specialty: General Paediatrics; UKCRC code/ Disease: Other/ General symptoms and signs

Interventions

All participants take part in the Social Communication Intervention Programme, a manualised intervention for children with pragmatic language difficulties. The programme involves 20 sessions of individualised speech and language therapy delivered by a trained speech and language therapist. The sessions may be delivered over 10 weeks or 20 weeks. The intervention is manualised (The SCIP Manual Adams and Gaile, 2015) and individualised for each child according to her/his assessment results, needs and priorities as agreed with parents and teaching staff. Relevant intervention tasks are identified in three areas: Social Understanding and Social Interpretation, Pragmatics and Language Processing (high-level comprehension and expression). Therapeutic methods include modelling, role play, sabotage and sabotaged role play.

Participants are followed up at the end of the intervention programme (at 10 or 20 weeks).

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

Goal attainment is measured using Goal Attainment Scaling to review individualised functional goals set at baseline, post-intervention (10 or 20 weeks)

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Parent/carer reported pragmatic ability is measured using the Children's Communication Checklist -2 (CCC-2) at baseline and post-intervention (10 or 20 weeks)
2. Social language interpretation and peer verbal interactions are measured using the Social Language Development Test - Elementary at baseline and post-intervention (10 or 20 weeks)
3. Conversational ability is measured using Targeted Observation of Pragmatics in Children's'

Conversation (TOPICC) at baseline and post-intervention (10 or 20 weeks)

4. Parent's perception of changes in language skills, social interaction, social skills and peer interactions is measured using the Parent Functional Communication Checklist (PFCQ) at baseline and post-intervention (10 or 20 weeks)

5. Functional narrative skills are measured using a dynamic Narrative Measure at baseline and post-intervention (10 or 20 weeks)

6. Children's perceptions of their own communication skills and of SCIP intervention are measured using Child Perception Measures post-intervention (10 or 20 weeks)

Completion date

30/04/2018

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Age 6 -10 years
2. Parents/carers able to participate in intervention
3. Social communication problems as observed by the SLT - a minimum of two out of five behaviours from a brief social communication screening checklist
4. Non-verbal reasoning within normal limits (Percentile rank ≥ 5) as measured on the Ravens Coloured Progressive Matrices
5. Score in the communication impaired range (<58) on the Children's Communication Checklist -2 General Communication Composite (CCC) and in the SCD range on the CCC- 2 Social Interaction Deviance Composite

Participant type(s)

Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Adult

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

1. Children unable to participate in intensive intervention as judged by speech and language therapist
2. Diagnosis of core autism according to Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule ADOS-2
3. Significant hearing loss
4. Severe speech disorder
5. Severe physical disability

Date of first enrolment

12/01/2017

Date of final enrolment

31/07/2017

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre

Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy

Salford Royal Foundation Trust

Sandringham House

3rd Floor

Windsor Street

Salford

United Kingdom

M5 4DG

Study participating centre

Children's Speech and Language Therapy

Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Springboard Child Development Centre

Orton Road

Carlisle

United Kingdom

CA2 7HE

Study participating centre

The University of Manchester

School of Health Sciences (Ellen Wilkinson)

Oxford Road,

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M13 9PL

Sponsor information

Organisation

The University of Manchester

ROR

<https://ror.org/027m9bs27>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Government

Funder Name

National Institute for Health Research

Alternative Name(s)

National Institute for Health Research, NIHR Research, NIHRresearch, NIHR - National Institute for Health Research, NIHR (The National Institute for Health and Care Research), NIHR

Funding Body Type

Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype

National government

Location

United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The current data sharing plans for the current study are unknown and will be made available at a later date.

IPD sharing plan summary

Data sharing statement to be made available at a later date

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article	results	22/09/2020	30/09/2020	Yes	No
HRA research summary			28/06/2023	No	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes