Grant recipient: Dr Niina Kolehmainen
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Title of project: Enabling Self-care in Children with Developmental Disabilities: pre-protocol research for a cluster randomised trial

Abstract

Development of self-care is an important childhood task and a key health outcome for children with neurodisabilities. Children with neurodisabilities often require therapy to develop self-care. Providing this is ‘bread-and-butter’ for occupational therapists; however there is little evidence on effectiveness, no national guidelines, and no cost-effectiveness (‘value-for-money’) evidence for commissioners. As a result, therapy provision is variable and families receive differing advice.

We will generate a protocol for the first large-scale randomised controlled trial of self-care interventions in children with neurodisabilities. We will use qualitative and quantitative methods to: (1) develop a sampling frame of therapy services; (2) investigate their willingness to take part in a trial and be randomised; (3) specify ‘current practice’ and agree compatible sampling and recruitment procedures; (4) identify costs and benefits to inform a future economic evaluation; and (5) develop a trial protocol and a related funding proposal to the National Institute for Health Research.