



AUTUMN RESEARCH ROUND UP

We now have a new format for the research round up! As well as highlighting research done by others we are going to provide some information about actually doing research. This month's topic is how to get started, and over the coming months we will be covering different research methods, research ethics, dissemination and much more.

We hope you enjoy these articles and find them useful – do contact us with any questions or comments.

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GETTING STARTED WITH RESEARCH

What is research?

Research can be hard to define, but might include:

- Ways of increasing understanding and knowledge about a particular group of people, problems, places
- Something we do when we want to answer a question or solve a problem
- The process of gathering and analyzing data or information about a topic

How do you start to think about doing a piece of research?



Image from: <https://pixabay.com/en/idea-cloud-think-concept-symbol-48100/>



The research process

Adapted from:

http://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/researchcourse/develop_writing_method_qualitative.html

The first step is the idea! What is it you want to find out? What knowledge do you need to improve your work?

May be you want to know about, for example:

- The use of remote technology by physiotherapists in low-resourced settings
- The existing provision of rehabilitation services in low-resourced settings
- How people with disabilities manage with water, sanitation and hygiene provision in rural Cambodia
- How SCI influences livelihoods in a Uganda
- The effectiveness of health partnerships for NHS organizations and their partner organizations
- The training needs of physiotherapists in the Caribbean
- Patients' experiences of your service

You could then go on to do a **literature review** on the topic. Doing a literature review enables you to understand what other research has been done on the topic and where your research might fit in. The extent of your literature review may depend on the type of research you're doing and its purpose and there are different ways of reviewing literature.

Some disciplines such as health and social care place more emphasis on the importance of a systematic literature review, similar to the Cochrane collection, with explicit selection criteria and sampling strategies. This can also be a research method in itself. Other disciplines may place less emphasis on the need for a systematic literature review and are more interested in the use of a literature review that informs the research questions.

For more details on literature reviews Helen Aveyard's *Doing a literature review in health and social care: a practical guide* may be a good place to start.

Lets take the first research topic as a hypothetical example:

In starting to think about doing a piece of research on the use of remote technology by physiotherapists in low-resourced settings I would need to examine the literature related to rehabilitation services and technology as a starting point and then draw together some of the key themes.

Reviewing the published literature related to these topics provides an insight into the use of telemedicine in high and low resourced settings, but also demonstrates the general neglect of the physiotherapy profession in these debates, particularly in low resourced settings.

This literature highlights the following:

- The term telemedicine encompasses a broad family of devices such as ipads, the internet, web cams, Skype, monitors.
- The geographical drive of many telemedicine initiatives, for example working with rural communities in Scotland or Australia, with a desire to reduce travel time and disrupt family routines cited as key incentives for telemedicine. These co-insides with other barriers to accessing services, such as incarceration, conflict or security concerns.
- Telemedicine currently concentrates on medical management, such as monitoring blood pressure or foetal distress. This is likely to be quite different from usual physiotherapy work, particularly those that privilege bio-psychosocial interventions.
- Telemedicine may increase the competence and skills of local staff through engagement with more skilled professionals and access to wider sources of knowledge and treatment options.
- There remain significant concerns around the use of telemedicine including privacy and confidentiality, liability, the need for appropriate equipment, internet connectivity and other forms of infrastructure, telemedicine will not necessarily overcome structural barriers to healthcare or change the way healthcare systems are governed.

- Telemedicine must therefore be seen as a component within an existing system, not different from it.

From my literature review I can develop a theoretical framework and starting formulating my research questions for this piece of work.

WE'LL HAVE MORE ON HOW TO DO THIS IN THE NEXT RESEARCH ROUND UP.

This edition's research items (with the help of and thanks to Di Hiscock & Guari Divan!):

There is an increasingly diverse body of work on Autism in different contexts. These examples come predominantly from South Asia:

Daley, T. C. (2004). "From symptom recognition to diagnosis: children with autism in urban India." *Soc Sci Med* 58(7): 1323-1335.

Daley, T. C. and M. D. Sigman (2002). "Diagnostic conceptualization of autism among Indian psychiatrists, psychologists, and pediatricians." *J Autism Dev Disord* 32(1): 13-23.
<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023%2FA%3A1017947922349>

Daley, T. C., et al. (2014). "Adults with autism in India: A mixed-method approach to make meaning of daily routines." *Soc Sci Med* 116: 142-149.

Perera, H. (2009). "Screening of 18-24-Month-Old Children for Autism in a Semi-Urban Community in Sri Lanka." *Journal of Tropical Pediatrics* 55: 402-405.

Elsabbagh, M., et al. (2012). "Global prevalence of autism and other pervasive developmental disorders." *Autism Res* 5(3): 160-179.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22495912>

Divan, G., et al. (2012). "Challenges, coping strategies, and unmet needs of families with a child with autism spectrum disorder in Goa, India." *Autism Res* 5(3): 190-200.
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/aur.1225/abstract>

Desai, M. U., et al. (2012). "The discovery of autism: Indian parents' experiences of caring for their child with an autism spectrum disorder." *Transcult Psychiatry*.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3472559/>

Minhas, A., et al. (2015). "Parents' perspectives on care of children with autistic spectrum disorder in South Asia – Views from Pakistan and India." *International Review of Psychiatry*: 1-10.
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.3109/09540261.2015.1049128#.V3z8hPI97IU>

Divan, G., et al. (2015). "Adapting an evidence-based intervention for autism spectrum disorder for scaling up in resource-constrained settings: the development of the PASS intervention in South Asia." *Glob Health Action* 8: 27278
<http://www.globalhealthaction.net/index.php/gha/article/view/27278>