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Title:

Defining barriers and enablers to implementing partnership working between speech and language therapy services and education settings: the Behaviour Change Wheel in motion

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## Defining barriers and enablers to implementing partnership working between speech and language therapy services and education settings: the Behaviour Change Wheel in motion

It is estimated that 1.4 million children and young people in the UK have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). SLCN is one of the most common disorders of early childhood, with between 10 and 50% of children affected depending upon socio-economic background. Speech and language therapists (SLTs) have a public health role in supporting children at risk for speech, language and communication (SLC) difficulties in the pre-school and early school years. Through NHS services, children in the UK are entitled to speech and language therapy (SLT) free at the point of delivery. However, this is not an unlimited resource and NHS Services strive to provide SLT that is evidence based, effective and efficient to children at greatest risk and with greatest need. High quality partnership working between SLTs and Education Settings is essential for effective management of this population of children. Using the Behaviour Change Wheel and specifically the COM-B Model (Capability, Opportunity, Motivation-Behaviour) as a theoretical and procedural basis, the researchers held focus groups and gathered data through a survey of SLTs and Early Years Practitioners to discover the barriers and enablers to partnership working. The results are presented here in terms of an operational audit tool for SLT and education settings to complete in collaboration as a first step in increasing quality of partnership working. The usefulness of the Behaviour Change wheel and COM-B model will be discussed in the context of implementing best practice. The paper presented here is part of a study developing resources to increase the implementation and normalisation of universal and targeted SLT interventions in education settings (Study funded by ESRC-Impact Acceleration Fund).

(270 words)