**UQ Winter Research Project Description**

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| **Project title:** | **Identifying the active ingredients of treatments used by speech pathologists: a scoping review** |
| **Project duration, hours of engagement & delivery mode** | Duration: 4 weeks  Hours per week: 25  Total estimated hours: 100  The project schedule is flexible: the successful candidate may elect to complete the project tasks over 3 or 4 weeks at 25-35 hours per week.  The project can be completed under a remote working arrangement. On-site attendance may be required for some aspects of the project however this is negotiable. |
| **Description:** | Background: Speech pathologists provide a large variety of behavioural treatments across broad practice areas (e.g., motor-speech, language, communication, swallowing, voice) and across the lifespan. Many treatments are known to be effective, but the mechanisms underlying effective treatment are rarely understood.  Effective treatments contain active ingredients. Active ingredients are the actions performed by the therapy provider and therapy recipient during treatment which lead to positive behaviour change. For example, a person who has hypokinetic dysarthria undertakes voice therapy with the goal of increasing vocal loudness and being able to sustain a loud enough voice to participate in a conversation in a busy café. What are the actions performed during voice therapy (e.g., vocal function exercises, educational counselling) that may lead to this person achieving these goals? In other words, what are the active ingredients of voice therapy for hypokinetic dysarthria?  Identifying the active ingredients of speech pathology treatments will enhance understanding of how treatments work and for whom, and will lead to critical improvements in treatment efficacy and efficiency across the discipline of speech pathology.  Research question: What are the active ingredients of treatment used to treat disorders of motor-speech, language, communication, swallowing and voice?  Aims: This project aims to identify and map the active ingredients of treatment used to treat disorders of motor-speech, language, communication, swallowing and voice. It will identify active ingredients that are common across practice areas and active ingredients that are unique to a particular therapy approach. It is hypothesised that a large number of active ingredients will have been theorised to exist but that relatively few will have empirical evidence supporting their existence.  Methods: Scoping review methodology will be used to search the speech pathology literature, organise the search yield, and report findings.  Impact: What we stand to learn from answering this question links directly with my PhD dose work and also with plans to work towards greater consistency of treatment specification and dose conceptualisation, measurement and reporting across the discipline of speech pathology. |
| **Expected outcomes and deliverables:** | With support, the successful applicant will gain experience undertaking a scoping review (see tasks below), reading and extracting pertinent data from published speech pathology journal articles, and managing these data including documenting review processes. The student will have the opportunity to begin building a network of research mentors.  Specific tasks [estimated time required to complete task]:   * Develop search terms and study eligibility criteria, working with UQ research librarian [5 hours] * Run searches in multiple databases and document processes [10 hours] * Manage search yields using Covidence/Endnote or equivalent [5 hours] * Screen study titles and abstracts for eligibility and document decisions for inclusion/exclusion [40-50 hours] * Review full texts of eligible studies and extract data, with supervisor [15-20 hours]   The student will be invited to participate in manuscript preparation (at a later date) and will be offered authorship on any resulting publications in alignment with UQ authorship guidelines. |
| **Suitable for:** | This project would suit a speech pathology student in 3rd or 4th year (undergraduate) or final year (masters).  The successful applicant will be a highly organised and self-motivated student who is willing to meet regularly with and be guided by the supervisor. |
| **Primary Supervisor:** | [Dr Sam Harvey - UQ Researchers](http://researchers.uq.edu.au/researcher/39287)  Queensland Aphasia Research Centre  School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences |
| **Further info:** | Students who are interested in this project are encouraged to contact the supervisor via email (sam.harvey@uq.edu.au) prior to applying. |