

Exploring the clinical progression of communication and swallowing impairment in patients with Motor Neurone Disease (MND)

Project title:	Exploring the clinical progression of communication and swallowing impairment in patients with Motor Neurone Disease (MND)
Project duration:	6 – 8 weeks
Description:	<p>Background and aim: Communication and swallowing impairments associated with MND are prevalent and debilitating symptoms of the disease that worsen as the disease progresses. Currently, there is no known cure and no effective treatment for MND. Therefore, under the guidance of speech pathologists, people with MND and their carers must adjust, compensate and manage rapidly declining swallowing function in order to maintain health-related quality of life. As there is limited information available regarding the progression of swallowing symptoms, clinicians are not well placed to anticipate problems. This project aims to examine the trajectory of decline of communication and swallowing function across the course of MND.</p> <p>Methods: This project is a mixed-methods study.</p> <p>Part 1 involves a retrospective chart review of consecutive patients attending a multidisciplinary MND clinic between 2003 and 2013 (Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and Prince Charles Hospital).</p> <p>Part 2 involves semi-structured interviews of people currently living with communication and swallowing impairments as a result of MND. This will enable recognition of all factors impacting the person living with communication impairment and dysphagia as a consequence of MND and better inform the nature of the services that are desired/required.</p>
Expected outcomes and deliverables:	The role of the scholar will be to collate, analyse and write up quantitative and qualitative information with the assistance of the supervisory team. They will gain skills in data collection and analysis and may also gain observational experience regarding the speech pathology role with this patient population.
Suitable for:	This project is open to applications from students currently enrolled in the UQ Bachelor of Speech Pathology (3 rd year) or Master of Speech Pathology Studies (1 st year) programs.
Primary Supervisor:	Dr Anna Rumbach
Further info:	If you are interested in this project, or to receive further information, please contact Dr Anna Rumbach via email (a.rumbach@uq.edu.au).