

Use of sleep positioning systems for children and adults with a neurodisability: a consensus of expert opinion using a Delphi Survey

The development is underway of a practice guide for clinicians and families on the use of sleep positioning systems. This is being funded through the Posture & Mobility Group (PMG) Research Fund. A wide-ranging literature review has been completed; however, the included studies are largely of low quality because of the small numbers of participants, the lack of methodological rigour, missing data, lack of information in the reporting or studies that were published only as conference abstracts. In the higher quality studies participants were already users of sleep positioning systems and this limits the applicability of the evidence to the general population of children and adults with neurodisability.

As recruitment to a large randomised trial may be difficult to achieve we are seeking a consensus of expert opinion as the way forward to strengthen the evidence of the potential benefits and risks associated in the use of sleep positioning systems for children and adults with a neurodisability.

We are asking for participants from the PMG membership to take part in 2 rounds of a Delphi survey which will build consensus and enable a position paper to be written. The position paper will then be presented at the PMG Conference in July 2018 and, in a question and answer session, ratified by the delegates. Minor changes to the paper may need to be undertaken following that session. To further ratify and consolidate the findings we aim to send the position paper to the membership of the professional bodies of occupational therapists and physiotherapists. Further minor changes or additions may be made at that point under the editorship of the research team.

We need as many people as possible to participate in this survey. Feedback to participants after each round will allow and encourage individuals to re-assess their initial judgements after reading comments by other, anonymous, Delphi panellists. Participants will remain unknown to each other, allowing individuals to express their opinions openly without peer pressure.

Timeline:

By 22nd January: members to opt in by sending an email to this address SPS@discoverhannahs.org

Week of 22nd January: round 1 of the survey sent out to participants with 3 weeks to complete

By 12th February: round 1 completed online by participants and emailed back

Week of 12th March: round 2 of the survey sent out to participants with 3 weeks to complete

By 2nd April: round 2 completed online by participants and emailed back

We do hope you will participate to make your views known, and enable a consensus of expert opinion to be reached.

Thank you from the research team

Dr Ginny Humphreys D.PT, Dr Tanya King D.PT, Jo Jex MCSP