



EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS
IRELAND



Cochrane
Ireland

Evidence Synthesis Ireland Fellowship Scheme

Review Centre/Group Mentor

Review Centre: Campbell UK & Ireland

Mentor: Dr Fiona Lynn

Review title

#1 Home visiting for socially disadvantaged mothers

#2 Alternative therapies for children and young people with behavioural and emotional problems

Review type

This is an opportunity for a Fellow to gain experience a cross section of skills across the different elements of a systematic review, specifically two reviews:

- 1) A Cochrane review of effectiveness;
- 2) An evidence synthesis to include a review of intervention effectiveness and cost-effectiveness, underpinned by stakeholder engagement

Review information

- 1) The Cochrane Review team for '*Home visiting for socially disadvantaged mothers*' received funding from the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland to synthesise the evidence about the efficacy of home visiting. The fellow will be involved as a reviewer (co-author) and will be coming on board the review, following an update of the search, to assist with the meta-analysis, subgroup analyses and write up of the review. They will gain experience in the final stages of the review process, with co-ordinating the peer-review process with the Cochrane Developmental, Psychosocial and Learning Problems Group (CDPLPG), publication and dissemination activities with stakeholders. This review is anticipated by those working with and advocating for socially disadvantaged mothers and their children, those involved in the provision of parent support services, service users and academics. In the lead up and on post-publication of the review, we are keen to disseminate the findings widely and the fellow will play a role in the planning and delivery of dissemination activities to a range of audiences.

- 2) The evidence synthesis on *alternative therapies for children and young people with behavioural and emotional problems* is at an early stage of development and stems from public calls for investment in mental health services for children and young people. It is envisaged that this synthesis will provide evidence of what works and whether it is worth it, recognising the demand on mental health services and constrained public resources. The fellow will first gain experience in conducting a scoping review alongside stakeholder engagement activities to inform the funding application, title registration and protocol development. The fellow will have the opportunity to be costed into the funding bid and continue working on the evidence synthesis to completion.

Review details

- 1) Over the last decade, home visiting has been adopted as a major social intervention in a wide range of countries. An up-to-date synthesis of the evidence about its efficacy is therefore important. The objective of the Cochrane Review '*Home visiting for socially disadvantaged mothers*' is to assess the impact of home visiting programmes aimed at improving outcomes for socially disadvantaged mothers and their children. A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised and cluster-randomised controlled trials is being conducted. Types of participants are socially disadvantaged women who are either pregnant or have an infant under the age of twelve months. The intervention is home-based maternal support provided by means of home visits by either a professional or a specially trained lay caregiver to socially disadvantaged women following the birth of a child. The control intervention is either no treatment or standard care. We are extracting a range of maternal and child outcomes relating to physical health, psychosocial health and development, injuries and accidents, abuse and neglect, quality of parenting and life course outcomes.
- 2) The evidence synthesis '*Alternative therapies for children and young people attending mental health services*' will aim to assess and compare the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of a range of alternative therapies for children and young people with behavioural and emotional problems attending Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. It is envisaged that the synthesis will include a network meta-analysis and involve stakeholder engagement at all stages of the evidence synthesis process. This project is currently being developed for a funding application to a UK funding body.

Review current status

Home visiting for socially disadvantaged mothers is a registered protocol within the CDPLPG. The review is in the latter stages of completion following a final updated search that identified an additional five studies for inclusion. Data extraction has been completed for these five studies,

with inclusion in the meta-analysis, subgroup analyses, sensitivity analysis to be completed alongside finalisation of the summary of findings table and write up for peer-review in the first instance.

The evidence synthesis of alternative therapies for children and young people attending mental health services is at an early development stage. We are in the process of conducting a scoping review and setting up a stakeholder engagement group to ensure a well-informed funding application and protocol development.

Any specific/desirable requirements for Fellow

Clinical and/or research expertise in maternal and child health and/or mental health services

Estimated start and completion dates

Start date Spring 2022

Home visiting for socially disadvantaged mothers – 1 year to completion

Alternative therapies for children and young people attending mental health services – 2.5 years to completion