

What's the Evidence?

Overview of how our summaries are produced

What are the 'What's the evidence' reports?

Our 'What's the Evidence?' reports are an ongoing series of reports designed to summarise what is known on specific questions relating to childhood disability. These reports are a synthesis of existing research and are not new studies that we have carried out.

Why do we produce these reports?

The Peninsula Cerebra Research Unit gets asked many different questions either through our website or from meetings that we attend. We receive queries from families about the research that exists surrounding specific therapies, treatments, and other issues relating to childhood disability. These reports are produced in response to those queries.

Our evidence summaries are divided into two groups:

- What's The Evidence: Treatments & Therapies
- Other Questions We've Been Asked

How do we write the reports?

The first thing we do is try to frame the query as a research question using the PICO format - a description of the group you are interested in (Patient, Problem or Population), what you are going to do to the group (Intervention), what you are comparing the intervention with (Control) and what you want to achieve/hope will happen (Outcome). Then we look to see what is known about the topic using some reliable sources on the Internet. We may also ask colleagues who are experts in the field if it is appropriate.

The following high quality databases are usually searched first for information; these are all accessible by anyone in the UK:

- [NHS evidence](#): A website provided by the NHS which enables access to authoritative clinical and non-clinical evidence and best practice. [Some areas do require an NHS Login and so are not available to the general public].
- [The Cochrane Library](#): This is a database of [systematic reviews](#) which summarise and interpret the results of high quality medical research. You can use the Cochrane Library to find the most up-to-date evidence about the effectiveness of a given intervention.
- [TRIP](#): a searchable database of clinical evidence information.

- [National Institute for Clinical Evidence \(NICE\) guidelines](#): This website contains UK guidelines aiming to improve health and social care.
- [PubMed](#): This is a large database of research studies. [A subscription is required to read the full versions of many of the studies in this database, however the abstracts can be read for free].

Where a recent, high quality review of the evidence already exists, we provide a summary of the existing report rather than our own evidence summary.

How should these reports be used?

The 'What's the Evidence?' reports will give you an idea of what the evidence looks like for the therapy of interest. Although they are produced systematically, they are not academic systematic reviews, and do not in themselves provide evidence about whether or not the therapy is effective. They are designed to provide information to families and help parents to make decisions based on the evidence available. We understand that research evidence may be just one of the factors that might influence a parent or young person's decision to try a treatment or therapy, and these reports are designed to make that information available should it be required.

It is important to bear in mind that even when there is limited evidence of the effectiveness of a treatment in a group or population studied in a research project, individual children may still improve while receiving a treatment.

If you have found that a particular treatment or therapy appears to benefit your child then we are certainly not advising you to stop using this treatment.

How can you suggest a topic for a new report?

We produce reports about both NHS and complementary or alternative treatments.

If you would like to suggest a topic for a report, please [contact us](#).

Please bear in mind that we cannot offer a personal advice service, or individual responses to queries about treatments.

Please note: the views expressed here are those of the Peninsula Cerebra Research Unit and do not represent the views of the Cerebra charity, or any other parties mentioned. We strongly recommend seeking medical advice before undertaking any treatments/therapies not prescribed within the NHS.