



## ***Creating Practice-Based Evidence: A Guide for SLTs***

*Edited by Corinne Dobinson and Yvonne Wren (2013). Published by J&R Press Ltd., Guildford, UK [240 pages]. ISBN: 978-1-907826-09-2. Price £19.99. Paperback.*

The motivation for the book is made clear by the two editors who wish to “develop and support a research culture across the (SLT) profession” (p. ix). They have designed this book to be a ‘bridge’ between clinical practice and active research and the book has been

endorsed by the RCSLT.

Each of the 11 contributing authors is a qualified SLT; a mix of private practitioners, tertiary level lecturers, research fellows and practitioners from both education and healthcare settings, and each has published across differing areas of SLT practice.

The book is divided into three parts, covering theoretical concepts and background information (Part 1), the ‘doing’ of clinical research (Part 2) and the varying ways of disseminating results and of having an impact (Part 3).

The first chapter of the book gives an overview of levels of evidence and emphasises the value of clinician-researchers as being people “ideally placed to carry out early stage and smaller-scale studies” (p. 11). While this is useful and may be true, ‘partnerships’ with more experienced researchers as mentors are usually invaluable at this early level.

The suggestion of partnering with researchers at academic institutions is therefore very welcome, as many clinicians have a difficulty in transforming a ‘good idea’ into clear, unambiguous research question(s) to ensure that an achievable, high quality study is completed to publication. This is a skill that needs to be developed and is most efficiently done with an experienced mentor to sort and ‘sieve’ ideas into a coherent starting point. The content of Chapter 10 (enrolling for a research degree) might therefore have been better placed earlier, as the authors seem to encourage the ‘doing’ of clinical research before the formality of higher degree work and research supervision occurs. While this is, of course, entirely possible, there is a danger of them becoming too

autonomous and 'redeveloping the wheel' when early guidance, such as that provided by an experienced and empathetic research supervisor, is a much more efficient and effective way to achieve early research success.

The coverage of the book is comprehensive, if sometimes a little repetitive (e.g., the refining of a clinical issue into an answerable research question is covered a number of times by differing authors).

The chapter on measuring Quality of Life (Markham) is rather superficial, as there has been quite some literature on measuring QoL published by SLTs working in adult acquired disorders (specifically Head and Neck cancer) with a rich discussion in that literature that could have further informed this section.

Obtaining the views of service users was emphasised (Bloch and Best), which is welcome, but a discussion on lack of representativeness/sample bias and how to address this would have been a useful addition to this chapter.

One omission in the text is a discussion of the place of inter-disciplinary clinical research and how to avoid its pitfalls, as this can be a rewarding and fruitful design, and is useful for examining innovative models of service provision or when assessing the benefit of 'emerging placements' for allied health students in these cash-strapped times.

Another quibble is that the book is very UK-centric, with examples only taken from British SLT practices whereas, for example, much work on translational research ('bench to bedside') in SLT has been undertaken in New Zealand and in Australia and that published work, together with the developed SLT-EBP databases, could have informed and enhanced this text, particularly in Part 1.

Overall, however, this text is an excellent 'starter guide' for SLT clinicians who are interested in clinical research and are working in a UK context, and some of the text is transferable to other health professionals. The writing is very accessible, with practical examples throughout that enable the clinical readership to understand research terminology, as most terms are clearly operationalized and are illustrated with suitable clinical examples.

The provision of a glossary of commonly-encountered research terms is helpful as it 'de-mystifies' terminology and provides a handy reference guide for clinicians who are not experienced in research.

The design of the book should enhance reflective practice. It may also form a good 'bridging' text for student SLTs studying, for example, an Evidence

Based Practice (EBP) module, as it clearly sets out and explains the importance of research as a mechanism to inform and change clinical practice.

The editors are to be commended for producing such a clear, accessible guide for SLT clinicians who wish to become research-active and develop their service by undertaking quality clinical work in an active research setting.

Embracing our clinician-researcher-educator roles is important for the future of SLT and this text forms a useful bridge across two of these three domains.

**Professor Alison Perry**, *Head of Department of Clinical Therapies, Faculty of Education and Health Sciences, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland.*  
E-mail: Alison.Perry@ul.ie