



Welcome to the second issue of the COMBINE newsletter and thank you very much for your ongoing interest in the study. The newsletter is designed to keep our health professional colleagues and adults with a traumatic brachial plexus injury, all potential participants in the study, informed of the study progress.

The **COMBINE** study is now in its second year and progressing well. **COMBINE** is the first study of its kind to help us identify what to measure when treating adults with a traumatic brachial plexus injury both in studies and in clinical care.

It is difficult to know what are the best treatments for individuals with brachial plexus injuries. Different centres and studies measure different outcomes (pain, movement, strength). Because of this we are unable to combine the results of treatments and make decisions on what treatments are best. **COMBINE** is working with patients, doctors, therapists and researchers to decide what are the minimum set of outcomes we should always use. This will help us bring together all the studies to get a better understanding of what treatments are best.

Core Outcome Measures in Brachial plexus INjuriEs



We have now completed **Phase 1** of the study.

In this phase we reviewed all published studies (between 2013-2018) assessing results of treatments in adults with a traumatic brachial plexus Injury. From this study we now have a long list of outcomes (pain, movement, quality of life) which clinicians and researchers are measuring.

We also finished our **interview study**.

Caroline has interviewed 13 adults with a traumatic brachial plexus injury. We have analysed the results and have a long list of outcomes which patients believe are important.



A massive thank you to all the patients who have participated in the study so far and for giving up their time to let us know what is important to them.



We are now busy designing the online international questionnaire. In this questionnaire patients,

clinicians and researchers will be able to prioritise the long list of outcomes from the literature review and the interviews.



We are really excited to be meeting with patients, therapists and doctors in January to review the first

draft of the questionnaire.

QUESTIONNAIRE

This aims to be online from March/ April 2020 for everyone to complete!! **Please watch your e mail inbox and twitter feeds.**

The questionnaire will involve three rounds. After individuals complete the questionnaire the results will be sent back to each person together with a reminder of their own score for each outcome and the groups score. Each person is asked to think about the groups result and decide if they want to change their score. This process is repeated until broad agreement is reached. This will produce a short list of the most important outcomes.

Meet the COMBINE team

Caroline Miller is the Chief Investigator and a physiotherapist who has worked with patients with brachial plexus injuries for 13 years.

Caroline is funded by the National Institute of Health Research to conduct the study as part of a doctoral fellowship.

Christina Jerosch-Herold has a background as an occupational therapist and is a Professor at the University of East Anglia. She has experience in other peripheral nerve injury and consensus studies. Christina has been involved in designing the study with Caroline and will support analysis and ongoing decision making regarding the consensus process.

Jane Cross is a physiotherapist and a senior researcher at the University of East Anglia.

She has been involved in the design and analysis of the interview study. This will ensure that outcomes important to patients are central to the project.

Dominic Power is a Consultant Hand and Peripheral Nerve Surgeon at the Birmingham Hand Centre and co-founder of the West Midlands Brachial Plexus and Nerve Injury Service. He has been involved in the design of the study and identification of patients in his department suitable for invitation to participate in the interview study.

If you have any questions about the COMBINE study, please do not hesitate to contact Caroline on
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