

Recruiting speech and language therapy departments in Scotland: delivering routine NHS interventions for people with Parkinson's disease as part of a randomised controlled trial (PD COMM)

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Background

PD COMM is a randomised controlled trial (RCT) investigating effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and implementation of Lee Silverman Voice Treatment (LSVT) and other standard NHS speech and language therapy (SLT) intervention for people with Parkinson's disease (PD). However, we cannot assume SLTs will want to be involved.

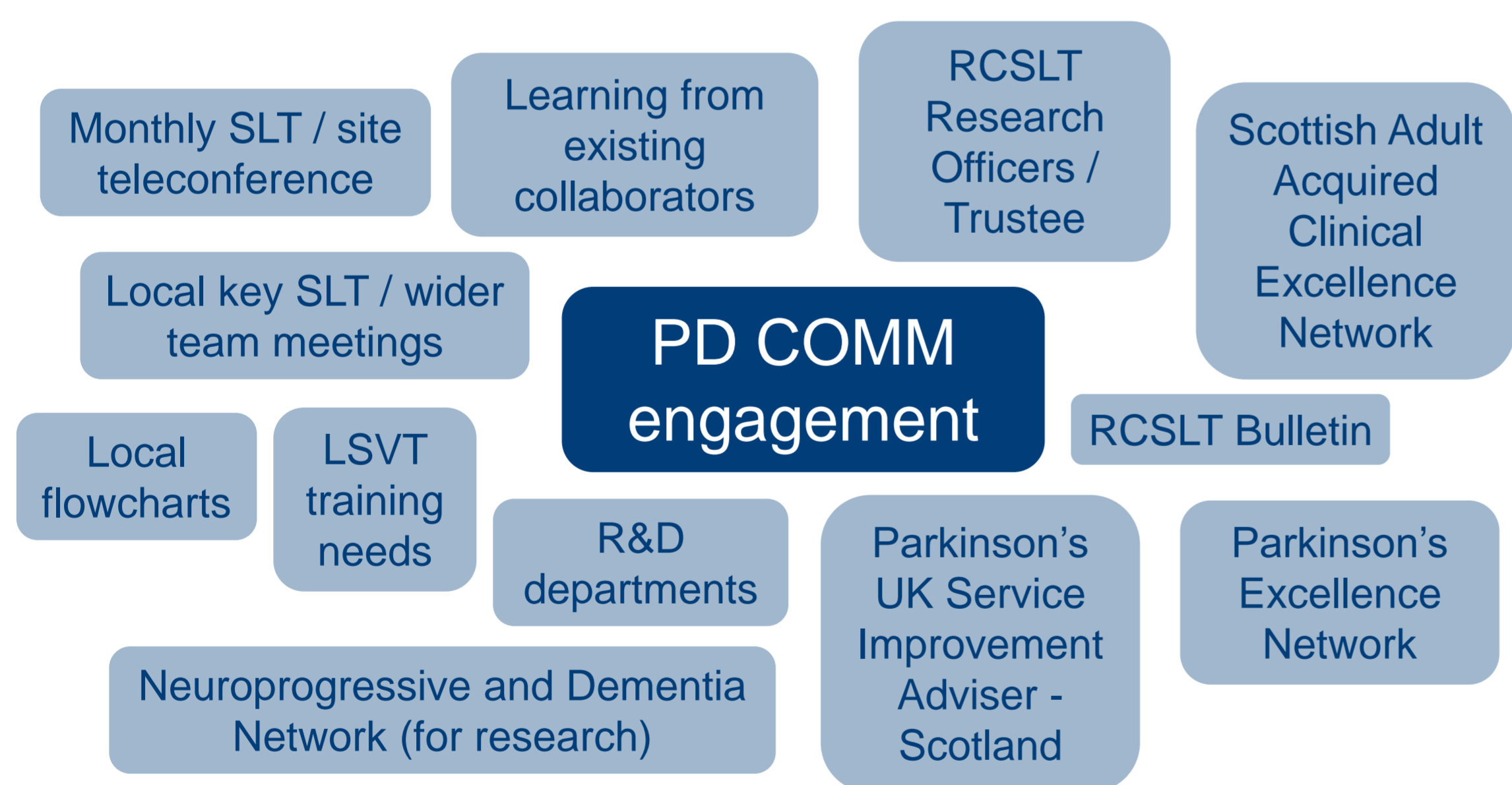
Objective



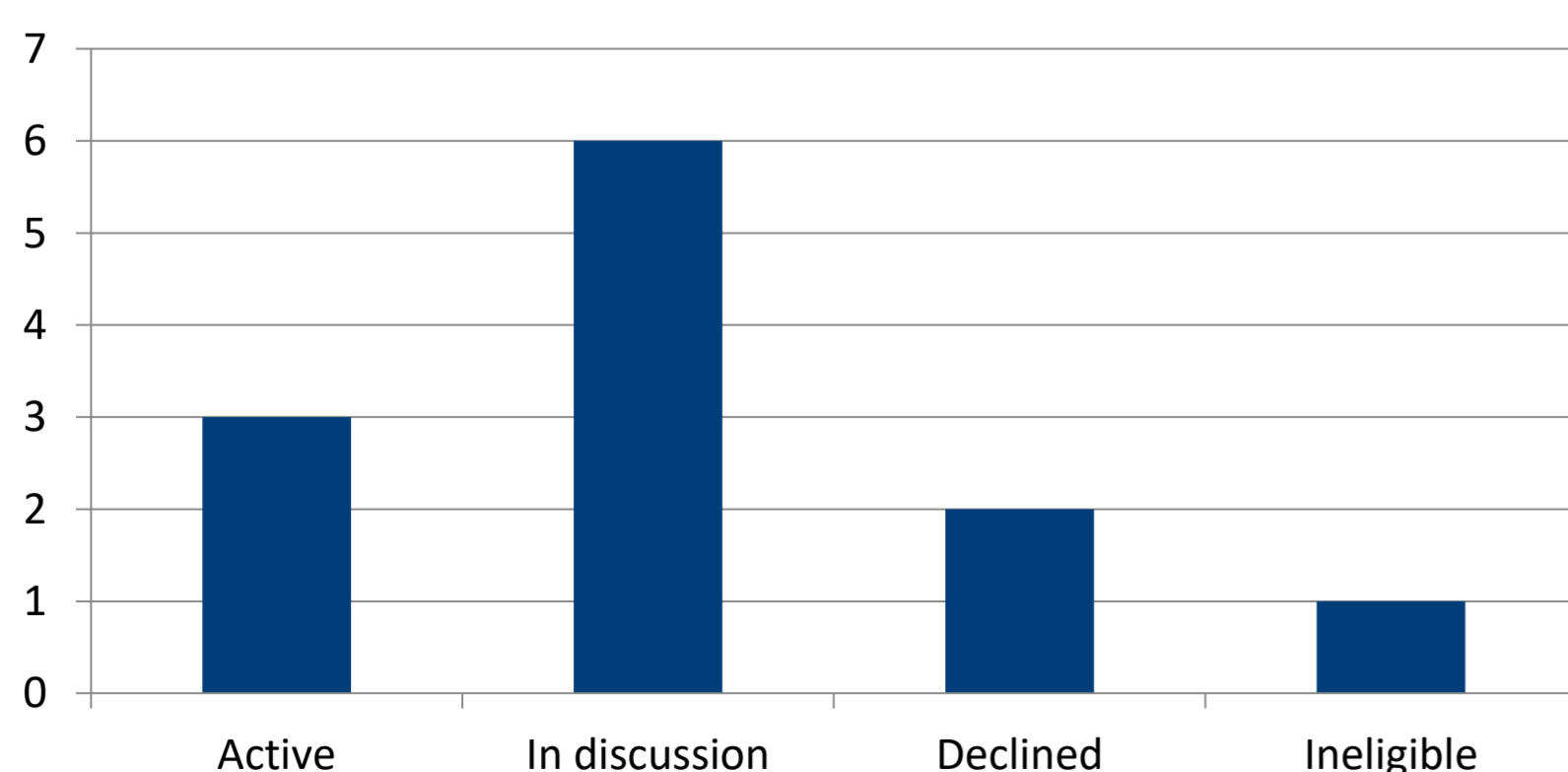
Facilitators and barriers

What we offer	Researcher role	Challenges
Rare opportunity to build the evidence	<p>Sylvia Avril</p>	Lack of experience of national SLT trials
Successful pilot		Limited practical local support
NIHR HTA funded	<p>Connect</p> <p>Understand</p> <p>Support</p> <p>Problem solve</p>	Low service capacity
Pragmatic, inclusive		Priority to dysphagia
Free LSVT training		Local perception about best practice
Process evaluation very relevant to practice		Muddled LSVT and standard NHS
Realistic recruitment target (6 per year)	<p>Marian</p>	Discomfort with patient-reported outcomes
Supportive network		Discomfort with randomisation / control
Help to develop research ideas		

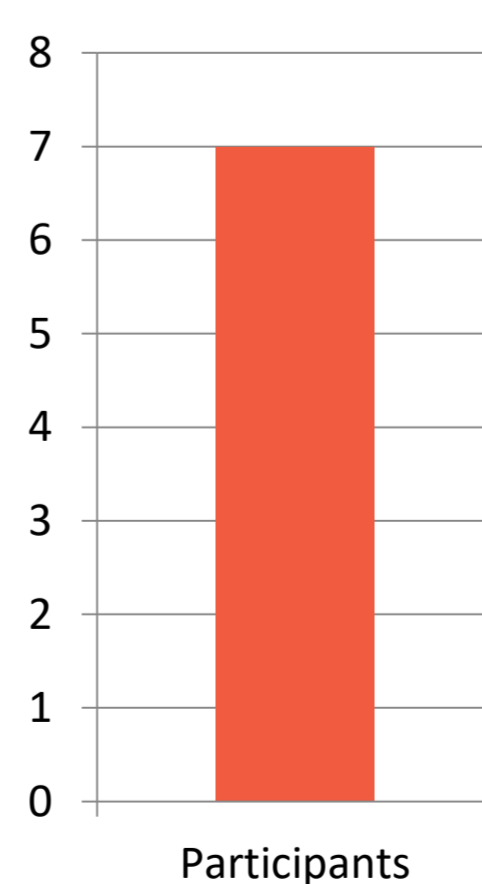
Activity



Scottish NHS SLT Departments*: PD COMM status



*Medium / large



Implications

Results from successful national, multi-centre trials are essential to informing clinical commissioning groups and other service decision makers, but a quarter of randomised controlled trials are stopped early because of poor recruitment. The challenges we face are not dissimilar to those reported in a systematic review of reasons for poor recruitment in discontinued trials (Briel et al. 2016). However, like those authors, we recognise most can be addressed in the short or longer term.

With our colleagues at Birmingham Clinical Trials Unit, we will continue to take every opportunity to support Scottish SLT departments with PD COMM. By monitoring and learning from this process, we hope to build the profession's research capacity and benefit people with Parkinson's disease.

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Reference
Briel, M. et al. (2016) A systematic review of discontinued trials suggested that most reasons for recruitment failure were preventable. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 80, 8-15.