

Exploring Paediatric Clinicians' Perspectives on Auditory Brainstem Response Peer Review

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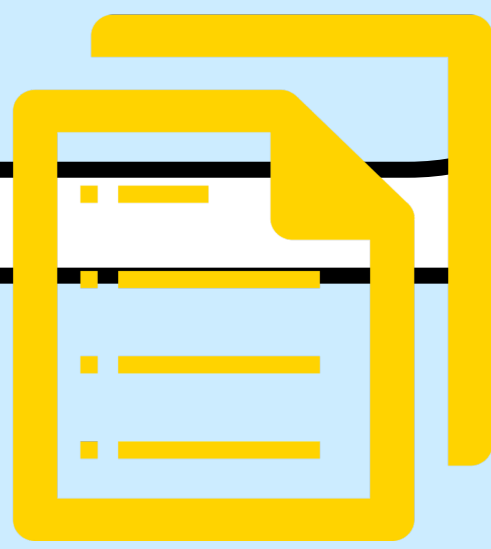


Background

- Services providing Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) testing are recommended to actively engage in peer review of results to prevent interpretation issues and misdiagnosis (NHS, 2023).
- However, there is no current measure of the effectiveness of the peer review process or perspectives from clinicians who are expected to use it day to day.

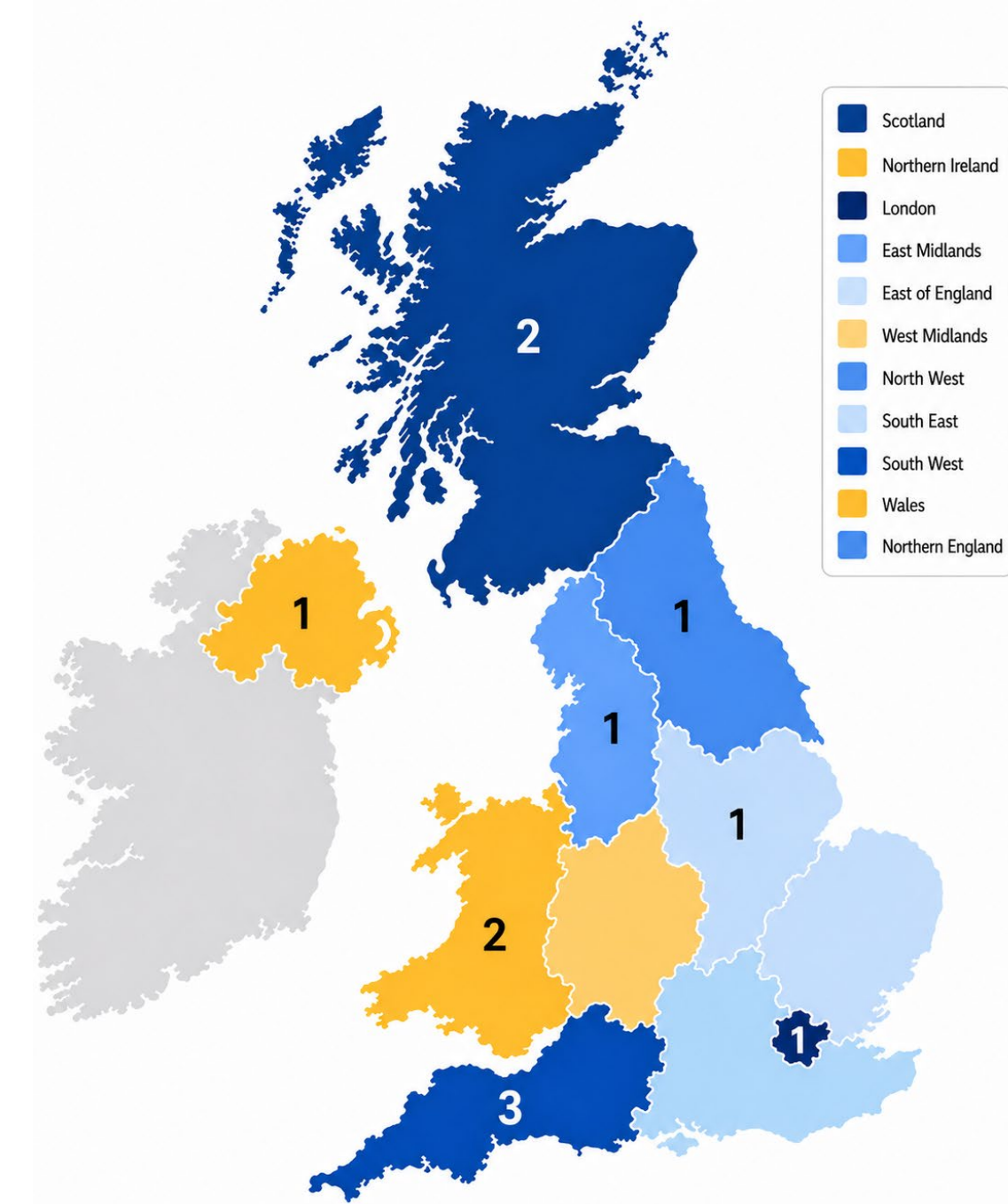


- Aim:** To explore perspectives of ABR peer review from the point of view of UK paediatric clinicians.
- Objectives:** To explore clinicians' perceived benefits, limitations and barriers to the process and ideas of how to make it more effective.



Methodology

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve paediatric clinicians from across the UK. Data was analysed using thematic analysis to generate four key themes (Braun and Clarke, 2013).



Participant location map

Results

Theme 1: Peer review is a necessary burden

- Peer review is an essential safeguard for patient safety and clinical quality.
- The process carries a significant emotional burden.

"It's one of those things that don't feel great for you personally, but it's for the greater good"

"I'm a different tester now, it's been worth it, but it was really hard. A lot of sleepless nights and guilt"

Theme 2: "It's so obvious we need more structure"

- Current systems and structures are insufficient to provide efficient and effective peer review.
- Governance and additional support is needed.

"If peer review had been robust, a lot of those cases wouldn't have happened"

"Even after everything found in audiology, it doesn't feel like we're valued in the same way"

Theme 3: Learning and training

- Peer review plays a crucial role in learning and professional development.
- Peer review training is severely lacking.

"It was a case of, if you want to do this you need to work it out yourself, and I think that's why there's so many problems"

Theme 4: "Try to be kind"

- The impact of the peer review process is shaped by how feedback is communicated.
- Supportive networks have been created which are seen as vital.

"I'm glad to have others reviewing my work. Constructive criticism helps me learn"

"We really desperately want to support each other"

"Try to think about how you'd feel if you received that email"

Conclusion

- Peer review is seen as a valued process of quality assurance. However, clinicians have highlighted areas of improvement. These include improved training, improved peer review systems and improving overall governance and support.
- Understanding the issues raised in this study could contribute to changes to the peer review process to make it more effective. Improvements to peer review could lead to fewer interpretation issues in ABR testing and help to prevent the misdiagnosis of children.



References

1. BRAUN, V., CLARKE, V. 2013. Successful qualitative research: a practical guide for beginners, London, SAGE.
2. NHS. 2023. Paediatric Hearing Services Improvement Programme: system recommendations for immediate action [NHS England » Paediatric Hearing Services Improvement Programme: system recommendations for immediate action]. [Accessed 06/05/26].