# Evidence review to support Talk With Me: Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) Delivery Plan

# Summary

This is an exciting opportunity to do a paid work placement on a project for the Welsh Government. The project will consult the evidence base in order to summarise and synthesise what is known about the available interventions and their efficacy in terms of the link between speech, language and communication (SLC) and perinatal and infant mental health and positive parenting. The successful applicant will work closely with Welsh Government officials and stakeholders to research and develop a varied range of research outputs, and support the Welsh Government in their research process. The applicant will have the opportunity to apply research skills in a policy environment, further develop generic skills (such as report writing or making presentations), and to enhance their knowledge of research outside academia.

# The Organisation

The Welsh Government is the devolved Government for Wales with responsibility for the economy, education, health and the Welsh NHS, business, public services and the environment of Wales.

Specifically, the internship will be based within Knowledge and Analytic services (KAS). KAS provides the collection, analysis and presentation of research and data for policymakers and the general public in keeping with professional standards. They offer independent evidence to understand, develop, implement, monitor and evaluate government policies. KAS also supports policy colleagues with policy development, implementation and delivery.

# The Internship

The intern will work closely with the team working on the delivery of the Talk With Me Programme as well as the Social Justice Research branch who provide analytical support to the Communities and Tackling Poverty policy area. The internship will provide an exciting opportunity to work at the heart of Welsh Government. The internship will require working closely with policy officials and researchers, and will provide an opportunity to apply research skills in a policy environment, further develop generic skills (such as report writing or making presentations), and to enhance policy knowledge.

The successful candidate will be line managed by a member of the Government Social Research (GSR) profession as well as being supported throughout by two professional speech and language therapists currently on secondment with the Welsh Government. The successful candidate will also benefit from development opportunities offered centrally by the Welsh Government, potentially including mentoring, shadowing, peer support and training.

Interns will benefit from the experience of working closely with the Welsh Government:

* Gaining a better understanding of the world outside of academia and increasing employability, using their knowledge and skills to contribute to the work of the Welsh Government.
* The intern’s colleagues at the Welsh Government can offer an insight into the intern’s PhD project that can contribute to the success of their thesis’, as well as networking opportunities within the policy arena linked to their research area
* Transferable skills and knowledge
* Time management skills
* Report writing skills

# The Project

The Welsh Government published their Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) [Delivery Plan](https://gov.wales/talk-me-speech-language-and-communication-slc-delivery-plan) in November 2020. The cross government delivery plan aims to ensure that children throughout Wales have access to high quality, universal, targeted and specialist support in the early years to develop their SLC skills. This cross- cutting plan is the first of its kind in the United Kingdom. The plan was developed in consultation with the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) and key stakeholders to identify what works to support children with SLC needs and identify future actions. It sets out Welsh Government’s commitment to promoting and supporting children’s speech language and communication needs and a commitment that interventions relating to parenting, perinatal/infant mental health and SLC will be reviewed and published. This will help to ensure that appropriate, evidence-based SLC interventions will be delivered at the point of need in order to improve SLC skills and reduce the risk of SLCN impacting on children’s development and wellbeing.

This project will provide a review of these interventions in order to contribute to and meet these commitment and assist with future plans to promote interventions with evidence of effectiveness.

Anticipated project outcomes:

* A review of the evidence base in terms of SLC interventions and their links to perinatal and infant mental health and positive parenting, including a ‘what works’ assessment.
* A GSR report summarising the links between the interventions available for perinatal and infant mental health and SLC, and between positive parenting and SLC, which have evidence of effectiveness.
* A presentation to analytical colleagues and policy officials
* Ideas on what can be used from the GSR report to inform practitioner guidance.

# Internship responsibilities and requirements

The internship will last for three months, with the option of extension, during which time the students PhD project will be paused by their home institution. The student will be paid the equivalent of their stipend during their internship. Over and above leave policies, time for existing PhD commitments can be arranged on discussion with line managers. E.g. research groups meetings and conference presentations. Applications are encouraged from part-time students.

It is anticipated that the successful applicant will be working from home during their internship. This is based on our current understanding of the situation and what is possible in terms of research work. This may change as the Covid-19 situation develops. Should the Covid-19 situation develop and allow for a return for a phased return to offices this will be discussed with successful applicants.

The internship will last for a period of three months full-time or the part-time equivalent. For students registered on a part-time studentship, this internship is available on a part-time basis over a longer time frame (no fewer than three days a working week), this would be negotiated between the WG and the successful applicant. If you would like to be considered on a part-time basis, please specify your preferred working hours on the application form.

Student specification

## The student must have:

* Experience of literature review and evidence synthesis
* The ability to interpret data and evaluation findings
* The ability to produce concise, well written documents presenting technical material in an accessible format.

Whilst not essential for the role a background and knowledge of child development would be advantageous.

# Start date of internship

September 2021 (exact date to be negotiated). There may be some flexibility dependent on individual circumstances.

# Funding and costs

Reasonable travel and accommodation costs for students not normally based in Cardiff can be met. Requests should be consistent with Wales DTP guidelines. Applications from students requiring additional funding for travel and accommodation will not be treated less favourably. For any queries on this please contact Carole Baker at the Wales DTP on: enquiries@walesdtp.ac.uk

# Security

The Welsh Government’s vetting procedures (which apply to temporary as well as permanent staff) involve the completion of a Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) application form and a Security Questionnaire for the purpose of security vetting.

This process requires the applicant to produce in person three original forms of identification documents, one of which should be photographic (passport, new driving license), one document should showing their current address, plus one of: a utility bill, birth certificate, P45 or P60.

# Queries

Any queries relating to the post or application process should be directed to Jody.Mellor@gov.wales