A Clinical Algorithm for Assessment of Hypotonia Mixed Methods with Design Research

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Pragashnie is an OT Lecturer based at a University in South Africa, having worked in both private and public health sectors in the country. She has an interest in paediatric neurodevelopment and general physical rehabilitation. She is an emerging researcher, currently pursuing a PhD in Health Sciences. She looks forward to this opportunity to engage with the audience and gain greater insights in the world of MMR.

ABSTRACT
The clinical assessment of hypotonia remains contentious in the literature. The reality is that the assessment is often subjective in nature. In order address the current challenges in clinical assessment of hypotonia, and in the move towards more evidenced based assessments, the author will develop and validate a clinical algorithm for the assessment of hypotonia in children. The purpose of this tool would be to assist clinicians (paediatricians, occupational therapists, physiotherapists) in the decision making process in a stance towards more objective and accurate clinical diagnosis and plan or referrals for early intervention. Such a study will also speak to the need for more evidenced-based assessment and interventions as well as address the global health needs with respect to early detection and intervention, advancing the attainment of goal four of the United Nations Millennium Development goals. Both researchers and practitioners form part of the targeted sample. Design Research, using across stage mixed methods will be used, within a pragmatic stance. Design research acknowledges the complex and dynamic relationship between theory and application and provides a relevant foundation to guide practice by methods that are both theoretically underpinned and empirically tested. The author will combine evidenced-based methods in three phases viz. preliminary phase (systematic review, survey on current practices, consensus via Delphi process); prototyping phase (guided by theory; empirical data from preliminary phase and inductive, deductive and abductive reasoning) and finally the assessment phase (which will include the validation processes using both QUAN and QUAL methods). The author would like to engage in a discussion around how and if these mixed methods can exist within a framework of design research.
No handouts were provided for this presentation:

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