

# Abstract

## Introduction

Real-world data (RWD) are defined as data relating to patient health status collected outside of a clinical study and are increasingly important to provide context to the evidence from rigorous research studies. The benefit of RWD is that it allows one to inspect the impact of intervention for non-selected clients who may have more complex conditions and being treated in a range of settings – unlike data collected through controlled and selective trials.

## Methods

The Royal College Speech and Language Therapists Online Outcome Tool (ROOT) has been developed to support speech and language therapy (SLT) services in the UK to collect and analyse RWD including demographic details, diagnostic information using ICD-10 codes, and outcome information using the Therapy Outcome Measure (TOM). The TOM is a psychometrically robust method of summarising levels of a patient's impairment, activity, social participation, and well-being based on the WHO's ICF. The ROOT RWD can be interrogated to inform on service improvements.

## Results

More than 70 speech and language therapy services in the UK now (October 2022) upload their information on a regular basis, providing information on more than 66,000 clients who are receiving or have received SLT.

## Conclusions

This data can assist in determining issues such as equity of access, and the impact of COVID-19. Yet, collecting data alone is not enough. Being able to access data, inspect data and determine the questions that need to be asked are all important.

## Learning outcomes

To understand the meaning of real-world data and its value in speech and language therapy. To understand the benefits and challenges of real-world data collection and analysis. To learn how routine data collection can be used to examine inequities of access and drive improvements.

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