



# Communication Matters – Research Matters: an AAC Evidence Base

April 2013





**SCOPE's  
No Voice,  
No Choice  
campaign**



**Bercow report**

**Government's "Better Communication Action Plan" published**



“...no funds available...”

“...what is the need?”

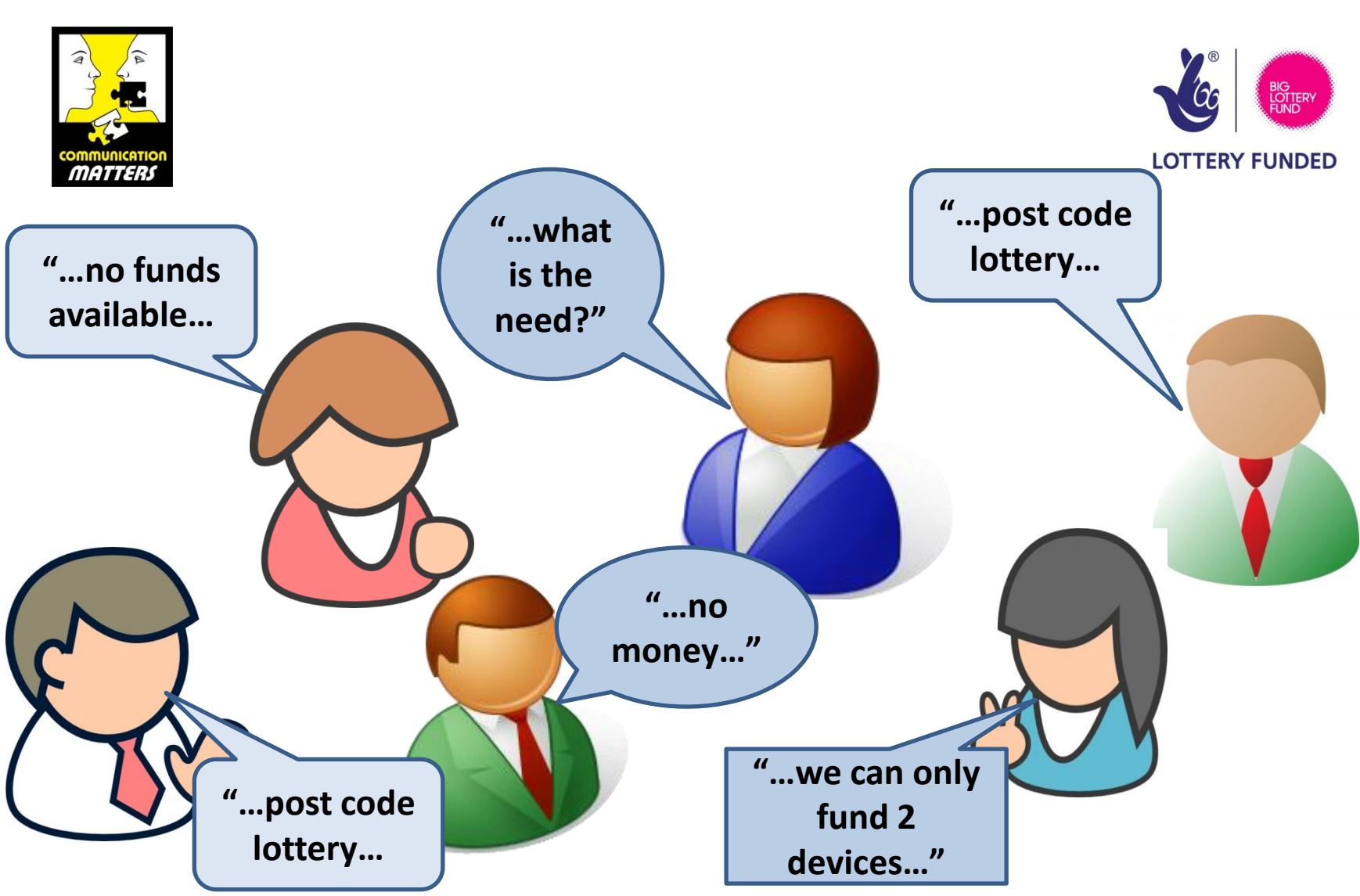
“...post code lottery...”

“...post code lottery...”

“...no money...”

“...we can only fund 2 devices...”

“...post code lottery...”





## Communication Matters – our aims

- Increase awareness of AAC
- Enable the exchange of information & ideas
- Support research into AAC
- Empower people with complex communication needs



# The AAC Evidence Base project

£468k grant from Big Lottery Fund

UK-wide research

High-tech & low-tech AAC

Started June 2010 (ends June 2013)



## Project outcomes

- Increase awareness of the need for AAC
- Increase understanding of current AAC provision
- Improved access to evidence about AAC
- Building research capacity



## Project team



**Dr Janice  
Murray**



**Professor Pam  
Enderby**



**Simon Judge**



**Katie Holmes**



**David Morgan**





# Communication Matters – Research Matters: an AAC Evidence Base

April 2013

Katie Holmes

David Morgan









**@Comm\_Matters**

**#righttoavoice**

**#AAC**

**#research**



## Project outcomes

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- Increase understanding of current AAC provision
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# The research team

**Professor Pam Enderby**

**Dr Sarah Creer**

**Dr Alex John**

**Simon Judge**

**Dr Susan Baxter**



# The data mountain



**Interviews**

**Health database searches**

**Online surveys**

**Scoping survey**

**Practitioners survey**

**Literature searches**

**Focus groups**

**Systematic literature review**

**involving**

**Professionals**

**Commissioners &  
policy makers**

**Voluntary sector**

**People who use  
AAC**

**Communication  
partners**

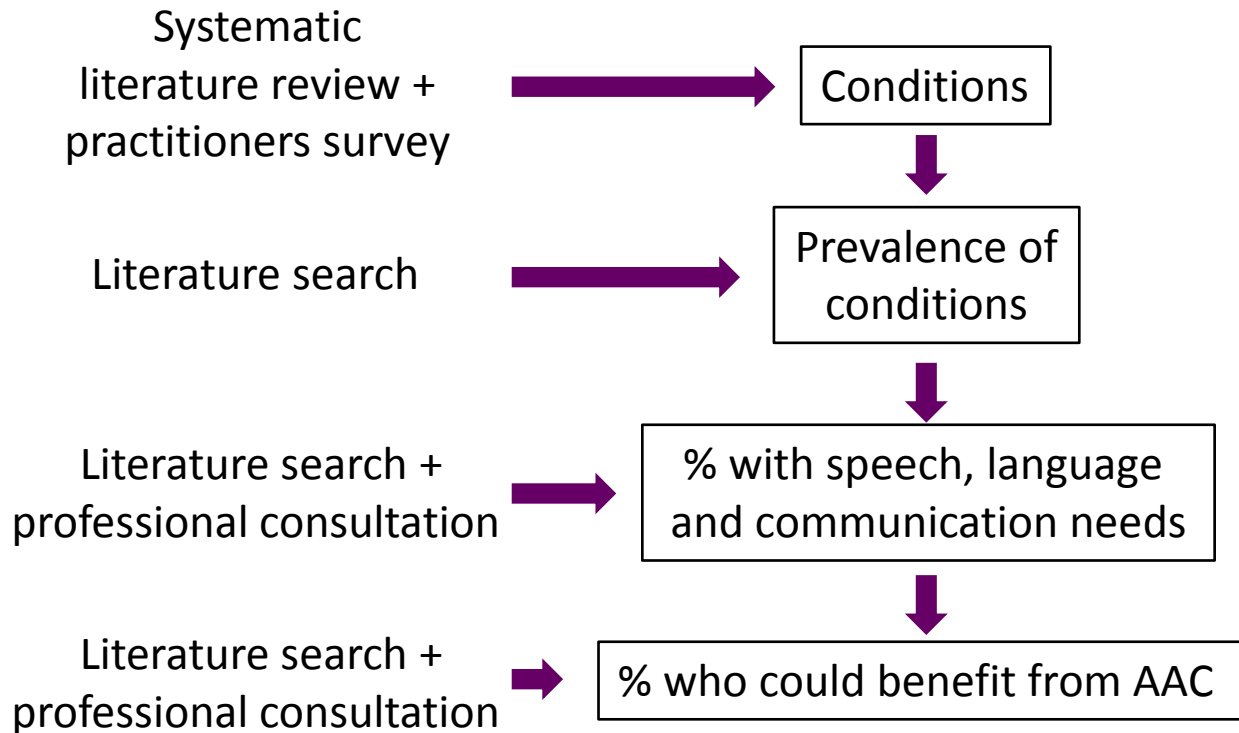
**AAC industry**



# Increase awareness of the need for AAC



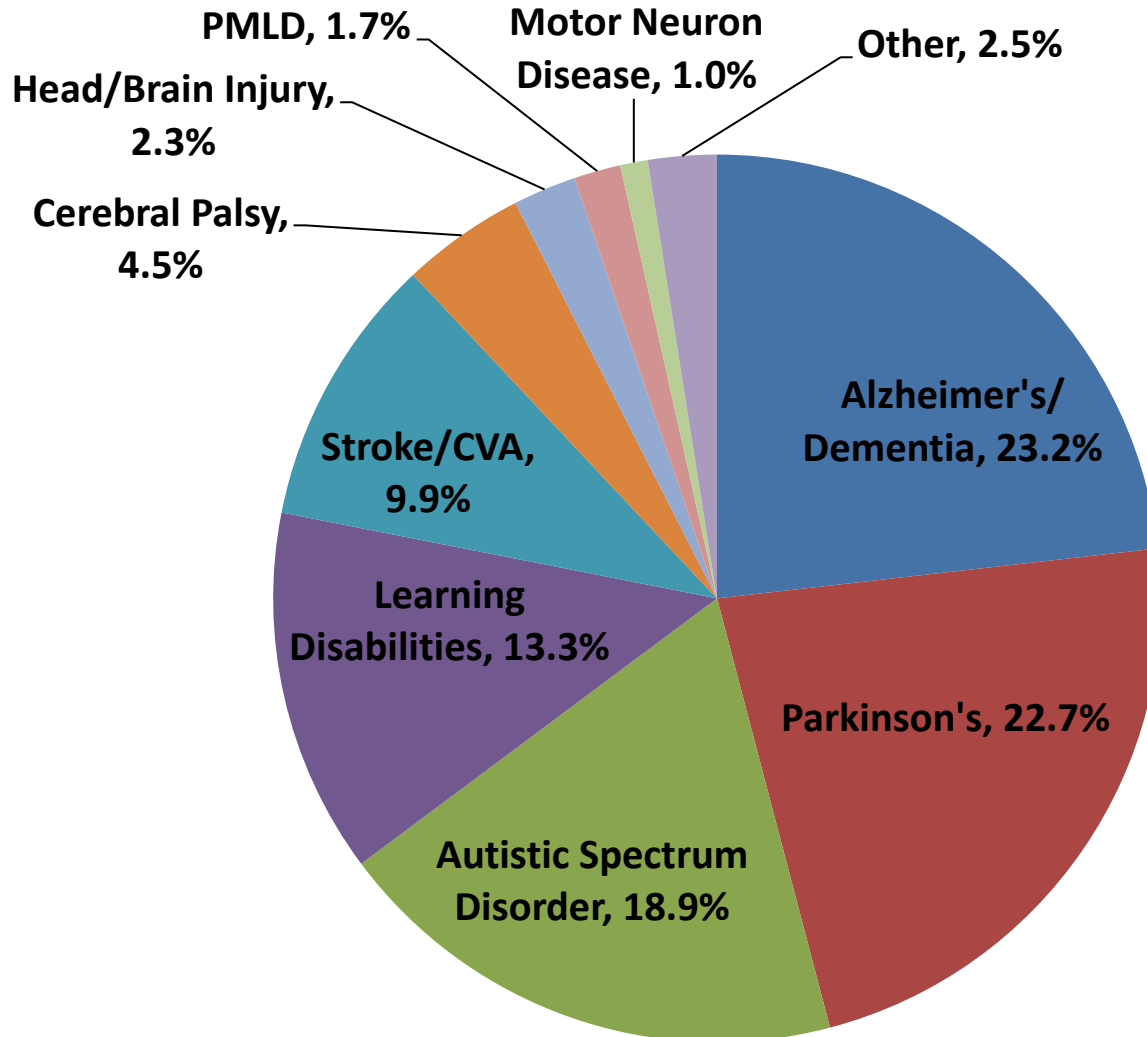
# Calculating need (UK)







# Conditions





**People who could benefit from AAC:**

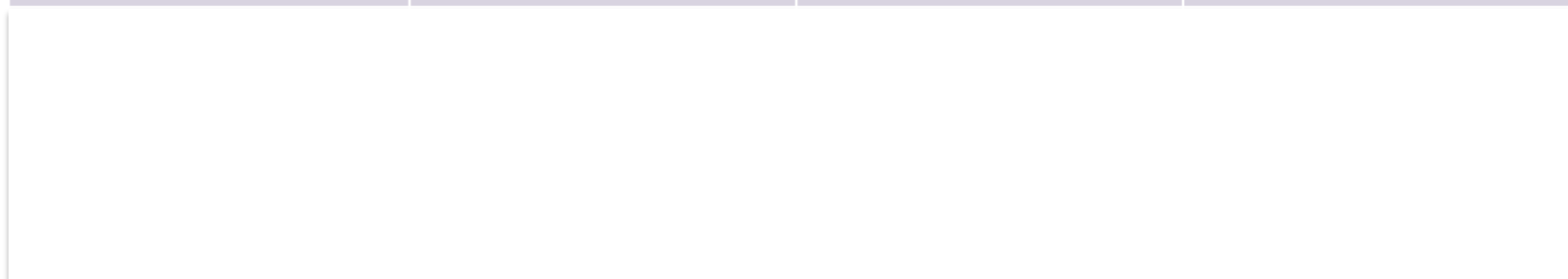
**0.5% of the population**

**529 people per 100,000 population**



# Population figures

|                 | % of population | England (53.1m) | UK (63.2m)     |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>Need AAC</b> | <b>0.5%</b>     | <b>265,536</b>  | <b>316,164</b> |





# Population figures

|                          | % of population | England (53.1m) | UK (63.2m)     |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>Need AAC</b>          | <b>0.5%</b>     | <b>265,536</b>  | <b>316,164</b> |
| <b>Need powered aids</b> | <b>0.05%</b>    | <b>26,554</b>   | <b>31,616</b>  |



# How many people use powered communication aids?

0.05%

Number of people who could potentially benefit



0.036%

Potential unmet need



0.014%

Number of people who currently use powered communication aids





# How many people use powered communication aids?

0.05%

Number of people who could potentially benefit



0.036%  
23,000

Potential unmet need



0.014%

Number of people who currently use powered communication aids





# A growing need

- medical advances leading to better survival rates
- the ageing UK population
- development of new AAC strategies & aids
- rising expectations

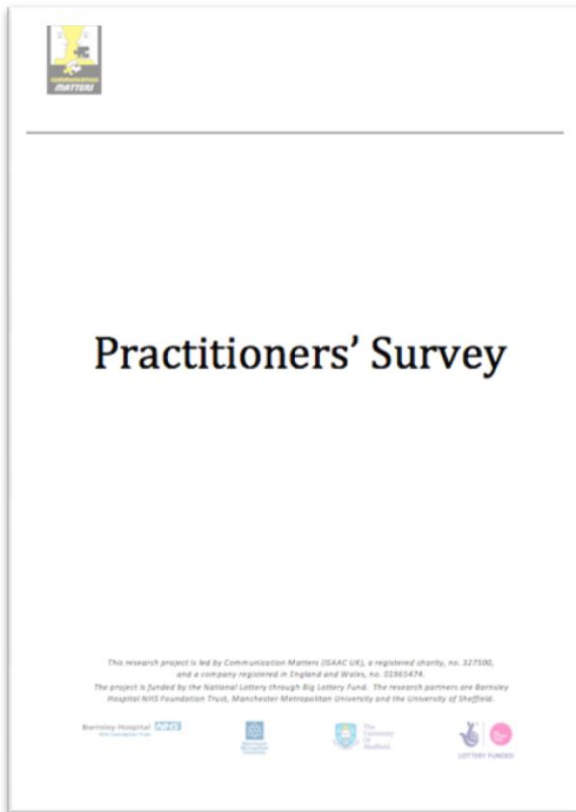


# Increase understanding of current AAC provision



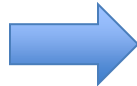


# Gathering service data



Information about the service

- Services provided
- Population covered
- Links to other services



Geographical coverage



Equipment/strategies available and in use



Local population

# Components of AAC service provision

Assessment

Funding

Training

Customisation

Positioning &  
mounting

Maintenance

Repair

Review

Support

Research &  
Development

Custom  
manufacture

Information/  
advice/  
education

Loans

Integration



# Service models

- Varied providers
- A wide range of eligibility criteria
- Little consistency in the components of service provision
- Funding for services & equipment was the number one issue of concern



# The experience of services

- Frustration over the time taken to identify & assess
- Funding difficulties
- Lack of support
- Lack of technical skills & knowledge amongst Speech & Language Therapists



- Mapped AAC services across the UK
- Categorised AAC services





- **Framework of service components**
- **Service categorisation & mapping**
- **Service audit and mapping tool**



## To summarise...



- Confirmed the prevalence of need for AAC at 0.5%
- “Gap” for powered communication aid could be affecting 23,000 people (2/3<sup>rd</sup> of those who could benefit)



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- Produced concepts of what would make up a full and satisfactory service provision





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**THESE ARE IMPORTANT AND VALUABLE RESEARCH RESULTS THAT WILL HELP THE FIGHT FOR BETTER PRODUCT & SERVICE PROVISION**



# Questions





***THANK YOU***

**[www.communicationmatters.org.uk  
/research](http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/research)**

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