

NIHR GOSH BRC Vacation Studentship

PROGRESS FORM - VACATION STUDENTS

Student Name:	Catalina Trama Alvarez
Programme:	Population, Policy & Practice
Project Title:	Scoping acceptability of discussing possible adverse effects of providing child weight feedback to parents and children as part of the National Child Measurement Programme
Lay Summary:	
What are you trying to do in this studentship? In this studentship we are exploring whether parents would find it acceptable to take part in a study looking at whether receiving feedback about their child's weight as part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) could have negative effects (e.g. eating disorders, overly strict feeding by parents, teasing). There is also the opportunity to process previous unanalysed data on the way weight feedback affects how parents feed their children and to undertake qualitative interviews with parents about their toddlers' weight.	
Why is this research important? The NCMP is a national programme in which children's BMIs are measured in Reception and Year 6 and are reported back to their parents. It is important to understand any possible negative effects that BMI feedback could have on children (e.g. eating disorders or weight-related teasing) or parents (e.g. overly-restrictive feeding styles). There is little research objectively studying the possible negative effects of BMI feedback, as most research focuses on descriptive interviews where parents or children may or may not voice concerns about this. However, before undertaking this sort of research, it is important to explore parent's acceptability as parents may not want us to discuss topics such as eating disorders with their children or how they feed their children, consequently not participating in our research. The data analysis and qualitative work also help with understanding more about parents' experience of weight feedback programmes.	
2 Value of Your Experience:	
This experience has allowed me to see how research projects work outside the classroom, and how to overcome any possible struggles. Moreover, it has expanded the knowledge I had on Health Psychology and shown me the vast potential of studying the effects of BMI feedback programmes, which I will continue to explore in my undergraduate dissertation alongside my current studentship supervisor. I have also had the opportunity to experience qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, in addition to questionnaire design. Aside from the academic aspect, this opportunity has allowed me to meet and get to know other researchers from different academic backgrounds and learn about other interesting research going on at ICH. Moreover, I have really enjoyed working in the Obesity Policy Research Unit as I have been treated as another member of the team and I have been given the opportunity to help on other research projects alongside mine, allowing me to get the most of this experience.	