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## City St George's, University of London

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# Is a social media chat a suitable approach to deliver a stakeholder focus group?



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## Introduction

Social media is used as a data source and for engagement, often without ethical approval<sup>1</sup>

Online focus groups are indicated as a suitable methodology for busy professionals and others<sup>2</sup> typically through video calls

## Methods

### Chat delivery:

- Ethical approval granted
- Via @ResNetsLT monthly chat host handle
- 18/03/20 UK's Swallowing Awareness Day 7-8pm
- 4 questions following @ResNetSLT standard methods
- Opt out choice for chat participants
- Optional demographic information & quote use consent process
- Collated using Symplur software using #ReSNetSLT hashtag

### Evaluation:

Chat data analysed:

- Participant numbers,
- Demographic data
- Engagement levels

Comparison:

- Methods strengths/weaknesses
- Could data be analysed/used

## Results

### Chat data:

23 participants

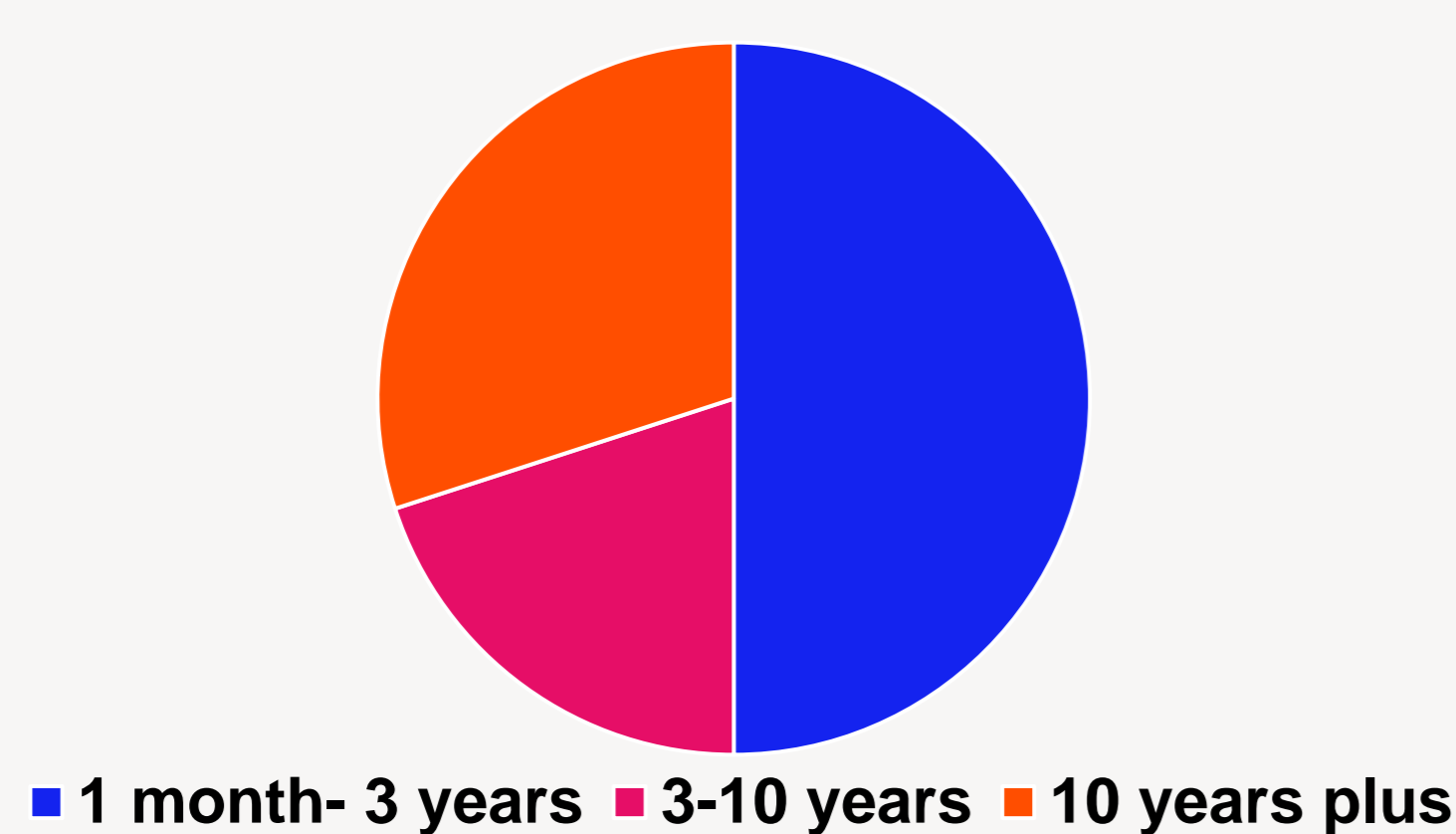
Greater than typical @ResNetSLT chat: n=19

Opt outs: n=0

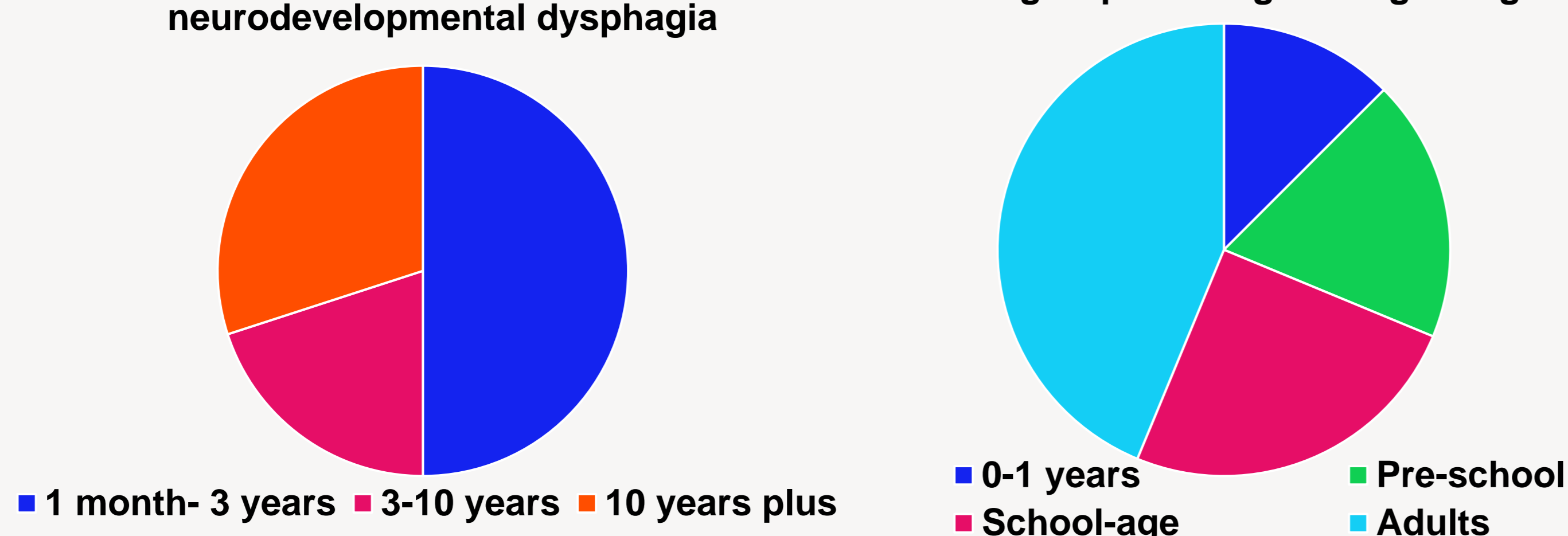
Provided demographic data: n=11

Profession: SLT n=10, Support worker n=1

Length of experience in neurodevelopmental dysphagia



Client group working with age range



Question answering posts: n=65

Social posts: n=17

Reposts: n=50

Number of posts/participant :

Range=1-58, mean=5.5, SD=11.42

### Strengths & weaknesses:

- 👍 More participants than typical focus group (n=6-12)<sup>2</sup>
- 👍 Acceptable to participants
- 👎 Limited non-SLT views captured
- 👍 Good diversity of participant clinical experience & geography
- 👍 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS POSSIBLE
- 👎 Missing data when hashtag not used
- 👎 Difficulties analysing meaning of re-tweets and tags
- 👎 Difficulties analysing simultaneous tweet threads
- = Varied engagement as seen in focus groups

## Conclusions

A one-hour tweet chat delivered positives compared to an online focus group with data analysed as part of stakeholder engagement for successful funding bid

Analysis approaches of specific online text chats aspects need further consideration

Rapidly changing social media platforms and their communities of practice need to be considered if using chats for data collection

## References

1. Golder, S., Ahmed, S., Norman, G., & Booth, A. (2017). Attitudes toward the ethics of research using social media: a systematic review. *Journal of medical internet research*, 19(6), e195.
2. Litosseliti, L. (2003). Using focus groups in research. *A&C Black*.