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Bio: After completing a PhD in Developmental Psychology at the Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford, Hannah moved to work on the Hearing Outcomes in Teenagers project (www.hotproject.org.uk) at the University of Southampton. Hannah recently joined the Visual Communication research group at the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, UCL (www.icn.ucl.ac.uk/Research-Groups/Visual-Communication-Group/), where she is working on the development of a computerised lipreading training intervention for young deaf children.

Title: The impact of universal newborn hearing screening on reading and language outcomes in deaf teenagers: Insights from the HOT Project.

Abstract: Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS) programmes are an effective way of increasing early identification of children born with moderate to profound hearing loss. Early identification of these children enables them to receive early intervention to maximise the quality of their early language environment, and consequently to support their language development. Previous work, including our own, has documented the benefits that UNHS and the associated early confirmation of hearing loss bring to deaf children's language and reading outcomes in the preschool and primary school years. However, to date no study has followed up children involved in trials of UNHS through to the teenage years to assess the longer term impact of UNHS and early confirmation of hearing loss. In this talk I will present data from the Hearing Outcomes in Teenagers project, a unique long-term follow-up study of a large group of deaf teenagers involved in trials of UNHS when they were born. These data showed that the beneficial effects of early confirmation of hearing loss on reading and language outcomes that were found in these children when they were aged 6-10 years had continued into the teenage years. Furthermore, the benefit associated with early confirmation not only persisted but also increased substantially over the 9 year interval since our earlier assessment: Those who did better at primary school had widened the gap by secondary school.

Learning objectives:

1. Understand what is already known about the impact of universal newborn hearing screening and early confirmation of deafness on outcomes for deaf children.
2. Recognise what the findings from the HOT Project add to the body of research evidence on the effects of universal newborn hearing screening.