

## Adult Speech and Language Therapy

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### Hertfordshire Community Trust - Our core values

- Care** - We put patients at the heart of every thing we do
- Respect** - We treat people with dignity and respect
- Quality** - We strive for excellence and effectiveness at all times
- Confidence** - We do what we say we will do
- Improve** - We will improve through continuous learning and innovation



## What is the approach?

- The Adult Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) service is a county-wide Hertfordshire service.
- The service works as a team to provide integrated, seamless care to adult patients with speech, language, communication, voice or swallowing difficulties.
- The care is patient-centred with individualised packages based on clinical evidence, good practice and clinical experience.
- The service has a culture of service review and development to meet identified needs.
- The service works in partnership with patients and their families and with other professions/multidisciplinary teams and agencies/Trusts to reduce the impact of these often life threatening and/or isolating difficulties on people's well-being and their ability to participate in daily life.
- The service is delivered from acute hospital sites, community hospitals, rehabilitation units, intermediate care locations, residential and nursing homes and patients' own homes. The patients are seen in the most appropriate setting to their needs.

## What are the aims?

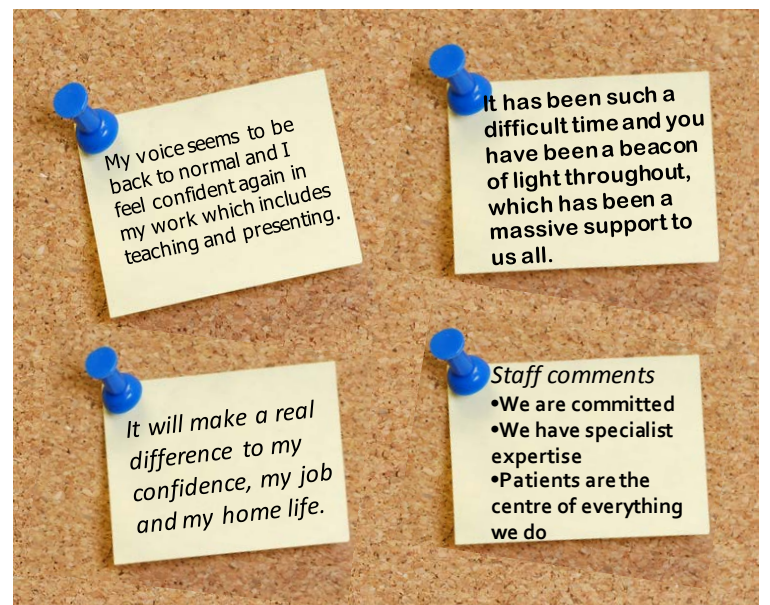
- The service accepts referrals for adult patients with stroke, progressive neurological conditions, head injury, cancer, voice disorders, dementia, COPD, stammering
- SLTs aim to minimise the long-term impact of speech, language, communication and/or eating and drinking disorders on patients' activities of daily living, prevent admission to hospital, and provide rehabilitation
- All adults who are referred or who refer themselves will be seen for assessment and, depending on their needs, will be offered a package of care which might include further assessment, treatment, advice, family/carer support, rehabilitation and review
- The needs of each person are individually assessed including their family if appropriate. The type of care provided is based on their goals to maximise motivation and participation.

## What are the benefits?

- Benefits can be health, social, work, decreasing care needs (promoting independence)
- SLTs consider not only the impairment but also the impact on the patient's life
- Health promotion packages to prevent problems are offered. e.g. voice care
- All packages promote self-management strategies and triggers are negotiated with patients ensuring re-referral into the service earlier preventing possible admission to hospital
- SLTs can offer adapted 'aphasia friendly' written information
- SLTs will facilitate communication with other services where specialist knowledge and skills are required
- SLTs can support capacity assessments by facilitating communication

## What are staff and users experiences?

“Dear NHS, you need MORE just like this one!! Visiting Speech and Language Therapist is the most helpful, kind, considerate, professional we have access to. Her commitment and guidance has been a great help in guiding us to appropriate treatments and therapies at a level far beyond any reasonable expectation. She is outstanding!”



## What are the costs?

Whole Time Equivalents = 26.99 (SLTs and A&C)  
Number of staff = currently 27 SLTs and 3 A&C

## What are the impacts?

### Service developments

- During 2014 we commenced a one year project funded by Parkinson's UK to offer LSVT therapy programme to patients with Parkinson's Disease. This is an intensive therapy programme with a strong evidence base and excellent outcomes.
- SLT service is involved in the Early Supported Discharge programme for Stroke patients to enable them to be discharged early from the acute hospital and receive therapy 5 times a week in their own homes.
- Our service has developed its use of iPads and apps with patients who have communication difficulties including patients with aphasia who have been traditionally not able to access communication aids or have had to use paper-based pictures with no voice output. This innovation makes a significant change in the day to day lives of patient:
  - The app functions to allow the person with aphasia to communicate about real life situations through familiar objects and scene pictures
  - It allows patients to have more autonomy and confidence in making decisions and communicating these to others.
  - This gives the patient the ability to have a 'voice'. The voice may be their own recorded voice (if they have the ability to record repeated words) or the app's synthesised voice.

This was nominated for an innovation award.