

Communication difficulties

You have been referred to the speech and language therapy service at Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead. This leaflet explains what to expect from speech and language therapy and what you can do whilst you are waiting for your appointment.

What to expect from your speech and language therapy appointment

We will contact you with an appointment as soon as possible. We are able to offer outpatient appointments at the hospital, or home visits.

During your initial appointment, we will ask you relevant questions about your medical condition(s) and the symptoms that you are experiencing.

Once we have completed our initial assessment, we will offer specific advice and therapy tailored to your needs. A strong emphasis is also placed upon providing close liaison and support to family and carers.

Helpful advice to consider whilst awaiting your speech and language therapy appointment

If you have difficulties thinking of the right word(s):

- Can you describe the word?
- Is there a similar word you could say instead?
- Can you show the person what you mean?
- Can you write down the word?
- Can you draw what you mean?
- Others could ask you yes and no questions to try to understand what you want to say.

If you are experiencing difficulties with slurred, slow or quiet speech that is difficult to understand:

- Say the words slowly
- Think "loud"
- Take a breath before you speak
- Say less per breath
- Exaggerate the words (make your mouth movements bigger)

- Break up longer words e.g. su-per-mar-ket
- Reduce any background noise when you are talking, e.g. turn the television off
- Others could ask you yes and no questions to clarify the topic of conversation and to check that they have understood.

If you are unable to produce a clear voice or any voice at all:

- Sit fully upright and relax while you are speaking
- Take a breath before you speak or when you find you are running out breath while speaking
- Avoid whispering, screaming or shouting
- Aim to drink two litres of non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic fluid a day (avoid cola or other fizzy drinks high in caffeine)
- Avoid smoking tobacco
- Rest your voice if it feels tired or sounds husky. 'Rest' means not speaking unless it is necessary.

Contact us

For more information about our community speech and language (SLT) therapy services or if your circumstances have changed since you were referred, then please contact the team on:

01342 414471

qvh.salt@nhs.net

Outpatient speech and language therapy at QVH

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Please ask if you would like this leaflet in larger print or a different format.

Speech and language therapy
Issue 1 – Ref no: 0079
Approved by the Patient Information Group
Print May 2020 – Review May 2023

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