

FOI 2584

16th August 2024

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

FOI Request to NHS Trusts in Northern Ireland - July 2024

- 1. Do you offer speech and language therapy services for children and young people who stammer? If so, what is the age range for this service?**

Response:

Southern Trust offers a service to children who stammer and their families. Community Clinic referral criteria is inclusive of children aged 18 months to 17 years 11 months and this includes children who stammer. Young people aged 18 years and older can access speech and language therapy for a stammer from adult services.

- 2. How are children and young people who stammer referred to the speech and language therapy service, and what are the referral criteria?**

Response:

Children who stammer can be referred by a parent or professional. There are no specific referral criteria re: stammering. Indication on a referral that there are concerns about a child or young person's fluency is sufficient.

- 3. Do you have a dedicated dysfluency/ stammering pathway? What is the process and criteria for being placed on the pathway?**

Response:

The service does have a stammering pathway from referral with the presence of a stammer being the criteria for acceptance onto this pathway.

- 4. Do you have a Clinical Lead for stammering in your children and young people service? As of July 2024, how many speech and language therapists work directly with children and young people who stammer?**

Response:

We do not have a Clinical Lead for Stammering. All SLTs can be expected to be able to work with children who stammer, with a smaller cohort of SLTs being trained to deliver stammering specific evidence-based interventions.

- 5. If you do not have access to a Clinical lead SLT (Speech and Language Therapist) for stammering, or other stammering specialist SLTs, how do you manage more complex stammering cases?**

Response:

Staff have access to the regional stammering Clinical Education Network where case discussion can be facilitated.

- 6. Who commissions speech and language therapy stammering services for children and young people in your trust? Do third sector organisations fund or contribute to funding any speech and language therapy stammering services for children and young people in your trust area?**

Response:

Stammering is not separately commissioned for SLT. There is no funding provided from third sector organisations to SLT stammering therapy.

- 7. How many children and young people were awaiting an assessment by a SLT for stammering in July 2023 and in July 2024?**

Response:

	31/07/2023	31/07/2024
NUMBER OF CHILDREN WAITING	39	43

- 8. As of 1st July 2024, could you provide the waiting times from referral to initial assessment for children and young people referred for stammering? Please categorise the data into the following timeframes: less than 12 weeks, 12 to 18 weeks, 19 to 26 weeks, 27 to 52 weeks, 1 to 2 years, and over 2 years.**

Response:

	LESS THAN 12 WEEKS	12 TO 18 WEEKS	19 TO 26 WEEKS	27 TO 52 WEEKS	1 TO 2 YEARS	OVER 2 YEARS	TOTAL
NUMBER OF CHILDREN WAITING	37	6	0	0	0	0	43

- 9. As of 1st July 2024, could you provide the waiting times from initial assessment to the start of therapy for children and young people referred for stammering? Please categorise the data into the following timeframes: less than 12 weeks, 12 to 18 weeks, 19 to 26 weeks, 27 to 52 weeks, 1 to 2 years, and over 2 years.**

Response:

	LESS THAN 12 WEEKS	12 TO 18 WEEKS	19 TO 26 WEEKS	27 TO 52 WEEKS	1 TO 2 YEARS	OVER 2 YEARS	TOTAL
NUMBER OF CHILDREN WAITING	39	5	2	2	0	0	48

- 10. How many sessions do SLTs typically provide to children and young people who stammer (e.g. once a week for six weeks)**

Response:

The majority of SLT intervention is provided weekly. The duration is dependent on the programme being accessed e.g Family Communication Skills programme runs once a week for 9 weeks, group interventions typically run during school holidays and are daily for 5 days.

- 11. Are Independent Patient Funding Requests utilised for speech and language therapy stammering services? If so, could these requests be made for children who stammer to access specialist services outside of Northern Ireland?**

Response:

Application can be made for funding for out of Trust specialist services if this is deemed necessary.

- 12. Would you ever refer or signpost children and young people who stammer to a specialist service or centre outside of your trust area? If so, how often has this occurred between 1st July 2023 and 1st July 2024.**

Response:

We have signposted some families to the Michael Palin Centre (MPC) in the past. No families have attended a specialist centre outside the Trust during the last 12 months but we have had families attend MPC prior to July 2023.

13. Do you provide information about and/or do you signpost to other organisations who can offer support for childhood stammering? If so, who do you signpost to?

Response:

We routinely signpost families to MPC, STAMMA etc

- Action for Stammering Children - Yes
- STAMMA - Yes
- Michael Palin Centre - Yes
- Other (please specify)

14. What therapy approaches (e.g. Palin PCI, Lidcombe) do your speech and language therapy service offer to children and young people who stammer? Do you offer individual or group therapy to children who stammer, or both?

Response:

Palin PCI

Palin FCS

1:1 therapy

Group interventions

15. Where do your SLTs access their specialist training from?

Response:

- Michael Palin Centre - Yes
- City Lit London - yes
- Online - yes
- CENs - yes
- In service training - yes
- Other (please specify)



16. What barriers exist to your SLTs accessing necessary training courses in stammering? (e.g. cost and funding, availability of specialised courses, time out of clinic, high staff turnover, institutional supports, etc.)

Response:

- High staff turnover is an ongoing challenge resulting in staff trained in specialist stammering interventions moving on to jobs in other Trusts / Clinical areas.
- Pailn PCI / FCS training programmes are funded regionally and run alternate years, allowing staff from our Trust to access this as appropriate.
- Additional Specialist courses have been supported for staff with a specific interest in Stammering e.g. the Camperdown Programme, Swindon Stammering Groups.

17. What information is provided to education setting staff about stammering? Would this information typically be provided for individual children and young people on your caseload or as part of education setting staff training more generally?

Response:

Written information is made available to Education staff when a child has been assessed as having a stammer. Stammering information is available on our Webpage for all to access. On stammering awareness days we have engaged in various initiatives to raise awareness and understanding of stammering.

Email: Foi.Team@Southerntrust.hscni.net