

Referral Guidelines

Paediatric Speech Clinic

Our clinic specialises in developmental speech disorders, with particular expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS). **We offer a tertiary level service, therefore the responsibility for the child's speech and language therapy lies with the local community service, who remain the primary Speech and Language Therapy care providers.**

CHILDREN REFERRED SHOULD MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- Have a severe or persisting speech sound disorder which is not felt to be due to another condition, or in line with their overall developmental profile
- Be between 3 and 18 years of age
- Be able to participate in formal assessment, involving naming pictures and imitating sounds
- Have had at least one block of therapy targeting their speech
- Have verbal comprehension skills which are at least at a 3 year level on formal assessment, or a three information carrying word level
- Have had some assessment of their learning skills e.g. developmental assessment, educational psychology assessment or information/report from school staff. The results of this assessment must be discussed with parents/carers prior to referral.

Please note that this is not a specialist second opinion centre for the assessment of developmental language disorders, social communication disorders including ASD, stammering, auditory processing disorder (APD), cleft palate, sensorineural hearing loss, or global developmental delay/disorder. Where another medical, developmental or learning issue is suspected, this should be investigated prior to referring to our Speech Clinic.

REFERRAL PROCESS

The speech clinic referral form should be completed by the referring speech and language therapist, and returned to us, accompanied by:

- Parent/carer case history form
- GP letter supporting the referral, along with a GP print off/medical summary
- SLT reports, plus any relevant medical and/or education reports

Referrals should be sent to:

uclh.paediatricslt@nhs.net

Please note that, for accepted referrals, appointments will be held at: Paediatric Speech Clinic, Royal National ENT and Eastman Dental Hospital, 47-49 Huntley Street, London, WC1E 6DG
Please be aware that referrals that do not include all the required information will be returned to the referrer. We regret that we are unable to discuss referrals. However, we hope that the referral form and these guidelines will answer any queries. Referrals are checked by a Speech and Language Therapist, and accepted/rejected on the basis of our referral criteria.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE CLINIC?

The family are seen by an experienced and Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, and in some cases also by a Consultant in Audiovestibular Medicine. The appointment may last for up to 2 hours. Usually, the doctor will ask about the child's health and development while the Speech and Language Therapist assesses the child's speech (sounds). Please note that we do not formally assess understanding/use of language, nor social communication skills, in this clinic.

The doctor will examine the child, and he/she may have another hearing test. Following a short break, the doctor and therapist meet with the family to discuss the results of the assessment.

It may be possible to give a diagnosis, although referrers should note that it *may not be appropriate* to give a diagnosis to very young children, children with very limited verbal language, or children with complex conditions. We may recommend onward referral for other investigations.

Where possible we will make suggestions about therapy targets, and recommend the type of therapy provision we feel a child needs. However, it is the responsibility of the local service to determine how a child's needs are best met. The local Speech and Language Therapist is welcome to come to the clinic, with the parent's permission.

AFTER THE CLINIC

Our Speech and Language Therapist will contact the local therapist by email to give feedback on the assessment. Please make sure we have an email address for the relevant SLT.

We will produce a report including both medical and speech information, which will normally be sent to the referring SLT, GP and the parents. Our report may take up to 4 weeks. We do not produce reports/complete forms for EHCPs or SEND Tribunal hearings. However, parents may submit our reports as additional evidence. We are unable to attend review meetings or tribunal hearings.

Many children will be discharged from our service following the clinic. However, some may need to be reviewed by our Speech and Language Therapy team, in order to update management advice and monitor progress. We offer limited therapy at this centre to explore therapy strategies and work on specific areas of difficulty. **The responsibility for the child's speech and language therapy remains with the local service.**

CONTACTING US

Enquiries should be directed to uclh.paediatricslt@nhs.net

We will contact the parent/referrer to let them know the outcome of their referral. For accepted referrals, we will contact the parent/carer directly in order to book an appointment for their child.