

Freedom of Information Request

Reference Number: EPUT.FOI.23.3066
Date Received: 27th of July 2023

Information Requested:

1. Do you have a **specialist dysfluency therapist** or **dedicated dysfluency pathway**? If so, **how many** therapists are there and what is the **process** for being put on the dysfluency pathway?

We would like to advise that Paediatric Speech Language Therapy sits within Mid and South Essex ICB.

The team has 2 Band 7 specialists working with children who stammer totalling the equivalent of 1.0 WTE.

Referrals are screened by a specialist stammering speech language therapist and allocated to a specialist caseload if stammering is the only reason for referral (rather than any other communication concerns) and any of the following criteria are met:

- Child is aged 10 years or older at time of referral
- Information on referral leads to a Section 1 risk score of 6 points (Malcolmess Care Aims model).
- Information on referral indicates 4 of the following known risk factors for persistent stuttering are present: family history of persistent stuttering; sudden onset of stuttering presentation; onset over 6 months ago; high level of parent anxiety, high level of child anxiety / avoidance when stuttering.

Referrals that mention concerns and impact of a stammer but don't meet the above criteria are offered an assessment in a community clinic for an initial assessment and intervention under our developmental speech/language development community clinic pathway. A child who is known to the service and managed by a community caseload may move to specialist caseload if the following criteria apply:

- Child does not have other communication needs that require intervention beyond indirect advice / programme to school / nursery and parents
- At least 3 of the following risk factors for persistent stammering present:
 - Family history of stammering persisting into adulthood
 - High level of parental anxiety about the stammer
 - High level of child anxiety about the stammer (at least 2 of the following):
 - Tension evident in the moment of stammering through e.g. head movement, eye rolls etc.
 - Disrupted breath support for speech
 - Use of filler words or sounds to mask blocks
 - Giving up when talking or frequently changing words
 - Child very emotional when talking about stammer.

- High level of avoidance evident within speaking situations associated with stammer (child reported as avoiding certain words/sounds, not speaking in some situations in school e.g. not putting hand up, getting parent to speak for them socially)
 - Child is in final term of Y5 and evidence of response to intervention to date suggests direct therapeutic support likely needed for stammer into secondary school
2. What types of **therapy approaches** do your speech and language therapy service offer to children and young people who stammer?

The service offers a number of therapy approaches, as deemed appropriate for the child's needs after assessment is completed. This includes parent child interaction therapy; block modification approaches; introduction of the 'it's OK to stammer' concept and exploration of stammering as a different way of talking rather than 'wrong' or 'broken'; easy onset or soft contacts; cognitive behavioural therapy; solution focused brief therapy.

3. What is the average **waiting time** for children and young people who stammer who are referred to the SLT service?

New referrals are seen within the standard 18 week wait from referral to first treatment

4. What is the average **period/block of intervention** for children and young people who stammer accessing your service? (e.g. once a week for six weeks)

Intervention is offered on a case by case basis and there is not a set number of sessions. Children on the specialist caseloads likely receive an average of 8 therapy sessions followed by consolidation periods, with sessions being delivered weekly or fortnightly as best fits the child's individual needs and school commitments.

5. Which **Integrated Care System** are your speech and language therapy services in?

Mid and South Essex ICS

Publication Scheme:

As part of the Freedom of Information Act all public organisations are required to proactively publish certain classes of information on a Publication Scheme. A publication scheme is a guide to the information that is held by the organisation. EPUT's Publication Scheme is located on its Website at the following link <https://eput.nhs.uk>