**Ref No:** FOI/2324/SG13423

**Date FOI request received:** 27 July 2023

**Date FOI response:** 15 August 2023

**REQUEST & OUR RESPONSE:**

**REQUEST:**

1. Do you have a **specialist dysfluency therapist** or d**edicated dysfluency pathway**? If so, **how many** therapists are there and what is the **process** for being put on the dysfluency pathway?
2. What types of **therapy approaches** do your speech and language therapy service offer to children and young people who stammer?
3. What is the average **waiting time** for children and young people who stammer who are referred to the SLT service?
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)
5. Which **Integrated Care System** are your speech and language therapy services in?

**OUR RESPONSE:**

**1.** We have a named Dysfluency Specialist Speech and Language Therapist (Band 7) who sees children over 11+ for first appointment. We also have a Speech and Language Therapy Service Dysfluency Network comprised of therapists who are experienced in working with children who stammer; they also hold a caseload of more complex children as well as supporting the wider team with clinical practice for children and young people with dysfluency. The network has 3-4 additional members.

All children who stammer (under age 11) are managed within the local community Speech and Language Therapy teams. Those over 11 are seen by a specialist for first appointment, and usually for follow up/therapy appointments too.

All children who stammer will be placed on the service’s Dysfluency pathway as part of their electronic patient record. As soon as they are allocated to the Dysfluency pathway, families are sent the details of our online Dysfluency workshop which provides information, advice and support for parents and education staff. This is to provide support whilst they are waiting to be seen by a therapist/therapy support worker. They will then be seen by either the specialist team or the community team depending on their age and complexity (e.g. wider mental health difficulties, working with families of parents who stammer or more complex family dynamics)

**2.** For under 11’s we offer Palin Parent Child Interaction as the first approach. We have some Lidcombe trained therapists in the service but have not used this approach for some time and this would only be offered if it was requested by a parent/carer. Following Parent-Child Interaction, we will offer some further whole family strategies and direct child strategies to focus on fluency and confidence building. Throughout all sessions with children who stammer, the aim is to promote openness and acceptance of stammering.

**3.** The service’s first appointment target is 18 weeks so following a referral, a child will be seen within 18 weeks. After this first appointment our waiting times vary depending on whether they are being seen by a specialist (approx. 6-9 months) or being seen by a community SLT (approx. 9-12 months)

**4.** The episode of intervention varies for children across the service. On average a child will access 4-6 appointments within an episode of care but this may be spread out over the year or more. Where possible, we are aiming to offer bespoke episodes of care (e.g. PCI approach would be 4 sessions carried out weekly or bi-weekly). The intervention is sometimes carried out in school depending on the needs of the family/child and the support that can be provided at school. This also depends on what the child/young person shares with us (e.g. if they have more difficulties at school, we would work with the education staff more)

**5**. Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care System.

**Attachments:** N/A