

Easy Read

# North Wales Community Health Council

## Speech and Language Therapy

### Report



This document was written by the **North Wales Community Health Council**. It is an easy read version of '**North Wales Community Health Council, Speech and Language Therapy Services report**'.

**May 2022**

# How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what all the words in blue mean on **page 19**.



Where the document says **we**, this means the **North Wales Community Health Council**. For more information contact:

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# Accessible information



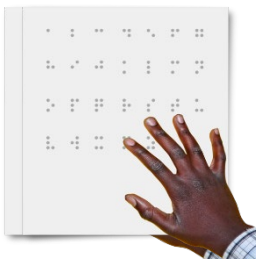
**Accessible information** is information you can use and understand. For example, Easy Read is **accessible information**.



We want you to be able to use and understand all our information.



If you would like this document in a different way, please contact us.



For example, if you want it in braille.



You can also get this document in Welsh on our [website](#).

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# Introduction



We are **North Wales Community Health Council (NWCHC)**.



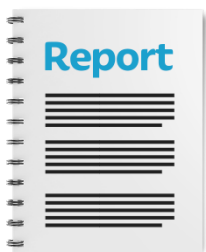
**NWCHC** makes sure the **NHS** in North Wales is doing a good job.



We make sure people have a say in their local health services.



We talk to people while they are having **NHS** care. We also talk to people at community events.



This document is about what people told us about **Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)** Services in North Wales.

**Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)** is a health service supporting problems with communication or eating and drinking.

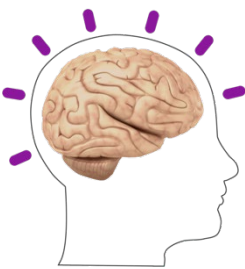


**Speech and Language Therapy** services are provided by health professionals called Speech and Language Therapists.

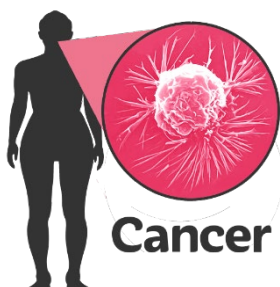
There are different **Speech and Language Therapy** services for:



- People who have had a **stroke**.



A **stroke** is an illness that happens when blood stops flowing to part of your brain. A **stroke** might cause problems with movement and speech.



- People who have throat cancer.



- Children and young people.



- People with learning disabilities



Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board **(BCUHB)** provide **Speech and Language Therapy** services for people living in North Wales.



Some people told us they are concerned about **Speech and Language Therapy** services in North Wales.

# What we did



We asked people in North Wales to tell us about their experiences of **Speech and Language Therapy** services:



- Face to face at groups at events



- At virtual events



- By emailing us



- In 1:1 meetings



# Who we spoke to



- People who have had **Speech and Language Therapy**.



- Parents and carers



- Teachers and education professionals



- **BCUHB** Speech and Language Therapists



- **BCUHB** Managers

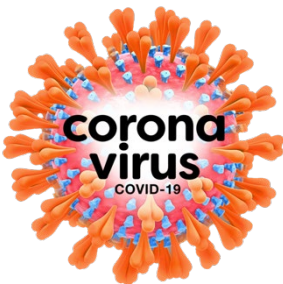
## We asked them to tell us:



- What went well with **Speech and Language Therapy** services.



- What didn't go well with **Speech and Language Therapy** services.



People also told us how COVID-19 affected **Speech and Language Therapy** services.

# What we found out

## Stroke services

One person who had a **stroke** told us they thought:



- **Speech and Language Therapy** services at Dollgellau Hospital are working very well.



- Using Video calls for speech and language therapy sessions worked well.

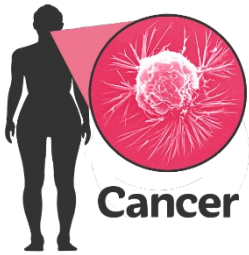


- Video calls work better during the pandemic because you don't have to wear masks.



- **Speech and Language Therapy** sessions are **person centred**. **Person centred** means putting the person at the centre of planning for their lives.

## Throat Cancer Services



People with Throat Cancer sometimes need an operation.



The operation changes the way they breathe and speak.

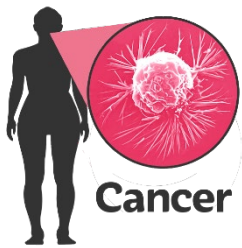
### They might need support to:



- Eat and drink safely.



- Use a special piece of equipment to speak clearly. This is called an Electrolarynx (**EL**).



One person who has had throat cancer told us:



- **Speech and Language Therapy** supported them well before and after their operation.



- They would have liked more 1:1 time with their Speech and Language Therapist.



- They would have liked to have tried different therapies to help them with their **EL**.



- They think learning from other people who use an **EL** is best.



- Being part of a support group really helped their speech. You can find out more about this support group at: <https://glanclywdlary.weebly.com>

## Children's Services



Lots of parents wanted to tell us about their experiences of Children's **Speech and Language Therapy** services.

They told us:



- During lockdown, Children's communication was affected because:



- Very few children had access to **SalT** sessions.



- Video sessions were not offered to many children.



- Children were socially isolated.

Parents also told us:



- They have had to fight to get **Speech and Language Therapy** for their children.



- Some children did not get **Speech and Language Therapy** even when lockdown finished.



- There are not enough Speech and Language Therapists in North Wales.



- There are not enough Welsh speaking Speech and Language Therapists.



- The NHS and the Local Education Authority need to work together to support children who need **SalT**.



- Children with the most difficult needs should have better support.



- The **Speech and Language Therapy** website is difficult to use.



You can read some examples of children's experiences of **Speech and Language Therapy** at:

<https://northwaleschc.nhs.wales/files/salt-engagement-nwchc-final-report-eng-pdf/>

## Learning Disability Services



Lots of people with learning disabilities need support with their communication.



It can be hard to support people who have difficulties communicating.



One person from an Adult Learning Disability Team told us:



More speech and language therapists are needed to:



- Give information and advice for behaviour support plans.



- Support decisions about funding for health care.



- Share information about communication for young people growing up and leaving school.

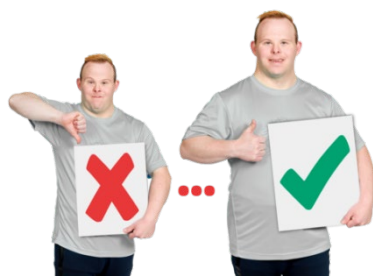


- Video calls have worked well for most people during the pandemic.



- Speech and language Therapists need more training to use technology to support communication.

## What happens now?



**BCUHB** will use the information in this report to improve **Speech and Language Therapy** services for people in North Wales.

# Hard Words

## Accessible information

This is information you can use and understand. For example, Easy Read is accessible information.

## Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)

is a health service supporting problems with communication or eating and drinking.

## Stroke

A stroke is an illness that happens when blood stops flowing to part of your brain. A stroke can cause problems with movement and speech.