



GIVING VOICE CAMPAIGN DELIVERY TOOLKIT

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Using this toolkit

This toolkit is designed to support RCSLT members who want to participate in Giving Voice campaigning. If you feel you need further training or assistance after reading the toolkit, please contact the RCSLT by emailing: campaigns@rcslt.org and we will endeavour to help you.

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Why your voice counts

Welcome to Giving Voice

Speech and language therapy transforms lives. You know that. The RCSLT knows that. Your service users know it. Together, let's make sure everybody else does too.

The Giving Voice campaign is a terrific vehicle to turn challenging circumstances into golden opportunities to ensure speech and language therapy services are seen as cost saving rather than cost driving.

Thank you again for your willingness to take part in the positive mobilisation of our profession. At this time of austerity measures, we recognise the need for collaboration to meet the challenges ahead. Securing services for people with speech, language, communication and swallowing needs is at the heart of this campaign.

We look forward to working with you.

Kamini Gadhok, CEO, RCSLT

The Giving Voice campaign is designed to 'give voice' to people with speech, language and communication needs – to ensure their needs, and those of their carers and families, are met. Our aim is to demonstrate how speech and language therapy makes a difference to individuals and the broader society across the UK. Giving Voice helps speech and language therapy services to demonstrate speech and language therapists' unique value to national and local decision makers, while showing evidence of our efficiency and value for money.

These are the four key messages on which our campaign is based:

1. Speech and language therapists (SLTs) are specialists who enable people to develop or regain vital communication and swallowing skills.
2. Problems with speech and language imprison the individual and severely limit their participation in family life, the community, education and the world of work.
3. Tackling communication and swallowing problems reduces avoidable costs and waste in the NHS, local authorities, the criminal justice system and the wider economy.
4. Urgent changes are needed to support timely access to speech and language therapy for those who need it.

'Campaigning' is a very broad term, describing everything from a community group getting together to petition against the closure of a local swimming pool, to a presidential election campaign which reverberates around the globe. The Giving Voice campaign looks different wherever RCSLT members pick up and run with the concept – but all our activity contributes towards a groundswell of awareness and appreciation of the role of speech and language therapy in our communities.

Giving Voice broke new ground for the RCSLT and we hope it marks the start of an exciting journey for you too. Thank you for finding the time and energy to learn more about the campaign. This toolkit will equip you with the facts and the skills needed to demonstrate to your local decision makers that your service is indispensable and good value.

Giving Voice is:

- **Timely** – Now is the time to demonstrate that speech and language therapy services offer a unique, essential and value for money service to the individual, families and society.

- **Positive** – Giving Voice will help you to offer solutions and indicate to your decision makers and budget holders that SLTs are proactively engaging with the challenges.
- **Realistic** – Money is a challenge everywhere. Giving Voice aims to help your service identify innovations that will lead to better patient outcomes and cost savings.
- **Collaborative** – Wherever it's beneficial, Giving Voice should be part of a joint effort amongst allied health professionals to work collectively on creative solutions to the economic challenge.

Giving Voice – across the UK

Nationally – The RCSLT engages with politicians and the media at a UK-wide level. We're Giving Voice through high-level lobbying meetings, parliamentary events and press work.

Locally – The most important action is on the ground where you are. Local decision making is increasingly influential – which is why the most powerful and passionate advocates for Giving Voice need to be embedded in existing speech and language therapy services.

Individually – Your role is to share the principles of Giving Voice with your colleagues, work with the RCSLT to equip members with campaigning skills and put these into practice for the sake of service users, who deserve the best possible service, despite the economic circumstances.

Take part in the Giving Voice campaign if you have:

Five minutes – Tell a colleague about the campaign whilst you're making a cup of tea/walking to the car park/in the lift. Log on to Facebook or tweet that you're 'Giving Voice' because speech and language therapy transforms lives. Visit: <http://www.facebook.com/RCSLT> and @GivingVoiceUK on Twitter.

One hour – Sit with a colleague and plan how to put your Giving Voice campaign skills into practice at a key meeting with your local MP.

One day – Work with your team to plan and deliver an activity day to raise awareness of your work. This could include developing case studies with your users and how speech and language therapy has transformed their lives.

You could use a normal working day where everything has a 'Giving Voice' flavour – for example, how about having template speech bubbles for service users to fill in available in the waiting room? You can then turn these into a vibrant display or include them in a photo-call with the local paper. (Read more about 'design-a-speech-bubble' in [Appendix G.](#)) You could also refresh your service notice board with Giving Voice materials and key messages. The possibilities are endless – we look forward to hearing from you about how Giving Voice is taking shape where you are.

This toolkit contains resources to make the campaign happen. From template letters to event activities, we have tried to make it as easy as possible for you to take part. See [Appendices](#).

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Why should I get involved?

What's in it for me and my service?

- Help to convey the importance of speech and language therapy services and make a positive case for the provision of speech and language therapy services. Show how your service adds value for money and is a cost saver and not a cost driver.
- Giving Voice is a positive vehicle for you to use to share your knowledge and experience, enabling you to be proactive in engaging with local decision makers to inform service re-design and innovation.
- Your campaigning should lead to improved collaboration and working relationships with Allied Health Professionals (AHP) colleagues.
- Giving Voice activities can be done by teams and individuals and used towards continuing professional development. Through Giving Voice, SLTs will demonstrate how they can enhance service delivery and be of benefit to service users.

What sort of support will we get?

- This toolkit will help you get your local campaigning started. It includes guidance on how to engage effectively, a template letter to send to MPs or equivalent, a template press release and other useful tips on running an event.
- Ongoing support at the end of the phone from the RCSLT.
- News of other champions' efforts plus the chance to share ideas and support each other.

Unleash your inner campaigner

Giving Voice aims to unleash the fantastic skills you already have in communicating, influencing and creativity (to name but a few). Many of the skills and activities within the Giving Voice toolkit can contribute to your CPD.

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How can I be involved?

We would like all RCSLT members to engage with the Giving Voice campaign. However, we appreciate that everyone has different skills, interests and circumstances. Campaign activity can be spread across your team to maximise your impact and the support you can offer each other.

We need *campaign champions* throughout the UK to:

- Train as Giving Voice trainers and cascade the campaigning workshop and toolkit to your colleagues.
- Coordinate your local Giving Voice initiatives,
- Be the link back to the RCSLT.

Please email: campaigns@rcslt.org if you would like to explore becoming a champion. Undertaking this role will involve exciting CPD opportunities as well as experience you can add to your CV.

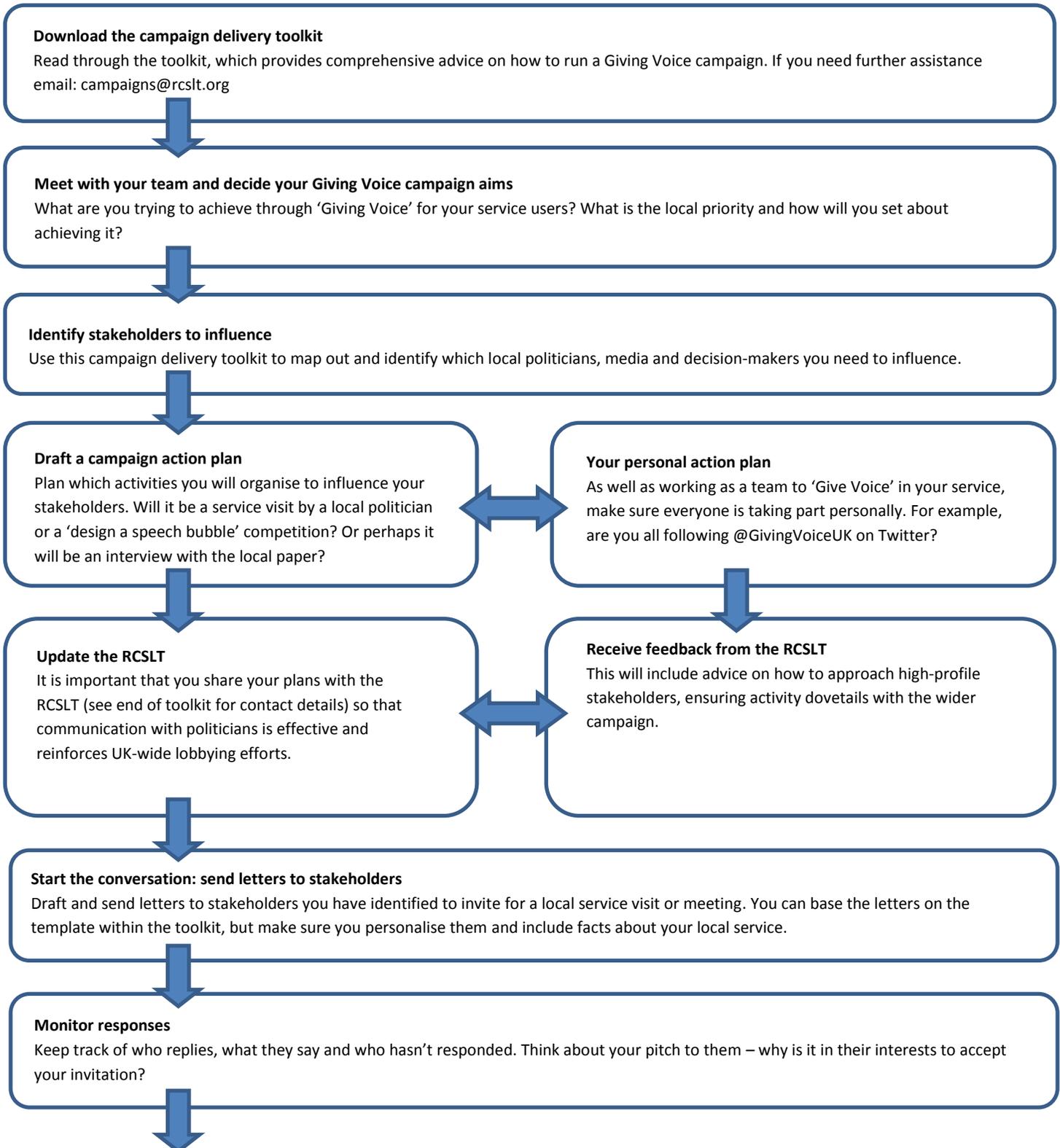
We need *all members* to be Giving Voice campaigners to:

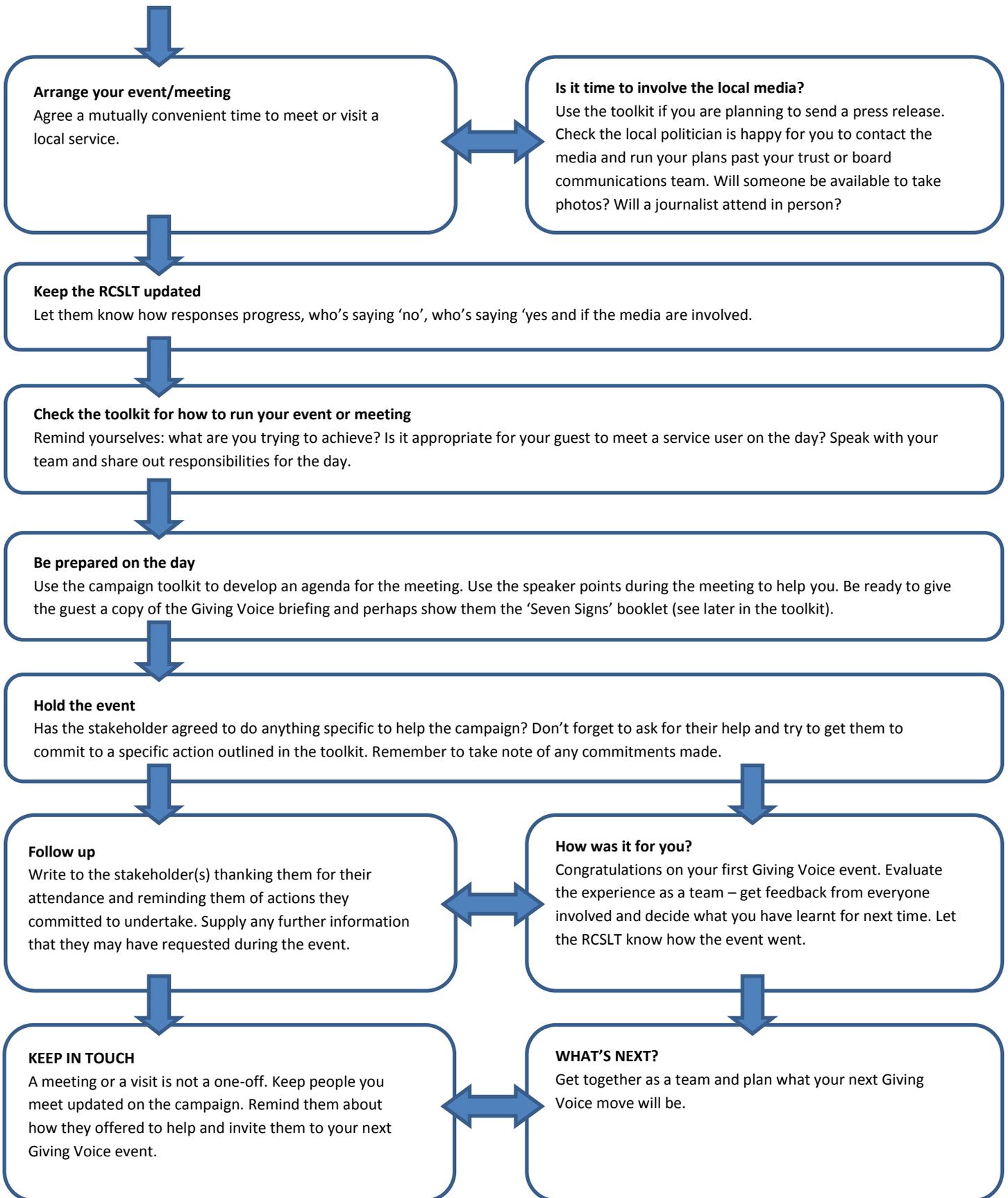
- Be the on-the-ground face of the Giving Voice campaign.
- Engage other SLTs and service users in the campaign.
- Engage and influence local decision makers like MPs, MSPs, AMs, MLAs and councillors.
- Feed back to the RCSLT on the success of campaign resources and support.

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How the campaign works

The following flow chart explains the steps you might take during your local campaigning activities. You might find it helpful to look at this with your team when you're planning local Giving Voice activities. It will help you share out roles and responsibilities.





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Who to engage and how

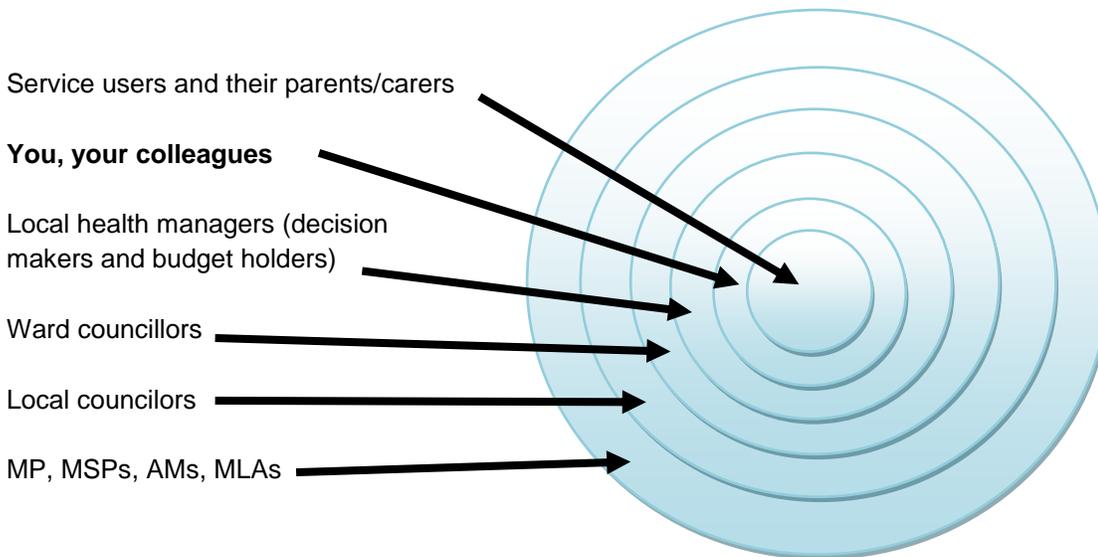
This section is designed to provide you with an intuitive guide to service user and political engagement in your local area, by helping you to identify the key local stakeholders to engage in your 'Giving Voice' campaign activity.

Local political engagement means approaching decision-makers and key influencers in your community, such as your constituency member of parliament (AMs, MPs, MSPs, MLAs), and councillors. They also include senior staff at your local authority, such as the directors of health and social services, depending upon their 'provider' and 'commissioning' form.

Understanding the best way to engage these stakeholders is important to achieving successful outcomes for the Giving Voice campaign, and, if handled appropriately, these relationships could prove extremely valuable to you. The RCLT is here to help with any political engagement activities you undertake, please contact us for the latest briefings before meeting local politicians.

Spheres of influence

Each one of us – whether or not we pay attention to it – exists in a sphere of influence. We are influenced by people and in turn have the power to influence others.



The table below demonstrates how one individual (Vanessa – head of service at Prince Charles Hospital in Merthyr Tydfil) can map out part of her sphere of influence. Use this information to map out your own and fill in the gaps below. Compare notes with colleagues in your team and get an idea of the sphere of influence you have between you.

| Elected representatives | Find yours | Example | Your sphere of influence |
|---|--|--|--------------------------|
| Council Group Leaders (and Independents) | (Local Council Website) www.merthyr.gov.uk | Full contact list on Council website. (Council Leader Councillor Jeff Edwards (Ind)) | |
| Ward councillors by service location | www.writetothem.com | Search by hospital/service postcode | |
| Local Councillor Health / Ed / Soc. Services Portfolio | (Local Council Website) www.merthyr.gov.uk | Eg Councillor Gareth Jones (Ind) | |
| | | Portfolio Member for Social Services and Social Regeneration | |
| In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland - MSPs, AMs or MLAs | www.writetothem.com | * Huw Lewis Lab | |
| Member of Parliament (MP) | www.writetothem.com | *Dai Havard Lab | |
| In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, MSP, AM & MLA candidates | Check party websites | | |

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Mapping and influencing

This guide seeks to make mapping and influencing your key stakeholders simple, straightforward, and above all, time efficient. We recognise the busy professional environment you work in and that you will have limited time for these activities. The guidance is divided into two sections:

- How to identify the key stakeholders to contact about Giving Voice.
- The means by which you should engage with these groups (there are template letters and further resources available in this toolkit to help).

Who should you contact?

Service users

“I’m supporting Giving Voice because ‘I am determined to have a positive impact on others in the same way that my SLT has had on me!’

Peter – a service user from Northern Ireland.

The ultimate aim of the campaign is to Give Voice to our service users. The RCSLT is working hard to help Peter and others to fulfil their ambition of sharing the benefits of their experience of speech and language therapy transforming their lives. Their stories and experiences are our most powerful means to gain the serious attention of politicians and press. Stories about people move us from facts and rationality to emotions and feelings. Stories don’t need to argue and you can’t argue with them. Listeners will work out the meaning of the story themselves. It isn’t thrust upon them. Stories change minds.

Of course, there are limits on the extent to which it is appropriate for SLTs to encourage their clients to be part of Giving Voice. The RCSLT engages user organisations in the campaign to enable interested service users to take part in activity, such as contacting their own local politicians. The following are some example of the means by which you might play a role in engaging service users in the campaign.

Sharing stories

The RCSLT would like to hear inspirational stories from therapists who have really made a difference to lives and from adults and children who have benefited from their speech and language therapy – whether that means starting school, getting a job or returning to work after an illness or event that has caused you to have communication difficulties. These stories demonstrate just how important speech and language therapy is – not just to those with communication and swallowing needs, but to society as a whole. And, whenever there’s an opportunity to do so, we will use the stories to encourage media coverage for the Giving Voice campaign and to bring the issue to life for politicians.

“Until it happens to you, you don’t realise how many people benefit from speech and language therapy. Without Andrew’s help, I believe I would still be unable to swallow. Thanks to him life is slowly returning to normal.”

Alan – stroke survivor

“I can’t imagine where Jamie would be now if we had not received such an excellent service and I feel very strongly that all children in a similar situation should be given the same opportunity.”

Laura – mother of young man with Down’s syndrome

See [Appendix B](#) for a communication accessible Giving Voice campaign briefing. This sheet should be a helpful starting point for engaging service users in the campaign, acknowledging some clients will need further assistance.

Service user organisations

Please use your local contacts with service user organisations to share the Giving Voice campaign. Involve them when you can in your local awareness raising activities and encourage them to endorse the campaign on their own website or materials where possible. Contact the RCSLT if you would like help supplying a user organisation with campaign information and a logo for their website.

Local decision makers

When deciding which local decision makers to prioritise read their biographies online (a quick internet search will locate these) and look out for particular issues or interest you could tap into. Make sure you refer to these interests in your communication with them. The website: <https://www.writetothem.com/> is a great way to quickly identify your elected representatives.

Your member of parliament

If your service is in **England** the first place to start is to approach your local MP. The UK is divided up into 650 constituencies, each with its own MP. You are represented in Parliament by the MP for the constituency in which you live. To find which constituency you live in and the identity of your local MP, go to the UK Parliament website and click on the 'MPs' section. By typing your postcode into the search box the result will come back with the name of your constituency and your local MP, with their contact details and a brief biography. Visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>

Parliamentary convention means that as a resident constituent you should write to your constituency MP, and writing as a resident of their constituency is the best means to engage with them. However, if your place of work or your patient base is in a different constituency, you are entitled to write to the local MP in your professional capacity as an employee in that area, or on behalf of a patient, and this is another effective means of engagement. You can use the Parliamentary search engine as above to identify these targets.

Your elected representative MLA/MSP/AMs (Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales)

If you live and work in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales, your first choice may be your local representative in your parliament or assembly, as most health and education matters are devolved.

In **Scotland**, the legislature is the Scottish Parliament, and the politicians are called members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs). Everyone in Scotland has one constituency (local) MSP and seven regional or 'list' MSPs – all of whom can do things for you. The same principles apply to MSPs as to MPs in terms of contacting them, and you can find your local MSPs at the Parliament's website: <http://www.parliament.scot/>

In **Wales**, the legislature is the National Assembly for Wales, and the politicians are called assembly members (AMs). Everyone in Wales has one constituency (local) AM and four regional or 'list' AMs – all of whom can do things for you. The same principles apply to AMs as to MPs in terms of contacting them, and you can find your local AMs on the Assembly's website. Visit: www.assemblywales.org

In **Northern Ireland**, the legislature is called the Northern Ireland Assembly, and the politicians are known as members of the legislative assembly (MLAs). There are 108 MLAs, six for each of the 18 constituencies. The same principles apply to MLAs as to MPs in terms of contacting them, and you can find your MLA at the Assembly's website. Visit: www.niassembly.gov.uk

Your local authority/councillor(s)

You are represented by local government councillors and will have one or more responsible for the ward in which you live (a smaller-scale division of your local authority area). Local councillors can represent you on a range of issues concerning

local services, including education. You may not know which ward of your local authority you live in, or the identity of your local councillors, but they can be valuable local advocates for the campaign.

All local authorities will have websites that follow a similar structure and should enable you to navigate to, for example, the 'Council and Democracy' or 'Find your Councillor' section. You may be presented with a postcode search tool, like with the parliamentary website above. This will tell you which ward you live in and the names and contact details of your local councillors.

Whilst on the local authority website, you may be able to identify a councillor who has executive responsibility for health and social care in your area. This can usually also be found on the 'Council and Democracy' section, although some councils may call the department 'Adult Services' or equivalent. You may also be interested to look at the other departments, such as children's services, which will have links with our campaign.

The following websites provide additional information for each nation:

England: www.yourboroughname.gov.uk

Northern Ireland: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/local-councils-in-northern-ireland>

Scotland: <http://www.gov.scot/About/Government/councils>

Wales: <http://www.wlga.gov.uk/>

Your local authority officers

In addition to local councillors, there is value in contacting the relevant permanent staff at your local authority. Each authority will have a health and/or social services/work/care department/directorate, headed up by a senior council officer, or director. Your local authority website will include the breakdown of the council departments, as well as the director concerned.

For additional information on local influencing, please visit: https://www.rcslt.org/members/local_influencing/who

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How can I approach stakeholders?

By letter

Even today, a personalised letter is the most effective approach. They are the best means of initiating contact with key stakeholders, and the majority of approaches to them are made in this way. If you have never written to a politician before, you could use the template [[Appendix D](#)] as a guide. To make your letter worthwhile you must personalise it with local facts and figures. The most important thing to do in the letter is to request a meeting or service visit to get your message across.

Through telephone conversations

It is not usually worth phoning your targets unless you have already written to them, as a 'cold call' will usually result in them asking you to write to them in one form or another. However, if you have not received a written response from your target within two weeks of writing, a telephone call to bring their attention back to your letter is an effective means of engagement.

Using face-to-face meetings

Above all, a meeting is often the result you are seeking to achieve from this engagement activity, although you may be able to achieve your campaign goals in a telephone call.

Surgeries

Politicians almost always hold 'surgeries' – sessions where they make themselves available to meet their constituents individually. These should be published on their websites or details of them can be obtained by contacting their offices directly. They can operate on an appointment or drop-in basis. You may therefore find it helpful to meet with your representative in this way, either before or after writing to them.

One-to-one at the speech and language therapy service

Ideally, you should try to obtain a meeting with the local politician, allowing them to meet with you at your service as this will maximise their engagement with your campaign.

Service visits

To achieve the campaign objective of improving understanding of speech and language therapy – what it involves and how it benefits individuals and society – it is great to invite politicians and/or the press to visit your service. It can be difficult for people who have not experienced speech therapy to imagine a session or grasp the importance of the regular contact between therapist and client.

A service visit takes a little more organisation, but is often a more effective way of engaging your stakeholders because it helps to bring the issue to life – they can experience at first hand what the service comprises, the people it supports, and the impact that SLT interventions make on individual's lives.

Think about the key components of a service visit:

- Arrange a convenient time for the stakeholder to visit your service or clinic.
- Seek the permission of any clients who will be present and ensure they feel comfortable with the plans. The RCSLT has some further communication accessible resources for use in planning events with client-involvement – contact us for more information.
- Arrange for a photographer to capture the visit and use these pictures to help you further promote the work you do.
- When inviting politicians or other VIPs offer them some encouraging advice on how best to engage with clients to find out more about their experience. The Communication Forum Scotland (of which RCSLT is a member) developed, in consultation with SLTs and people with communication disabilities, a fantastic toolkit aimed at policy and decision makers. It offers advice and practical tools on improving and supporting engagement with people who have a variety of

communication support needs. For example it includes a fact sheet on how to ask questions in the best way for people with communication needs. Visit: www.communicationforumsotland.org.uk . Why not ask your guests to visit this website before their service visit?

Draw up a clear agenda for the visit. Ideally this would include the following activities:

- Private meeting with SLTs and clinical manager to provide an introduction to the service and clients that the stakeholder will be meeting. You will want time to run through the business of the meeting and the campaign 'asks'.
- Sessions with one or two service users, ideally showing a range of interventions and services you provide. If possible, it is useful to be able to show the 'special relationship' between the SLT and client.
- Brief tour of the service.
- Photo opportunity (with external local media or for internal PR purposes).
- Make sure you get permission from the right people in advance – both clients and the communications team of your trust or board if this is necessary. Liaise closely and ensure your visit plans are approved beforehand.
- You will also need to run any press releases past the constituency office of the politician – you can check they are happy with the media being there when you set up and confirm the meeting.
- Make sure you tidy up in advance and prepare a short briefing for all attendees and staff – who is visiting and why is it important. You might also remind them of the campaign key messages so they are front of mind.

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Telling the story of your service

To build a powerful case for the relevance and effectiveness of your speech and language therapy service you need to arm yourself with accurate and compelling information about your situation. Local politicians, journalists, decision makers and budget holders are interested in the local picture. You need to combine 'killer facts' about speech, language and communication needs, with prevalence rates in your area, along with other pertinent information such as successful models of service delivery, to form the basis of your case for your service. Combining these hard facts with the retelling of service users' personal experiences should add up to a strong case that's worth listening to. (You can use [Appendix H](#) as a template for telling the story of your service.) More on involving service users later.

Where to find the information

Giving Voice key messages

The four messages below sum up the central arguments for ongoing investment in SLT services in tough times. They aim to improve understanding of the impact of your service and demonstrate the economic benefits of sustained investment. You can use these messages to explain the campaign to your colleagues and commissioners. Make them visible and have them on the tip of your tongue:

- 1: Speech and language therapists are specialists who enable people to develop or regain vital communication and swallowing skills.
- 2: Problems with speech and language imprison the individual, and severely limit their participation in family life, the community, education and the world of work.
- 3: Tackling communication and swallowing problems reduces avoidable costs and waste in the NHS, local authorities, the criminal justice system and the wider economy.
- 4: Urgent changes are needed to support timely access to speech and language therapy for those who need it.

General 'killer facts' about speech, language and communication needs

Here are some 'killer facts' you can use in letters or during meetings to demonstrate the need for action, and the importance of speech and language therapy interventions – it is good to show the bigger picture and be able to answer the 'So-what question?':

Communication and swallowing problems can affect people at all ages and stages of life:

- Nearly 20% of the population experience communication difficulties at some point in their lives
- 7% of children aged about five years have specific speech and language impairment and a further 1.8% have speech, language and communication needs linked to other conditions, such as learning disability, cerebral palsy and autism spectrum disorders.
- Around a third of people will have some level of communication difficulties (called aphasia or dysphasia) following a stroke.
- At least 40% of stroke survivors will initially experience some difficulty swallowing.
- 20% of people with head or brain injury have speech difficulties.

The ability to communicate is key to children's life chances and outcomes in later life:

- More than half of children in socially deprived areas may start school with impoverished speech, language and communication skills.
- Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) are one of the most common types of special educational needs amongst school children.
- More than 60% of young people in the youth justice have communication difficulties.
- 88% of long-term unemployed young men have speech, language and communication needs.
- Vocabulary difficulties at age five are significantly associated with poor literacy, mental health and employment outcomes at age 34.

Make sure you have some local 'killer facts' up your sleeve too – as this is where local politicians' interests really lie. But it is helpful to give a flavour of the national picture.

The resource manual

This RCSLT resource provides a synthesis of the evidence base and a synthesis of the management for a range of clinical areas. It can be used to assist speech and language therapists in gathering data required to support service tendering agreements, service planning, monitoring arrangements and/or where services require the development of a specification. Speech and language therapy managers can use this resource as part of a dialogue with commissioners to support understanding the commissioning agenda and the outcomes that speech and language therapy services are to be assessed on. Visit: [RCSLT Resource Manual for Commissioning and Planning Services](#) .

Economic case

The RCSLT commissioned an independent economic study into the short and medium term cost savings that can be achieved as a result of targeted investment in speech and language therapy. This is more commonly known as '[The Matrix Report](#)'. The findings can be used to help with the development of your speech and language therapy service's business case and to help realise the value from cross-boundary decision-making and pooled budgets.

I've gathered the information – how do I use it?

- Don't feel overwhelmed by the amount of information and the different sources we have provided.
- If you are able to, we recommend sharing a mixture of national facts, and local prevalence data with politicians. This is because they are interested in what is happening in their local area (indeed they are accountable for what's happening there at election time). They are also interested in challenging issues that have a national significance. With the increasing focus on localised decision making and planning, our elected representatives and councillors are increasingly important people to influence.
- You could put together half a page with some of the key facts using the different sources above. You might use this to prompt yourself during the meeting, or as something to give to your audience.
- You can follow up with more facts and figures after the event to help bolster your case for action.

Illustrating how your service is cost effective

More than ever before, it is vital that speech and language therapy services demonstrate they are evidence based and improve outcomes. As part of your Giving Voice activity your SLT team leader/manager needs to work towards undertaking evaluations of your whole service. Individual case studies demonstrating improved outcomes are also powerful. See [Appendix F](#) for examples of service stories to help you plan how to communicate your own innovations and best practice in a similar format which helps decision makers tick the right boxes.

This work needs to be happening alongside the campaigning activities described in this toolkit. To help encourage this work, you could get together as a team and explore these points:

A. Demonstrating the economic benefits of your service:

- Our service is cost effective because....
- Not doing it would have these costs....
- By *us* doing it rather than.....
- We save money being spent elsewhere...

Our service has increased efficiency:

- eg in comparison to previous/standard practice...
- eg in comparison to others...
- eg more efficient means.....

B. Innovation in service development:

- Identify potential area(s) that could develop for your service. For example, from Giving Voice training, reading, networks.
- Why could it work for you? eg similar staff, service, problems.
- Why have you not done it yet: barriers; resources needed to implement the idea?

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Giving Voice support from RCSLT

We understand that your time is stretched and resources are extremely tight. That's why the RCSLT is committed to supporting all our members in their engagement with Giving Voice. If you have a question, need resources or would like to request training, please email campaigns@rcslt.org and one of the team will endeavour to help.

Resources inside this toolkit:

[Appendix A – Giving Voice prompt sheet](#)

A handy sheet to stick by your computer screen/in your diary to enable you to explain the basics of the campaign and remind you of the key local issues your campaign team are focusing on as part of Giving Voice

[Appendix B – Engaging service users: Communication accessible introductory campaign briefing](#)

Every service user's needs are different, but this campaign briefing provides a communication accessible introduction to Giving Voice and could help you share the campaign with service users where appropriate.

[Appendix C – Template press release](#)

This shows an example of how to use the local media to boost support for your Giving Voice campaigning.

[Appendix D – Template letter to local politicians](#)

Key points to make in a letter to your own elected representative or the politicians responsible for the area in which your service operates.

[Appendix E – Politicians' briefing sheet and speaker points for you](#)

If you are able to engage your own politicians or the elected representatives responsible for your service, make sure they get hold of this briefing which sums up Giving Voice in the most effective way for local politicians. Make sure you've got the up-to-date version for your country – check with your RCSLT contact if you're unsure. Use the suggested speaker points to help prepare you for a meeting with them. NB: please work with your local champion and the RCSLT to plan your political engagement – it's important that decision makers hear a consistent and well planned message from us.

[Appendix F – Example of a service story](#)

Use this format to communicate the economic benefits of your service.

[Appendix G – 'Design a Speech Bubble' activity sheet](#)

Extra ideas for turning this activity into an awareness-raising opportunity where you work. If you have colleagues or contact in other areas who can only engage in part of Giving Voice why not pass this on to them and invite them to get creative.

[Appendix H – Frequently asked questions](#)

Some of the top questions that might come arise as you plan your campaigning activities.

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Giving Voice resources and materials

Further resources to support your campaigning are available via www.givingvoiceuk.org or by emailing: campaigns@rcslt.org

Giving Voice logo

Download the [Giving Voice logo and strapline](#) to use on your own campaign posters, email signature or letters.

The seven signs

You can also use the Seven Signs of speech and language and communication difficulties for [children](#) and [adults](#) in your service and campaign activities. They have been designed to improve understanding and awareness of SLCN amongst your clinical colleagues.

Social media

Please engage with the Giving Voice social networking profiles:

- www.facebook.com/RCSLT
- [Giving Voice You Tube Channel](#)
- <https://twitter.com/GivingVoiceUK> (@GivingVoiceUK) and use #givingvoiceuk or #RCSLT in your own related tweets.

Make sure you keep an eye on...

The Giving Voice campaign pages at: www.givingvoiceuk.org – your first port of call for campaign updates, resources and news.

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Over to you

Thank you for reading the Giving Voice campaign toolkit. We hope you have found it both useful and inspiring. As the campaign continues it is vitally important that you stay in touch with the RCSLT (through Bulletin, the www.givingvoiceuk.org website and [Giving Voice social media feeds](#) so your local efforts can be as effective as possible in contributing to the overall campaign. Look out for opportunities to attend Giving Voice events featured in Bulletin articles and help us to get local support for national campaign petitions when they come up.

Your feedback is vital

Use the campaigns@rcslt.org email address to:

- Tell us which resources and activities are working well and what additional ideas you have to make the campaign a success.
- Tell us about your Giving Voice activities before and after they happen and we will help you to promote them through our various news channels. Remember, stories of local triumphs can be an inspiration to others!
- Send us good quality images of your Giving Voice activity. We will upload the best pictures to our website gallery and social media feeds.
- Order Giving Voice merchandise.

We will do everything we can to respond to your feedback and requests.

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Appendix A

Giving Voice prompt sheet

The Giving Voice campaign is designed to ‘give voice’ to people with speech, language and communication needs – to ensure their needs, and those of their carers and families, are met. Our aim is to demonstrate how speech and language therapy makes a difference to individuals and the broader society across the UK. Giving Voice is helping speech and language therapy services demonstrate SLTs’ unique value to national and local decision makers, while showing evidence of their efficiency and value for money.

The campaign’s key messages are:

- 1: Speech and language therapists are specialists who enable people to develop or regain vital communication and swallowing skills.
- 2: Problems with speech and language imprison the individual, and severely limit their participation in family life, the community, education and the world of work.
- 3: Tackling communication and swallowing problems reduces avoidable costs and waste in the NHS, local authorities, the criminal justice system and the wider economy.
- 4: Urgent changes are needed to support timely access to speech and language therapy for those who need it.

The top three issues that we’re Giving Voice to in our team are:

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

The top three value for money initiatives (proposed or actioned) we’re telling everybody about:

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Our champion contact point is:
Our RCSLT contact point is:

If you have any questions about the campaign please email: campaigns@rcslt.org

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Appendix B

Engaging service users: communication accessible introductory campaign briefing

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists is running a campaign.

The campaign is called 'Giving Voice'.

Aim of the Giving Voice campaign

The campaign will:

- explain what speech and language therapists do.
- show how speech and language therapy services can change lives in a cost-effective way.

We are organising the campaign because we want existing speech and language services to continue.

We want you to have the help you need with your communication and swallowing difficulties.

You can support the "Giving Voice" campaign

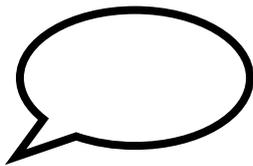


Tell your story in different ways

The campaign is called 'Giving Voice' because we need people to say how speech therapy has helped them and their families.

This will show people who make the decisions on services that speech and language therapy is vital.

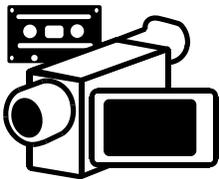
You can do it on your own or work with someone else.



Design a speech bubble

Draw a blank speech bubble. Put a message in it. Use words, pictures or symbols.

Take a photograph of the speech bubble. It will go onto the campaign website.



Make a short video

Say why speech therapy matters to you. Start with 'I'm Giving Voice because.....' It will go onto the campaign website.



Contact your elected representative

Ask them to support the Giving Voice campaign. Tell them what a difference speech and language therapy has made to your life.

Contact them by email, letter, phone or arrange a visit.

Contact details of your elected representative are on www.theyworkforyou.com/ If you would like help email: campaigns@rcslt.org



Work with your local speech and language therapy service or user organisation

Your speech and language therapist may ask you to come with them to talk to decision makers. They will help you to prepare for the meeting.



More information

To find out more about the Giving Voice campaign:

| | |
|--|---|
| An icon showing two black silhouettes of people facing each other, with a blue speech bubble containing a white question mark above them, indicating a consultation or question. | Talk to your speech therapist |
| A simple line-art icon of a computer mouse with a cord, representing a website or online resource. | Go to the website www. givingvoiceuk.org |



Email campaigns@rcslt.org

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Appendix C

Template press release

LOCAL MP/MSP/AM/MLA [delete as appropriate] GIVING VOICE TO SUPPORT SPEECH CAMPAIGN

[insert date of issue]

During a visit to [service] today, [decision maker + role] gave their voice in support of [name client group] with speech language and communication difficulties.

[[Name] has signed the House of Commons Early Day Motion in support of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists' *Giving Voice* campaign.] *Insert if applicable as per advice from the RCSLT*

The MP is writing to [insert name of PCT/Board/Council] to find out more about what plans are in place to safeguard essential services for [number of + client group] with speech and language difficulties in [constituency/area].

The RCSLT Giving Voice campaign aims to increase understanding of the role of speech and language therapy and to show how **tackling communication and swallowing problems reduces avoidable costs and waste in the NHS, local authorities, the criminal justice system and the wider economy.**

The MP spent time at the [insert name of service] and met a local service user [insert name if appropriate] who [insert the specific needs of client – e.g. parent of child with SLI, stroke survivor].

[Insert name of service user] who lives in [insert town/village] says speech and language therapy has transformed their life by [explain how].

[Insert quote from service user if you are able to]: "I am giving my voice to support speech and language therapy because [...]."

[Name of MP] said: [insert quote from MP e.g. "Tackling communication and swallowing problems reduces avoidable costs and waste in the NHS, local authorities, the criminal justice system and the wider economy. That's why I'm giving my voice to support speech and language therapy."]

The RCSLT's campaign highlights that in [country] speech, language and communication disabilities are widespread and that support must be readily accessible.

For further information about the Giving Voice campaign please contact: [insert your contact details].

Notes to Editors

- Speech, language and communication disability is the most common difficulty experienced by children. Stroke is the most common cause of disability in adults in England and one third of stroke survivors have communication problems, while around 850,000 people with dementia have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) in the UK and the figure rises each year.

- Speech and language therapists (SLTs) are specialists who enable people to develop or regain vital communication and swallowing skills. SLTs enable people to express themselves, to listen to and understand others.

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Appendix D

Template letter to local politicians

[Politician name]

[Politicians local office address]

Date

Insert logos/use letter-headed paper
as appropriate

Dear [politician]

Invitation to visit your local speech and language service in [location]

I am writing to invite you to visit [insert service name here], to meet with local therapists and service users to learn more about the role of local speech and language therapy services and how they can and are helping improve the lives of constituents and their families in our local community.

As you may know, speech, language, and communication difficulties are some of the most common difficulties in early childhood and amongst children of all ages. Adults with long term conditions such as stroke, cancer and progressive neurological conditions also experience significant speech, language communication and swallowing difficulties. The RCSLT campaign called 'Giving Voice' which aims to raise awareness of these difficulties and demonstrate the unique role and value of speech and language therapy in improving outcomes for these individuals.

Speech and language difficulties severely limit an individual's participation in family life, the community, education and the world of work. Tackling communication and swallowing problems can reduce avoidable costs and waste in the NHS, social care, the criminal justice system and the wider economy.

Our service is working to promote collaborative solutions at a local level to deliver quality, productivity and cost-effectiveness and achieve shared objectives in health, welfare, education, employment and criminal justice. [Insert an example of a recent "innovative" local project or immediate concerns that you may have regarding service changes.]

We would be delighted if you were able to visit us to see first-hand how speech and language therapy transforms lives, and delivers value for the Government and the wider society.

I will be in touch with your office shortly to see if we may arrange a convenient time for a meeting. In the meantime if you would like any more information, please do not hesitate to contact me on [telephone](#), or [email address](#).

Yours sincerely,

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Appendix E

Politicians' briefing sheet and speaker points for you

Draft agenda and speaking points for meetings

AGENDA (reproduce and adapt for external use)

1. Introductions and overview of meeting
2. About the Giving Voice campaign
3. Local issues: challenges and opportunities
4. Supporting local people with SLCN
5. Supporting the national campaign
6. AOB
7. Close

SPEAKER POINTS for meetings (internal only)

1. *Introductions and overview of meeting*
 - Find out how long the stakeholder has for the meeting.
 - Explain in brief the services that you provide and the role of SLT in the local community.
 - Explain that the aim of the meeting is to tell them about the Giving Voice campaign and the current challenges facing SLT services in the local area, and to ask for their support.
2. *About the Giving Voice campaign*
 - Use the 'campaigner prompt sheet' ([Appendix A](#)) to explain what the campaign is all about.
 - You can use some of the killer facts to explain why the campaign is so important.
3. *Local issues: challenges and opportunities*
 - What are the particular issues you are concerned about in the context of tight spending? What services – in particular your clients (especially vulnerable groups) could be hit? Your discussion should focus on the opportunities for improving efficiency and patient outcomes, not on the doom and gloom of cuts. For some elected representatives it may be the first question they ask. So, be ready to turn the conversation into a positive demonstration of how your service is responding.
 - What do you think might be the solution? You don't have to have all the answers.
 - One point to raise is the importance of SLTs and clinical managers being involved in decisions with providers and commissioners about cuts because they can help with service re-design that supports a framework through which health services aim to achieve better quality care while making efficiency savings leading to better value.
 - What are the opportunities – have you got examples to share of how you have re-shaped your services?
 - Remember that your elected representative can help by getting this on the agenda of commissioners and providers by contacting them on your behalf and raising his/her concerns or questions further to your meeting.
4. *Supporting local people with SLCN*
 - What actions would you like the elected representative to take locally? For example:
 - Ask them to contact your local health service provider, local authority, council or youth offending service to facilitate a joint meeting on the Giving Voice campaign and speech and language therapy provision in the local area.

- Speak to the media about the visit and register his/her support for the Giving Voice campaign.

5. *Supporting the national campaign*

- What actions would you like the elected representative to take nationally? For example:
- Write to the Government in his/her country in support of the Giving Voice Campaign (NB RCSLT can advise on appropriate ministers to contact and this can be included in the follow-up letter).

6. *AOB*

- Make sure you have asked for the stakeholder's views on what you have said and respond, or promise to follow up with any questions that you cannot answer.

7. *Close*

Remember to:

- Read a short biography of the stakeholder in advance – this can help you to tailor the meeting to suit their particular interests.
- Ask them for their views, not just talk at them – this way you can develop a dialogue and identify points of agreement (what the MP is really interested to help you with).
- Give the stakeholder a copy of the Giving Voice briefing paper.
- Show them the 'Seven Signs' (of speech and language and communication difficulties for children and adults).
- Ask them to take action at both a local and a national level.
- Write up your notes from the meeting; draft a prompt thank you letter to the elected representative with a reminder of the actions. Ask the RCSLT for help if you need to and let us know what the elected representative has offered to do.

Overview: What is the Giving Voice Campaign?

- The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) launched 'Giving Voice' to increase understanding of the role of speech and language therapy and to show how this transforms lives, and releases value for Government, society and the economy.
- The Giving Voice campaign aims to demonstrate how speech and language therapy makes a difference to people with speech, language and communication needs, their families, and the wider society. We want to show what speech and language therapy is and the positive impact it has. Giving Voice will also demonstrate that this unique and vital service is cost-effective and value for money.
- The campaign is attuned to the political and economic imperatives we now face. 'Giving Voice' calls for collaborative solutions at national policy and local service level to deliver quality, productivity and cost-effectiveness and achieve shared objectives in health, welfare, education, employment and criminal justice.
- The goal of the campaign is to promote smarter, joined-up investment in SLT, and secure timely access to speech and language therapy for all those who need it.

Who is speech and language therapy for? What are communication disabilities?

- Speech language and communication problems can be present independently of other learning difficulties, disabilities or health problems: such as a stammer, specific language impairment or voice loss.
- Speech language and communication problems are also associated with other widespread causes including mental illness, stroke, head and neck cancer, learning disability, hearing impairment, brain injury, autism, cerebral palsy, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, cleft palate and voice difficulties.
- In every classroom there are children who need expert help with speaking and understanding. If their speech, language and communication difficulties are resolved, children are enabled to develop good reading and spelling skills. They become more receptive to learning and social situations and develop emotional maturity and better behaviour.

Speech and language therapists also work with people who have swallowing disorders. These affect both children and adults and can cause life-threatening problems with breathing and choking; chest and other infections; poor nutrition and hydration; and invariably cause distress and depression.

Everybody knows somebody who has benefited from the help of a speech and language therapist. But did you know that:

- Nearly 20% of the population experience communication difficulties at some point in their lives.
- 7% of children aged about five years have specific speech and language impairment and a further 1.8% have speech, language and communication needs linked to other conditions, such as learning disability, cerebral palsy and autism spectrum disorders.
- Around a third of people will have some level of communication difficulties (called aphasia or dysphasia) following a stroke.
- At least 40% of stroke survivors will initially experience some difficulty swallowing.
- 20% of people with head or brain injury have speech difficulties.

The ability to communicate is key to children's life chances and outcomes in later life:

- More than half of children in socially deprived areas may start school with impoverished speech, language and communication skills.
- Speech, language and communication needs are one of the most common types of special educational needs amongst school children.
- More than 60% of young people in the youth justice have communication difficulties.
- 88% of long-term unemployed young men have speech, language and communication needs.
- Vocabulary difficulties at age five are significantly associated with poor literacy, mental health and employment outcomes at age 34.

*****Try to use this space to fill in facts about SLCN in your country or region – this will help the elected representative see the impact of your service on their electorate*****

What is speech and language therapy?

- Speech and language therapists enable people to express themselves, to listen to and understand others. They provide accurate identification, assessment and diagnosis of speech, language, communication and swallowing disorders.
- Speech and language therapy is based on continuous assessment and a process of responsive and changing support. This includes setting personal goals and specific strategies for people who have communication and swallowing disorders.
- Speech and language therapists are specialists who enable people to develop or regain vital communication and swallowing skills. They enable people to express themselves, to listen to and understand others.
- Speech and language therapists work with others including parents, carers and other professionals to make their interventions and support more effective, when communication difficulties would otherwise prevent this.

Why do we need to take action now?

- Problems with speech and language imprison the individual, and severely limit their participation in family life, the community, education and the world of work.
- Speech, language, communication and swallowing needs among children and adults are relatively common but access to the right specialist support is not always possible and budgetary pressures are putting existing services at risk.
- Tackling communication and swallowing problems reduces avoidable costs and waste in the NHS, local authorities, the criminal justice system and the wider economy. For example:
 - Sustaining speech and language services will help to deliver ‘more for less’ in the NHS e.g. by reducing emergency admissions resulting from swallowing difficulties.
 - Supporting earlier discharge, ongoing rehabilitation and care closer to home for patients including stroke survivors, victims of head injury and those living with dementia.
- Communication problems are an important factor in young offending – but research has shown that speech and language therapy can make a difference in helping people escape the cycle of offending behaviour.
- Unidentified and unmanaged speech and language problems become more entrenched and can lead to complex ‘secondary’ challenges such as poverty, poor mental health, anti-social behaviour and unemployment. This not only ruins lives, but requires more intensive, high-cost forms of state intervention.
- Speech and language therapy will improve the effectiveness of public health initiatives to reduce health inequalities, such as the smoking cessation and managing mental health campaigns, amongst people with communication difficulties.

- Sustaining speech and language services will help to deliver 'more for less' in the NHS by reducing emergency admissions resulting from swallowing difficulties, and supporting earlier discharge and care closer to home for stroke survivors, victims of head injury and those living with dementia.
- High-cost rehabilitation programmes, such as prison education schemes, can waste money unless they are made accessible to offenders, the majority of whom may need additional help with communication.
- By forming educational environments that are supportive of children who have communication problems, schools can create a context in which all their pupils' communication development will benefit.

What are we asking Government and local budget holders to do?

Below are some of the high level asks we are making throughout the campaign. Further more specific asks for all four administrations are available from your RCSLT contact.

- Prioritise speech and language therapy within their strategic planning as a cost-saving intervention, rather than a cost-driving service. The ability of people with speech, language and communication needs to access and benefit from mainstream services is dependent on access to specialist support.
- Ensure that mainstream services support the early identification of speech, language and communication difficulties, and ensure timely access to specialist services.
- Deliver coherent planning and sharing of resources across traditional boundaries such as health, social care, education and probation.
- Engage clinical experts in decisions about budget management and cost cutting. Harness the expertise of clinical managers who can offers solutions that address policy framework imperatives.

How can you support the Giving Voice campaign?

- Contact your local trust/board, local authority or probation service to facilitate a joint meeting on the Giving Voice campaign and local speech and language therapy provision.
- Write to the Government in support of the Giving Voice Campaign.

To find out more about how you can support the Giving Voice campaign, please email:
<mailto:campaigns@rcslt.org>

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Appendix F

Example of a service story

Story – ‘Harry and Daisy’

Eastern and Coastal Kent Community Health NHS Trust Developmental Verbal Dyspraxia Specialist Service

Context

Eastern and Coastal Kent Community Health NHS Trust is focused on delivering care to children, families and adults, which includes supporting and protecting vulnerable adults and children, reducing health inequalities and early intervention. As part of their core services, there is a specialist service for children with developmental verbal dyspraxia (DVD). This is a neurological childhood speech sound disorder in which the precision and consistency of movements underlying speech are impaired. (American Speech-Language Hearing Association, ASHA 2007).

Problem - Unmet need

The service was set up following identification by the team managers and service lead that the needs of the children with DVD were not being met. In the East Kent area, the number of specialist schools and nursery placements for children with DVD decreased and responsibility for these services were transferred to the local authority, special schools and unit reviews. This meant children with significant needs were dependent on mainstream provision and were receiving therapy through the ‘traditional’ clinic-based intervention, which included 30 minute sessions, once a week, for six weeks. After this intervention, children were then added to the waiting list for further therapy.

Solution - Service re-design

Based on clinical experience and research, children with DVD require intensive intervention, which was not provided for children in mainstream settings.

The DVD specialist service commenced in January 2009 to enable children and young people to express themselves as clearly as possible by providing an intensive therapy package tailored to their unique requirements. By meeting these needs, children were enabled to access the national curriculum; reduce their frustration; and ensure long-term wellbeing.

In summary this was achieved by:

- Working directly with children to identify suspected DVD.
- Therapy delivered by a highly specialist speech and language therapist and carried over on a daily basis by school staff and parents.
- Offering more flexibility to reduce barriers to access (e.g. taking the service to the service users and meeting clients’ and families’ needs – bringing therapy to children directly in their home or school).
- Providing regular reviews to monitor a child’s progress and ensure packages are tailored to the individual child’s speech, language and communication needs.
- Reviewing progress on a quarterly basis and monitoring against the East Kent Outcome System.

Therapy is ongoing and children only exit the service when no further therapy is required – that is if their speech errors are resolved or there is a satisfaction with the level of progress.

Outcome measures – did it work?

Harry and Daisie

Based on a recent evaluation report, the DVD specialist service showed it is not only clinically effective but also cost effective. To demonstrate effectiveness, a service example describing two very similar cases with two very different outcomes is provided below.

Harry

As set out above, prior to this specialist service being available, children with DVD received therapy in a clinic once a week for six weeks and then their name was added to the waiting list for further therapy. Under this system, Harry was referred to the speech and language therapy service at two years, six months years of age. He presented with DVD and expressive language difficulties. Harry received clinic-based intervention until he was nine - by that time he had received 124 direct therapy contacts. At the age of nine, he was transferred to the newly-established DVD service. There, he received further 60 direct contacts.

Up to that point the total **cost calculated was approximately £23,000. Harry continues to require therapy.**

Daisie

Daisie was referred at two years, 10 months years of age and she also presented with DVD and expressive language difficulties - very similar characteristics to Harry. Daisie received 29 direct contacts in clinic and she was transferred to the new DVD Service when she was five years old. She received further 42 direct contacts and now, a year on, her case is due to be closed.

Total cost calculated was approximately £9,000.

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Appendix G

Design a speech bubble campaign activity

Designing a speech bubble is just one activity you might choose to replicate in some form to help raise the profile of Giving Voice. Encourage people to design a bubble that reflects their personality, interests or communicates their reason for supporting the campaign.

At public events: Invite guests to design their bubble. Create an area to display the bubbles and photograph participants, perhaps holding their bubble to their mouth. Alternatively you could produce one giant speech bubble which everyone adds to like a patch-work quilt. If it turns out well it could provide a good photo opportunity for the local paper and be displayed at future events.

In the workplace: Hold a Giving Voice lunch or breakfast event. Use croissants or fruit to lure people in and persuade them to spend ten minutes designing their bubble (as above). Take a photo of each colleague with their speech bubble. Arrange to display the speech bubbles in reception/outside your office alongside the key messages of the campaign so that everyone knows about it, even if they didn't have time to design their own bubble.

At home/with your family: Print off a speech bubble template below and spend an evening/weekend designing speech bubbles – you could do one to represent everyone in your home and then take a group photo.

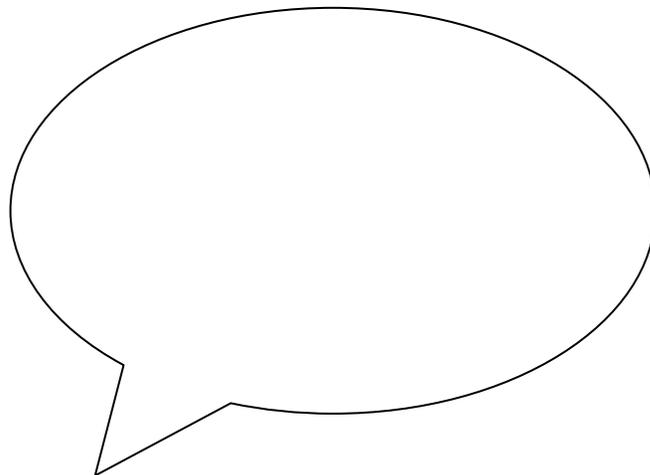
In user organisations: Suggest designing speech bubbles as a group activity: it could be a good way to learn more about each other and advertise your group to others in the community. The designs could be used for future posters or on your own website.

In schools: Run a competition for pupils to design a speech bubble.

You will need:

- Speech bubble template – available below but feel free to draw your own – try to make it fill an A4 sheet).
- Art and craft materials – as messy as you're prepared to clear up.
- Some examples of your own to inspire others to get involved.
- A camera to photograph the speech bubbles.
- Record the name (doesn't have to be the full name), location and, if appropriate, communication need of the artist. Check it is okay to share their design with a wider audience.

Speech bubble template



Afterwards:

- Post images of your speech bubbles on your social media feeds and share the content with @GivingVoiceUK on Twitter, adding the information gathered above.
- Use the original speech bubbles to create a display, explaining Giving Voice to everyone who sees the campaign.
- Continue to offer a template to anybody who wants to take part.

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Appendix H

Template - Telling the story of your service

[Insert name of speech and language therapy service]

How speech and language therapy helps

Did you know?

Communication and swallowing problems can affect people at all ages and stages of life:

- Nearly 20% of the population experience communication difficulties at some point in their lives.
- 7% of children aged around five years have specific speech and language impairment and a further 1.8% have speech, language and communication needs linked to other conditions, such as learning disability, cerebral palsy and autism spectrum disorders.
- Around a third of people will have some level of communication difficulties (called aphasia or dysphasia) following a stroke.
- At least 40% of stroke survivors will initially experience some difficulty swallowing.
- 20% of people with head or brain injury have speech difficulties.

How our service makes a difference

We work with people with swallowing and communication difficulties and their families to:

- [insert a short description of your service and what you do]
- [insert a short description of your service and what you do]
- [insert a short description of your service and what you do]

Find out more

To learn more about our speech and language therapy service and or how we can help you and/or constituents in your local community please contact: **[insert contact details]**

For further information about how speech and language therapy transforms lives visit:

www.givingvoiceuk.org

[Insert name of speech and language therapy service]

How speech and language therapy supports the best start in life

Did you know?

The ability to communicate is key to children's life chances and outcomes in later life:

- More than half of children in socially deprived areas may start school with impoverished speech, language and communication skills.
- Speech, language and communication needs are one of the most common types of special educational needs amongst school children.
- More than 60% of young people in the youth justice have communication difficulties.
- 88% of long-term unemployed young men have speech, language and communication needs.
- Vocabulary difficulties at age five are significantly associated with poor literacy, mental health and employment outcomes at age 34.

How our service makes a difference

We work with children and young people with swallowing and communication difficulties and their families to:

- [insert a short description of your service and what you do]
- [insert a short description of your service and what you do]
- [insert a short description of your service and what you do]

Find out more

To learn more about our speech and language therapy service and or how we can help you and/or constituents in your local community please contact: **[insert contact details]**

For further information about how speech and language therapy transforms lives visit:

www.givingvoiceuk.org

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Appendix I

Frequently asked questions

I don't have time to spend on this campaign – but what can I do to help?

We understand that everybody is working under pressure. The campaign is designed to ultimately make life better for you, so please do your best to play at least a small part. As the campaign grows, we'll share stories of SLTs getting involved to continue demonstrating how Giving Voice can fit into your working life.

I don't think I'm allowed to make approaches to local politicians or media without prior consent from my trust/board – what should I do?

You're right to think through who should know about any plans you have to involve politicians or the media. Find out who runs your press office or communications team and let them know your plans – explain that you're raising the profile of the good work of the whole trust/board.

I don't really understand how the local politician could help make a difference?

Local politicians are elected to put the needs of their community first. They depend on their constituents raising local issues for them to follow up – either amongst their fellow local politicians, through contacting government departments on your behalf or by simply helping to bring the issue to the public's notice.

How do I make sure that things happen after meetings with decision makers?

When the meeting comes to an end, reiterate what you've understood the decision maker's committed to do. Afterwards, write and thank them for their time and politely remind them of their commitment. It is perfectly reasonable to contact them again afterwards if you don't get a regular update on their progress with your issue.

There are so many challenges; I'm not sure exactly what to ask the local politician during the meeting?

Talk through the top three challenges your service is facing and work out with the local politician the issues on which they are best placed to offer effective support. There are things which all local VIPs could usefully do to show that there is a groundswell of support for the campaign's objectives.

What if I get asked something I don't know the answer to by a local politician?

This is not a problem – if it is something you can find the answer to, commit to doing so (this will give you a great excuse for being back in touch). Use the speaker notes in this toolkit and have a copy of the campaign leaflet and a tailored briefing on hand to help you get your message across confidently.

I don't think I'm in a position to be able to approach our commissioner – what should I do?

If your role doesn't give you the opportunity for airtime with the commissioner, your task is to persuade your SLT manager/leader that the Giving Voice campaign is worth getting involved with so that they can approach the commissioner with the campaign's key messages.

I don't think I'm allowed to ask service users to support the campaign – what's your advice?

Share the campaign with your service users by displaying Giving Voice information in your waiting areas or other locations where you work. It should be possible to explain the basics of the campaign to service users (or their parents/carers) that you know well, especially if they are asking questions about the future of the service they're receiving. Simply prompting them to visit www.givingvoiceuk.org will open up a range of opportunities for service users to get involved with independently.

My manager hasn't done anything and I want to support the campaign and get involved but I'm worried about over-stepping my position – what should I do?

Your task is to persuade your manager/leader that the Giving Voice campaign is worth getting involved with. If this is not easy, start by supporting the campaign as an individual by joining the social networking profiles and contributing a video or speech bubble design to the campaign website, by emailing: campaigns@rcslt.org. Contact the RCSLT to talk in more detail about how services are successfully engaging with the Giving Voice campaign. We can offer advice on convincing your colleagues to take part.

I don't know how to use the Facebook site or twitter, who can I contact for help?

You can email: campaigns@rcslt.org and someone from the team will endeavour to help.

I work in an acute setting and I'm not sure how much of these activities can apply to me?

Why not investigate advertising Giving Voice and its key messages on your trust/board intranet or organise an awareness day for hospital staff, based around an area such as nutrition, communication or tracheostomy? You could publish a write-up in the hospital newsletter. We are very keen to hear from you about how we could support your campaigning efforts in the acute setting.

Everyone is focused on what our new provider units are going to look like – how can I make them get interested in this?

The Giving Voice campaign is relevant to any discussions about any changes to service structures, allocation and new commissioning processes. Make your colleagues aware of the Giving Voice campaign and use items from the toolkit such as the example case study and 'how to tell the story of your service' section to help effectively influence discussions around the changing environment. The RCSLT is organising leadership training for managers/leaders to prepare them for interacting in the new commissioning environment – ask yours to look out for dates.

What can I do help my AHP or other colleagues and what's in it for them to support us?

In the face of current austerity measures SLTs need to look at how to meet needs by working jointly with other colleagues. By focusing on evidence-based practice, outcomes and cost effectiveness we can plan for the future in line with the government's priorities and chart a distinctive course during challenging times.

Giving Voice is designed to be a collaborative campaign, and throughout your local endeavours you should be emphasising the unique contributions each colleague makes to local service provision. Many of the activities and strategies suggested in this toolkit could be adopted by a group of AHP or other

colleagues seeking to work together to influence the future of their service. The RCSLT has already initiated very positive collaborative engagement with commissioners as part of the Giving Voice campaign.

If you have more questions, don't hesitate to email: campaigns@rcslt.org

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