

***Practice* Based Scenario**

**Autistic spectrum disorder and counselling**

**About this document**

This document is designed to take you through a practice-based scenario to help you reflect on what you might do if faced with a similar situation. It can be used to guide your thoughts and prompt discussion with your colleagues. Working through this document counts towards your continuing professional development (CPD). Your reflections on this document are not assessed and you do not have to send your responses to the RCSLT.

You can work through it on your own, with a colleague or supervisor, or in groups, eg as part of an RCSLT Hub or Clinical Excellence Network.

This document is broken into five parts:

1. **The scenario:** for you to read
2. **The issues to consider:** for you to gather your thoughts on practice issues relating to this scenario
3. **Next steps:** for you to plan out what you would need to do next
4. **Prompts for consideration:** RCSLT prompts for further consideration
5. **Sources of further information:** links to CQ Live themes
6. **Update your CPD diary:** for you to do
7. **The scenario**

**You have been providing therapy to a child on the autistic spectrum. You notice during the visits the child’s mother is frequently appears to be holding back tears.**

**What should you do?**

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**What do you do in this scenario?**

1. **The issues to consider**

**What do you need to consider?**

Think about the above scenario and its implications and jot down your notes about issues you may need to consider. Please feel free to use extra sheets of paper if you need. Or, if you are in a group, you may like to record on a whiteboard or flipchart.

1. **Next steps**

**What steps do you think you need to take next?**

1. **Prompts for consideration**

What is your duty of care in this kind of scenario?

It is recommended that you think about the following prompt questions and formulate a considered strategy to deal with the problem.

Remember that if you are faced with a similar situation you will need to think about it in relation to the frameworks within which you work, such as the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Standards, RCSLT professional guidance and resources, local and national policies and policies of your employer (or your own policies if practising independently). Use the relevant resources available on this website and the list of prompts that follow, to help with your thinking.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and does not constitute legal advice.

**Prompt questions to consider**

1. How should you adress your concerns about the mothers mental health
2. What should you consider when/ if broaching the subject?
3. What elements of this scenario lie within the s/lt remit for counselling?
4. Who else should be involved in supporting this individual?
5. Do you treat the child or the child as part of the family?
6. How do the autistic child’s needs impact on the mothers and vice – versa?
7. Are there any other providers you should be linking in with to provide holistic care?
8. Where are your boundaries of involvement?
9. Are there any confidentiality/ consent considerations?

**Possible next steps**

1. Create some time when the child is not present to speak to the mother
2. Give support services information to the mother
3. Suggest she speaks to her G.P
4. Consider how/ what aspects of your assessments and goals regarding the child’s communication needs could be shared with other relevant agencies who are supporting the mother.
5. Gain consent from the mother to share information regarding your speech and language interventions with other agencies.
6. **Sources of further information**

**The following information in the professional accountability and autonomy, and professional guidance sections of the RCSLT website is also particularly relevant:**

1 - [Promote and safeguard the interests of service users and carers](https://www.rcslt.org/professional-autonomy-and-accountability-guidance#section-5)

2 - [Communicate appropriately and effectively](https://www.rcslt.org/professional-autonomy-and-accountability-guidance#section-6)

6 - [Manage risk](https://www.rcslt.org/professional-autonomy-and-accountability-guidance#section-10)

10 - [Record keeping](https://www.rcslt.org/professional-autonomy-and-accountability-guidance#section-14)

[Autism](https://www.rcslt.org/autism)

[Confidentiality](https://www.rcslt.org/confidentiality)

[Counselling](https://www.rcslt.org/counselling)

[Safeguarding](https://www.rcslt.org/safeguarding)

**External resources**

[HCPC Confidentiality - Guidance for Registrants](http://www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/100023F1GuidanceonconfidentialityFINAL.pdf)

1. **Update your CPD diary**

Working through this scenario counts towards your continuing professional development (CPD). Once you have completed this scenario, please record this learning and your reflections in your CPD diary.