Bercow: Ten Years On

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Bercow: Ten Years On – 1st Anniversary Update

• 1st anniversary update published on 6th March
• 17 of 47 recommendations achieved – but five areas where more action is needed:
  – Joint commissioning
  – Support for long term SLCN
  – Professional development
  – Incentivising schools
  – Vulnerable groups
Dear Prime Minister...

- A letter to the PM calling for urgent action to improve support for children and young people with SLCN
- Signed by more than 60 organisations
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Media

• A national press release using findings from YouGov survey of parents and carers:
  – 59% of parents of children and young people with SLCN have to fight to get support for their children’s difficulties
  – More than half have to wait longer than six months to get support

• A trade press release focused on the letter to the PM

• Media coverage included: Sky News Radio, Sunday Mirror, The Sun, Times Education Supplement, and Nursery World
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Social media

- Launched two new hashtags and encouraging people to share photos and video clips in which they pledge to #SpeakUpForCommunication and #SpeakUpForSLCN

- A Twitter campaign running through to July

Developmental Language Disorder

Lauren Longhurst
Research Officer
Today

- A brief overview of the changes to terminology and diagnostic criteria
- A local example
- Discussion session - where are you at?
- Current and planned RCSLT work
What has changed and why?

**Specific Language Impairment (SLI) → Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)**

- In the past, terminology has been variable and confusing.

- There has been a lack of research funding for SLI in relation to frequency and severity and terminology used in research is inconsistent (Bishop, 2010).

- SLI was often used in a way that does not align with clinical reality.

- Strict discrepancy criteria has led to difficulties with equitable provision of services. A non-verbal IQ score is no longer required for a diagnosis, meaning DLD includes a broader range of children than those that would have met criteria for a diagnosis of SLI.
Criteria and Terminology Applied to Language Impairments: Synthesising the Evidence

• Group of 57 experts in children’s language disorders from English speaking countries including:
  - Speech and language therapists
  - Education
  - Medicine
  - Psychology
  - Audiology
  - Charities

Aim: to seek consensus on identifying children requiring support above and beyond what is available in the classroom
Risk factors:
- SES
- EAL
- Family history
- Neglect/ abuse
- Prenatal/perinatal
- Male

Co-occurring disorders:
- ADHD
- Motor skills
- Literacy
- Speech
- Exec. Function
- Behaviour
- Adaptive behaviour

Bishop et al. (2016)
The term Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) should be used for children where...

1. The child has language difficulties that create barriers to communication or learning in everyday life.

2. The child’s language problems are unlikely to be resolved by five years of age.

3. The problems are not associated with a known biomedical condition such as brain injury, neurodegenerative conditions, or chromosome disorders.
DLD diagnosis should be accompanied with specification of the impact on domains of:

1. Phonology
2. Grammar (syntax and morphology)
3. Verbal learning and memory
4. Semantics
5. Word finding
6. Pragmatics/language use

Many symptoms persist into adolescence and beyond
Assessments by an SLT are needed to identify how DLD is affecting an individual's...
What does not meet criteria for developmental language disorder?

• Late talkers with few indicators of poor prognosis
• Poor phonological awareness as a stand alone difficulty
• Children learning more than one language, unless there is evidence of meeting DLD criteria in their home language
So how does this all fit together?

7.58%
(Norbury et al. 2016)

9.92%
(Norbury et al. 2016)

Speech, language and communication needs - an overview:

- Developmental Language Disorder
  - Syntax
  - Morphology
  - Semantics
  - Word finding
  - Pragmatics
  - Discourse
  - Verbal learning and memory

- Language Disorder associated with biomedical condition

- Speech Sound Disorder
  - Dysarthria
  - Verbal dyspraxia (CAS)
  - Articulation disorder
  - Orofacial structural defects

DLD sits within the 'Language Disorder' category, which itself is nested within the overall SLCN category

Adapted from Bishop et al. (2016)
SLI = DLD

All children with an existing SLI diagnosis meet the criteria for Developmental Language Disorder
Implications for service delivery

- Changes will take time to implement
- The degree of change will depend on local circumstances
- Access to services currently is variable
- Terminology clarification can potentially help with planning services, data collection and outcome measurements
- SLTs should continue to work in partnership with other professionals, ensuring that the children and families’ perspectives are central to decision-making and goal-setting
- Services may need to adapt current resources/training materials to reflect terminology changes

(RCSLT, 2017)
Discussion session

• Where are you at?

| I didn’t know about the new terminology and criteria and I am still using SLI | We have already implemented the new terminology and diagnostic criteria |

• Successes
• Barriers
RCSLT resources

- Clinical webpages with evidence and research section
- RCSLT briefing paper
- FAQs document
- DLD factsheet
- Powerpoint presentation for training purposes
- Webinar

https://www.rcslt.org/members/clinical-guidance/developmental-language-disorder
Related and future work

- Research priorities project
- Story telling project
- Children's strategy work
- Bercow: Ten years on
- Outcome measures programme of work
- Terminology work via. SNOMED CT
- Liaising with government
- DLD factsheet
- System leader roundtable event
- Collection of resources