

# Policy and Public Affairs Team: Impact report

October 2016 – September 2017



# The year in numbers



- **Three** meetings with UK Government Ministers
- Representation on **eight** Scottish Parliament Cross Party Groups
- **1,000+** new followers for @RCSLTpolicy Twitter feed
- **2,881** people shared The Guardian interview with Nick Robinson
- **3,000+** children participated in Voice Box Northern Ireland
- **200,000** people viewed a video of astronauts eating and drinking in space as part of European Swallowing Awareness Day

Healthcare Network

Nick Robinson: 'I never thought I'd get my voice back'

It's thanks to a speech and language therapist who supported him all the way that Robinson is back in a high-profile career at the BBC

● Is there a healthcare professional you'd like to thank?



Tim Peake  
@astro\_timpeake

Replying to @RCSLT

.@RCSLT, microgravity makes us very aware of the importance of the swallowing mechanism! #swallowaware2017



5:32 pm - 6 Mar 2017

144 Retweets 396 Likes

13 144 396

# The PPA top ten



- 1. Mental capacity**
  - 2. The Communication Summit**
  - 3. Work, health and disability**
  - 4. Primary care**
  - 5. Looked after children**
  - 6. My Journey, My Voice**
  - 7. Inclusive communication**
  - 8. Youth justice**
  - 9. Early years**
  - 10. Augmentative and alternative communication**
- And....supporting members' local influencing**

# 1. Mental capacity



## Northern Ireland

- **Activity:** Influencing the Mental Capacity Bill
- **Impact:** RCSLT invited to sit on the external reference group for the Code of Practice, and as a result the needs of people with communication disabilities are better reflected in the Code.

## UK

- **Activity:** Developed a factsheet on the role of SLTs in relation to mental capacity.
- **Impact:** The tweet was re-tweeted 90 times and had over 12,600 impressions.



RCSLT policy @RCSLTpolicy · Aug 9

Hot off the press: new @RCSLT factsheet on how #SLpeeps help support determination of #mentalcapacity. [bit.ly/2hJopMn](https://bit.ly/2hJopMn)

**Giving Voice**™ | Speech and Language Therapy transforms lives

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPISTS

**Speech and language therapists helping to determine mental capacity**

All of these can have a significant impact on an individual's communication and thinking skills, including:

- comprehension
- expression
- assessment of need

**Mark Jayes** @MCAsupporttool

Replying to @RCSLTpolicy @RCSLT

Excellent work, sends really important message about #SLT role in supporting people with #communication needs to maximise #mentalcapacity

the interests of people with communication needs by supporting them to demonstrate whether or not they have decision-making capacity. They promote inclusion, dignity, choice, and equality of access to services. They also reduce the potential risk of people with communication needs being wrongly deemed as lacking capacity and, in some extreme cases, being deprived of their liberty (having decisions about their care or treatment made

mistake their communication disability for a lack of capacity.

### Mr J's story

Mr J had been diagnosed with dementia following a

5 90 85

# 2. The communication summit and the intergenerational cycle of speech, language and communication

## Scotland

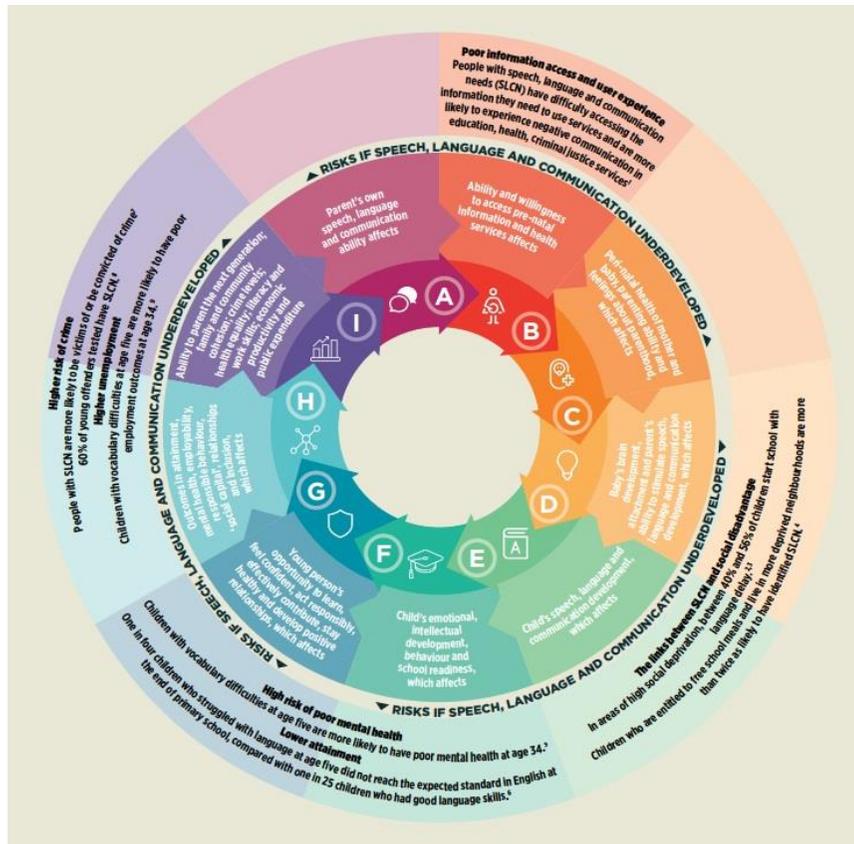
### Activities:

- Developed the intergenerational cycle of speech, language and communication outcomes and risks factsheet.
- Held two joint communication summits with Scottish Government, attended by cross sector and cross agency leaders.

### Impact:

- Deputy First Minister John Swinney requested an Action Plan for systemic change an action plan for systemic change to end the intergenerational cycle of communication disadvantage

*The PPA team also developed a UK-wide version of the intergenerational cycle which has been shared with officials at the Department for Education and Public Health England.*



# 3. Work, health and disability



## Improving Lives

The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper

Presented to Parliament  
by the Secretary of State for Work and  
Pensions  
by Command of Her Majesty  
October 2016

Cm 9342

### England, Scotland and Wales

**Activity:** Lobbied government departments to include role of speech and language therapists in supporting people into work.

#### Case study – Robert

"Robert, a secondary school teacher had a very severe stroke in September 2012. This led to paralysis of the right side of his body and his speech and reading abilities were affected by aphasia. He was determined to return to work, but even if the school could accommodate his wheelchair, he could not resume teaching until his speech was at the level required in the classroom to be understood.

"Subsequently, Robert received individual speech therapy and also joined the local aphasia group where he presented weekly topics to the group and received feedback on his intelligibility. After 18 months of therapy, Robert began a phased return to work. During the first academic year, this was based around sixth form supervision and the following academic year it included a return to some teaching of younger years pupils. Robert's speech and language therapist completed the "Allied Health Professions Advisory Fitness to Work Report" to guide his employers on the level of support which was required for his return to work. For example, he needs extra time for written work so as not to compromise on accuracy.

"Today, Robert works four short days per week and teaches whole classes of year 7 and 8 pupils. He also attends after school meetings and parents' evenings as required.

"To get to this point, Robert received community speech therapy for some 18 months. This sounds like a long time to invest resources in the rehabilitation of an individual. It is but as a direct result, not only has Robert's life been transformed it has also saved him living on 20 years' worth of sickness benefits."

An account from his treating speech and language therapist – Provided by Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists

- **Impacts:**  
*Improving Lives: The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper* featured two case studies involving speech and language therapists.
- RCSLT was engaged as a key stakeholder throughout the consultation period.
- RCSLT is the only AHP that was invited to join the Round Table of Royal Colleges chaired by the UK's Deputy Chief Medical Officer Gina Radford.
- RCSLT has now been invited to contribute to the statement for action for how work is good for your health.

# 4. Primary care



## Northern Ireland

**Activity:** RCSLT invited to participate in Health Committee round table on contribution of AHPs in primary care.

**Impact:** As a result of the event the Health Committee has published a report on the value of AHPs in primary and community care which includes speech and language therapy examples.

### 4.1 Person-centred care

This focuses on four main areas:

- Ensuring personal and public involvement;
- Improving the service user experience;
- Promoting and supporting self-management; and
- Working in partnership.

A good practice example from community care was highlighted:<sup>51</sup>

Speech and Language Therapy - A nationally recognised partnership model between health and education for Primary 1 children in the Colinglen area of Belfast has resulted in 59% of those accessing the service being discharged with age appropriate speech and language skills:

- Improved early identification of children with speech, language and communication difficulties;
- Increased access to services with a 2 week wait for assessment and 50-70% increased uptake of the service compared to local community clinics;
- Improved support with goals of therapy linked to class targets; and
- Increased knowledge, skills and confidence of teaching staff in identifying and supporting children in the classroom.

## Wales

**Activity:** RCSLT submitted written evidence to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee inquiry into primary care clusters

**Impacts:** The report gives speech and language therapy as an example of where cluster funding could be targeted to reduce demand on GPs and improve access to care.

– The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT), referring to speech and language therapists, stated “significant additional opportunities exist to utilise SLTs to support the shift from hospital to community care”.<sup>74</sup>

**Activity:** RCSLT met with Vaughan Gething AM, Cabinet Secretary Health, Wellbeing and Sport to discuss the SLTs role in dementia and primary care.

**Impact:** RCSLT invited to speak to key civil servants with regards to SLT role in primary care.

# 5. Looked after children



## Activities:

- Worked with members of the House of Lords to influence the Children and Social Work Bill.
- As part of the Alliance of Children in Care and Care Leavers and Royal Colleges, RCSLT met with officials from DH, DfE and NHS England to discuss integrated physical and mental health assessments.

## Impacts:

- The UK government committed to actions to address issues around the communication needs of looked after children, including a pilot of integrated physical and mental health assessments.
- The draft guidance to accompany the Act includes a number of references to SLCN and speech and language therapy.

- **Activity:** Developed relationship with the National Association of Virtual School Heads (NAVSH) and held a joint webinar.
- **Impact:** Increased understanding amongst Virtual School Heads of the communication needs of looked after children, and how speech and language therapy can support them.

*The PPA team also developed a factsheet on looked after children, and a factsheet on how the Five Good Communication Standards can be used to support children's homes, which were published on the Children's Homes Quality Standards website.*

## Supporting looked after children

**M**any looked after children have unidentified speech, language and communication needs. These include difficulties both understanding language (making sense of what people say) and using language (words and sentences). Speech and language therapy plays a crucial role in identifying and meeting communication needs. It helps looked after children and those around them to communicate with each other and supports relationship building, educational attainment and future life chances.

### Looked after children and communication needs

Some looked after children's communication needs may be associated with their environment. The majority of children in care experience conditions of poverty and social disadvantage<sup>2</sup> and in areas of high social deprivation between 40% and 56% of children start school with limited language.<sup>3,4</sup>

Attachment difficulties and any previous abuse, neglect and subsequent trauma may also have had an impact on the development of looked after children's communication skills.<sup>4</sup>

Communication needs may be the result of developmental language disorder<sup>5</sup> or associated with other conditions, such as autism spectrum disorder and learning disability, or co-occur with them. Such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and co-occur



### The size of the problem

► There were more than **93,000** children in care in the United Kingdom in 2015.<sup>6</sup>

# 6. My Journey, My Voice (NI)



## Political engagement highlights

### Activity

- Millennium forum anniversary event was supported by the late Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness
- Chair of the Assembly's Education Committee, Barry McElduff MLA met with Philomena Cleary (SLT) and Christine Birnie (participant)
- Bangor library exhibition launch attended by Lady Hermon MP, Dep Mayor Alderman Bill Keery and Gordon Dunne MLA.

### Impact

- Local MPs, MLAs and councillors more aware of communication disability and RCSLT.

## Media influence

**Activity:** Coverage on NI executive website, BBC News website and Radio Foyle, as well as many local newspapers.

**Impact:** Increased awareness of SLCN.

## Other influence

- RCSLT met with the Health and Social Care Board to discuss the impact of MJMV – as a result RCSLT NI has received an additional grant of £16,000 to develop a second MJMV project aimed at school aged children to address bullying, inclusion and mental health.

*"I am proud to support the My Journey My Voice exhibition which is raising awareness and understanding about the speech, language and communications difficulties which people can face, and the impact it has on their daily lives".*

Martin McGuinness, former Deputy First Minister



# 7. Inclusive communication



## Scotland

Activity	Impact
RCSLT submission on Health Literacy Action Plan	Health Literacy Action Plan makes direct reference to work of RCSLT and SLTs in field of Inclusive Communication
RCSLT invited to position on Scottish Government's Disabled CYP Advisory Group	Inclusive Communication is in the Disabled CYP Action Plan
CEO of Improvement Scotland (LG CPD and quality body) agreed to be Inclusive Communication Champion.	Offer of IC webinar for LG across Scotland chaired by CEO.
Scottish Health Council "Our Voice" Citizen's Panel survey relating to Inclusive Communication	Will lead to publication of "official" evidence re: 1250 members of public reporting experience of and views on Inclusive Communication – Scottish Govt. health directorate to receive report from Scottish Health Council

## Northern Ireland

- Activity:** Presentation to Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) officials on inclusive communication.
- Impact:** Officials have better understanding of communication disability.

# 8. Youth justice

## England and Wales

**Activity:** Development of Justice Evidence Base

### ■ **Impacts:**

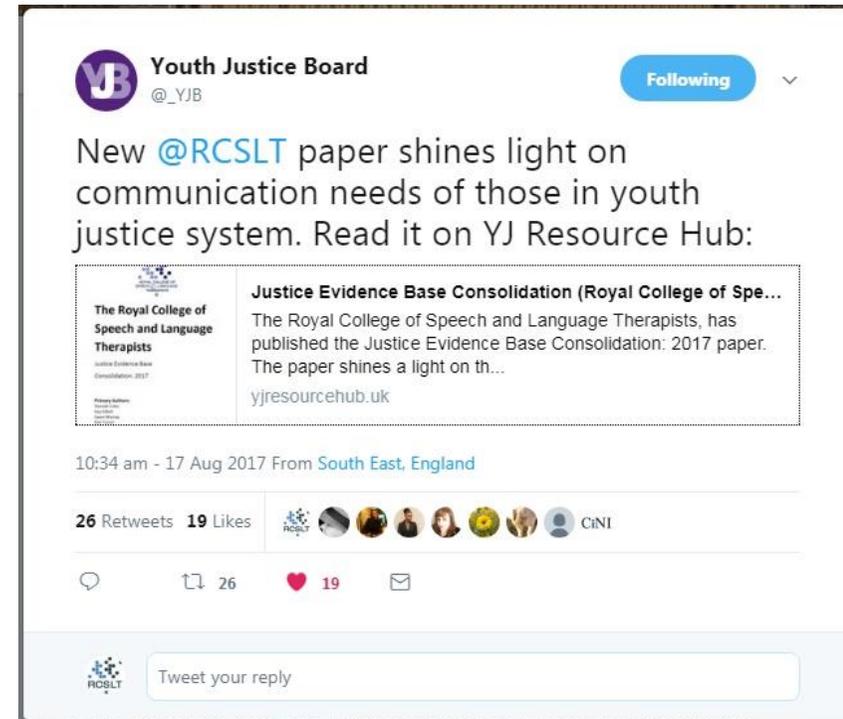
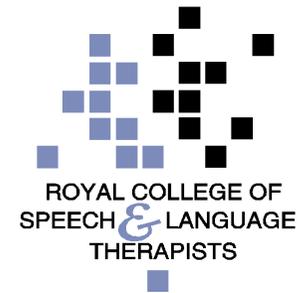
- RCSLT invited as a key stakeholder to a policy workshop for secure schools alongside the chair of the YJB and the Justice Minister.
- RCSLT was proactively engaged by MoJ civil servants further to the publication of the Justice Evidence Base to discuss SLCN in youth justice and the community, in order to make a case for the Minister to prioritise SLCN.
- The Justice Evidence Base has been published by multiple organisations including the Youth Justice Board's Youth Justice Resource Hub, where it has been read 338 times. The report has also been disseminated by justice sector professionals across both domestic and international networks.

## Northern Ireland

### ■ **Activities**

- Meeting with the Minister for Justice - Minister requested the Justice Evidence Base paper
- Meetings with members of Justice committee and Health committee
- Ongoing correspondence with the Youth Justice Agency

- **Impact:** An SLT post in youth justice has been announced.



# 9. Early years



## Wales

### Activities:

- RCSLT members presented to the Welsh Government's Early Years Programme Board.
- RCSLT members invited to work with Qualification Wales on new childcare qualification.

### Impacts:

- RCSLT were invited to meet with the Director of the Adverse Childhood Experiences Hub within Public Health Wales, who has invited a proposal for a joint briefing / event.
- New childcare qualifications will have a strong focus on early language development.

## England

### Activities:

- Member attended event and written response submitted as part of consultation on early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP).
- Event on social disadvantage as part of the Bercow: Ten Years On review, attended by officials from DfE and PHE.

### Impacts:

- Government response plan to revise the EYFSP early learning goals to ensure there is sufficient focus on increasing depth and breadth of vocabulary.
- Invited to meet with DfE to discuss early years proposals.

## Northern Ireland

### Activity:

- RCSLT invited to sit on the Save the Children Read On Get On working group.

### Impact:

- The importance of early language development was included in the published report; evidence from local members was used and RCSLT Northern Ireland was acknowledged.
- Save the Children flagged up the importance of early language in their meeting with the Programme for Government team.

## Scotland

### Activity:

- SLT seconded to NHS Education Scotland to develop a resource to support health visitors to meet the requirements of the Children and Young People's Act 2014.
- RCSLT invited to sit on Ministerial Early Learning and Childcare Quality Reference Group.

### Impact:

- An online training resource for health visitors has been developed.
- Awareness raised among partners and stakeholders on reference group.

# 10. Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)



## Scotland

### **Activity:**

Influencing Ministerial Directions for implementation of law which establishes right to communication equipment and support to use that AAC for anyone with communication difficulties includes:

- Chairing and Co-ordinating AAC Collaborative (AACC) - made up of 12 AAC user and / or provider organisations
- Compiling AACC Collaborative Submission on Draft Directions
- Representation on National Advisory Group
- Co-ordinating AAC User Forum.

### **Impact:**

Draft Directions on Definitions of Equipment and Support) significantly altered to reflect comments, including principle that maintaining communication is as important as maintaining physical health.

## Northern Ireland

**Activity:** RCSLT invited the Minister of Health to tour the regional AAC centre

**Impact:** A review of AAC has been commissioned by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS)

# Supporting members' local influencing



To help members make their case locally including any facing challenges to their services, we:

**Further developed RCSLT's Local Influencing Pack, designed to give members the tools they need to influence local decision-makers and budget holders**

**Produced new factsheets giving evidence to demonstrate the impact of speech and language therapy across a range of clinical conditions and settings**

**Shared Select Committee submissions and responses to Government consultations, providing members with evidence of the impact of speech and language therapy in a range of clinical areas and settings**