

# Writing legal statements

## Key points

- A statement is an accurate account of a person or professional's involvement with an individual adult, child or family
- A statement can be requested from various sources, including solicitors, a social worker or guardian
- The statement should be truthful, accurate and factual

## Responsibilities

Speech and language therapists must follow the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) standards.

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- **RCSLT guidance on meeting HCPC professional standards**
- **RCSLT guidance on SLTs' duty of care**

## What is a statement?

A statement is an accurate account of a person or professional's involvement with an individual adult, child or family for a professional reason during the course of undertaking their duties.

## Who might request a statement?

- The employing authority
- A solicitor
- A social worker
- A guardian ad litem (an officer appointed by the court to represent the interests of the child)

as well as other authorities

## Guidance and principles for writing your statement

### Principles for writing your statement

- The statement should be truthful, accurate and factual.
- The facts should, to the best knowledge of the therapist, be verifiable.
- The statement should be made from the records.

### Guidance

Before making a statement, the professional should first establish the employing authority's policy for professionals making a statement. This will usually include contacting a line-manager in the first instance.

You can use the following format to write your statement:

1. Date of statement
2. Name, professional address and qualifications, position and employing authority
3. Name, address and relationship of family and member/s about whom the statement is written
4. The sequence of events in chronological order, e.g. sub-headings with dates of each contact and an explanation of what took place or was observed. A record of any clinical measurement/treatment should be included
5. In chronological order, any other communication or attempted communication, e.g. telephone calls, visits, failed appointments, contact with other agencies/disciplines

The above should be written in short paragraphs to facilitate reading. Take advice from the legal officer retained by the authority.

## Resources

- **RCSLT guidance on meeting the HCPC standards** provides guidance to support you in adhering to the standards of the regulator, the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- **HCPC what you need to know about being an expert witness**
- **Practice Direction 35 Experts and Assessors**
- **HCPTS practice note – opinion evidence, experts and assessors**

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