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**

Contributors

- Kathryn Cann,
- Sadia Hussain

The RCSLT develops guidance to promote good **clinical** and **professional** practice in line with HCPC standards. **Please read our statement on guidance** to understand how it is developed and how to use it.