



External Impact Report: highlights of RCSLT's impact on the external world

Autumn 2021 to
Autumn 2022



Priority areas 2021-2022

- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Workforce
- Health & Care Bill and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs)
- Mental health and neurodiversity
- Rehabilitation and social care
- Long COVID and service recovery
- SEND, ALN, ASN & SEN
- Inclusive communication and Communication Access UK (CA UK)

Key stakeholders

- Government ministers and officials
- Parliamentarians
- Agencies and public bodies
- Local government representatives
- Charities
- People having speech and language therapy and their families
- Service providers
- Professional bodies across education, health, care and justice
- RCSLT members

The number in years

- **26** meetings with elected representatives in Northern Ireland
- **114** organisations came together in the #SENDInTheSpecialists coalition in England
- **265** emails sent to election candidates sharing RCSLT NI manifesto asks
- **11000+** individuals and organisations signed-up to Communication Access UK (CA UK)

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

In the external world

- **Supported HEIs** (Higher Education Institutions) in development of EDI in the student experience.
- **Spoke at Council of Deans** event about best practice in education, highlighting the RCSLT audit tool.
- **Responded to consultations** on the Welsh Government Race Equality Action Plan and Gender Equality Action Plan.
- **Influenced Workforce Race Equality Standard** - asked to be critical friend and to sit on working group on barriers to assessing services in childcare and play and the development of the childhood education and care (ECEC) Action Plan.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Within the profession

- Established **LGBTQIA+ working group** with SLT Pride Network.
- Worked with **disability working group** to publish **Supporting SLTs with disabilities in the workplace.**
- Launched **health inequalities resource.**
- RCSLT diversity and health inequalities **shared on Royal Society for Public Health website.**

Workforce: England & Scotland

England

- Joined **#StrengthInNumbers coalition** on workforce planning.
- Requested to submit evidence by the **Health and Social Care Select Committee's Expert Panel** – the final reports quoted us.
- First **SLT apprenticeships** started at the **University of Essex**.

Scotland

- A **survey of the SLT workforce**, identifying a significant increase in demand as well as significant vacancy and recruitment issues, used to **influence Scottish Government and politicians**.

Workforce: Wales & Northern Ireland

Wales

- Highlighted **detriment of streamlining** recruitment process for SLTs within NHS Wales with Health Education and Improvement Wales, Directors of Therapies, and the Health Minister - **streamlining discontinued for 2023.**

Northern Ireland

- **Manifesto asks** included **maximising** the speech and language therapy **workforce.**
- **Increase of undergraduate places commissioned** for September 2022, bringing total from 28 to 33.
- Invited to **meetings on apprenticeships and safe staffing.**

England: Health & Care Bill and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) 1/2

- **Legislation amended** - took a leading role (as a member of the Children and Young People Health Policy Influencing Group) in delivering Government amendments to the Bill to include requirement for children and young people's needs to be considered in commissioning plans, as well as a commitment to require a named executive lead for children.
- **Advice sought** – part of a select group of trusted stakeholders invited to comment on the draft statutory guidance on the preparation of integrated care strategies.
- **Changes secured** - changes were made to the statutory guidance in line with our feedback, including strengthening the requirement to consult with children, young people and families.

England: Health & Care Bill and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) 2/2

- **Assurances secured** – took a leading role (as part of the Community Rehabilitation Alliance) in securing on the record assurances around rehab from the Minister: *‘Under the existing bill provisions, every ICB will be required to provide and improve rehabilitation services as part of its duty to provide a comprehensive health service. As an added layer of scrutiny, ICBs must publish an annual review detailing how they have discharged this function.’*
- **Information published** – published information for AHP leads on ICSs detailing:
 - role of SLTs;
 - how they support the strategic purposes of integrated care; and
 - how SLTs can support the delivery of the NHS's 2022-23 priorities.

Mental health and Neurodiversity: England & Scotland

England

- **Secured amendments to NICE guideline** on 'Social, emotional and mental wellbeing in primary and secondary education' to include the need to make adjustments and take into account children's communication needs.
- **Secured two places for SLTs on the Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCP) QNLD Advisory Group and the QNLD Accreditation Committee** – followed our support and input to the RCP new Standards on inpatient Services in 2021 and the RCP new standards for community care 2021, in which we highlighted the added value of SLT to inpatient care.
- **Secured SLT input** to and helped to write new national **mental health resources**.

Scotland

- Written **evidence to Scottish Government's Mental Health Strategy**.
- **Development of profile** on SLTs contribution to mental health services and **workforce requirements** for the future.

Mental health and Neurodiversity: Wales & Northern Ireland

Wales

- **Secured SLT representation on the Demand and Capacity review** of neurodevelopmental services by Welsh Government - review takes in account views of SLTs and includes references to recent doctoral research by a Welsh speech and language therapist.
- Subsequently **invited to sit on Ministerial Group on Neurodiversity**.
- **Joined Welsh Royal College Mental Health Expert Advisory Group** – resulted in opportunities to meet with key stakeholders, influence the mental health workforce plan and hold a joint Senedd event with other royal colleges attended by a third of all MSs.

Northern Ireland

- Following publication of the Northern Ireland mental health strategy 2021-31, **RCSLT NI invited to sit on Department of Health workforce review steering group, CAMHS and adult services working groups**.
- **Secured recognition** for SLT roles within core CAMHS and adult MH services.

Rehabilitation and social care: England & Wales

England

- **Secured meeting with the Independent Review of Children's Social Care** team to raise awareness of the need to support speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) for children in touch with social care services.
- **Final report** quoted **high prevalence of SLCN** in children and young people in touch with social care services and **named speech and language therapists** as professionals who could be part of new Family Help teams.

Wales

- Gave **oral and written evidence to a Welsh Parliament Health and Social Care Committee inquiry** on hospital discharge and its impact on patient flow through hospitals.
- Final report included **two key recommendations** including that Welsh Government should:
 - work with partners to establish a comprehensive wrap-around rehabilitation service; and
 - clarify its expectations about the availability of allied health professionals in different health and care settings, and set out how it will work with health boards to increase the presence of such professionals at the front door of services, particularly GP surgeries and A&E departments.

Rehabilitation and social care: Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland

- **Met with political parties** including Ulster Unionist Party, Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, and Sinn Féin as part of the Community Rehabilitation Alliance to lobby for support on the Right to Rehab.
- The **Alliance party mentioned Right to Rehab and the RCSLT in their manifesto** - announcing their support of a Right to Rehab in the next programme for government.

Long COVID and service recovery

Long COVID outcomes

- Involved in the **development of the core outcome** set for Long Covid (PC-COS).
- Participated in an **international Long COVID Core Outcome Set (COS) e-delphi project** - aimed to establish an agreed upon set of outcome measures across different symptom domains associated with long COVID.

England

- Continued lobbying and engagement with Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to ensure availability of transparent face coverings for SLTs - **DHSC have noted the RCSLT website as the trusted place to go** to for the list of approved providers.
- **Secured amendments to NICE guidance on managing the long-term effects of COVID-19** – now directly references speech and language therapy in supporting people post-COVID, and access to SLT in the wider wraparound team supporting people.

SEND, ALN, ASN & SEN: England & Wales

England

- Facilitated meeting between the Department for Education and senior members to highlight key concerns around Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) review proposals - **key messages on SEND were heard directly by Government officials working on the SEND Review.**
- Consulted widely with parents/carers, charity partners and members to produce our response to the Government's SEND Review Green Paper - **our joint statement with ASLTIP** was supported by service-user partners and represented **a united, collective response from the profession and the people we serve.**

Wales

- **Met with Welsh Minister for Education** to discuss SLT role in Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and importance of a focus on oracy.
- **Speech, language and communication actions** within Welsh Government **oracy and literacy plan.**
- Specific **SLT involvement in development of new curriculum framework and resources.**

Northern Ireland

- **Media piece** on the ongoing concerns regarding workforce in relation to special educational needs (SEN) and the increasing numbers of children each year with no increase in SLT funding in Northern Ireland.
- **Director for Education announced £6.1 million for SEN services**, of which SLT services hope to acquire around £1.25m.

Inclusive Communication and CA UK



UK wide

- **CA UK now at over 14,000 individuals and organisations** signed up and 70,000 committed to training.
- **Endorsers** include Welsh Water, Barnsley Football Club, Coventry Building Society and adult services in the Government of Guernsey.

Scotland

- Worked with Camphill Scotland **lobbying MSPs to lodge amendments to new legislation** to incorporate inclusive communication.
- Scottish Government included our previously used wording on **inclusive communication in flagship National Care Service Bill**.

Northern Ireland

- **Supporting service user Clodagh Dunlop** working within the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to request that CAUK is embedded within induction training for all PSNI staff.
- **Potential significant impact** given the prevalence of SLCN in the justice system.

England

- Responded to **consultation** on changes to the Mental Capacity Act for England and Wales which proposed **adding SLTs to the Liberty Protection Safeguards Approved Mental Capacity Professional (AMCP) role**.
- The Box was added to the HPSSS training on neurodiversity in all prisons.
- In a precedent setting achievement, thanks to RCSLT's lobbying the **statutory guidance** to the Domestic Abuse Act includes a specific section on **speech, language and communication**.
- As part of our long-standing campaign to have s.104 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (statutory basis for defendant intermediaries) commenced, we **welcomed a new HMCTS Appointed Intermediary Services (HAIS)** which, at judicial discretion, will allow registered intermediaries to support defendants in criminal courts and family courts and tribunals.

Influencing Government Policy: Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland

Scotland

- Met with **Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport** - minister agreed that **SLCN in children and young people should be considered a public health crisis**, now announced **significant investment in early intervention in speech and language**.
- RCSLT and children and young people Leads **worked collaboratively with Public Health Scotland** on the increase of communication needs and a whole systems approach.

Wales

- Responded to consultation on new **Welsh Language in Health and Care plan - speech and language therapy highlighted** as a priority area within the plan.

Northern Ireland

- Responded to the **Draft Regional Policy on the Use of Restrictive Practices and Seclusion in Health and Social Care Settings** - DoH contacted RCSLT seeking permission to **reproduce the 5 Good Communications** and **reference RCSLT in the final policy**.

Influencing other policy: examples in England & Scotland

England

- **Eight RCSLT recommendations were added or amended** in NICE guideline 'Disabled children and young people up to 25 with severe complex needs'.
- **Engaged in the future of Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP)** – brought together expert group of leading researchers, academics and senior clinicians to review and agree the key updates to SSNAP needed to make the audit more meaningful for SLTs.

Scotland

- **Scottish Parliament committee** inquiry into the Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People **highlighted the RCSLT contribution** on SLT workforce challenges within mental health.

England

- Meeting of **APPG on Speech and Language Difficulties** on Developmental Language Disorder.
- Influenced **debates on the Schools Bill** in relation to spoken language and communication, and the specialist workforce.

Scotland

- An **event in the Scottish Parliament celebrating AHPs** on behalf of AHPF Scotland. Event widely attended by AHPs, Scottish Government officials and stakeholders - attended by 8 MSPs and a speech from the Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport.

Wales

- Met with **Welsh Health Minister** who **recognised the importance of the SLT secondment** and has offered to meet with us again next year to discuss funding challenges.
- Briefing for **Senedd debate on school exclusion – RCSLT evidence referenced** and has led to conversations with civil servants leading on school exclusion within Welsh Government.

Northern Ireland

- Allied Health Professions Federation Northern Ireland (AHPFNI) **event in Long Gallery** at Stormont to launched collective manifesto asks – attended by health committee MLAs.
- Achieved **recognition of our collective AHP voice**, including manifesto asks. AHP policy leads were invited to begin discussions around workforce solutions, specifically apprenticeships with the DoH.

Stakeholder engagement

England

- Worked with experts to **shape content of major Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) funding call** looking to further develop our understanding of effective support for early language development. Bids have been submitted.

Scotland

- Hosted **stand at the NHS Scotland Event in Aberdeen** - great engagement with health professionals, civil servants and third sector organisations across Scotland, **discussion with the Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport** which led to a further meeting in the Scottish Parliament.

Northern Ireland

- Hosted **stands at UUP and Alliance conferences** - name check in Alliance Party of Northern Ireland manifesto and **request from UUP for meeting with all their MLAs**.
- Co-signed **Stroke Association's 1000 days letter** and supported twitter and social media campaign - Minister for Health published **update on reconfiguration of stroke services**.

Raising awareness and campaigning: International and Scotland

International

- RCSLT was successful in securing an intervention at this year's **Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the UN.**
- **Abdi Omar, a service user advocate and AAC user delivered a statement on our behalf** - calling for access to communication technologies, the adoption of inclusive and accessible communication systems as well as access to speech and language therapy.
- **Abdi's statement** will be **published in the UN journal** and **disseminated to all nations** party to the treaty.

Scotland

- Media stories published in Scotland **raising awareness of the profession.**
- **Musician experience of SLT**, story run by more than 230 news outlets, made headlines in Scottish papers like The Herald and Scotsman - and in the Evening Standard in London and publications in Canada and New Zealand.

Raising awareness and campaigning: Wales and Northern Ireland

Wales

- BBC Wales and BBC Cymru about **SLT provision during the pandemic.**
- Coverage on BBC Radio Wales and also web content on BBC Wales online and BBC Cymru Fyw providing context to a news story about **criticism by a community health council about provision in North Wales.**

Northern Ireland

- BBC Radio Ulster interview with **Ruth Sedgewick and service user around importance of CA UK.**



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