

# South East London Community Head and Neck Team (CHANT) Community FEES Service

## Background

- Patients on the Community Head and Neck (CHANT) team caseload previously could only access FEES via Head & Neck SLT services at Guy's Hospital.
- Appointment slots were challenging to arrange and capacity reduced resulting in prolonged wait times for assessments and increased reliance with referral to Videofluoroscopy.
- Also resulted in inequality in access for patients who find it difficult to attend GSTFT.

## Approach

- CHANT Community FEES service commenced October 2023 offering FEES assessment in CHANT rehabilitation clinics across South East London for patients post treatment completion, palliative and late effects patients.
- FEES service set up in collaboration with the Lewisham and Greenwich Home Enteral Nutrition (HEN) team who own the FEES equipment. In return, CHANT offer training and learning opportunities for HEN team. A jointly monthly clinic is run.
- CHANT FEES completed across 8 sites in South East London (including Health Centres, community hospitals, hospices and GP surgeries) either via monthly clinics or via responsive ad hoc assessments during regular MDT clinic appointments.
- Additional staffing of 0.6WTE Band 7 SLT for 6months currently in post to establish service including running of clinics, training substantive staff and auditing service for future permanent funding.

## Challenges

- Travel time to clinics
- Availability of clinic space
- Clinician skill mix (2 FEES trained SLTs)
- Availability of FEES stacks
- Storing of equipment

## Outcome/Impact

- Increase in number of FEES conducted within CHANT service to guide rehab
- Elimination of FEES performed at GSTFT for CHANT patients

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- Reduction in annual referrals to GSTFT VF clinic
- Improved swallow outcomes following rehab involved FEES
- Improve engagement and compliance with swallow rehabilitation following therapy review/implementation
- Improved patient experience: FEES performed in clinic close to home
- CHANT to be innovators in H&N SLT community: Using FEES within a community setting with an emphasis on utilising this for biofeedback as part of rehabilitation

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***“Having a FEES service in CHANT has had such a positive impact on both patients and the SLT team. We’ve been able to utilise FEES in a different way to how it was being used before e.g. for initial assessments to inform dysphagia diagnoses and for the introduction and review of swallow rehabilitation exercises. In doing so, patient’s needs have been met a lot quicker and our management of their swallowing is much more informed. What’s more, the team have been able to really develop their skills in FEES, too. We’ve noticed that in using FEES within CHANT clinics, our waiting list for videofluoroscopy has significantly reduced!”***

Richard Lord, Advanced Specialist Speech and Language Therapist

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### Top Tips

- Data collection for pre and post clinic implementation
- Patient feedback early on in clinic creation
- Trial of different service delivery models (set fortnightly/monthly clinics vs responsively in clinic appointments)

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- Liaise with other local community services to discuss options for joint FEES clinics!