



*Irma Donaldson, Pippa Cotterill, Jeremy Miles
MS Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care.*

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists is its members.

Thank you to all of our members who have engaged with our influencing work in the past year.

RCSLT Wales highlights

June 2024/25

To get involved in our work:

Visit our Wales policy website
www.rcslt.org/wales

- Read our bi-monthly Wales policy e-newsletter.
- Attend a drop in event.
- Call or email us –
walesoffice@rcslt.org
029 2002 5585



2025 marks our 80th anniversary. To celebrate this significant milestone, we held a celebratory event in the Senedd and published our landmark state of the nation report on speech and language therapy services in Wales.

It was wonderful to see so many members and stakeholders in attendance at the Senedd. We were delighted that the audience also heard from service user, Karen, who has verbal apraxia and were serenaded by the Cardiff and Vale Aphasia-Friendly Choir.

Lack of speech therapists as demand for help grows



BBC Wales interview with service user, Ceri Maher.

Impact

24/60 Senedd Members (MSs) attended the event including the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, who gave the keynote address.

The event and report inspired a 60 minute opposition debate in the Senedd by the Welsh Conservatives in January 2025.

The state of the nation report was covered by BBC Politics Wales and Newyddion.



Following on from last year's Senedd event, DLD continues to be an influencing priority for our small team.

- Our Head of Wales Office, Pippa Cotterill presented on DLD at the WJEC (Welsh examinations board) Conference for Subject Officers in October 2024.
- Pippa also delivered a Community of Practice live session on DLD awareness day for the National Neurodivergence team.
- We hosted a stand with RADLD at the Senedd on Tuesday 15th October 2024 to raise awareness of DLD with Senedd Members and officials.

Impact

The Community of Practice live session attracted **150** people.

11 MSs called by our stand at the Senedd and four posted graphics and a message of support on DLD day itself.

Children and young people



We have responded to a number of Senedd consultations on Children and Young People and gave oral evidence to the Senedd Children, Young People and Education Committee as part of its inquiry into access to education for disabled children.

Impact

The final report published in July 2024 includes a number of mentions of speech and language therapy and a key recommendation that:

"The Welsh Government reviews the current numbers of key allied health professionals, identifies where there are current gaps, how these gaps will be addressed and the numbers needed to support future likely level of need, including the number of training places needed. This should then be supported by a clear delivery plan¹."

¹ Senedd Children, Young People and Education Committee (2024). Do disabled children and young people have equal access to education and childcare. <https://senedd.wales/media/3zzhhref/cr-ld16592-e.pdf>.

Women's Health Plan



Our External Affairs Officer, Naila Noori played a key role in drafting the NHS Wales Women's Health Plan. Naila is explicitly thanked within the plan.



Impact

Our expertise in equity, diversity and belonging is acknowledged by ministers.

Justice



We published a progress report for the Senedd Equality and Social Justice Committee 18 months on from the committee's 60% Giving Them a Voice report – speech, language and communication needs within the criminal justice system.

- We prepared a briefing for and met with a number of Welsh MPs on funding for speech and language therapist posts within youth justice services.
- We arranged a visit for the Children's Commissioner for Wales to the speech and language therapy service in Hillside Secure Children's Home.

Impact

Meeting secured with Minister at Ministry of Justice and continuation funding for services agreed.

AHPF Cymru



In January 2025, the Allied Health Professions Federation Cymru (AHPF Cymru) was launched. The AHPF exists across the UK, but it is new to Wales. Policy officers in Wales have always worked collaboratively across professions but the launch of AHPF Cymru with associated funding allows us to work together more strategically and effectively to benefit our members. Caroline Walters, our External Affairs Manager, Wales is the first chair.



Impact

AHPF Cymru has met with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care. We have also created a manifesto for the Senedd elections in 2026 and are lobbying all the main political parties on our key asks via individual meetings and attendance at party conferences.