



# High 5

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists  
**NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY ELECTION**  
**2016 MANIFESTO**

*'Communication at the heart of health and wellbeing'*

## OUR HIGH FIVE

-  HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE WORKFORCE
-  CHILDREN
-  YOUNG PEOPLE
-  ADULTS
-  COMMUNICATION DISABILITY

Work with us to improve outcomes for people in Northern Ireland with communication and swallowing difficulties and support the work of the speech and language therapy profession.



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Make this happen by.....



**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE WORKFORCE:** Ensure that allied health professionals are at the centre of an integrated workforce planning process to deliver 'Transforming Your Care'.

- Demonstrate and acknowledge the contribution of all healthcare professionals by referring to allied health professionals (AHPs), doctors and nurses at both public and policy level.
- Open up senior health and social care leadership posts to AHPs in Northern Ireland so that their unique insight can inform the integration of health and care around the needs of the patient.



**CHILDREN:** Ensure that every child is school-ready by having the best possible speech, language and communication skills to help them achieve their full potential, make friends and enjoy learning.

- Empower parents and carers to give children in Northern Ireland the best start in life through universal public health messages about the importance of and ways to develop appropriate speech, language and communication skills.
- Ensure that children with complex difficulties get access to the services they need to ensure early diagnosis and effective support of their speech, language, communication and feeding skills.



**YOUNG PEOPLE:** Recognise that speech, language and communication are core life skills, fundamental for success in education, training, and job-readiness for all young people in Northern Ireland.

- Ensure that young people with disabilities transitioning to adult services have access to timely speech and language therapy support so that they can express their choices, participate in society and live well.
- Identify and support young people within the justice system who have speech, language and communication needs to give them the best chance of breaking the cycle of reoffending.



**ADULTS:** Ensure that every adult with communication difficulties has access to speech and language therapy so that they can express their choices, live well, and be independent for as long as possible.

- Ensure that people with a dementia are referred to speech and language therapy for a communication assessment so that they can remain independent for as long as possible.
- Ensure that every stroke survivor is referred to speech and language therapy for an assessment of their communication and swallowing needs in the days immediately after their stroke so that they can be given a voice and can make a safe and good recovery.



**COMMUNICATION DISABILITY:** Ensure that people in Northern Ireland with a communication disability have equality of opportunity in every aspect of their lives.

- Support the development of a regional alternative and augmentative communication strategy which enshrines the importance of communication for health and wellbeing.
- Ensure that Northern Ireland has legislative safeguards including a mental capacity act, that supports and protects individuals with a communication disability.