



NHS Long Term Plan RCSLT response

The RCSLT welcomes the publication of the NHS Long Term Plan and its ambitions to support prevention, early intervention and tackle health inequality, through increased integration across the system and better support and development opportunities for staff. We believe these changes have the potential to deliver improved care for people with communication needs and swallowing difficulties. We also welcome the fact that the plan takes into account the needs of people of all ages, from neonatal services to end of life care.

We are encouraged to see the plan's explicit recognition that speech and language therapists are a workforce group which is in short supply. We look forward to this being addressed during the implementation of the plan.

We are pleased that the plan recognises speech and language therapy as part of the new models of care which will bring together physical and mental health services for children and young people to provide holistic care which is age appropriate and closer to home. As we made clear in our engagement with NHS England during the development of the plan, speech and language therapy has a similar role to play across the age range, supporting people to stay healthy and age well. Speech and language therapists also have roles to play as enablers of improvement in relation to workforce, primary care, digital innovation and technology, research and innovation, and engagement.

The Long Term Plan recognises that allied health professionals can significantly support the demand profile the NHS faces, and in particular have a role to play in urgent response and recovery support, community multidisciplinary teams, the mental health sector and neonatal care. Speech and language therapists make important contributions to all of these areas and in many of the conditions prioritised by the plan, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke care, respiratory disease, frailty, and learning disability and autism.

We stand ready to play our full part, with NHS England and other partners, in the development of the national implementation programme. In particular, we look forward to being involved in the development of both the Children and Young People's Transformation Programme and the Workforce Implementation Plan.

The NHS Long Term plan can be accessed via:

<https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/>

RCSLT's response to NHS England's consultation can be accessed via:

<https://www.rcslt.org/-/media/Project/RCSLT/rcslt-nhs-long-term-plan-response.pdf>

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