**Template letter**

*Use this to write to your local MP. We encourage you to tailor it according to your personal experience and local circumstances. Try wherever possible to keep the letter to one side of A4 and, if appropriate, ask your MP for a meeting where you can discuss the issues in more detail.*

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<YOUR ADDRESS>

<TODAY’S DATE>

Dear <NAME>

**Improving the lives of your constituents with communication and swallowing needs**

I understand that the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) has written to you about how speech and language therapists support people of all ages with communication and swallowing needs. I wanted to get in touch too because as you know there will be many such people in your constituency.

* Up to 20% of the UK’s population experience communication difficulty at some point in their lives, and more than 10% of all children and young people have a long-term communication need.
* People with a range of health conditions can also have difficulties with eating and drinking safely – this includes those who have had a stroke, who are living with certain cancers, dementia, or neurological conditions, such as Parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis and motor neurone disease, and those with learning disabilities.

Speech and language therapy services locally are supporting many of those people and I would welcome the opportunity to discuss our work in more depth with you.

In the meantime, I hope you will work for better lives for people with communication and swallowing needs by supporting both our work locally and the work of the RCSLT in Parliament, including through joining the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Speech and Language Difficulties for which the RCSLT provides the Secretariat. If you would like any further information on the RCSLT’s national work, do please contact its Head of External Affairs, Peter Just, on peter,just@rcslt.org or 020 7378 3630.

I look forward to hearing from you and with best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

<YOUR NAME>