

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the speech and language therapy profession



The Research and Outcomes Forum in the [August 2020 issue](#) of *Bulletin* discusses the findings of a survey we conducted at the end of April 2020, which was devised to understand the impact of COVID-19 on the speech and language therapy profession at that time. This document provides the full tables of results to accompany the article.

Table 1: Summary of responses to specific survey questions about changes experienced by RCSLT members following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Change reported	n	Percentage of all respondents
Redeployment	107	(19.7%)
Reduction in referrals	278	(51.1%)
Individuals not receiving intervention who would usually	406	(74.6%)
Increase in video and/or telephone consultations	355	(65.3%)
Increase in video consultations	237	(43.6%)
Increase in telephone consultations	330	(60.7%)
Total number of respondents	544	-

Table 2: Number and proportion of responses to RCSLT survey questions by region.

Region	Total number of respondents	Number & percentage redeployed	Number & percentage reporting a reduction in referrals	Number & percentage reporting individuals not receiving intervention who would usually
Channel Islands and Isle of Man ¹	2	-	-	-
Northern Ireland	19	4 (21.1%)	10 (52.6%)	14 (73.7%)
Scotland	52	8 (15.4%)	31 (59.6%)	44 (84.6%)
Wales	16	4 (25.0%)	9 (56.3%)	14 (87.5%)
England	458	92 (20.1%)	231 (50.4%)	342 (74.7%)
East Midlands	30	5 (16.7%)	17 (56.7%)	24 (80%)
East of England	38	11 (28.9%)	18 (47.4%)	34 (89.5%)
London	99	28 (28.3%)	41 (41.4%)	72 (72.7%)
North East & Cumbria	28	5 (17.9%)	17 (60.7%)	16 (57.1%)
North West	36	4 (11.1%)	24 (66.7%)	25 (69.4%)
South Central	27	5 (18.5%)	17 (63.0%)	23 (85.2%)
South East	73	14 (19.2%)	27 (37.0%)	50 (68.5%)
South West	45	11 (24.4%)	22 (48.9%)	33 (73.3%)
West Midlands	28	4 (14.3%)	17 (60.7%)	22 (78.6%)
Yorkshire & the Humber	54	5 (9.3%)	31 (57.4%)	43 (79.6%)

¹ Data omitted due to fewer than 10 respondents from this category
(Please note: respondents were asked to select their RCSLT Hub region from a list of options, and could select any that applied to them.)

Table 3: Number and proportion of responses to RCSLT survey questions by the clinical area speech and language therapists reported that they typically worked in.

Clinical area	Total number of respondents	Number & percentage reporting individuals not receiving intervention who would usually	Number & percentage reporting a reduction in referrals	Number & percentage reporting an increase in video and/or telephone consultations	Number & percentage redeployed
AAC	108	84 (77.8%)	54 (50.0%)	75 (69.4%)	16 (14.8%)
Acquired speech difficulties	113	84 (74.3%)	71 (62.8%)	70 (61.9%)	16 (14.2%)
Aphasia	138	101 (73.2%)	88 (63.8%)	85 (61.6%)	19 (13.8%)
Autism Spectrum Disorder	193	152 (78.8%)	84 (43.5%)	135 (69.9%)	45 (23.3%)
Bilingualism	45	36 (80.0%)	26 (57.8%)	30 (66.7%)	13 (28.9%)
Brain injury	98	70 (71.4%)	61 (62.2%)	59 (60.2%)	15 (15.3%)
Cleft lip and palate / craniofacial	24	20 (83.3%)	10 (41.7%)	19 (79.2%)	8 (33.3%)
Cognitive communication disorder	114	88 (77.2%)	68 (59.6%)	73 (64.0%)	16 (14.0%)
Critical care	61	26 (42.6%)	35 (57.4%)	23 (37.7%)	1 (1.64%)
Deafness	29	26 (89.7%)	12 (41.4%)	19 (65.5%)	7 (24.1%)
Dementia	108	75 (69.4%)	73 (67.6%)	65 (60.2%)	12 (11.1%)
Developmental language disorder	185	146 (78.9%)	73 (39.5%)	121 (65.4%)	49 (26.5%)
Dysfluency	79	70 (88.6%)	36 (45.6%)	58 (73.4%)	23 (29.1%)
Dysphagia (adults)	221	153 (69.2%)	136 (61.5%)	135 (61.1%)	26 (11.8%)
Dysphagia (paediatrics)	47	38 (80.9%)	24 (51.1%)	40 (85.1%)	14 (29.8%)
Head and neck cancer	48	34 (70.8%)	29 (60.4%)	37 (77.1%)	8 (16.7%)
Learning disabilities	127	97 (76.4%)	61 (48.1%)	92 (72.4%)	29 (22.8%)
Mental health (adults)	22	16 (72.7%)	9 (40.9%)	14 (63.6%)	3 (13.6%)
Motor disorders	54	39 (72.2%)	36 (66.7%)	30 (55.6%)	10 (18.5%)
Neonatal care	11	9 (81.8%)	7 (63.6%)	11 (100.0%)	5 (45.5%)
Physical disabilities	37	26 (70.3%)	24 (64.9%)	30 (81.1%)	7 (18.9%)
Progressive neurological	129	91 (70.5%)	86 (66.7%)	80 (62.0%)	20 (15.5%)

Clinical area	Total number of respondents	Number & percentage reporting individuals not receiving intervention who would usually	Number & percentage reporting a reduction in referrals	Number & percentage reporting an increase in video and/or telephone consultations	Number & percentage redeployed
disorders					
Public health	16	15 (93.8%)	9 (56.3%)	14 (87.5%)	5 (31.3%)
Respiratory care	63	34 (54.0%)	42 (66.7%)	33 (52.4%)	8 (12.7%)
Selective mutism	67	56 (83.6%)	26 (38.8%)	44 (65.7%)	26 (38.8%)
Social communication difficulties	176	144 (81.8%)	75 (42.6%)	122 (69.3%)	48 (27.3%)
Social, emotional and mental health	54	42 (77.8%)	19 (35.2%)	37 (68.5%)	14 (25.9%)
Speech sound disorders	174	140 (80.5%)	70 (40.2%)	116 (66.7%)	47 (27.0%)
Stroke	140	99 (70.7%)	93 (66.4%)	86 (61.4%)	23 (16.4%)
Tracheostomy	81	40 (49.4%)	42 (51.9%)	46 (56.8%)	9 (11.1%)
Trans and gender-diverse voice and communication	10	9 (90.0%)	6 (60.0%)	9 (90.0%)	2 (20.0%)
Visual and multi-sensory impairments	15	11 (73.3%)	5 (33.3%)	10 (66.7%)	6 (40.0%)
Voice	86	67 (77.9%)	52 (60.5%)	60 (69.8%)	20 (23.3%)

(Please note: respondents were asked to select the clinical areas that they typically worked in from a list of options, and could select any that applied to them. Therefore, the percentages do not total 100.)

Table 4: Number and proportion of responses to RCSLT survey questions by the setting speech and language therapists reported that they typically worked in.

Setting respondents typically work in	Total number of respondents	Number & percentage reporting an increase in video and/or telephone consultations
Acute setting	173	94 (54.3%)
Care home	71	57 (80.3%)
Community health setting (i.e. clinics)	221	164 (74.2%)
Further education	16	13 (81.3%)
Hospice	20	20 (100.0%)
Hospital setting	138	92 (66.7%)
Mainstream school	148	104 (70.3%)
Nursing home	74	60 (81.1%)
Patient/ client home	177	140 (79.1%)
Private practice setting	24	16 (66.7%)
Private school	21	17 (81.0%)
School – specialist unit/ resource base	106	76 (71.7%)
Secure setting ²	8	-
University ²	7	-
Other (please specify)	66	47 (71.2%)

² Data omitted due to fewer than 10 respondents from this category

(Please note: respondents were asked to select the settings that they typically worked in from a list of options, and could select any that applied to them. Therefore, the percentages do not total 100.)