

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.)