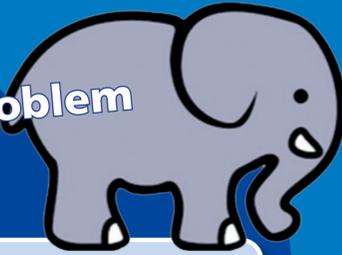




Speech, Language and Communication Needs – The Elephant in the Room?

The **SIZE** of the problem

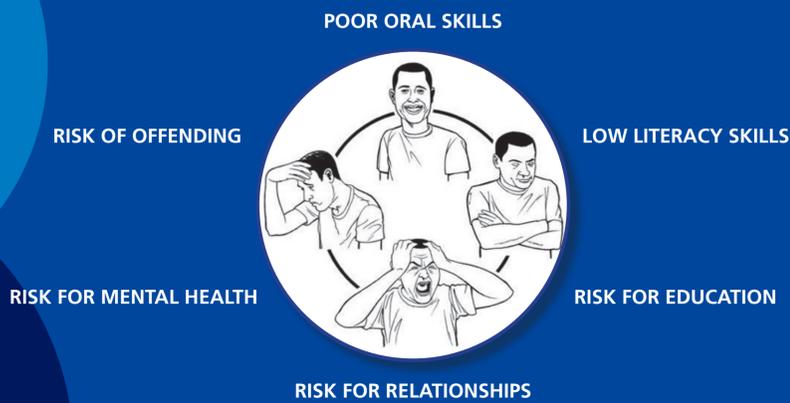


81% of children with emotional and behavioural disorders (EBD) have significant unidentified communication needs¹

More than 60% of young people who are accessing youth justice services present with Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) which are largely unrecognised²
In a study of pupils at risk of exclusion from school, two thirds were found to have SLCN.³

Why is SLCN Relevant?

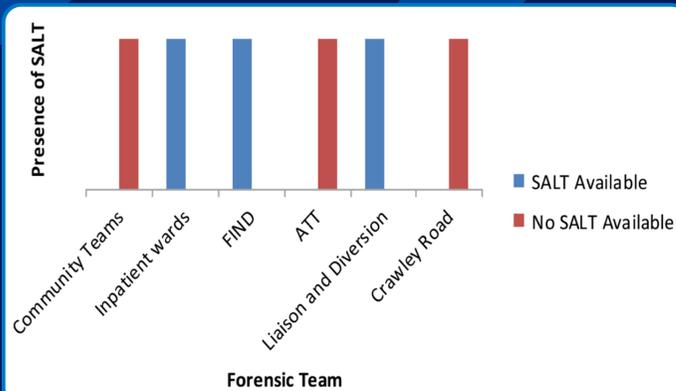
Bryan 4 talks of the Compounding Risk Model which can be illustrated as below:



How Speech and Language Therapy can promote positive behaviour

- Greater understanding of communication needs
- Earlier identification of needs
- Consider the impact of communication difficulties and respond appropriately
- Remove barriers that could increase difficulties
- Support the person and their network

So where is SALT currently hosted within Forensic CDS?



Where SALT is not hosted within a Forensic Team, it may be possible to refer the person to other services which have SALT, such as the Transforming Care - Autism team, and local community Speech & Language Therapy services.

Case 1 - a patient in medium secure inpatient unit

K was referred to Speech & Language Therapy for assessment particularly of his social communication skills due to concerns about how he was interacting with peers on the ward. A screen of his language skills was completed confirming that he had a good understanding of vocabulary and sentence structures, was able to retain information well, and was also able to express relevant and necessary information without too much difficulty in a variety of situations.

However, when a social communication skills checklist was completed, there was a large discrepancy between how he perceived himself in social situations, and how staff rated his social communication skills. Intervention focused on identifying different components of social communication skills, such as assertiveness, self esteem, managing conversations.

The evidence based model of "Social Thinking"⁴ was used as a framework for intervention and with the support of Speech & Language Therapy, K was able to map his own skills and difficulties onto an image which he could relate to, helping him understand why he was perceived as challenging and threatening at times. He shared this model with staff and continued to use it to help reflect on situations and develop more appropriate communication skills in social situations, being more aware of how he might be perceived by others and able to adjust his presentation accordingly. This in time had a positive impact on how he was perceived on the ward and contributed to strengthening his ability to build relationships with peers.

Speech and Language Therapy Service Delivery



What Has SALT Achieved?

Work is still underway to confirm which outcome measures are most useful to demonstrate our work. We'd like to evidence outcomes that are recognised clinically, prioritised by clients and carers.

Interim Outcomes (of individual work)

- SALT develops a good understanding of SLCN
- Staff have a good understanding of SLCN
- Increased staff awareness of SLCN
- Staff use effective strategies to support SLCN
- Improved communicative functioning
- Appropriate and effective patient-staff interactions
- Effective engagement with therapeutic interventions
- Equal access to information
- Increased self awareness and self esteem

Ultimate Outcomes

- Interventions with offenders are more successful
- Fewer violent and negative incidents
- Staff have increased understanding & confidence
- SLT assessment and therapy provided to individual appropriately. SLT also supports service providers to engage with individual within appropriate age and ability level
- SLTs and SLT services are commissioned
- Further SLT training is commissioned
- Less offending
- Better educational attainment
- Better mental health outcomes
- Better access to health services
- Better engagement with community services
- More effective effort
- Transferable communication skills
- Higher morale / positive attitude
- Fewer complaints about staff
- Enhance ability to understand legal proceedings and orders when required

Case 2 - Sussex Liaison and Diversion adult

A presented in police custody for an alleged offence of domestic violence. He had existing diagnoses of Autistic Spectrum Condition, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, and was screened by the SLDS practitioner who completed a speech and language screen which identified that he had difficulty understanding and retaining information about the significance and likely consequences of his offence and with expressing himself effectively. The practitioner referred A for a speech and language assessment ahead of his police interview on the basis of A's results from this screen and high probability of SLCN associated with his existing diagnoses.

The speech and language assessment confirmed severely restricted understanding of vocabulary and difficulties with expressive language which were impacting on his ability to engage with the CJS. This information and a copy of the speech and language assessment report was shared with the practitioner, custody sergeants, solicitor and appropriate adult. This helped to maximize A's effective engagement in police interview.

A appeared in court 4 weeks later and a copy of the speech and language report was shared with Her Majesty's Court Service.

The SLDS court practitioner feedback that the magistrate had welcomed the information regarding the communication difficulties. The Speech & Language Therapist subsequently met with the case worker to discuss the impact of his communication difficulties on being able to comply fully with his order.

This involved identifying creative strategies to ensure he could understand the content of his order, and most importantly, to provide practice of using verbal and non-verbal responses to a variety of situations in order to comply with the restrictions imposed through his order.

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