

Dorset Children's Hearing Services Working Group (CHSWG)

Wednesday 6th November 2024, 10am, Microsoft Teams

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| 1 | <p>Introductions and Apologies:</p> <p><u>Attendees:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ursula Murley – Principal Teacher, Dorset Hearing Support Service (Chair) • Ken Tucker – Educational Audiologist, Dorset Hearing Support Service • Lisa Nind - Clinical lead for Paediatric Audiology • Louise Viney – Local Engagement Officer NDCS • Sam Bealing - Educational Audiologist, Hearing • Eirwen Burgess – Local Manager NHSP • Liz Jamieson – Speech & Language Therapist • Helen Williams - Service Manager for Dorset Audiology • Sarah Morris - Consultant Paediatrician • Cllr Bridget Bolwell • Chinyere Mercy - Parent <p><u>Apologies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simon Baird – Clinical Scientist (Audiology) • Heidi Watts – Senior Rehabilitationist (Teacher of the Deaf) University of Southampton Auditory Implant Centre (USAIS) • Shirley Sorbie – DDCS (Dorset Deaf Children's Society) Trustee • Juliet Viney – NDCS Trustee and CHSWG Parent Representative • Gemma Hardman - Speech and Language Therapy Service • Katie Key – Senior Specialist Audiologist (Paediatrics) • Steven Frampton – Consultant ENT Surgeon • Jemma Buckler – NHSP (Neonatal Hearing Screening Programme) Local Manager • Rachel Beeby – Clinical Scientist (Audiology) • Kate Halsey – Integrated Care Systems Senior Programme Lead Children and Young People's Team • Charlotte Freeman-Laurence - Deputy Manager, Head and Neck Service • Deepa Shenoy - Consultant Paediatrician • Erica Davies – Speech and Language Therapist for Deaf Children • Jill Warn – Service manager, Looked After Children • Barry Alborough-Duell – East Dorset ENT Service Manager |
| 2 | <p>Matters Arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of minutes from last meeting – agreed. ○ Review of actions from last meeting: Parent CHSWG meeting attendance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UM – no response to the invitation for parents to join the meeting. Parents have commitments but know they can attend the meeting to |

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| | <p>UM confirmed no questions have been raised from parents in response to the parent questionnaire.</p> <p>Batteries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LN raised about tamper proof drawers for batteries. KT confirmed that he had addressed it in the staff meeting and this has now done and OTICON have sent drawers. <p>Local Offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UM gave an update from the School Health Team. Reception screening has ceased due to it not capturing enough information. LV queried the reception screening asking if information would be sent out to parents about recognising hearing impairments. Information for schools and parents about referrals are on the Local Offer and NHS websites. BB raised the importance of school staff knowing about hearing impairments in preparation for children starting reception that have not been to preschools, so teachers know what to look for. UM confirmed that literature updates and information for staff are being worked on and is an ongoing project. <p>Glossary terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not completed but in progress. <p>Parent Information Evening - Postponed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postponed due to numbers, further details in the Hearing Support Service update. |
| 3 | <p>Service Updates:</p> <p>Newborn Hearing Screening Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EB presented figures looking at the five standards – figures to be shared. They are above the standard level for quarter one with 97.8 %. Further to the last meeting the service is now screening within 28 days of birth (2 late arrivals, six declined). The service works hard with babies/families that decline but usually these babies/families also decline other health services. Standard 2 – the number of babies requiring second screenings is 5.4.% which is below the acceptable level. Standard 3 - referrals to Audiology, twenty-three babies referred which is good that the numbers are smaller. Standard 4 – babies offered appointments on time. Standard 5 - those that attend. Appointments were changed over the summer to be compliant with new legislation requiring permissions from families. This has been difficult due to needing permission from parents before being able to make contact, but contact has been made with midwives and health visitors and a new contact number has been given to midwives to pass on to parents so that parents can recognise the number when they receive calls from the service. It is thought that the level for this quarter is achievable. SM was interested to know about parents declining and missing opportunities and if this is looked at. EB confirmed that the service has contact with parents |

prior to them declining and that some parents decline as they have concerns, but options are available and the service work with parents/children to try and offer options for screening to be done.

- BB queried if it is flagged and recorded when parents decline screening – EB confirmed that these services are optional. However, GPs are sent letters when screening is declined, and it is recorded in notes but not reported from a safeguarding point of view. The service must allow parents the choice for their child to be screened unless the child is referred to audiology for example as then the parents are choosing not to follow up on advice or help that is needed.
- LV says there are videos available about the NHS screening service and wondered if GPs could share this information. EB responded that there is a link that is sent to parents with leaflets and information if they decline. If parents are seen by an NHS midwife, they are given this information. However, if they are seen by a private midwife they don't receive this information. The link is available via the NHS website.

Paediatrics (East and West)

- SM reported for Paediatrics East, DS (West) sent apologies.
- SM reported that the service is established and providing a good service in the Southwest. There is a record kept of children with hearing impairments which is reviewed at the end of the year, showing that the numbers are still small with older children being diagnosed more than younger children. The reason for this is that results are taking longer but genetic testing can be requested. DS and SM are looking to follow-up babies with CMV quicker than they currently do with an example of a four-year-old child seen with a congenital CMV who now has cochlear implants.
- SM announced that she will be retiring at Easter, and RL will be taking over the role. RL has had a meeting with SF talking about the service going forward.
- LV asked about the increasing number of older children being diagnosed and the reason for this. SM said that SF is keen to investigate this and will often arrange MRI scans. There is guidance from Paediatric Audiologists and investigations.
- LN asked if RL will be based at the Child Development Centre, SM confirmed that she will and will be an Associate Specialist Paediatrician continuing to lead for looked after children and that this role will be an additional part of her clinical work. SM said that it is a rewarding role and will do a handover with RL. LN offered to meet with RL.

Dorset Hearing Support Service

- There are currently 520 children and young people supported by the Hearing Support Service. In addition, there are 281 children are on clinic review, plus 225 children have been diagnosed with a hearing loss which is currently unaided. There are five children attending residential schools for deaf children.
- Across Dorset and BCP 139 of the children have EHCPs in place. Since the last meeting, the Hearing Support Service has supported forty-seven new referrals.
- The service currently has fourteen members of staff and is in the process of recruiting an additional member of staff on a part-time basis.

- A professional development priority this year is up-skilling BSL skills. Several staff are in the process of completing the level 2 BSL course and level 3 BSL course.
- Baby Signers Group – will be starting in the new year. Teachers are currently being trained for the Baby Signers' Group which will be launching as a new initiative for preschool families. It will be a 12-week course for families with location to be confirmed.
- The service has projects being worked on in line with the service development plan. The service is looking at bitesize training courses to be more budget and time considerate.
- Key performance indicators are being reviewed to included smaller projects that records impact and feedback from children and parents.
- Parent Information Evening – 19 parents that said they would like to attend but due to a range of factors, including expense, it was decided to postpone the evening. A survey was sent out to parents asking for suggestions and what they would like from these events. Twenty-nine percent said they would like the events via webinars, 46% of parents asked for an evening event with information and workshops, 25% of parents asked for daytime events. Parents were asked about the time of year that they would like the events to take place with 80% saying it did not matter about the time of year, 10% would like something in the new year and 10% of parents would like the event before Christmas. 7% of parents did not want to travel far to the events, 6% were happy to travel up to 20 miles to attend an event and 4% wanted events to be under 20 miles.
- When asked about what topics they would like to be covered, parents were interested in topics such as hearing aid maintenance, mental health, EHCPs and Speech and Language Therapy. Childcare was also considered a barrier for attending events and there was a suggestion of Zoom/online meetings.
- BB loved the idea of the Little Signers Group but raised concerns about families that are not able to get to the BCP area when they live in West Dorset and other areas due to the distance and transport. UM explained it is planned to be available across the county and there is currently a group running in the BCP area. The aim is to expand this to other areas to target families and preschoolers once the group is established and gained confidence in its success.
- BB asked about webinars being run as part of school staff meetings as well as for early years and SENCOs and UM confirmed that bespoke training is offered to teachers and SENCOs.

Dorset Paediatric Audiology

- LN talked about the NHS Paediatric Improvement Plan due to a few children who have been mis-diagnosed in other services. Dorset Paediatric Audiology have been involved in case studies since the last meeting. NHS England have visited Shelley Road and asked a range of questions about the pathway from start to end. They also inspected clinic rooms and visited clinics, which has had a positive outcome. The report is still pending due to visits to other centres, but the inspectors have been pleased so far.
- The IKIP accredited certificate for Audiology is taking a significant amount of work to gain looking at clinicians and the patients' journeys from start to end.

- There has been further work on the Audiology website to make it user-friendly and provide more information.
- Waiting lists are continuing to offer babies appointments within four weeks. Waiting times are currently over 6 weeks for babies outside of newborn, but a new member of staff has been employed to work on clinic lists.
- There have been some concerns regarding hearing aids. The team has been speaking with OTICON about battery safety and now include information on reports about battery safety with updated information.
- HW spoke about battery safety working with OTICON. There have been no proven failures but need confidence with OTICON to deem product safe.
- HW says Audiology have been working together with Dorset Health Care and NHS England. This has been extremely positive about the service in Dorset.
- HW said the biggest challenge has been the new IT system which was done in two stages.
- UM mentioned that when there was a previous concern about battery safety issues the Hearing Support Service updated their reports to include battery safety information.
- UM congratulated Audiology on their successful audit.

University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service

- There were no representatives in attendance from the University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service.

ENT (East and West)

- There were no representatives in attendance from ENT.

School Health

- There were no representatives in attendance from School Health.

Paediatric Speech and Language Therapy

- LJ reported for the service.
- Staffing still challenging but LJ has increased her working hours and JW is helping, in addition to this some graduate therapists are also helping to support the service.
- It has been a busy time since the last meeting as the service has changed the way they work with schools, communities, and groups. The role of the Balance System is being rolled out in schools which has been a big part of working with schools.
- The service is taking a graduated approach to see what children might need and working with schools to evaluate this.
- The number of children being supported at specialist level is about forty.
- The service is reviewing support in school for children with a variety of additional needs. The team are planning to work with the Hearing Support Service as a lot of children, who have hearing loss, are not at specialist level.
- LJ shared diagrams of the number of children receiving specialist/non-specialist support including targeted intervention groups.
- There is a programme of workforce training provided which includes drop ins, audits of deaf children's needs and specialist children.
- In schools, Teaching Assistants and staff are carrying out support for children guided by the SaLT team.

- The service is currently short staffed so there are a few families that have not been seen by the SALT team for a while.
- UM talked about the graduated response suggesting that SALT and the Hearing Support Service could work together on this. LN agreed and is happy to contribute too.
- LV thought it was good that the services are working together to build resilience and prepare young deaf adults for life outside of school.

Children's Social Care

- There were no representatives in attendance from Children's Social Care.

Dorset Deaf Children's Society

- SS is unable to attend but sent a report for the meeting to be distributed to the attendees.
- To date this year there has been twelve events. The new baby and preschool group for children under 5 has been very successful.
- Upcoming events include the Christmas party and a residential trip for families to PGL Osmington in the summer term.
- There were nineteen nominations for the Jenny Barrett Deaf Child Achievement Awards – nominations and winners will be in the DDSCS newsletter.
- The DDSCS has 11 trustees and a youth person representative who are all volunteers.
- DDSCS membership is currently 219, of which 148 are families who have children with a hearing loss. There are currently 158 children registered. So far in 2024, 20 new families have joined DDSCS.
- Information about the DDSCS is available online: [HOME | dorsetdcs](#)
- SS asked about DDSCS literature in waiting rooms and if more leaflets are needed.

National Deaf Children's Society

- LV represented the National Deaf Children's Society.
- LV added a link to the chat a link concentration fatigue:
- [Ian Noon: The impact of concentration fatigue on deaf children should be factored in | The Limping Chicken](#)
- LV shared other updates from the NDCS which were sent to UM to be distributed with the minutes.
- The NDCS website has useful information about sign language:
- [What is sign language? | Communication](#)
- The mentoring scheme is no longer being offered by NDCS, it is now being run by the Royal Association for the Deaf with training for teachers.
- UCL offers a range of short courses aimed at different professionals including doctors, nurses, and teachers.
- The READY Study regarding young deaf people ages 16-19 has now been published on the NDCS website:
- [READY study: reaching under-represented groups | National Deaf Children's Society](#)
- UM reported that the Hearing Support Service have been hasn't been receiving CHSWG newsletters from the NDCS. LV confirmed that there have been some technical difficulties with distribution.

NHS Clinical Commissioning Group

- No representatives at the meeting.

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| 4 | Any Other Business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consideration of a Parent Information event for the new year. ○ All attendees expressed thanks to SM for all her work over the years and wished her good luck and best wishes for her retirement at Easter. |

Dates of next meetings:

Thursday 22nd May 2024, 10:00am – 12:00pm via Microsoft Teams

Thursday 6th November 2024, 10:00am – 12:00pm via Microsoft Teams