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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Bae Abertawe  
Swansea Bay University  
Health Board



Meeting Date	26 April 2022	Agenda Item	6.3
Report Title	Update on Speech and Language Therapy Performance including a recovery plan with clear demand and capacity assumptions and an improvement trajectory		
Report Author	Ann Milligan, Interim Head of Speech and Language Therapy		
Report Sponsor	Brian Owens, PCT Service Group Director		
Presented by			
Freedom of Information	Open		
Purpose of the Report	This paper provides an update on the performance of the Speech and Language Therapy service against RTT targets laid out by Welsh Government, based on a previous paper presented on 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2021. The paper explains progress to date and plans to ensure breaches do not reoccur.		
Key Issues	In line with the Annual Plan for 2021/2022, the service is identifying the need to address waiting times for paediatric services following Covid, including the increasing needs of children and young people affected by the pandemic. The service is also identifying the demands of implementing the ALN reform, and the impact this will have on current service delivery. The service is also committed to developing a sustainable response to the Gender Identity Reform as part of a wider development to adults with voice disorders. These key performance areas are addressed within this report.		
Specific Action Required (please choose one only)	Information	Discussion	Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Recommendations	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NOTE</b> the contents of the report, the improvement in performance and plans to maintain performance.</li> </ul>		

## Speech and Language Performance

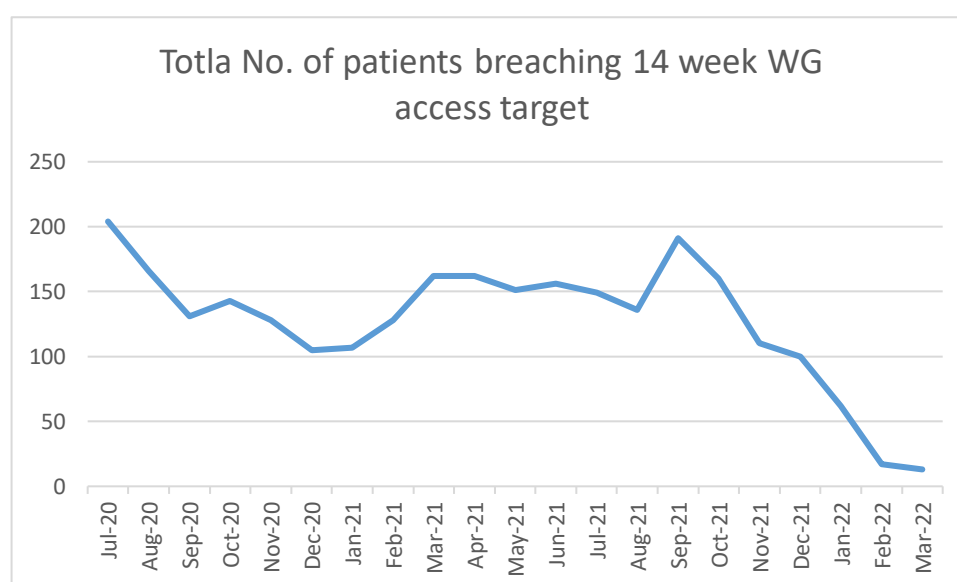
### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Welsh Government 14-week access target for Speech and Language Therapy has been breached since April 2020.

This report describes the history to this, factors affecting recovery and the recovery trajectory.

### 2. BACKGROUND

Subsequent to the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic, waiting list times for the Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) department have breached key performance waiting time targets. However, there has been recent significant improvement (there are currently 12 breaches as of 06.04.2022), and we anticipate that April's data should indicate a fully recovered position with 0 breaches by 30.04.2022.



The SLT dept. covers three distinct service areas, adults, adult learning disability and paediatrics. Adult learning disability service users are managed within multi-disciplinary teams and do not breach performance targets. The adult and paediatric departments have implemented an action plan to reduce the number of breaches on their waiting lists.

Since the outset of the pandemic the SLT dept. has embraced virtual technology and the service delivery model changed whereby only those patients requiring diagnostic intervention are seen face to face. Reports from informatics indicates that the SLT dept. continue to be one of the highest Attend Anyway users.

### 3. GOVERNANCE AND RISK ISSUES

Assurances that our recovered position will be maintained;

- Recruitment of 4 additional newly qualified SLTs in July 2022 following the Streamlining process, who will be involved in assessment of patients.
- Additional Recovery funding secured to stabilise the waiting list – patients are currently seen at week 13, leaving limited headroom to account for sickness, annual leave etc. Seeing patients around week 10, would significantly reduce the risk of inadvertent breaches occurring. Utilising recovery funding to reduce the waiting list for initial assessment further will support this, and decrease the risk of breaching.
- More robust universal and targeted support is now available for patients to access independently, reducing referral rates. This approach is proving effective and demonstrate positive outcomes.

Risk to maintaining our recovered position.

- Our waiting lists that are not reported nationally continue to increase whilst our workforce focuses on maintaining the 14 week waiting list.
- We continue to receive complaints from those on waiting lists that are not reported nationally, which are frequently escalated through the complaints department. We have also recently received complaint direct from WG ministers on behalf of families.
- We anticipate difficulties fulfilling our statutory obligations regarding Health Additional Learning Provision under the Additional Learning Needs Reform, as we work to maintain the 14 week waiting list. This will increase the risk of costly tribunals.
- The Gender Identity Pathway continues to be managed via Recovery Funding. We do not have a sustainable solution to managing this pathway. We continue to receive excellent feedback on service delivery. Breaches will occur once the Recovery funding ceases in September 2022. A Business Case has been presented to the Triumvirate.

These areas will continue to be monitored, and risks escalated appropriately.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Area of Concern	Financial Implications	Availability of Resource	Additional Allocation Required?
Gender Identity Pathway	1wte x Band 7		

#### 5. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:

- **NOTE** the contents of the report, the improvement in performance and plans to maintain performance.