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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



Meeting Date	26 July 2022	Agenda Item	4.1
Report Title	Update on Speech and Language Therapy Performance		
Report Author	Ann Milligan – Interim Head of Speech and Language Therapy		
Report Sponsor	Helen Annandale – Clinical Director of Therapies and Health Sciences		
Presented by	Helen Annandale		
Freedom of Information	Open		
Purpose of the Report	This paper provides continued assurance regarding the recovery in performance of the Speech and Language Therapy Department in line with the Welsh Government waiting time target of 14 weeks.		
Key Issues	Further recovery to our pre-Covid position has been hindered by difficulties in recruitment, a delay in the streamlining process, and an increase in Covid sickness levels within staff.		
Specific Action Required <i>(please choose one only)</i>	Information	Discussion	Assurance
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Recommendations	Members are asked to:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NOTE/RECEIVE/CONSIDER/APPROVE/RECOMMEND/ENDORSE <p><u>Items for information will not be allocated time for consideration within the Board/Committee meeting.</u></p>		

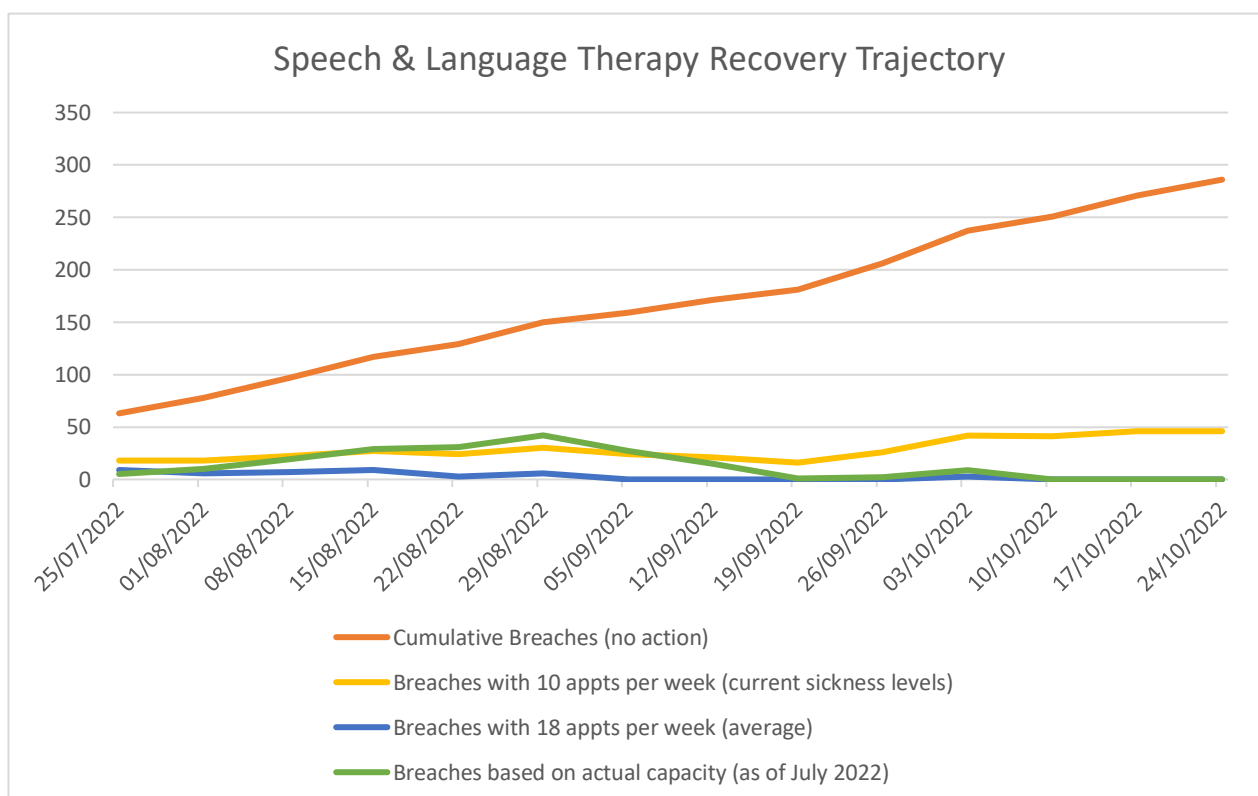
TITLE OF REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper continues to inform the board on the performance of the Speech and Language Therapy department in line with the Welsh Government's 14 week waiting time for new assessments in our department. Our adult waiting lists are now recovered, and there are no breaches for patients over the age of 18 years who have been referred to SLT. Breaches remain in the paediatric service.

2. BACKGROUND

Anticipated recovery trajectory;



The cumulative breaches demonstrate our position if no action is taken to address the breaches.

The green line, based on our actual capacity, indicates full and sustainable recovered by the end of October 2022.

However, the following issues are currently contributing to rising breaches and a worsening problem for 6 week period August/ mid Sept;

- Sickness – at 5.52% in June, our sickness rates are at their highest level in the last 24 months. This is predominantly short term sickness as a result of Covid, although 2 members of staff are on long term sickness. This means assessment sessions are being cancelled. As clinics are arranged around 6 weeks in

advance, it is not always possible to book a child back in for their appointment without them then breaching.

- Annual Leave – over the next 6 weeks, 54 days of AL will be taken in the paediatric team, significantly reducing the number of assessment sessions we can now book in during July and August, resulting in children breaching.
- Vacancies – we currently have 2.6 vacancies in the core paediatric team due to a combination of leavers and maternity leave. We are actively recruiting into these positions, but have had to re-advertise some unfilled vacancies. We anticipate filling these vacancies within the next 6 weeks.
- Recent complaints have related to children waiting for therapy intervention, rather than for an initial assessment. We have needed to prioritise seeing those with the highest clinical need requiring intervention following their assessment, rather than those waiting for an initial assessment.

These areas have been accounted for within our forecasted recovery trajectory.

The following risks may influence our recovery further;

- Delays to HCPC registration for 4 x newly qualified SLTs who have been appointed via the streamlining process. We anticipate them starting in at the beginning of September, within an increase in capacity from the beginning of November.
- The anticipated demands of the ALN reform. We are expecting an increase in our referral rates as a result of ALN implementation. More children are being identified with Speech, Language and Communication Needs and are requiring Additional Learning Provision from the HB. Early data supports this hypothesis. We are continuing to monitor this data to establish a clear demands and capacity model.
- Long-term sick leave is affecting the support the Gender Identify caseload. Due to other vacancies and priorities in the adult team, this cannot be covered. We anticipate the waiting list breaching in approximately 6 weeks. The Gender Identity caseload remains as risk on the SLT risk register until a sustainable solution to funding this service is identified.

These areas are not accounted for within our recovery trajectory, as it is difficult to predict the impact they will have on recovery in terms of weeks/months.

3. GOVERNANCE AND RISK ISSUES

No matters addressed in this report carry a significantly increased risk to the Health Board. The risk regarding ALN is captured in our SLT risk register, and on the Corporate risk register.

The Speech and Language Therapy department can provide a moderate to high level of confidence in the delivery of this recovery trajectory. Confidence is hindered in part by the factors mentioned above.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

We have an outstanding Business Case for the Gender Identify pathway for a 1.0wte Band 7 SLT, with a recurring annual cost of £57,537

5. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:

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