

Community Adult Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Referral Criteria

We offer a service to a wide range of adults with communication and swallowing disorders. Individuals must be at least 16 years old and be registered with a GP in the Colchester, Tendring and/ or be an inpatient at Harwich or Clacton Community Hospitals.

Inclusion Criteria

Referral to Speech and Language Therapy is appropriate when an individual meets the following criteria;

- Difficulty swallowing food or drink
- Coughing or choking when eating or drinking
- Unexplained repeated chest infections
- Already on a modified diet or fluids due to swallowing difficulties but noted change in — swallowing function
- Communication difficulties that impact functional daily living (speech, language, stammering or voice difficulties)
- Transgender voice
- Client / carers need advice on alternative communication systems e.g. communication aids

Exclusion Criteria

Referrals for the following are not appropriate and **will not be accepted**;

- Difficulties chewing food due to poor dentition but no other swallowing difficulty
- Holding food in mouth due to cognitive changes but no other swallowing difficulty
- Difficulty swallowing tablets, managing saliva or chronic cough **only**
- Too drowsy to manage sufficient oral intake
- Refusal to eat and drink
- Weight loss with no apparent swallowing difficulties
- Vomiting or oesophageal problems **only**
- A risk feeding decision has been documented and there have been no changes since documentation
- Previous diet and fluid modifications made but no noted change in swallowing function
- Client is refusing to participate in therapy or declining referral to SLT
- Voice input for clients with difficulties when singing only
- Client has a registered learning disability