

Other Information

The referrer is responsible for ensuring all relevant consent is obtained for the referral.

Students may be working in the department, fully supervised by senior staff. Consent will always be sought in advance if a student could be involved in care.

Information will be stored in electronic and paper records and used/stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Things to bring with you:

- Appointment letter
- The communication system the young person currently uses
- If a wheelchair user, it is important that the young person attends the appointment in the seating which gives them the best position for function. Please bring their tray if available

You are free to express any concerns or worries, say no, or ask for more information at any stage of an appointment within Integrated Community Paediatric Services.

Feedback

We aim to offer a good service to you. We welcome your comments and suggestions. If you have any queries or concerns with any aspect of your care that cannot be resolved with your therapist, please contact the **Service Lead** on the main office numbers.

If you feel you are unable to discuss your concerns in this way please contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**. Contact details shown below:

Open 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 4pm,
Monday to Friday except Bank Holidays
Telephone: 0800 917 9673 or 01284 712555
with 24 hour answerphone facility
Email: PALS@wsh.nhs.uk

Formal complaints / compliments can be directed to:

Patient Experience Team
West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust
Hardwick Lane
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 2QZ
Email: feedback@wsh.nhs.uk
Telephone: 01284 713056

Integrated Community Paediatric Services



Suffolk Communication Aids Resource Centre for young people aged 19-25

Contact information

Suffolk Communication Aids Resource Centre
Thomas Wolsey School
Defoe Road
Ipswich, Suffolk
IP1 6SG
Tel: 01473 744223

pipe
approved
JUL 14

July 2019
Review date
January 2020

An NHS community health service provided by West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (WSFT).
These services are delivered by an alliance of WSFT, the Suffolk GP Federation, Suffolk County Council and Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust.

*Caring for children, young people
and families in the community*

What is the Suffolk Communication Aids Resource Centre?

Suffolk Communication Aids Resource Centre (SCARC) is a countywide assessment, support, training and advice service for children and young adults up to age 25 who need to use an Alternative/Augmentative Communication (AAC) system such as an electronic Voice Output Communication Aid (VOCA).

SCARC operates an Equipment Loan Bank which involved purchasing, setting up and providing short and long term loans of Communication Aids, including responsibility for maintenance and repairs.

What is a communication aid?

A communication aid can be 'low tech' – a chart, photo/symbol/text book or a high tech aid – an electronic aid which produces speech output.

Communication aids are operated by pointing to or pressing a square or key with a picture, symbol, word or letter.

People who have very little movement may use a high tech aid by using an alternative such as a switch with any part of their body or using eye gaze technology.

Who does SCARC see?

Children and young adults with complex communication needs with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) up to the age of 25 years who reside in Suffolk.

Children and young adults with severe communication difficulties, who are unable to speak, have very limited speech and their attempts are unintelligible to someone who does not know them well.

The person's communication difficulties may be congenital arising from Cerebral Palsy, physical disabilities, learning difficulties, language disorders or acquired through head injury or degenerative neurological conditions.

Who can be referred to SCARC

In order to refer a person to SCARC for a **high tech** communication aid, there must be:

- A clear discrepancy between the person's level of understanding and ability to speak, **and**
- Established use of a low tech communication strategy, such as Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) or symbol communication book.
- The person may also have a complex physical disability which means alternative ways of accessing a communication aid will need to be considered.

SCARC also sees people with profound and multiple learning disabilities who may benefit from using voice output switches for early communication, including choice making and requesting.

How to refer

To make a referral, please contact SCARC on 01473 744223 to discuss the referral and request the SCARC Information for Assessment Form.

The referral should be made by the young adult's Speech and Language Therapist or a key professional who coordinates the delivery of the person's EHCP recommendations. Please note that all relevant consents must be obtained to make the referral.

What will happen?

An initial assessment will be planned for the young adult. The local team, including parents/carers, health, education and support staff will be invited to attend the assessment.

The young adult will be seen by a Speech and Language Therapist who has specialist skills in using communication aids. An Occupational Therapist may also carry out the assessment if the person has a complex physical disability.

During the assessment, the young adult will be encouraged to try out different communication aids.

At the end of the assessment, there will be an opportunity for a discussion about the options.

A report will be written and circulated to all involved. Recommendations will be made for any training, support and follow up needed.

If communication aid equipment is needed, an application will be made for funding to the SCARC Management Group for funding for a long term loan.

Small pieces of equipment may be funded following the assessment.

SCARC may recommend that an onward referral is made to the Communication Aids Service East of England (CASEE) who are the regional communication aids service for the East of England.