

Voice Therapy

This is a leaflet designed to help you understand what to expect from your Voice Therapy appointment.

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have concerns or wish to give feedback about services, your care or treatment, you can contact the PALS office on the Ground Floor of the hospital just behind the main reception.

Alternatively, you can send us your comments or suggestions on one of our comment cards, available at the PALS office, or on a feedback form on our website www.chelwest.nhs.uk/pals.

We value your opinion and invite you to provide us with feedback.

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Speak to your clinician



Chelsea and Westminster Hospital **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient information

Your Voice Therapy Appointment

Date produced: January 2018

To be reviewed: January 2019



Voice Assessment/Therapy Appointment:

Why do I need to see Speech and Language Therapy?

You have been invited to attend an appointment with Speech and Language Therapist because your ENT specialist or your GP has referred you to our service. This does not mean you necessarily have a problem with your speech and language. Speech and Language Therapists are specialists in voice assessment and treatment.

A problem with your voice is known as **Dysphonia**. You may be experiencing complaints such as:

- Excessive strain or tension due to poor voice use or overuse, often described as **Muscle Tension Dysphonia**
- Age-related bowing of the vocal cords (**Presbyphonia**)
- **Vocal cord nodules, cysts, polyps** or other malformations leading to changes in your voice
- **Vocal cord palsy or paralysis**
- **Abnormal/inappropriate pitch**
- **Abnormal/inappropriate volume**
- **Spasmodic dysphonia**

It may also be that your voice quality is fine, but you have a persistent discomfort in your throat or larynx. We also assist in the management and treatment of the following conditions which all involve the vocal cord function:

- **Laryngo-pharyngeal reflux (LPR)**
- **Chronic cough**
- **Throat clearing**

Speech and Language Therapists are not singing or elocution teachers.

How can I get to my appointment?

Please inform us if you require hospital transport. Please arrive to the hospital on the time and date stated on your appointment letter.

The location of your appointment is:

**Ground Floor – left hand side
Therapies Department (near lift bank C)
Waiting Area 2 (Speech and Language Therapy)**

You do not need to check yourself in on the touchscreens, please just take a seat in the waiting area and we will collect you for your appointment.

What will happen at my first appointment?

The first appointment will last approximately 45 minutes hour.

You are welcome to attend with a friend or relative if you prefer.

The Speech and Language Therapist will ask you questions to find out what factors are contributing to is your voice problem / vocal cord discomfort and how this is affecting you.

The Speech and Language Therapist might also want to listen to your voice and record you reading aloud for analysis.

Depending on your needs, you will then be provided with advice for healthy voice use and/or a plan for further treatment, such as exercises, if appropriate.

There will be opportunities to ask questions throughout the session.

How many sessions will I get?

This depends on the type/nature of voice difficulty you are experiencing. Some voice disorders can be effectively managed with one or two sessions, others require a longer block. Typically, the maximum number of treatment sessions required is six.

You may be asked to carry out part of the treatment plan independently in your own time, as only carrying the therapy in once a week/fortnightly sessions is less effective.

How many sessions will I get?

Again, this depends on your specific needs but sessions are often spaced out to be fortnightly. Some people prefer weekly sessions.

Will the voice problem/throat clearing problem resolve?

Although we often see improvements after a block of voice therapy/advice, the final outcome is never certain. There is huge variability in success depending on the severity and nature of the problem. It is also dependent on your ability to carry out the therapy in your own time. Speak to your ENT or Speech and Language Therapist about this for more information about your dysphonia and potential to resolve. We are always available to provide any advice or help required.

Contact information

If you have any questions regarding your swallowing appointment or you are unable to keep your appointment, please contact the Speech and Language Therapy team:

- Chelsea and Westminster: 020 3315 8874.
- West Middlesex: 020 8321 5487.