

Initial Assessment for Adults

An initial assessment is an opportunity for the Speech and Language Therapist to get to know you. The Speech and Language Therapist will find out about your strengths and difficulties in different ways. This may include:

- **Taking a case history** – the therapist will ask you questions about your medical history and may listen to examples of things that you manage well and things that may be difficult for you. It doesn't matter if you are unsure of some questions. The more information that you can provide will help us to understand you better. It is also helpful for us to find out how long you have been concerned about your speech, language or communication skills.
- **Informal Assessment** – the therapist will use pictures or words in tasks with you whilst taking note of certain skills such as your ability to understand the meaning of words or how easy you find it to use appropriate words.
- **Formal Assessment** – you may be encouraged to complete some formal tasks with the therapist. The therapist may ask you to name or describe pictures and point to certain objects. These assessments will provide a score so that the therapist can compare your performance with an expected score.
- **Conversation** – the therapist will try to get to know you and may ask about your work and home life. This will help them to see how you communicate and whether you use any strategies to help you get your message across. The therapist may be interested in how motivated you are to take part in therapy and practice in your own time. They may ask about what you want to achieve and your goals, you may want to have a think before your initial assessment about what you are hoping to achieve.

Initial assessments can take place in the community, your home or a local clinic. The session usually lasts about one hour and you will have the opportunity to ask the Speech and Language Therapist questions too. You may find it helpful for a relative or friend to attend to session with you, but this is not necessary.

At the end of the session the therapist may make some suggestions about what the next steps could be for you. You do not have to make any decisions at the appointment about the options that are presented to you and you can contact the therapist after the visit to discuss these further. The therapist may need more time to look at assessment findings in detail but they will be able to provide you with some advice in the meantime.