



Regional Communication Aid Service

Information Leaflet

Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (eg Braille, audio, larger print, easy read, BSL or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre
Tel: 0191 246 7288

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Introduction

This leaflet will provide you with information about the service. If you are not sure about anything in this leaflet please ask a member of staff.

What is the Regional Communication Aid Service?

The Regional Communication Aid Service is based at Walkergate Park, Centre for Neurorehabilitation and Neuropsychiatry, Newcastle upon Tyne. The service helps people with communication difficulties using the latest technology. We can provide assessments, advice, loan of equipment and training.

Who is it for?

The service is for people of all ages who have a severe speech impairment associated with a range of physical, cognitive, learning or sensory difficulties and a clear discrepancy between their level of understanding and ability to speak. They must also be able to understand the purpose of a communication aid, have an understanding beyond cause and effect and be capable of learning and remembering how to use the communication aid. They may also have experience of using low tech alternative and augmentative communication which is insufficient to enable them to realise their communicative potential.

What do we offer?

- Visiting Assessment Service: this takes place in a suitable location (i.e. home, school, work, hospital etc)
- Equipment loan service (Post Assessment only from April 2017)
- Advice on specialist Communication Aid Equipment
- Training in the use of specialist Communication Aid equipment

What happens when I attend my first appointment?

Your first appointment will take place in a suitable location eg. your home, school, work, hospital. You will be visited by the assessment team who will carry out a full assessment. This may also involve other people, such as your family, carers, relatives, teachers and health care professionals.

The assessment will consider your communication requirements and take into account any limitations you may have. Recommendations for the most appropriate Communication Aid to meet your needs can then be decided.

What happens next?

Following your Communication Aid assessment you and your referrer will be given a written report. We will usually discuss this with you on the day of your assessment. Following this we may loan you a Communication Aid for you to trial. In some cases we may make further visits to assess your progress, provide further training and support, or to re-assess you if your needs change. Equipment is loaned for a short period. If the loan is shown to sufficiently enhance your face to face communication, there is potential for it to be funded by NHS England. If appropriate, this is then followed up by your referrer and the Regional Communication Aid Service.

How do I access the service?

You can refer yourself or be referred by a family member, your doctor, a therapist or other agencies. The Regional Communication Aid Service can be contacted by telephone, email, or in writing.

Travel information

Contact Nexus Traveline Tel: 0871 200 22 33
Website: www.traveline.info/

What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website www.ntw.nhs.uk (click on the 'Contact Us' tab)
- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
- we are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention.
 - **Points of You** - available from staff.
 - **Friends and Family Test** - available from staff or online at www.ntw.nhs.uk/fft

Useful contacts

• Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

North of Tyne Tel: 0800 032 0202, 9am-4.30pm, Monday - Friday

Provides information and advice about local NHS services and support organisations and helps sort out any problems with NHS services.

Contact details

The Regional Communication Aid Service

Walkergate Park

Centre for Neuro-rehabilitation and Neuro-psychiatry

Benfield Road

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE6 4QD

Tel: 0191 287 5240

Email: rcas@ntw.nhs.uk

Please note that information sent to the Trust via email is sent at your own risk.