

## **Leaflet of keypoints for service user.**

If you wish to make changes to your voice and communication, Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) can provide this as part of the multi-disciplinary team ensuring the best possible outcomes for trans and gender-diverse people. SLTs are regulated healthcare professionals and should be members of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists Trans and Gender-Diverse Clinical Excellence Network.

Voice is a central part of our identity; it is how we communicate with family, friends, work colleagues and the wider society (RCSLT, 2019). Voice plays a key role in how others perceive us and our gender. Some people feel very comfortable with their voice and communication and for others, it can cause distress related to gender dysphoria. It may impact on confidence and participation in social or everyday activities.

Referral can be made via a recognised GIC, GP or self referral by contacting your local Speech and Language Therapy department.

We will work with you either face to face, via video conferencing, within a group setting or 1:1.

Voice and communication therapy involves exploration of voice, using a range of approaches including breathing, vocal techniques, language use and non verbal communication. Therapy does not involve any surgical procedures and will provide exploration of voice in a safe manner to reduce any harm to your voice. It aims to provide you with techniques to support exploration of voice and communication that is unique to your sense of self, feels comfortable reflective of your gender identity.

What to expect from voice and communication therapy

- An initial appointment
- How the voice works
- Vocal hygiene (how to take care of your voice and avoid any harm)
- Exploration of vocal techniques
- Utilising appropriate voice apps
- Group therapy
- Practising exercises and using techniques in everyday life.

Other areas of consideration might include the impact of hormone treatment on the voice.

In order for voice and communication therapy to be successful it takes practise and time. It is recommended you practise regularly and have a supportive conversation partner to support your maintenance of skills.

People who have undergone voice therapy, will be able to decide when to apply the skills, some people might only use them some of the time whilst others may prefer to adopt the skills most of the time, it is all a matter of what works best for you and your needs.