

# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Newsletter

## Barnet & Enfield Paediatric Audiology Service

On 1 May 2020, the Barnet & Enfield paediatric audiology service transferred from the Royal Free Hospital NHS Trust, to Whittington Health NHS Trust to create a paediatric audiology service provided across North Central London.

We are a 2nd tier audiology service which provides care for children aged between 6 months and 19 years of age where there are concerns about their hearing. We assess, treat and monitor their Audiology and Audio-vestibular needs in line with national policy and legislation. We transfer children and young people who we identify with permanent hearing loss onto a more specialist paediatric setting for further assessment and management. We also provide a School Screening Service to the 72 primary schools across Enfield and demonstrate effective outcomes in identifying children with a hearing loss.

### Our skill mix

We work together closely as a team, often working together across our skill mix. We have 6 paediatric audiologists; a Paediatric Audiology Clinical Service Manager, an acting Chief Audiologist, 3 school screeners / Assistant Technical Officers (ATOs) and an Audio-Vestibular Physician (AVP).

The paediatric audiologists see a variety of patients from all age groups either alone, as a pair, with an assistant, or with an AVP. We have 3 administrators who support clinical staff. The ATOs screen reception age children in Enfield schools, and provide support in clinics requiring a distractor led by a paediatric audiologist.

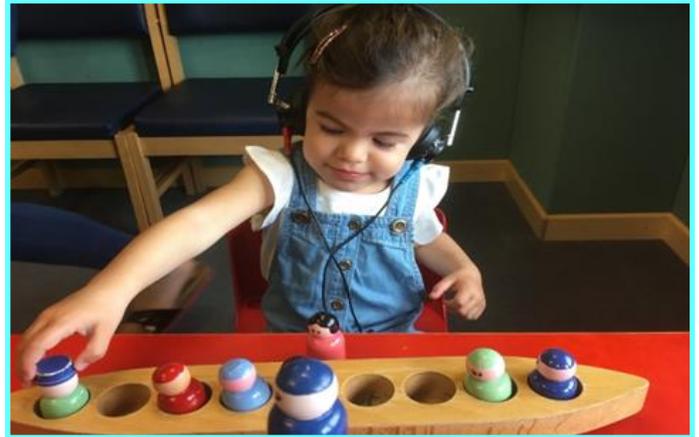
Our team works cohesively, and our primary aim is to ensure that permanent hearing losses are identified and treated quickly and accordingly. We support and monitor our patients so that they receive the advice, referrals and treatments required for them to continue optimally with their daily lives.

### Where are we based?

We currently operate across three community sites which are based at Edgware Community Hospital, Oak Lane Health Centre (Barnet) and St Michaels Hospital (Enfield).

### Impact of Covid 19

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the service was able to see an average of 135 patients per week. Following the closure of our routine clinics due to the pandemic, we were unable to offer any face to face (F2F) appointments but carried out telephone consultations. F2F clinics restarted in June/July 2020, but with a much-reduced capacity which slowly increased as it was safe to do so. We prioritised urgent new referrals and follow up appointments, depending on individual risk factors and following the outcome of a telephone consultation. This was in accordance with Whittington Health NHS Trust Infection Prevention and Control guidelines in order to maintain the safety of patients, their families and staff. As we come out the current lockdown, we are restarting our clinics at a reduced capacity as we did last summer but hope to build back up to reduce the backlog of patients.



### Future service developments

The service has some current challenges which are not related to the pandemic, including staffing levels, aging equipment and clinic soundproof booths which we hope to overcome with new investment in the service to further enhance the quality of patient care which is provided. Since the transfer of the service to Whittington Health, we have already moved away from paper-based files to electronic notes and have already welcomed new team members which will continue. We will be looking at other opportunities of working together as an NCL audiology service with the potential of providing more care locally to our families.

Our team have regular brief weekly meetings, plus lengthier monthly meetings. The clinical service manager is in regular communication with us to ensure we are providing a safe and effective service and as a team, we are given the opportunity to offer any feedback, concerns or suggestions to help to improve the service. We also carry out regular audits and surveys to obtain feedback from our patients and families, and constantly look for ways we can improve and monitor our quality of care.

### How to refer to the service?

Children and young people are referred to our service by a variety of health and educational professionals using our standard referral form.

For further information and a copy of our referral form please contact us via [paediatric.audiology@nhs.net](mailto:paediatric.audiology@nhs.net) or by phone 020 3316 8080



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) newsletter

## Barnet Parent Carer Forum & Barnet Health Provider/CCG Conferences – Past, Present and Future

Barnet Parent Carer Forum and Barnet NHS Providers and Local CCG representatives collaborated in 2018 to design the start of an annual Barnet Health Conference. The aim of holding such an event is for young people, families and carers to engage with local Barnet service providers to learn about commissioned Health services and what was available across Community Services.

The Health Conference has been held each February since 2018 and is free for all delegates to attend. Registration is managed by the Barnet Parent Carer Forum Committee. Previous Barnet Health Conferences have focused on a range of topics which are reflected below. After each event, updates and presentations have been uploaded onto the Barnet Local Offer including a section on how Barnet service providers have responded to any issues raised by families at the Conference.

### 1st Annual Health Conference (held in 2018)

Meet your health professionals and let's start talking together about what is important for local children and young people with SEND and their families.

- A better understanding of the local health system, including recent changes and the available pathways to care and support with presentations from commissioned services.
- An opportunity to identify the key professional leads, what services offer and how to access them.
- A platform for parent carers to share their views on what is working well in local health services for their children and families and what requires improvement and a question and answer session with professionals to help improve the future of health services.

### 2nd Annual Health Conference (held in 2019)

Changes to your local health services; where are we now? Building on the success of 2018's conference, health professionals updated on important changes and parents/carers were invited to engage in discussions to shape further progress of local Barnet health services.

- An understanding of changes to the local health system and dialogue with health professionals from CAMHS and Barnet Integrated Therapies Service.
- An update on the CAMHS transformation with details of the social, emotional and mental health needs for children and young people and their families.
- An opportunity to identify key professionals and services on offer to help improve the future of services.

### 3rd Annual Health Conference (held in 2020)

Understanding and Supporting Children and Young People's Continuing Care and Adult's Continuing Health Care in Barnet. The profile of continuing healthcare was given a spotlight and well received by all participants.

- An understanding of the Children and Young People's Continuing Care Framework and an opportunity to meet key professional.
- Transitions for children and young people in preparation for adulthood.
- An update from Barnet Integrated Therapies Team about service developments and pathway processes.

2020-21 has been an unprecedented year for all, due to the national emergency caused by the Covid-19 global pandemic. Consequently, parents and carers and NHS health organisations have had to comply with requirements and respond to the national emergency. It is recognised that a shift of focus for parents/carers to support their children and young people under all lockdown restrictions, has impacted everyday routines for families and children, young people and hugely.

The impact of the pandemic and associated restrictions meant that this year's February 2021 event had to be postponed. However Barnet Parent Carer Forum, Barnet Health Providers/CCG remain committed to hold a 2021 Health conference and can now confirm that it will take place virtually next term. The 4th Annual Health Conference to will focus on the importance of understanding and supporting children and young people's mental health care in Barnet. Further details will be available shortly.

*Special thanks to Lisa Coffman BPCF Committee Member for her advice and contributions to this piece.*



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Newsletter

## Going virtual: Barnet Community Paediatrics Team

Autism Diagnostic Pathway for children aged 2-7 years  
At the start of the pandemic in March 2020, all non-urgent face to face Community Paediatric clinics were stopped and this had a significant impact on our ability to conclude autism diagnoses. The diagnostic pathway has three main parts:

1. Detailed assessment by a Community Paediatrician
2. Review of all available evidence by expert panel
3. Clinic based assessment (ADOS)

A diagnosis could be concluded or excluded at any point on the pathway if there was sufficient supporting evidence. Stopping face to face clinics meant that any child waiting for the third part of the pathway (ADOS) was unable to receive a concluding diagnosis.

Since March 2020, the Barnet Community Paediatric Service has developed remote working and virtual assessments to support children and families. We have been busy considering a new way of assessing younger children (under age 7) for autism. This has been led by Royal Free London Community Paediatricians Barnet pre-school teachers and included engagement and support from the Barnet Parent Carer Forum.

PreCovid-19 we used the ADOS assessment (Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule) to obtain evidence to enable clinicians to evaluate whether a child met the criteria for a diagnosis of autism. When this became no longer possible, we looked for alternative models of assessment. We created a team of skilled professionals to adapt a virtual model for Barnet. The team consists of a Speech and Language Therapist, Clinical Psychologist, Pre-School Teacher as well as the Community Paediatricians and administrators. The team is called: Team for the Assessment of Autism and Social Communication (TAASC) and we have developed processes and protocols to carry out virtual clinics.

### What we do:

With parents' consent, we gather information from various settings and people that are closely involved with the child. A member of the team makes an appointment and explains what the parent(s) need to do during the assessment and the resources (toys) they should have ready. On the day of the assessment, the family join the clinic virtually. Everyone is introduced and their roles are explained.

At least two clinicians are involved – one directs the assessment, asking the parent to guide their child through specific play-based tasks; the other observes. With parents' permission, other professionals working with the family may also observe, for training and quality purposes.

The assessment lasts about an hour. Following which, the team considers and evaluates clinical observations and considers all information gathered. The team contacts the parent(s) to discuss their child's observed strengths and areas of challenge. They agree with the family whether the child does or does not meet the criteria for a diagnosis or their child should be seen at nursery or school. A full report is written. Parental feedback is also used. These areas have been identified:

- Parents report that they prefer their child being observed in a familiar home context.
- Parents feel that there is a committed network of professionals around them.
- Clinicians gain greater understanding by observing parent-child interaction.
- Other professionals can join a remote clinic.
- Clinicians are able to give extra support in follow-up sessions e.g. with extended families.

Remote assessment will not work for every case e.g. due to IT issues or a child's reluctance to interact with someone on screen. We are also developing a COVID safe face-to-face assessment and will be piloting this shortly to support equal access for all. Given the advantages of virtual assessment, it is likely to be part of our standard way of assessing for autism post Lockdown restrictions lift.

We are currently working hard to clear the backlog of assessments and aim to address this by mid-summer 2021. We will continue to see new cases within three months of referral. The first step in the pathway is a Child Development Clinic assessment with a Community Paediatrician. Details of how to access this can be [found on The Local Offer](#).

We will shortly be publishing the Autism Diagnostic Pathway on the local offer. For more general information about autism please see: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) newsletter

## Combined Care Pathway for Children and Young people with Down syndrome

Barnet Down Syndrome Leading Edge Group launched the [Combined Care Pathway](#) for children and young people with Down syndrome In December 2020. The combined care pathway details the developmental and health needs for babies (antenatal and neonatal), children and young people with Down syndrome. It details the pathway for preschool, school age and for those transitioning to adult services and adult Pathways.

There are many factors that impinge on the life opportunities of children and young people with Down syndrome. The combined care pathway aims to deliver:

- The right people
- In the right order
- In the right place
- Doing the right thing
- In the right time
- With the right outcomes

Feedback from families has identified the need for a clarity and consistency in the care of children with Down Syndrome. The Combined Care Pathway for children and young people with Down Syndrome was developed in partnership with parents, carers, education, social care, and health professionals and those living with Down Syndrome. There has been close collaboration with families, and multidisciplinary representatives from Community Services, Barnet Hospital, Education, Therapy Services, Community Paediatricians, and the Royal Free Hospital Trust to devise this CCP that is based on national guidelines and applies to Barnet's local services and community.

It puts all the health and therapies information that is relevant for people with Down Syndrome in one place. The pathway does not replace those services that all children and adults have access to, for example, GP services, Health Visiting, School Nursing, Therapy Services, Community Health Services and Hospital Services. It seeks to clarify additional services that may need to be involved in the care of a person with Down Syndrome because of some common health difficulties experienced by some people who have Down Syndrome. The pathway also signposts education and social care services.



The pathway and accompanying document is strategically managed via the Barnet SEND Development Group and Partnership Boards and reviewed annually. If there are any changes that should be made please email Dr E. Rachamim: [erachamim@nhs.net](mailto:erachamim@nhs.net). This pathway will enable people to navigate their way through the relevant health, and integrated services to ensure no one who has Down Syndrome gets 'left behind'.

## A little more about the Leading-Edge Group for Down Syndrome

The Barnet Leading Edge Group for Children and Young people with Down Syndrome are a small group of parents and professionals who work to support Barnet take a strategic lead to help early years settings, schools and further education colleges and provision to improve outcomes for our children, young people and their families.

We provide training and guidance for our schools. Our guidance includes support to secondary school, teaching reading and 'What works? Supporting Children and Young people with Down syndrome in Primary and Secondary schools. Most important is supporting belonging and learning [available on the Barnet Local Offer](#). We welcome members so please contact [sarah.geiger@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.geiger@barnet.gov.uk) if you would like more information.



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Newsletter

## Barnados BOLOH Helpline

Barnados launched BOLOH in Autumn 2020 - a specialist helpline for Black, Asian & Minority Families to support communities during lockdown and beyond. BOLOH is a word used in many languages from the Indian sub-continent and it means "speak" or invited to speak.

The first of its kind in the UK, the helpline [<https://helpline.barnardos.org.uk>], offers support, and a live Webchat facility for COVID-19 helpline for those aged 11 years upwards, with access for all in communities struggling to manage a range of issues.

Contact can be made to speak to a trained professional about concerns, worries, problems and stresses. Emotional support can be provided, together with practical advice and signposting to other organisations who can provide further help.

Professionals can also contact the BOLOH helpline us to discuss how to support a child or young person and family they are working with.

The BOLOH helpline is available Monday -Fridays, from 10am-8pm, and at weekends on Saturdays and Sundays 10am-3pm. The number is: 0800 1512605

Attached are key e-posters about the BOLOH Helpline that provides advice and support to children, young people and families. For completeness, these details have been directly shared with the Barnet Parent-Carer Forum, to Barnet Schools /SENCOs, all Barnet NHS Providers and GPs across the Borough.

## Barnet Local Offer

Looking after children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health – a dedicated space on the local offer.

We are excited to share that we are developing an area on our Barnet Local Offer that will be a dedicated space for thinking about emotional wellbeing and mental health. This area will share valuable information to support the wellbeing of our children and young people, and their families. There will be resources from useful articles and websites as well as what research and guidance tells us.

There will also be resources shared around what can be done when wellbeing and mental health are becoming an area of concern; what to do and where to get help. This will include information about available local services and how to access them.

It is hoped this dedicated space will be a helpful resource for all those who care for and support children and young people whether that be parents/carers, staff in educational settings or beyond. It is also hoped that for those young people who are wanting to find out information for themselves, this will be a useful place where they can start.

We plan to launch this in the summer term so do look out for further information on our [Local Offer website](#).



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) newsletter

## What's On Offer From Integrated Therapies Service - NELFT

Barnet Children's Integrated Therapies joined NELFT in September 2018 with Speech and Language, Occupational and Physiotherapy services previously from separate trusts joining to create an integrated service for children and young people in Barnet. Our service follows the Balanced System (Marie Gascoigne, 2016) delivering under a model of Universal, Targeted and Specialist input, which is shared below:

Our therapists have always delivered training sessions to families and professionals in the past on an individual or team basis. Our Universal offer aims to support all children, young people and their families with and without referrals to our service. In September 2020, we launched our Universal Training program, with a wide range of free termly trainings for parents/carers and professionals. Trainings are delivered across all 7 of our clinical pathways:

- Language and hearing impairment
- Autistic spectrum disorder / social communication
- Motor skills
- Acute musculoskeletal, sensory and physical disability and development
- Complex specific and dysphagia (eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties)
- Speech, voice and dysfluency (stammering)
- Transitions (Post 16)

Keep an eye out on the [Local Offer events page](#) for upcoming SEND Events

*Barnet's new SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2021 – 2024 is about to be published on the Local Offer. Thank you to all who have contributed to this.*



Due to COVID-19, we are offering these trainings virtually and have had a hugely positive response from parents, education staff, advisory teachers, paediatricians who have booked and will be looking to continue offering these sessions virtually.

We are gathering feedback following each session and will be carrying out a short audit each term and fully auditing at the end of the academic year to implement any changes needed. All our therapists have been involved in setting up and delivering this program and we are excited for the additional support it will bring to children and young people in Barnet and in support of families.

If you have any further queries, please contact our main office as follows:

3rd Floor, Westgate House, Edgware Community Hospital, Burnt Oak Broadway, Edgware, HA8 0AD  
Telephone: 0300 300 1821  
Email: [nem-tr.BarnetCIT@nhs.net](mailto:nem-tr.BarnetCIT@nhs.net)

