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Health - key roles

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There are a number of health services designed specifically to support children and young people. If you are worried about the health and wellbeing of your child, you can speak to your early years setting, children's centre staff, school staff, health visitor or school nurse or your health professional.

If they are unable to help your child themselves, they can make a referral to more specialist health services, such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, podiatry.

Designated clinical officer (DCO)

The designated clinical officer (DCO) supports the NHS services to make sure they are meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from 0 to 25 years.

The DCO listens to children and young people (CYP) and families' views and experiences in accessing NHS health services required to meet their special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

To ensure coordinated and integrated services that reflect the voice of children and young people, the DCO service improves communication and links between health, education and social care professionals.

The DCO want to hear your views about using NHS services. You can contact me directly or share your views through parent representatives, at meetings and events. For more information on the local area meetings please contact the DCO (details below).

The DCO team

- Ensure robust processes are in place to allow for the early identification of children with SEND
- Ensure all health services are reflected in the local offer and that health providers are cooperating with the local authority in its development and review
- Coordinate the collation of health advice that contributes to the education, health and care initial assessment process
- Answer EHCP queries linked to health provision from parents and professionals
- Support NHS practitioners to contribute to any SEND tribunal challenges raised with health

Improving services and processes

- Act as a single point of contact for parents/carers, partner agencies and professionals to raise queries and concerns related to NHS health services
- Raise awareness within the NHS of the statutory responsibilities linked to SEND, through training and discussions with staff groups
- Work with NHS practitioners to improve the quality of health advice
- Monitor quality of health advice through regular audit and feedback
- Support colleagues to make sure that they are able to make reasonable adjustments for children and young people with medical conditions and SEND, in order to improve the quality of their service offer
- Work with families and providers to identify inequities or gaps in commissioned services and highlight these to local commissioning teams

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Blackpool Teaching Hospitals - Children's services

You can find what health services are available on the [BTH childrens services website](#).

Designated clinical officer

The role of the [designated clinical officer](#) is to listen to children, young people, families and professionals so that health services offer the right provision to ensure that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are able to reach their goals and achieve their outcomes.

Community physiotherapy and occupational therapy

The [community physiotherapy and occupational therapy](#) team work with children with long term and life limiting conditions and mobility problems.

Physiotherapy helps to manage pain and maintain mobility.

Occupational therapy can help you take part in day to day activities such as playing, eating, going to school and continue to grow and develop.

Audiology

Audiology is the science of hearing and vestibular (balance) function. Audiology services provide a range of hearing tests for all ages (from birth upwards) and vestibular (balance) function testing. We also work with individuals giving rehabilitation for hearing difficulties in the form of hearing aids, information and advice, tinnitus management and help with balance problems.

The audiology department at Blackpool Victoria Hospital is located in Area 1 of main outpatients, next to the ear, nose and throat clinic.

Paediatric consultant

A paediatric consultant is a senior doctor who has spent a lot of time studying and working with poorly children. Some consultants have specialist areas, this means that they know and study a lot about a specific illness or condition and are the best people to see patients who have those conditions.

If your child has special educational needs or a disability then they are probably under the care of a paediatrician who will ask to see your child for regular reviews

CAMHS

[CAMHS](#) is used as a term for all services that work with children and young people who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing.

Children and young people may need help with a wide range of issues at different points in their lives.

Parents and carers may also need help and advice to deal with behavioural or other problems their child is experiencing.

Parents, carers and young people can receive direct support through CAMHS.

Mental health services are free on the NHS, but in some cases you'll need a referral from your GP to access them.

Children's speech and language therapy (SLT)

The [Children's speech and language therapy \(SLT\)](#) service is for children with speech, language, communication and/or eating and drinking difficulties.

Speech and language therapists work with children who have difficulties with any aspect of speech, language or communication development. This might include:

- Children who are taking longer than expected to learn to talk
- Children with limited vocabulary, who struggle to form sentences, or who get their words and sentences muddled up
- Children who find it difficult to understand what others are saying.
- Children who struggle to communicate socially with others.

- Children who struggle to say certain sounds or make themselves understood
- Children who stammer
- Children who have problems with their voice

The aim of the speech and language therapist is to help the child or young person to reach their full potential by providing assessment, diagnosis and intervention through programmes of activities, individual or group therapy and advice and support.

National deaf CAMHS

[National deaf CAMHS](#) is a highly specialised mental health service for deaf children and young people with mental health issues. The service also accepts referrals for hearing children of deaf parents (see below for who this service is for).

The service operates a team around the child and family model, employing deaf and hearing staff (including psychiatrists, psychologists, specialist deaf outreach workers, nurses, social workers and interpreters) to ensure that the child and family can work in their first or preferred language in a culturally sensitive way to address their mental health needs.

The service in the north has centre's in Manchester, Newcastle and York and covers the north of England, from the North Wales border across to north Lincolnshire and up to the Scottish border. The service is flexible about where meetings and sessions take place, so it does not matter whether you live close to a centre or not.

Families can contact the service directly for advice and information about the service but referrals must be made through a professional. This can be any professional the child, young person or family is working with and include G.P, pediatrician, teacher, school or social worker.

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