



## Metis Therapy Limited

Independent Speech and Language Therapy Provider

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### Metis Therapy Limited

#### Collaborative Working with NHS Speech and Language Therapists' Policy

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#### Introduction

We always aim to provide a high standard of care in all our services. Our service users' best interests are of significant importance to us. There are occasions when service users are known to both NHS Speech and Language Therapy Departments and us. In these cases we need to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

We are Independent Speech and Language Therapists and registered with the Health Care Professions Council and the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists. Both organisations promote professional integrity and outline a set of professional standards to which we adhere.

#### Which professional bodies support this policy?

*Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)* and the *Association of Speech and Language Therapists in Independent Practice (ASLTIP)* have set clear guidelines and that it is

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the responsibility of all Speech and Language Therapists (SLT's) to support service users and their families and carers by:

- Promoting confidence in service user-centred team working.
- Facilitating a seamless therapeutic process.
- Promoting mutual trust between the service user and all professionals involved in care.
- Anticipating and resolving potential conflicting professional issues in a timely manner.

*The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC previously known as HPC) Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics state that: 'You must take all reasonable steps to make sure that you can communicate properly and effectively with service users and other practitioners. You must communicate appropriately, cooperate and share your knowledge and expertise with other practitioners for the benefit of service users'.*

This policy has been written underneath the headings of Communicating Quality Live. These are RCSLT's professional guidelines for all Speech and Language Therapists.

## **1 – Service User Interests**

Metis Therapy Limited will only work with service users where there is a valid clinical reason for their intervention. In these instances, we will always work with our service user's and their parents or carers in order to design an intervention that is suitable for them.

Our therapists will seek to liaise with NHS SLT's when they are also involved in a service user's care. For an effective transfer of information we seek to share information with NHS SLT's when we are working regularly, i.e. weekly or fortnightly with a service user. We aim to share knowledge, skills and information with others to promote effective joint decision making, planning and evaluation where applicable.

## **2 – Communication**

Metis Therapy Limited aim to cooperate and collaborate with NHS SLT's in all aspects of service users' management in the best interests of service users. Our therapists will share information, knowledge and skills for the benefit of the service user.

We maintain a professional approach to communication when professional opinions differ. In these instances we respect our colleagues' perspectives and contribution and will work together to formulate a plan.

We work in partnerships with other services, putting the service user's interests first.

We participate in team or multi/interdisciplinary working as required for the benefits of service users and the wider service.

We share and express our professional opinion using clinical reasoning and the evidence base to demonstrate the SLT role.

It is the responsibility of NHS and Independent SLT's to seek to share information with the other. Parents and carers have the right to seek additional SLT from one or more services if they choose.

RCSLT state:

*“Where more than one service is involved with the same client, it is essential that all SLTs collaborate in the user’s best interests. It may be appropriate for one SLT to take the lead role. A specialist or senior therapist may take the lead role especially if the other therapist is a less experienced colleague. All SLTs involved should be informed of, and invited to, case conferences. Case management should be complementary and ensure best care.”*

Metis Therapy Limited communicate effectively via phone or email.

Metis Therapy Limited seek to share relevant information with their NHS colleagues so that:

- Cases can be discussed and roles assigned accordingly.
- Cases can be effectively coordinated.
- Therapy or programmes of work are not duplicated.
- Formal assessments are not duplicated within given time frames.

### **3 – Knowledge and Skills**

Metis Therapy Limited understand that all speech and language therapy activities or interventions must be considered in the context of the best interests of the service user and we only ever provide speech and language therapy services, assessments, interventions, management and advice for which we are qualified by education and/or experience.

We understand that our scope of practice sits within the evolving scope of speech and language therapy practice.

We participate in clinical, team, multidisciplinary or inter-professional learning relevant to their context.

Metis Therapy Limited promote continuing professional development appropriate to their caseload. We ensure that our clinical competencies are sufficient to meet the service user's needs and access professional support if necessary. Our therapists maintain their CPD and access support in the form of Clinical Excellence Networks, ASLTIP Local Groups, Peer Supervision and Support Groups as well as self-directed study.

#### **4 – Delegate Appropriately**

We contribute to reviews of workforce and skill-mix, as appropriate to role and experience, to ensure that best practice in service delivery for speech and language therapy is being maintained.

In the case of collaborative working with NHS SLT's we aim to define each therapist's roles. In some situations it can be useful for the therapist with more experience to take the lead role.

#### **5 – Respect Confidentiality**

We abide by all legislation, policies and other regulations relating to confidentiality for service users and their carers. We maintain high standards around confidentiality, information management and record keeping – whatever format (e.g. paper, electronic) ensuring that information is stored safely and securely and is only accessed by those who have the service user's consent. Please refer to our Data Storage and Processing Policy and our Privacy Policy on our website for further information.

As part of standard practice all parents and carers sign consent in order for Metis Therapy Limited to work with their child. We also seek service user consent to share information in all circumstances. We only share relevant information with other professionals in the best interests of the service users' management and treatment.

#### **6 – Manage Risk**

We work with other speech and language therapists, professionals and services to ensure the safety and wellbeing of service users. We assess and manage the identified risks involved in providing speech and language therapy services.

#### **7 – Report Concerns**

We have a responsibility to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. We act on reports concerning resources and service deficiencies to protect service users and carers.

We will disclose confidential information when it is considered to be in the public interest in order to prevent serious harm, injury or damage to the service user or to any other person in keeping with local policies and procedures.

## **8 – Be Open**

We communicate honestly, openly and in a professional manner with service users and/or carers and those involved in their care. We address concerns cooperatively and providing feedback. We welcome enquiries from our NHS SLT colleagues in a reciprocal agreement. We inform service users and carers about the ways they can raise concerns about any care, treatment or services they have received. Please refer to our Complaints Policy on our website for further information.

## **9 – Be Honest and Trustworthy**

We ensure that our conduct promotes speech and language therapy in a positive way. We aim to act with honesty and integrity at all times.

We use due care when making reference to or expressing an opinion on the quality of work or integrity of a professional colleague. We provide second opinions confined to the case in question and not extend to the general competence of another speech and language therapist.

We will contact the HCPC if they are aware that possible misrepresentation of the protected title 'Speech and Language Therapist' may have occurred. We will declare any conflicts of interest.

We will cooperate with any investigation and/or formal enquiry into own professional conduct, the conduct of another worker or the treatment of an individual.

## **10 – Record Keeping**

We have procedures for the creation, use, secure storage and appropriate sharing of records, in line with current legislation. We monitor and review these procedures in line with our Data Storage and Processing Policy.

We have a protocol for secure information sharing with other organisations. This includes a private phone call to an NHS SLT or an email to a secure email address.

## References

Health Professions Council, 2008, *Your duties as a registrant: Standards of conduct, performance and ethics*. (London: Health Professions Council). Available at: <http://www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10002367finalcopyofscpejuly2008.pdf>  
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Health Professions Council, 2007. *Standards of conduct, performance and ethics: consultation document*. (London: Health Professions Council). Available at: <http://hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004EDFStandardsofconduct,performanceandethics.pdf>  
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The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, 2018. *Communicating Quality Live*. (London: The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists). Available at: [https://www.rcslt.org/cq\\_live/introduction](https://www.rcslt.org/cq_live/introduction)  
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## When will This Policy Be Reviewed?

This policy will be reviewed and updated in October 2023, unless any necessary changes are identified when it will be updated sooner.