



Improved Early Years Speech and Language Therapy Report Template

How we saved time and reduced stress

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IMPROVING VALUE

Requirements:

End of therapy reports must accurately reflect the child's strengths and needs, outline what happened in therapy, and detail recommendations for how the child can be supported.

The problem:

The existing template gave some direction on information to be included – this had not been reviewed for some time. Some of it was not necessary for the needs of the audiences. Furthermore, it lacked prompts for some key information. Each report required the therapist to heavily edit the template.

Impacts:

It took a LONG time to complete a report for each child. This caused delays for families and professionals receiving our advice. It also risked delays in accessing support. Staff shared that report-writing was a main source of stress at work.

Process:

- Gathered insight from therapists to inform problem-shooting.
- Identified priorities for different audiences, i.e. SENCo, parents, MDT.
- Developed a draft and tested it, gathering feedback from therapists.
- Tested a second version, gathered feedback and optimised.
- Outlined guidance for the therapy team to support roll-out.

Collaboration:

- Service user was part of the core team.
- We facilitated a focus group to harness further service user input.
- Utilised our networks to gain input from wider stakeholders e.g. early education; autism assessment team.

Result:

The new report template takes less time to produce – and has been developed to better meet the needs of the people who receive it. It is holistic, which removes the need for therapists to write follow-up letters to other services such as housing. Allows for clearer, more focused advice for home and education. Easier to read for people with dyslexia and related conditions, and easier to explain in another language. Utilises outcome measures to demonstrate results - supporting the critical need for our service.

Learnings:

- Every audience had their own priorities but insight-gathering allowed us to identify shared needs.
- Test and learn is crucial: our first draft did not deliver time efficiencies as we tried to include too much.
- We outlined frequently used terms, scenarios and advice in order to create a menu of prepped options for therapists to select from, saving time when writing.
- Regular review of templates going forwards will be important – the process has galvanised our team to share their experiences in order to optimise the service.

