

Communicate SLT: What to expect as we head toward the end of our commissioned service in Halton

What changes are being made to the provision of speech, language and communication services in Halton and when?

Communicate SLT were advised by commissioners that our current contract to deliver these services would come to an end on Wednesday, 29 October 2025.

Who is the new provider?

As at Wednesday, 17 September 2025, Communicate SLT are still awaiting information from commissioners about the new provider or providers of the service, and what the new service model is going to look like. We hope to know this information soon and we would expect all service users to be advised of the same very shortly afterward.

We understand that the name and contact details of the new provider will be made available on the Halton Local Offer website which can be found here

www.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/speech-language

Will there be any disruption to services during the transition?

Although Communicate SLT will be doing all we can to try to maintain as much service provision as we can to 29 October, we believe there will be *some* disruption to *some* services/planned appointments.

Please be assured, the needs of the children and young people remain our priority as we move through the next few weeks.

Dysphagia Pathway

Communicate SLT will continue to provide dysphagia services to those already on the pathway and to any new referrals until we are able to handover to a new provider. This remains a priority for us – more information about this pathway can be found on our website <https://communicate-slt.org.uk/halton-slt-services/dysphagia/>

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Pathway

Communicate SLT will continue to book and carry out, ASD assessments in settings/schools, homes and clinics for as long as we can into October 2025, to support those on the Pathway awaiting an outcome.

If we reach out to you to ask to visit on a date in the next few weeks, we would hugely appreciate you responding as quickly as you can, so we don't miss any opportunities available to use to assess these children. More information about this pathway can be found on our website <https://communicate-slt.org.uk/asd-pathway-in-halton/>

Applications for EHCPs

Communicate SLT will continue to book and carry out, speech, language and communication assessments in settings/schools, homes and clinics to support applications for EHCPs for as long as we can into October 2025.

If we reach out to you to ask to visit on a date in the next few weeks, we would hugely appreciate you responding as quickly as you can so we don't miss any opportunities available to use to assess these children. More information about this pathway can be found on our website <https://communicate-slt.org.uk/halton-slt-services/education-and-health-care-ehc-plan/>

Expected Autumn Term Appointments

For those of you who may have been expecting we would have been in touch to arrange a follow up appointment based on our last contact with you pre-summer break by now, we hope you understand that this is now under review.

Communicate SLT will be in touch directly as soon as we can to book an appointment for the children and young people who have the highest clinical need.

Existing Review Appointments

1. For those who have appointments booked in their diaries from today until 29 October 2025.
 - a. Communicate SLT have taken the decision to initially cancel all pre-booked appointments for this cohort of children from 22 September 2025 onward. This will apply across all settings and schools, whether SEN or mainstream, in or out of borough.
 - b. We will then begin to reach out to settings/schools to reschedule appointments with the children and young people who have the highest clinical need, until our capacity is reached. These new appointments may be offered virtually, in person at setting/school or in a clinic.
 - c. Should a review date not yet be booked/re-booked in by us for a date by the 29 October, the new provider/providers will be responsible for arranging these post end of our contract. These details will be made available to them as part of our exit planning process.

2. For those who have appointments booked in their diaries from 30 October 2025 into the future.
 - a. Communicate SLT are preparing to share all pre-existing appointment dates and times with the new provider/providers as part of our exit planning process.

Who do we contact with questions in the meantime?

We'd recommend you continue to use slt.halton@communicate-slt.org.uk to reach out to our Business Support Team for support in the first instance.

We will be creating virtual appointments for the education team, families and other professionals to book onto from 1 October 2025. These appointments will allow us to share with you what information we can, as we get to know it, and hopefully alleviate any concerns that arise as we head to the end of the commissioned service. A link to book these appointments and an explanation of what topics can be covered during those calls will be shared in due course.

What happens to the data/information we hold relating to the children/young people on our active caseload?

Communicate SLT are committed to ensuring a smooth transition of service, as far as we are able. Please be assured, the needs of the children and young people remain our priority as we navigate this next period.

As part of that transition period, **ALL** patient records will continue to be safely held by Communicate SLT until the new provider/providers of the speech, language and communication service for Halton is announced; this will be on or before the 29 October 2025.

ALL patient records will then be safely transferred by Communicate SLT to new provider/providers.

How long will we continue to support you and the families of Halton?

Communicate SLT will continue to support the community for as long as we practically and safely can ahead of end of day on Wednesday, 29 October 2025.

What should I do if I need to request speech, language and communication support?

- **Up to and including 28 October 2025**, please refer in via the Communicate SLT webpage, which can be found here <https://communicate-slt.org.uk/halton-slt-services/request-a-service/>
- **From 29 October 2025**, please refer in via the Halton Local Offer webpage which can be found here www.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/speech-language