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|  | Adult Speech and Language Therapy Service  Central Booking Office  Bracken House  Crewkerne Road  Chard  Somerset  TA20 1YA    Tel: 01823 617464  <https://somersetft.nhs.uk/> |
|  |
| Date: 18th April 2022 |
| Update for All Care Home Managers |

Dear Care Home Manager

I**MPORTANT INFORMATION:- SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PROVISION FOR CARE HOMES**

I am writing with an update regarding the Speech and Language Therapy provision in care homes.

During the last few years we have experienced a steady increase in referrals to our service from care homes. Prior to covid, the volume of referrals was reaching an almost unmanageable situation with long waiting times for patients to be assessed in care homes. During covid we set up video consultations, which have proved to be a great success and we can now manage the majority of routine assessments remotely. We are still committed to providing face to face visits, at the discretion of the triaging clinician, when the assessment or the circumstances are more complex.

By continuing with video assessments, we are able to greatly increase our capacity for care home referrals, meaning that patients are triaged and assessed in a timely way. The benefits of remote consultations in terms of the environment, reduced travel and time costs, as well as reducing the risk of spreading infection are also significant. For these reasons we **will not** be reverting back to offering a face to face assessment for every routine patient.

I would like to thank you for your ongoing commitment in supporting residents to attend their video consultations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number if you require any further information or have any queries regarding this letter.

Yours sincerely



Karen Dockings

Head of Adult Speech and Language Therapy