

Ref: FOI/GS/ID 7124

**Please reply to:**  
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29 December 2021

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

I am writing in response to your request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to Communication aid devices for adults with speech difficulties.

*You asked:*

- 1. Do you have a budget for providing low and mid tech communication aid devices for adults (18 or over) with speech difficulties (e.g. iPads and tablets, text to speech apps, keyboard-based communication aids), and if yes how much was this budget for this and the last two financial years (2021, 2020, 2019)?*
- 2. If yes, how many adults (18 or over) with speech difficulties were provided with a low or mid tech communication aid (e.g. iPads and tablets, text to speech apps, keyboard-based communication aids) that was funded or provided by your Trust in this and the last two financial years (2021, 2020, 2019), and what devices were provided?*
- 3. If yes, how many adults (18 or over) with a diagnosis of motor neurone disease were provided with a low or mid tech communication aid (e.g. iPads and tablets, text to speech apps, keyboard-based communication aids) that was funded or provided by your Trust in this and the last two financial years (2021, 2020, 2019), and what devices were provided?*
- 4. If you do not have a budget for providing low and mid tech communication aid devices (e.g. iPads and tablets, text to speech apps, keyboard-based communication aids) how should a local, community or acute based speech and language therapist working for your organisation make available assessment and provision of these devices for adults (18 or over) living with speech difficulties?*

**Trust response:**

1. Yes. We have 2 iPads within the department to use in demonstrations or to support with single assessments. The capital cost for these was kindly funded

by the League of Friends for the Trust in 2021. We otherwise use low tech aids, comprising a bespoke laminated picture and / or alphabet chart. We would budget for the overheads for this within the non-pay component of the departmental budget, so approximately £46.80 per annum (156 @ 30p per board).

2. We provide low tech aids only and estimate this figure would be a total of 156 per year. This can be broken down as 36 patients from our acute team, plus 120 from our stroke team. For all other more medium to high tech requests, we would refer to our regional specialist provider:

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/support-for-schools/kent-and-medway-communication-and-assistive-technology-service>

3. Most of our MND patients come in with their communication aids, provided already by our community colleagues. However, for newly diagnosed MND patients or those experiencing a sudden deterioration in speech we estimate this figure to be 6 per year. We would provide a bespoke low-tech aid and demo applicability of a medium tech aid using the iPad.

4. We budget for low tech aids within our departmental administration costs. More specialist devices are provided by our regional specialist provider as above.