Scottish Borders CHSWG

Minutes

Wednesday 17th September 2025

Galashiels Health Centre

Present:

* Alison MacPherson- Deputy Head Teacher of Leader Valley School and head of service for Teachers of deaf children and young people
* Pamela Scott- Teacher of deaf children and young people
* Mark Sleigh- clinical lead audiologist
* Fred Tanner- NHS borders audiologist
* Heather Young, Marnie Davis Wood and Jenna Green- parents of deaf children and trustees for South of Scotland deaf children’s society
* Claire Irving – Paediatric consultant (link with hearing)
* Hilary Broatch- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion officer Borders College
* Emma Chapman- NDCS advice and guidance officer for South of Scotland
* Mona Vaghefian- Head of policy and influencing for Scotland (NDCS)
* Alison Vannan- health visitor
* Dawn Coventry- service manager for women and children’s services - newborn hearing screening manager

Apologies:

* Brogan Thomson- rehab adviser from Crosshouse
* Lucy Benjamin- speech and language therapist
* Esmond Carr- ENT consultant
* Diahann Whitefield and Verity Hill- NHS Lothian Audiology
* Rosie Scott- sensory services team
* James Bewsey- Quality Improvement Officer

Also invited:

* Jaqueline Nimmo- Borders College

1. **Introductions**

Round the table introductions from all parties. Secretary gave apologies from those who are unable to attend.

1. **What is a CHSWG?**

* Multidisciplinary and multi-agency group with a shared commitment; to work collaboratively across services to ensure that deaf children and young people- and their families- receive the highest quality support possible.
* The vision is to deliver services which are well integrated and child centred and responsive to needs.
* The strength in the group lies in the diverse expertise from many agencies
* CHSWG is a forum for sharing ideas openly and overcome challenges posed to children accessing services in the area.
* Aim to improve services locally but to influence policy and ensure opinions and ideas are acted upon at a higher level

1. **Terms of reference – discuss and agree**

* **Aims**- Question from Marnie re ‘making recommendations’ – who are we making recommendations to? Who are we not? Mark- services represented in the group, other groups we perhaps work with in the ‘wider picture’. Claire- should be have something about sharing minutes / making a regular report to CYPPP- Children and Young People’s Planning Partnership (representation from education, health and ……). Make a link to them? Letting them know about us. Point of greater influence when it comes to strategic planning. Claire to find out who health lead is. Can we find out who education lead is?

Need a clearly defined list of stakeholders to ensure minutes are shared with appropriate people / services.

* **Quality improvement**- Dawn- need a set of measures that tell us how we are doing. How do we know we are doing well if we don’t measure it? No need to reinvent the wheel- is there something already out there that we can use. HIS (Health Improvement Scotland) standards- none specifically for hearing online. There are some for audiology and newborn hearing etc.
* **Meetings**- Claire- do we need a comment about how many people we need to make it a viable meeting? Previous minutes suggest that there are 2/3 of the membership (including chair or nominated representative) present in order to hold the meeting. Do members need to attend in person or will there be an option for hybrid? Hybrid option will be provided from next meeting.
* Do terms of reference reflect ones from NDCS? Terms of reference are based on these.
* Is there a role in the CHSWG for membership from young people? Possibly Borders College or older high school pupils? Parent role- 2 parents present are also trustees from SSDCS- who is here from SSDCS and who is here as a parent? Parent representation from different experiences as there will be different priorities based on where they are on their journey e.g. high school, college, someone been through journey. How do we capture views of parents who cannot attend?
* Important to reflect something about communication e.g. BSL users. What communication support will be provided if a BSL user is present e.g. interpreter?
* Updated version will be created and sent out to group members. Agenda item to be reviewed / agreed at next meeting.

1. **Service update forms**

* ToD- Alison gave service update (see form attached)
* NHS Borders audiology- Mark gave service update (See form attached)
* NHS Lothian Audiology- not preset at meeting but Mark gave brief update (see form attached) Mark updated attending head of service meeting recently, level of staffing and currently running at 46% capacity. Question regarding training of audiologists- no current courses in Scotland, need to go to England. Masters available at QMU (every 2 years?). Need degree in a science or relevant subject. No real experience during masters with patients- not ideal for audiology. Mona- Bit of vacuum at Government level regarding someone available to move things forward after Audiology review.
* NDCS- Emma gave service review (see form attached).
* Borders College- Hilary gave service review (see form attached). Questions around provision of BSL courses as none currently are running. Comment from Marnie regarding BSL training across Scotland- after level 3 there is nothing available. Newcastle is the closest. Comments from Jenna around time taken for things / ideas to move forward- lack of support, lack of funding, lack of guidance. Dawn- is there an area that are doing it better? How are they making things work? Can we look at baby steps rather than longer term actions.
* Scope for sub-group looking at BSL and the scope around that? In tandem with SaLT.
* Other reports from ENT and paediatrics are attached to these minutes.
* Dawn- newborn hearing screening. Now have 24 hour a day 7 days a week access to newborn hearing screening after sending them to Lothian for training. Still reliant on Lothian to provide training but looking out for opportunities for ‘train the trainer’ situation to be available in the Borders.
* SSDCS- Marnie gave update. Small group of dedicated parents set up group 2 years ago (from ‘Making Connections’ group). Aim to connect children, young people and families who are deaf with social activities etc. Semi-regular ‘blether and brew’ sessions online and then social activities with families / young people. Mark suggestion of poster up in audiology department. Jenna suggestion of parents being invited in to speak to new parents of newly-identified babies after newborn hearing screening- to connect with Dawn via email.

1. **Actions to take forward** 
   1. Logo – involve children and young people
   2. Audiology website – area to be set up and minutes posted
   3. Clearly defined list of stakeholders to be drawn up for sharing of minutes etc.
2. **Any other business**

Discussion around the setting up of a subgroup to look at the provision of BSL locally and nationally. This is to be taken forward to the next meeting.

1. **Next meeting date**

Fred to send out options for dates in January, May and September. There will be a TEAMS option for the next meeting as well.

The meeting dates have been set as:

* Monday the 19th of January 2026
* Tuesday the 12st of May 2026
* Wednesday the 16th of September 2026

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