



AAC: a perspective

Jean Gross, September 2010



Why a Communication Champion?



The Bercow Report

A Review of Services for Children and Young People (0-19) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs

Bercow review



Better communication
action plan

Bercow review





Year of...

Communication
champion

Better communication
action plan

Bercow review



A priority task.....

‘Review the effectiveness of AAC provision in different areas of the country, to identify good practice and inform the development of future initiatives to improve services’

www.thecommunicationcouncil.org

The hub and spoke model

The team around the child

Referral

Coordination of assessment and follow up

Ongoing support with access to specialist advice

Coordination of set up of equipment

Local AAC service

Local awareness raising

Local funding arrangements

Triage assessment advice

Local assessment

Limited equipment loan bank

Technical training

Specialist regional (tertiary) AAC services

Specialist assessment

Specialist loan equipment bank

Regional funding arrangements for equipment and specialist support

Specialist advice

Training and development of enhanced local services



Findings

- One in five local areas lacks local specialist expertise
- Under-identification of need
- Hand-to-mouth funding arrangements
- Major problems on transition



Findings

- Only one in ten NHS specialist regional commissioning teams is fulfilling the function set out in NHS guidance



Recommendations

New NHS

Commissioning Board
should commission
regional all-age
assistive technology
'hubs' that supply
communication aids on
long term loan, and
allied assessment,
support and training



Recommendations

- NICE should adopt quality standards for AAC services
- Better signposting of availability of AAC
- Commissioning tools for local 'spoke' services- to include guidance on prevalence
- Statements of SEN should specify the levels of competence in AAC required by teachers and teaching assistants in regular contact with the child/young person



- Estimated annual cost of providing communication aids to every child and young person in England who needs them £6.5 million
- Plus around £3.2 million per year for 10 regional hub services
- DfE have estimated that for each person whose employment changes from permanent unemployment to permanent employment, this realises £500,000 in benefits to the economy over that individual's life



Cost benefits

Proposals would cost around £10 million a year , for children and young people

But if even one in ten of those provided with effective communication aids and services entered employment, this would bring £310 million to the economy over their working lives



What the AAC community can do

- The work on data, quality standards and measuring outcomes really matters
- Get involved with White and Green Papers
- Be realistic
- Make yourself heard locally



Help create the National Year

Join (or set up) a local
planning group

Plan fun events

Open house

A month of publicity about
the achievements of AAC
users

Make use of the resources
that are developed
nationally