Information for patients

NHS
Berkshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Therapy options for Parkinson's disease (PD)

Lee Silverman Voice Treatment (LSVT)

What is LSVT?

LSVT is an intensive voice treatment programme. It is the most-researched therapy option for speech changes in PD (dysarthria).

LSVT involves completing exercises, such as, sustaining sounds and pitch changes. We work from increasing loudness at single words, to phrases, paragraphs and conversation. We can try to tailor the resources we use to your interests.

How often do I need to do LSVT?

Four consecutive sessions a week for four weeks lasting one hour (16 individual sessions in total). You'll be required to complete daily independent work.

What requirements are there for LSVT?

- **Motivation** – since maintenance exercises need to be completed daily during and after the programme. If you are unable to complete daily exercises and independent work consistently, this therapy may not be appropriate.
- Access to **telehealth (online appointments)** will be beneficial to avoid delays in therapy.
- Typically, you'd need to see an **ear, nose, and throat (ENT) specialist** to confirm your suitability via a small camera down your nose to look at your vocal folds. Due to current wait times, we may commence therapy without this.

What benefits can you expect after therapy?

- You may find it easier to be understood and may not need to repeat yourself as often.
- You may feel less out of breath and have a less flat pitch when speaking.
- Research also suggests positive impacts on facial expressions and swallow safety.

Dysarthria one-to-one therapy (for speech and voice difficulties)

What is dysarthria one-to-one therapy?

- A less intensive therapy approach aimed to improve vocal loudness and breath support.
- We begin by focusing on single sound production, before building up to word production, sentences and paragraphs as your speech improves.
- You will also work on improving your posture and completing relaxation exercises.
- We will try to tailor resources to your interests.



How often will I need to do it?

One hour session, once a week, for up to six weeks. You'll need to practice the exercises daily at home.

What are the requirements?

You will need to be motivated, since maintenance exercises need to be completed daily during and after the programme.

Access to telehealth (online appointments) will be beneficial but not essential.

What are the benefits?

- Increased vocal loudness.
- You may find it easier to be understood and may not need to repeat yourself as often. You may also feel less out of breath and have a less flat pitch when speaking.
- You may have increased awareness of how you can improve your intelligibility.

Dysarthria group therapy (for speech and voice difficulties)

What is dysarthria group therapy?

A less intensive therapy approach where you can engage in guided conversations with other individuals also

experiencing speech and/or voice difficulties. We begin by focusing on single sound production, before building up to word production, sentences and paragraphs as your speech improves. We provide tea, coffee, and snacks. We also help to facilitate conversations.

How often do I need to attend?

Two-hour session (with break after an hour), once weekly for six weeks.

What are the requirements?

Willingness to engage in conversation with other individuals. At present, you will need to be able to attend one of our local clinics to join this group.

What are the benefits?

You will get all the same benefits as one-to-one therapy, plus:

- increased social support, fun, games, and a chance to meet others who may experience similar difficulties to you
- education around what to expect for Parkinson's disease, expressions, and swallow safety



How to get a referral

Ask any healthcare professional to make a referral to our service, e.g. your nurse, specialist, or GP. Please ensure your referral has detailed your speech and/or swallowing symptoms clearly.

In the meantime, think '**SLOP**' to clear speech:

S – Slow

L – Loud

O – Over-articulate

P – Pause for breath

Learn more about our service at:

berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/slt

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