



Francesca Sephton

Clinical Manager and Assistive Technology Team Lead

Health and Care Professions Council number: SL30695

Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists registration number: RC0030916

Personal Profile

I am a highly motivated and enthusiastic Speech and Language Therapist specialising in the field of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). I am a Clinical Manager at ATtherapy and I lead the ATtech team which comprises a team of assistive technologists and assistive technology (AT) assistants. I am currently undertaking an MSc in Educational Assistive Technology at the University of Dundee. In my management role, I support the company to define and achieve their company mission, vision, and values.

I have experience of presenting at conferences such as Communication Matters and Acquired Brain Injury Forum for London, clinical excellence networks such as the North West AAC CEN and study days and shows such as the Autism show. I have participated in research with Manchester Metropolitan University regarding literacy and AAC. I complete expert witness assessments and reports. I am a trustee for the charity 1Voice which supports individuals who use AAC and their families.

Professional Qualifications

2008-2012 [The University of Sheffield](#) - 1st class degree in Speech Science, Tracey E Cox Memorial Prize for achievement.

2015 - Manchester Post Basic Dysphagia Training Course

Employment History

[ATtherapy, Clinical Manager and Assistive Technology Team Lead](#) - 2016 - Present

ATtherapy, independent company providing specialist support for individuals with brain injury who require AAC and AT. I have a Clinical Manager role and lead the service development of the ATtech team.

In my role at ATtherapy I provide specialist assessment and intervention for people who need AAC/ AT including paper-based/ no-tech (e.g. eye pointing, using sign, communication books), mid-tech devices (e.g. a communication tool operated with batteries which gives a voice output) and electronic communication aids accessed by a range of methods e.g. switches and eye gaze. I am experienced in setting up AT to ensure the individual can access their technology for a range of functions including leisure, communication, education, and environmental control. I horizon scan to seek out the latest new technology and engage in research and development with our internal and external networks. I work with clients within the home, at school/ college and often out in the community with the AT mentor service to ensure the individual is able to communicate effectively across a range of settings. I previously led the development of the ATmentor service from 2017-2021. I have previously set up a speech and language therapy services in a number of schools at ATtherapy.

2014 – 2016

Bridge College, specialist college for young people with a range of complex communication difficulties. This role involved developing Outreach services, writing and delivering staff training, presenting at Clinical Governance forums and conferences (Communication Matters and National Teachers Conference at Manchester College), participating in service evaluation and AAC pathway development, working with individuals with dysphagia and supervision of junior members of the team and AAC volunteers. I was secretary of the North West AAC CEN, and I sat on the committee for the North West RCSLT Hub. I also have sat on the committee for 1Voice as I set up the 1Voice Manchester branch.

2013 - 2014

Speechwise – private speech and language therapy service. I worked as a speech and language therapist with two children, one learning to use LAMP.

2012 - 2014

Landgate School for children and adolescents with ASC and Willow Grove School for primary school aged pupils with social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH). Part of my role at Landgate involved participating in some research of the efficacy of yoga and Lego therapy intervention with this client group.

2011 - 2013

Time Specialist Support Services for autistic children, adolescents, and adults. I worked as a support worker and provided some voluntary speech and language therapy as part of a project entitled the 'Communication Project'.

2010

Arbour Court Care Home. In this role, I worked with adults with dementia and eating and drinking difficulties in a healthcare assistant capacity.

At college, I worked on a voluntary basis in Wargrave House School, specialist school for autistic children.

Training

I regularly attend AAC/AT clinical excellence networks, AAC/AT information days and courses, and meet with suppliers to review the latest equipment and software. I also have undertaken the following training courses:

- Witness Familiarisation Courtroom Skills by Bond Solon
- PODD (Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display) training
- Supporting early communication skills in readiness for voice output
- Text based voice output communication systems
- Grid 3 Expert training day
- Level 5 Chartered Management Institute Training
- Mental Capacity Act Training
- Acquired Brain Injury Training (Headway)
- Colourful Semantics Training
- Intensive Interaction Training
- Talking Mats Training
- Approach and Team Teach Training
- Clinical Practice Educator Training
- Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP)
- Brick by Brick - Play Included
- Signalong Training
- Makaton training, enhanced
- An introduction to developing management capabilities (Elcons management)
- Safeguarding
- Talk Tools level 1

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Additional Skills

Communication skills – I work in a transdisciplinary manner with large teams around the individuals I support. I have good team-working skills to enable me to work in the best way with an individual to ensure they achieve the best of their potential. I can write comprehensive reports to support onward referral or provide detailed, accessible information for clients, parents/carers and other professionals.

Innovative Assessment and Intervention – I have experience of combining theoretical knowledge with various assessment methodologies and interventions and I feel I am skilled at employing innovative ways to gather assessment data and deliver input for those individuals with complex communication needs.

Reflective – I am continually reflecting on my practice and engage in frequent activities to continue my professional development.

Interpersonal Skills – I am skilled at communicating sensitive information to others and modifying my communication to ensure that what I am saying is accessible (for parents/carers, staff or the individual with a communication difficulty). This supports me when delivering training.

Motivated – I am motivated to work as a speech and language therapist and provide the best possible communication solution for an individual using a person-centered approach.

Publications

Sephton et al. (2020) Challenging attitudes: Changing communication... the ATmentor way. *Communication Matters*, 34 (2), 23-25.

Sephton, F. (2020). Participation for young AAC users. *Communication Matters*, 34(1), 13-15

Sephton, F. (2019). ATmentor Launch event. *Communication Matters*, 33(3), 14-17

Sephton, F. (2018). Mentoring at ATtherapy. *Communication Matters*, 32(2), 22-26

Sephton, F. & Banns, A. (2015). A multidisciplinary approach to AAC assessment. *Communication Matters*, 29(3), 8-11

Sephton, F. & Brown, K. (2012). The effectiveness of yoga on individuals with Autism [poster presentation for the Autism Conference at Edge Hill University]

Sephton, F. (2012). Insight into Autism. Aukids Magazine. Available [here](#).

ATtherapy

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