

The Teaching Role of the Implant Centre Teacher of the Deaf

Most ICToDs (Implant Centre Teachers of the Deaf) are employed by the NHS rather than by the Department of Education. We are part of the multi-disciplinary team that assesses whether a child would be suitable for hearing implants. If the answer is yes, then we liaise with local services to co-ordinate support for the child and their family, monitor progress, check and set up equipment and advise on educational issues, including target setting.

So do we do “direct teaching”? Each implant centre will work in different ways. If an outreach service is what is provided, then my answer would be yes, we do. For a St Thomas’ ICToD the following would be a typical visit to see a school-aged child who has cochlear implants which have recently been activated:

- Plan and set up the visit in advance with local staff, send objectives for the visit and advise on progress for the child so far and inform staff at what stage they are in the activation process.
- Arrive at the school, meet staff and breathe a sigh of relief at having found the school and arrived on time (hopefully!). Long journey.
- Carry out equipment check with the child and train local staff how to carry out daily checks. Advise on the use of future assistive listening devices, once the child has stable maps.
- Accompany the child to class and do a classroom observation. Report back on ideas to support inclusion most effectively.
- Join the child and Teaching Assistant if class breaks in to group work. Get involved in teaching the child and group if appropriate, modelling effective communication style and language level needed.
- See the child in 1:1 for specific listening work. Use regular assessments to monitor progress. Demonstrate to staff working with the child the level they are at on the listening hierarchy.
- At end of the visit, feed back to all staff who work with the child, provide training on implants and the findings during the visit.
- Help to plan next steps and IEP targets
- Write up a report or record of visit for local staff and the rest of the multi-disciplinary implant team.

The ICToD role is a teaching role..... Although our visits to individual children might be few and far between, the impact we may have on the effective inclusion and rehabilitation in particular settings can be massive. This can only be delivered by Qualified Teachers of the Deaf with substantial classroom experience.

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