

How to...write case notes

The content and style of case notes varies slightly depending upon whether you are in the Aphasia Centre, Literacy Clinic or Children's Clinic. However, the following points are relevant in all contexts.

Case notes should be:

1. Accurate
2. Comprehensive
3. Relevant
4. Concise
5. Contemporaneous
6. Signed

Always write case notes for someone else to read. If, for whatever reason, you don't come back to clinic next week, will someone else be able to continue working with your client without having to repeat what has already been done?

The general format for an entry:

- Objective observations of the client e.g. who they came with, how cooperative and attentive they were during the session. You would also add relevant information that the client/carer tells you e.g. if the client was ill recently, changes in home circumstances or demonstration that therapy is generalising outside clinic
- Brief statement of goals for session
- Tasks for each goal and how the client performed. This would include quantitative information about the number of items correct/incorrect, comments the client made about the task (e.g. 'this is hard', 'I like this game'), other observations about their performance
- Assessment information should be recorded, including analysis of test results. You will use this information when you write reports
- Write brief notes about what you plan to do in the next session and any actions you need to make e.g. report writing, telephone calls.

NHS case notes must:

1. be written in black ink and be legible
2. have errors crossed through with a single line and dated and initialled
3. have dates written with month in words not numbers
4. have your name and title printed below your signature
5. have student's notes countersigned by supervisor
6. have every single contact, including phone messages, email etc recorded in notes