

# [News story: Making better use of speech therapy: apply for funding](#)

The [Department of Health](#) in Northern Ireland has up to £180,000 for technology projects that promote and support better use of speech and language therapy services for people who have suffered strokes.

Up to 3 early-stage projects will be funded under the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI), with the best ideas going on to compete for further funding to undertake clinical trials.

## **Aim to improve rehabilitation**

Projects should aim to use technology to increase use of speech and language therapy services and make these more effective and efficient.

They should help therapy services improve rehabilitation of stroke patients experiencing a number of difficulties including:

- aphasia, an impairment of language skills
- apraxia, a difficulty with motor skills required for production of speech
- dysphagia, where patients have swallowing difficulties
- dysarthria, which is difficult or unclear articulation of speech

Phase 1 projects will be expected to develop and design prototypes and plan and design clinical trials. Ideas could include:

- tailored patient assessments
- ways of encouraging patient participation including through motivating interfaces and involvement of family and friends
- remote working
- personalised smart programs that adapt to patient progress
- real-time patient feedback to therapy teams

Solutions should be small, portable and conform to relevant standards for medical devices.

## **Competition information**

- the competition is open, and the deadline for tenders is at 3pm on 3 August 2018
- the competition is open to any organisation that can demonstrate a route to market for its idea
- we expect phase 1 contracts to be worth up to £60,000 and to last 6 months
- successful projects will attract 100% funded development contracts
- applications should be made through [eTendersNI](#)