

Career Profile

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST

What is a Speech-Language Pathologist? – Career Description/Scope

Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LPs) are regulated health professionals who screen, assess, identify and treat speech, language, voice, fluency (stuttering), swallowing and feeding problems for all age groups in addition to advocating for the prevention of these disorders.

S-LPs work independently or as part of interprofessional teams in: hospitals, clinics, schools, rehabilitation centres, long term care homes, early intervention programs, universities, colleges, research centres, and private practices.

Education Requirements to Work in Ontario

- Master's degree in speech-language pathology
- Graduate programs vary in length from 2-3 years and include supervised clinical practicum

Speech-Language Pathologist Practice Requirements

To practice in Ontario Speech-Language Pathologists, must be registered with the College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists of Ontario (CASLPO) and perform the following requirements:

- Entry to Practice
 - Minimum 300 hours university supervised clinical practice
 - Professional liability insurance
 - CASLPO's Initial Practice Period (IPP) – minimum 6 months under the guidance of a general member of CASLPO
- Ongoing
 - Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) to CASLPO annually indicating compliance with CASLPO Standards of Practice, Guidelines, and Position Statements and identifying learning goals for the following year
 - Minimum of 15 hours of Continuous Learning Activity Credits per year, related to the learning goals identified in the SAT
 - Participate in Peer Assessment/Site Visits when randomly selected

How does a Speech-Language Pathologist Practice at TBRHSC?

- Works to scope of practice as outlined by various legislation and authorities including:
 - College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists of Ontario
 - Regulated Health Professions Act
 - Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Act
 - Public Hospitals Act

What does a Speech-Language Pathologist Do at TBRHSC?

- Provides assessment, treatment and consultative services as well as counseling/education for individuals with:
 - Language disorders including aphasia
 - Speech disorders including apraxia, dysarthria, and motor speech impairment
 - Communication disorders related to stroke, head injuries, cognitive disorders, dementia, and progressive neurological diseases
 - Swallowing disorders (including administering and interpreting videofluoroscopic swallow studies)
 - Voice and resonance disorders
 - Structural anomalies of speech, voice, and swallowing mechanisms (i.e., cleft palate, head and neck cancer)
 - Voice and swallowing changes related to tracheostomy
 - Dysfluency/stuttering
 - Written communication difficulties
 - Alternative and augmentative communication needs
 - Psychogenic communication and swallowing disorders
- Provides education to staff and caregivers on the identification, assessment, and treatment of communication and swallowing disorders
- Provides education and supervision of students
- Works closely with other professionals in providing a coordinated program of care, including referrals to community resources

Web Resources

- College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario www.caslpo.com
- Speech-Language and Audiology Canada www.sac-oac.ca
- Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists www.osla.on.ca
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association www.asha.org