

Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

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What Is Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology?

In general, these professions work in collaboration to maximize the communication and hearing potential of individuals.

What Do Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Audiologists do?

Speech-Language Pathologists:

Screen, identify, assess, diagnose, manage, rehabilitate and prevent speech and language disorders which includes swallowing, voice dysfunction and cognitive communicative disorders

Assess, select and develop augmentative and alternative communication systems

Provide of counseling and education services to clients

Provide of aural (re)habilitation and related counselling services to hearing impaired individuals and their families

Enhance speech-language proficiency and communication effectiveness (e.g., accent reduction)

Audiologists

Facilitate the conservation of auditory system function

Develop and implement environmental and occupational hearing conservation programs

Screen, identify, assess, diagnose and prevent, cerumen management, and rehabilitation of individuals with peripheral and central auditory system dysfunction

Administer and interpret behavioural, electro-physiological and electro-acoustic measurements of auditory and vestibular functions.

Select, fit, and dispense amplification, assistive listening and alarming devices and other systems

Provide counselling services to clients, families and caregivers,

Provide aural (re)habilitation and related counselling services to hearing impaired individuals and their families;

Screen speech-language and other factors affecting communication function for the purposes of an audiologic evaluation

Where do SLPs and Audiologists work?

An SLP or Audiologist can work in various settings. Some of these include: hospitals, rehabilitation centres, childcare facilities, schools, universities, research centres, and private practice. Audiologists can also work in industrial settings and hearing-aid and cochlear implant manufacturers. Collaboration with other professionals such as physicians, nurses, teachers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists and supportive personnel often occurs with both of these professions.

Education & Preparation:

An SLP or Audiologist must have at least a master's level training. There are nine universities in Canada that offer a degree in SLP. Two of these, University of Western Ontario and Dalhousie University have three year programs that accept individuals with more diverse backgrounds and fewer pre-requisites. For the remaining SLP programs, a background in psychology, linguistics and biological science would be beneficial, although all schools vary in the exact pre-requisites.

There are six programs in Canada that offer Master degrees in Audiology and all of them offer PhD programs. An important trend within the field and what is currently happening in the US is that a doctoral level degree is required to practice. The mandatory pre-requisite courses vary from school to school with University of Western Ontario and Dalhousie having the least amount of requirements. Statistics, human physiology, anatomy, linguistics and physics are courses which some universities require.

Licensure :

The governing body is the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA). However, many provinces have regulatory bodies and membership is required in order to practice in that jurisdiction.