

What is communication access?

COMMUNICATION
Everyone gets the message
ACCESS

Speech Pathology Week 2017

20-26
August
#SPweek

It's when everyone can get their message across.

Communication access is about creating a world where people with communication difficulties can communicate successfully with everyone, a world where everyone gets the message.

Communication by definition involves at least two people. People with communication difficulties often experience communication barriers to their full participation in community life.

People with communication difficulties may communicate with others using a variety of means, including electronic speech devices, word-based or picture-based communication boards or books, sign and gesture, and spelling.

Like mobility access, **communication access** involves the provision of community supports and strategies for people with a communication disability to participate fully in social, educational, economic, sporting, and community life. This involves greater awareness and understanding of communication disability within our community, and for all of us to learn how to interact with people with communication disability.

Speech Pathology Australia estimates that over **1.1 million Australians**, around five per cent of the Australian population, have a communication disorder.

You can learn tips for communicating successfully with a person with a communication disability – visit www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/week#tips

Our communities need to be accessible for everyone, including people with communication difficulties, physical disabilities, reading difficulties, vision impairment, hearing impairment and intellectual disability. Building communication accessibility will ensure everyone is treated with dignity and respect. When we create communication accessible communities, **everyone gets the message**.

During Speech Pathology Week 2017 join the conversation about communication accessibility and help make sure “everyone gets the message”. Participate on social media by using **#SPWeek**



What is a speech pathologist?

Speech pathologists study, diagnose and treat communication disorders, including difficulties with speech, language, reading and writing, stuttering and voice.

People who experience difficulties swallowing food and drinking safely can also be helped by a speech pathologist.

Speech pathologists work with people who have communication and swallowing difficulties that:

- arise from premature birth, or may be present from birth (e.g., cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, fragile X syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder, hearing impairments and cleft palate); or
- occur as a result of physical, intellectual or sensory disability or a mental illness; or
- emerge during early childhood (e.g., speech and language disorders, stuttering, difficulties learning to read and write); or
- occur during adult years (e.g., traumatic brain injury, stroke, head/neck cancers, neurodegenerative disorders such as motor neurone disease); or
- develop in the elderly (e.g., dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease).

Where do speech pathologists work?

Speech pathologists work in a variety of settings, including public and private hospitals; early intervention; child care and education settings; community health and rehabilitation centres; corporate organisations; correctional and juvenile justice facilities; disability services; universities; mental health services; residential accommodation; aged care facilities; private homes; and private speech pathology clinics.

About SPA

Speech Pathology Australia is recognised by government as the national professional association for speech pathologists in Australia.

The Association supports and regulates the ethical, clinical and professional standards of the profession, as well as lobbying and advocating for access to services that benefit people with communication and swallowing difficulties.

Speech pathologists who meet professional development and recency of practice requirements are eligible for Certified Practising membership of the Association, with the status of Certified Practising Speech Pathologist (CPSP).

1/114 William Street,
Melbourne Victoria
1300 368 835



www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au/week

#SPweek

