

Redington Fairview General Hospital

Speech Department

57 Fairview Avenue, Skowhegan, Maine 04976

Phone: (207) 474-7000 Fax: (207) 858-4772



Role of a Speech Language Pathologist

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) work to assess, diagnose, and treat speech, language, social communication, cognitive-communication, and swallowing disorders in children and adults. These include problems with:

Speech disorders - difficulty producing speech sounds correctly or fluently (e.g., stuttering is a form of disfluency)

Language— impairments with comprehension to understand written or auditory information as well as expression to formulate words that convey a meaningful message.

Social Communication - hardships with the application of pragmatic rules for verbal or non-verbal communication in a social interaction.

Voice - problems with components of vocal quality that require intervention to achieve improved vocal productions by addressing respiration, phonation or resonance.

“The earlier people get help,
the better!”

Cognitive Communication - difficulties with attention, memory, problem solving, organization or other critical thinking skills that are typically impaired following a stroke, concussion, traumatic brain injury, dementia or other neurological conditions.

Dysphagia - swallowing or feeding impairments that may lead to poor nutrition, weight loss, or other secondary health complications.

Speech-language pathologists work collaboratively with other professionals, individuals, families and caregivers, to promote successful achievement of desired improvements or outcomes with therapeutic intervention.

Speech-Language Pathologists: Who We Are and What We Do (2020). *ASHA* [Brochure]. Rockville, MD: Author.

Did you know?

- Nearly 180,000 Americans acquire aphasia each year
- Approximately 1 in 12 children in the United States has a disorder relating to voice, speech, language or swallowing.
- Each year an estimated 1 in 25 adults will experience a swallowing problem related to dysphagia.



Referrals for Speech Therapy Services

Listed below are various behaviors that may be indicative of a formal referral for therapeutic intervention with a qualified Speech-Language Pathologist.

Pediatric

- Problems following directions or understanding what others say
- Reduced vocabulary
- Trouble putting words together in sentences
- Difficulties playing and talking with other children
- Feeding or swallowing problems
- Speech that is not easily understood
- Difficulty forming speech sounds or words
- Problems with early reading and writing
- Stuttering-like behaviors (e.g. repeating or stretching sounds, prolonged pauses)
- Changes in vocal quality
- Delays in achieving communicative milestones

Adults

- Trouble saying words clearly
- Word finding problems
- Limitations with comprehension to understand what others are saying
- Hardships with reading or writing words and sentences
- Changes in vocal quality
- Eating or swallowing problems
- Difficulty recalling information
- Poor judgment with challenges in solving everyday problems
- Difficulty responding appropriately to the message of another individual
- Limitations to provide biographical information
- Hardships with understanding non-verbal communication
- Restricted communicative abilities to make wants/needs known

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Rehab & Fitness

Clinic: (207) 474-7000
Fax: (207) 858-4772
57 Fairview Avenue,
Skowhegan, ME

