As Regulated Professionals, Speech-Language Pathologists are required by law to adhere to rigorous clinical, professional, and ethical standards, and are held accountable to these standards.

Team Work

Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists also collaborate with other regulated providers, including physicians, nurses, dietitians, teachers, psychologists and occupational therapists, with each providing their specific expertise to the care of the individual with the communication, swallowing, or hearing problem. For example, Speech-Language Pathologist, dietitians, occupational therapists, radiologists, and nurses work together to provide care for individuals who have difficulty swallowing. Speech-Language Pathologists, upon assessing a student’s speech-language, work with teachers on appropriate classroom programming for a student. Audiologists collaborate with physicians or ear, nose, and throat specialists if there is a medical problem related to a hearing difficulty. The important point for consumers is to ensure that an Audiologist or Speech-Language Pathologist is consulted to assess the difficulties and participate in the ongoing management of the problem.

For additional information about Ontario’s speech-language pathologists or audiologists, contact:

**Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (OSLA)**

Tel: 416-920-3676
Toll free: 1-800-718-OSLA(6752)

or visit [www.osla.on.ca](http://www.osla.on.ca)
How Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists Differ from Other Service Providers

Many people become involved in the care of individuals with communication difficulties (speech, language, voice, swallowing and hearing). It is extremely important that consumers of these services be aware of the expertise of the provider and that there is legislation describing the services Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists provide (the Regulated Health Professionals Act and the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Act). Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists are therefore Regulated Professionals under government legislation.

Audiologists as Distinctive from Other Service Providers

Audiologists have a minimum of Master’s level of education in the complete range of assessment and management of hearing difficulties and disorders. As such, Audiologists are the professionals knowledgeable in providing a complete hearing assessment. Based on their assessment, they determine and provide the appropriate non-medical audiological care. This may include selecting the appropriate hearing aid or other assistive listening device and writing a prescription detailing the precise specification requirements for the hearing aid.

Many Audiologists also dispense hearing aids. Audiologists may also provide a variety of other services to assist in the (re)habilitation of people with hearing loss, including auditory verbal therapy, recommendations to caregivers, teachers, and others.

There are others who provide services to hearing-impaired people. They include audio-metric technicians, hearing instrument practitioners, communication disorders assistants, teachers for the deaf, and auditory verbal therapists.

Consumers and other professionals need to be aware that Audiologists have a Master’s level or higher training specifically in audiology, and have expertise in the full range of assessing hearing and determining the appropriate audiological care.

Audiologists are certified by law to provide these services and must belong to a regulatory college established under the Regulatory Health Professionals Act. As regulated professionals, they are required by law to adhere to rigorous clinical, professional, and ethical standards and are held accountable to these standards.

Speech-Language Pathologists as Distinctive from Other Service Providers

Speech-Language Pathologists have a minimum Master’s level education in the complete range of assessment and management of communication disorders and difficulties.

As such, Speech-Language Pathologists are the professionals knowledgeable in providing a complete speech and language assessment and range of interventions, a complete voice assessment and treatment, and assessment and management of feeding/swallowing difficulties. Based on their comprehensive assessment, Speech-Language Pathologists set treatment goals and determine and provide the appropriate care to meet these goals. Speech-Language Pathologists also develop programs/treatments to be carried out by non-Speech-Language Pathologist providers and they supervise/monitor the implementation of these programs/treatments and the progress of the individual receiving the treatment.

Other service providers who may be involved with individuals with communication difficulties include communication disorders assistants, educational assistants, speech teachers, and speech therapy aides.

Consumers and other professionals need to be aware that Speech-Language Pathologists are professionals with a Master’s level or higher training in speech-language pathology/communication disorders and that Speech-Language Pathologists have the full range of expertise in assessing communication and determining the appropriate follow-up programs/treatments.

Speech-Language Pathologists are certified by law to provide these services and must belong to a regulatory college established under the Regulatory Health Professionals Act.