



SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers comprehensive speech-language pathology services to Veterans and Service members with speech, language, swallowing, cognitive-communication, and voice disorders. Communication includes understanding auditory information, verbal expression, reading comprehension, and writing along with non-verbal communication such as gestures, facial expressions, and sign-language.

Speech Disorder

When a person is unable to produce speech sounds precisely or fluently he or she may have a speech disorder. A speech-language pathologist offers treatment for motor speech disorders and accent modifications.

Language Disorder

Difficulty understanding the spoken language and verbal expression or aphasia is often due to stroke or traumatic brain injury. Speech-language pathologists provide individual and group treatment for individuals with language disorders.

Cognitive Disorder

Cognitive problems include difficulty with attention, memory, orientation, and problem-solving. Speech-language pathologists provide strategies to improve ability to function at home, work or school.

Voice Disorder

Speech-language pathologists provide evaluation and treatment for disorders of voice including pitch, loudness, nasal resonance or voice quality to be consistent with identified gender.

Swallowing Problems (Dysphagia)

Dysphagia may co-exist with a wide variety of neurological or structural problems and treatment may include modification of food or liquids, positioning while eating, or exercises to improve swallow function.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS TREATED

- Injury to the brain, head, neck, spinal cord
- Neurological disorders: Parkinson's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Amyotrophic Lateral (ALS), Huntington's Disease, muscular dystrophy and dementia or Alzheimer's disease
- Oral and laryngeal cancer
- Laryngeal abnormalities: vocal cord paresis or paralysis
- Respiratory compromise including tracheostomy and ventilator dependence

TREATMENT SETTING

- With 190 VA sites the 450 speech pathologists and 176 graduate trainees provide services in outpatient clinics and inpatient settings including medical centers, community living centers and their home
- Telehealth is also available to provide treatment to VA outpatient clinics or at home.
- A wide range of technology such as computerized speaking devices, cognitive aids, or a voice prosthesis for individuals that are unable to speak or may need compensatory strategies.