

Becoming a Speech- Language- Pathologist

Speech-Language Pathologist, CF-SLP:

- An expert in the field of communication sciences and swallowing disorders.
- Uses mastery of elements of speech and language in order to prevent, assess, diagnose, and treat disorders of speech, language, communication, and swallowing.
- Works with multidisciplinary team including audiologists, physicians, nurses, occupational therapists, dietitians, psychologists, teachers, and social workers.
- Works in a variety of settings:
 - Public and private hospitals
 - Skilled nursing facilities
 - Long-term acute care facilities
 - Hospice
 - Home healthcare
 - Public and private schools
 - Colleges and Universities

How to become a SLP

- Complete a **Master's degree (M.A., M.S., or M.Ed.)** from a university that holds regional accreditation and from a communicative sciences and disorders program that is accredited by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
- All clinicians must complete 400 clinical hours
 - 25 required observational hours often completed during undergraduate years
 - 375 hours of graduate clinical practicum
- Additional coursework in undergraduate and graduate studies and additional licensure is required to work in the K-12 setting.
- Pass the Speech-Language Pathology **national board exam (PRAXIS)**
- Complete a **clinical fellowship year (CFY)** as a clinical fellow.
- Obtain **ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence** and full state licensure to practice following clinical fellowship year.



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

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Helping People Communicate

“Speech is the mirror of the soul; as a man speaks, so is he.”

-Publilius Syrus



Clinical Speech-Language pathology

This specific avenue of practice employs speech-language pathologists as part of an interdisciplinary team for the evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of communication and swallowing disorders. SLPs work collaboratively with other members of the health care team to help optimize patient outcomes in a variety of clinical settings. Additionally, SLPs provide training and education to family/caregivers and other professionals. Clinical SLPs may own or run clinics or private practices.

Speech-Language Pathology in the Community

SLPs can make a significant impact in the community by working closely with schools to help children with speech, language, or communication disorders. In this setting, SLPs can direct school programs and work with patients, families, and teachers to optimize the patient's school performance and social experience. In addition, SLPs can work for national, state, or local associations or agencies to provide services at prisons and young offenders' institutions. Recently, SLPs have begun delivering some services via teleconference.

Research and Continuing Education

For those with a passion for education, SLP's may teach at colleges and universities in order to train future professionals in their field. They may also engage in research of the communication sciences and swallowing disorders to expand the knowledge of their field and develop new evaluation techniques that can be employed in clinical practice.