

## **SPEECH PATHOLOGY SERVICE**

### **WHAT IS A SPEECH PATHOLOGIST?**

A Speech pathologist has been specially trained to assess, identify, diagnose and treat people with communication and swallowing difficulties. Speech Pathologists have achieved a Bachelor of Applied Science in Speech Pathology or a Masters Degree in Speech Pathology. A Speech Pathologist is a member of the multi-disciplinary team and works with other team members to achieve optimal rehabilitation outcomes for our clients.



### **SPEECH PATHOLOGY – CLINICAL SERVICES**

The Speech Pathology service at the Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney provides tailored rehabilitation programs for clients with acquired speech, language, cognitive, voice and/or swallowing problems. Speech Pathologists at Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney specialise in the areas of acquired brain injury (traumatic such as car accident victims and non-traumatic such as stroke), aged care and degenerative illness, congenital diseases and long-term disability. Speech Pathologists provide in-patient, outpatient, and home-based rehabilitation services across all specialised rehabilitation units in the centre.

Types of intervention provided include:

- Conducting hearing screenings and training of communication strategies to compensate for hearing impairment
- Teaching reading and writing to someone who has suffered a stroke
- Coaching in social communication skills such as turn-taking, eye-contact, tone of voice, vocabulary selection.
- Providing a training program for someone whose speech is difficult to understand due to a brain injury
- Developing augmentative communication devices such as communication books or training in high tech communication aids for people who are unable to speak.
- Providing therapy for someone with swallowing difficulties including physical strategies and prescribing food and fluid consistencies to improve swallow function and maintain safety.

To optimise motivation and appropriateness of intervention programs Speech Pathologists work with goals set in conjunction with individuals and/or their families. These goals are developed to ensure a holistic approach that not only addresses remediation and compensation of the impairment, but also targets participation in activities limited by the impairment and to optimise the client's emotional adjustment. To achieve this, a variety of service delivery models are used at different stages of the rehabilitation process. Examples of these include:

- training of family, friends and other professionals in communication and/or swallowing strategies
- providing education to the workplace
- therapy in groups
- tasks for independent practise
- outings to practise functional communication activities

### **SPEECH PATHOLOGY AND RESEARCH**

The Speech Pathology Service at Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney has a strong and active commitment to research. Several staff have been recipients of substantial research grants and 3 staff are currently employed through the National Health and Medical Research Council grant looking into treatment for naming deficits in aphasia. Staff regularly present at conferences & forums and have had multiple publications in national and international journals.

### **REFERRAL TO SPEECH PATHOLOGY**

At Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney, any team member can refer a client to Speech Pathology and individuals can also request a referral. External referrals need to be made through our outpatients coordinator or the referral coordinator.

**For further information contact your Speech Pathologist at the Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney on 02 9807 1144**

**For more information about Speech Pathology, go to** [www.Speechpathologyaustralia.org](http://www.Speechpathologyaustralia.org)