



About Speech Pathology Australia

The Association

Speech Pathology Australia is the national peak body for Speech Pathologists in Australia, representing over 4,200 members. A speech pathologist is a specialist qualified to provide a variety of services to people with communication and swallowing difficulties that may be present across the life span.

Members are speech pathologists who work in hospitals, rehabilitation centres, schools and education centres, community health centres, aged care facilities, private practice, and agencies for those with specific disabilities.

History

The first Speech Pathology clinic opened in Sydney in 1931. In 1949 the Australian College of Speech Therapists was founded and later became the Australian Association of Speech and Hearing. In 1996 the Association became the Speech Pathology Association of Australia with a public name of Speech Pathology Australia. In June 2002 Speech Pathology Association of Australia changed its name to 'The Speech Pathology Association of Australia Limited', but still has the public name of 'Speech Pathology Australia'.

Vision of the Association

Speech Pathology Australia aims to be an informed, influential and dynamic peak body of professionals striving for excellence and recognition for the profession of speech pathologists and for the interests of our clients with communication and swallowing difficulties.

Mission

- To prescribe, guide and govern the clinical and ethical standards of members in their practice of speech pathology
- To facilitate and promote opportunities for members to pursue knowledge and develop professionally
- To disseminate professional positions to key stakeholder groups including: the government, consumers, referrers and the public
- To advocate for and respond to the needs of clients with communication and swallowing difficulties
- To promote timely access to services
- To represent the interests and views of members of the Association.

The role of the Association

Speech Pathology Australia acts as a resource for members and provides the following services:

Representation - Represents the profession to external bodies including government, employing authorities and the community in general.

Public relations - Develops and manages the Association's national public relations activities.

Publications - Provides publications on professional issues and up-to-date research.

Continuing education - Coordinates Continuing Professional Development events; arranges a national tour of workshops by overseas professionals and annual National Conference.

Member services - Maintains and develops a comprehensive range of member services including member register, professional information and advice and practice services.

Submissions - Researches, coordinates and drafts submissions to funding bodies, government departments and research authorities.



Benefits of membership

- Access to information via *Speak Out* including job opportunities around Australia and overseas, what is happening professionally in other states and territories and upcoming interest group meetings, workshops and conferences;
- Journal subscriptions to *Advances in Speech Language Pathology* and *ACQuiring Knowledge in speech, language and hearing*;
- Access to member price Continuing Professional Development events on a range of topics;
- Access to the National Conference at a member rate;
- Benefits such as access to the Association's Professional Indemnity Insurance;
- An opportunity to develop networks within the profession;
- An opportunity to attend Branch meetings and forums to put forward issues you would like addressed by your Branch;
- Entitlement to use the initials MSPAA after your name;
- Eligibility to participate in the Association's Professional Self Regulation program to earn Certified Practising Speech Pathologist status;
- Access to the Association's Mentoring Program;
- Easy access to professional networks and work contact details of other members through National Office;
- An opportunity to participate in Branch portfolio activities and influence the future directions of the profession.

Professional representation

Speech Pathology Australia is recognised as the national scientific and professional standards organisation for speech pathologists in Australia. The Association has established and monitors the educational and clinical standards required for Practising membership and holds functions of assessing those with overseas qualifications and accrediting university programs.

Membership is voluntary and the Association estimates that approximately seventy percent of practising speech pathologists in Australia are current members.

Association Structure

The Association is run by the National Council. The Council (Board of Directors) of the Association comprises representatives of each State and Territory. A Council Management Group consisting of the President and two Vice-Presidents exists with other Councillors holding a portfolio responsibility.

In each state and territory there is a Branch of Speech Pathology Australia, with a President, Office-bearers and Portfolio Leaders represented in each branch.

Council and Branch positions are all of a voluntary nature.

Management and Administration

The work of Council and Branches is supported by paid staff and project officers at the National Office, Branch Offices or remotely for specific projects.

The Chief Executive Officer is based at the National Office in Melbourne and is supported by a range of professional and administrative staff.

