



Frustration from speech disorders

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ONE in seven Australians are affected by speech disorders, but few are aware of the angst and frustration they bring.

Research has shown that children and adults with communication difficulties are more likely to suffer mental health issues and behavioural problems.

They can display poor self esteem and struggle to

manage social relationships and sustain employment.

So speech pathologists gathered at Blacktown Hospital last week in an effort to break through the silence during Speech Pathology Week.

The theme of the week was 'Language for Life', exploring the importance of communication through all stages of our existence.

"Communication disorders are any problems to do with speech, using or understanding language, voice fluency, hearing, reading and writing," speech pathologist Emma Clifton said.

"They can be hereditary, occur in childhood or happen as the result of a stroke, disease or injury."

While the range of

symptoms is broad, they impact on the daily lives of those who suffer from them.

"They can make simple daily activities like ordering lunch, paying a bill or paying a bus ticket, frustrating and difficult," Dr Clifton said."

Online information: www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au



Speech pathologist Eryka Arteaga works with patient Gwen Sanson.

Picture: DARREN EDWARDS