

What is an S-LP?

Speech-language pathologists (S-LPs) in Nova Scotia hold a Master's degree and are clinically certified with Speech-Language & Audiology Canada. S-LPs are the health professionals who evaluate, identify/diagnose, and provide treatment for speech, language, voice, fluency, and cognitive-communication disorders.

How do I Find an S-LP?

S-LPs work in the public health and education systems and in private practice. Private practitioners can be found through the Speech and Hearing Association of Nova Scotia (www.shans.ca/our-professionals/). Clients can self-refer or ask their doctor for a referral.

Patients with PD who are experiencing voice symptoms should speak with their doctor about a referral to an ENT specialist for a laryngeal evaluation.

Professional Fees

Private practice services are paid for by clients. Many private insurance plans provide coverage for S-LP services. Contact your provider to learn about your coverage. Shoreline's fee schedule is available online.



Shoreline's Team

Shoreline's team is made up of three clinicians with complementary skills to provide a range of services for adults and children in the Dartmouth and Halifax area. Our team offers:

- assessment and treatment for: speech and language, stuttering, voice, reading and writing
- bilingual services
- home visits
- short wait times (new clients can usually be seen immediately)
- continuing education for early childhood educators


Shoreline Speech Therapy

PARKINSON'S DISEASE



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Cognitive-Linguistic Changes

Many people with PD develop difficulties with cognitive-linguistic abilities. These symptoms may include: difficulty finding the right word, forming grammatically complex sentences, understanding complex sentences, and retaining verbal information.

Intervention is offered to help individuals develop strategies to compensate for these difficulties. Cognitive training to improve and maintain linguistic skills may also be of benefit to some persons.

Individuals with PD may develop mild cognitive impairment or Parkinson's disease dementia, both of which can affect higher level mental processes, interpreting visual information, verbal memory, and language.

Intervention options include strategies to improve or maintain functional skills and caregiver training based on an individual's cognitive-linguistic profile.

Speech & Voice Symptoms

Most people with PD will experience speech and voice symptoms which become more pronounced as the condition progresses. These symptoms may include: reduced loudness; monotone voice; fast rushes of speech or slowed speech; breathy, tremulous, or hoarse vocal quality; inadequate breath support; and unclear speech.

Treatment focuses on improving breath support, loudness, vocal quality, pitch range, rate, naturalness, speech clarity, and confidence. LSVT LOUD (Lee Silverman Voice Treatment) is an intensive treatment program offered at Shoreline to target these areas. Other non-intensive treatment approaches are also available.

Intervention may also involve 'augmentative communication' to supplement speech. Options include electronic text-to-speech applications or devices, alphabet boards, and communication books with messages frequently used by a person. Individual and caregiver training is an essential element in the success of augmentative communication approaches.



Neurogenic Stuttering

Persons with PD may develop 'neurogenic stuttering' or 'stuttering associated with acquired neurological disorders (SAAND)'. These individuals may or may not have stuttered as children. Characteristics of stuttering associated with PD include repetitions ("i-i-i-i-in"), prolongations ("iiiiiiin"), or blocks (".....in"). In attempting to cope with stuttering, persons may develop 'secondary behaviours' such as use of filler words ("um um um um"), blinking, muscle tension, or even pinching oneself.

Treatment focuses on eliminating secondary behaviours, addressing emotional reactions to stuttering, reducing muscle tension, and gaining greater control over one's speech. This may include learning strategies to increase speech fluency and reduce the likelihood of stuttering, and how to effectively regain control during a stuttering episode.

