

## Online Speech Therapy

Advances in modern technology mean that speech therapy live online, or tele-practice, can be an effective tool for the treatment of people with speech, language and communication difficulties and disorders. Therapy online refers to the application of telecommunications technology for delivery of professional services at a distance by linking clinician to the client, for assessment, intervention, and/or consultation. Icommunicate is aware that some individuals and some communication disorders are not suitable for speech, language and communication therapy using telecommunications as the first and foremost intervention option. However, many individuals can benefit from therapy being delivered in this way, and for many, it makes the situation easier and more comfortable because they are in a familiar environment.

### **Advantages conducting speech therapy sessions online with icomunicate**

There are a number of advantages to conducting therapy in this manner:

- At icomunicate, our initial assessment/consultation is free\* of any charge and with no obligations (assessment by a qualified speech language therapist/pathologist is generally more expensive than a speech therapy session, and would commonly cost around \$100 or more). This assessment will involve some basic evaluation and testing, and information gathering relating to the nature of the communication difficulty.

Speech Therapy online may actually be more effective for some clients. Children with poor listening and attention skills and/or auditory processing disorders may benefit from the interactive nature of tele-practice and the use of headphones.

There is a greater availability of therapy for individuals living in more rural areas, or areas where there is restricted access to speech-language therapy services.

There are financial benefits for both the therapist and the individual, as services “online” may be cheaper than “face to face” services, and because there are no costs in travel, and less administration.

There are time benefits, as services online do not require you to travel to a clinic, or the therapist to travel to your home. There may also be more flexibility around fitting in with your schedule.

There are also environmental benefits, with services being done online, there is no petrol consumption and possibly less paperwork being produced.

If you choose to have your therapy live with icomunicate we can provide access to videos, programs and resources (via email), all included in the price of treatment.

All online assessment and services will be arranged and conducted by qualified and Certified speech and language therapists/pathologists.

\* 1 free assessment per family or school, and this does not include the cost of a written report.

## **What you need to participate in speech therapy online sessions:**

- A computer and internet connection (our sessions should work on PC or Mac computers). Our software allows us to present you with information and activities on your computer screen as we speak.

A high speed internet connection is preferable (e.g. broadband, jetstream etc, not dial-up). If you live rurally and only have dial-up internet, we may be able to provide you with a more limited service which would include discussion, guidance and programs and resources to work on at home.

We recommend headphones over speakers because of the feedback and echo that speakers produce. We acknowledge that parents and /or carers may wish to listen to the therapy sessions, and this can be achieved by purchasing a microphone splitter or USB splitter plug from your local electrical retailer for around \$5 which will allow you to connect a second pair of headphones and listen to the session.

It may be helpful in some cases to have a Webcam so that the we can see you. This may be useful to observe things such as mouth or tongue movement during speech exercises.

## **How do you get access to speech therapy online?**

Getting access to our therapy services is easy:

- Contact us at [icommunicateonline@gmail.com](mailto:icommunicateonline@gmail.com) to arrange a no-obligation, free speech assessment on-line at a convenient time. Please tell us geographical location and the nature of your communication difficulty.

Following the initial assessment if you decide that you or your child would benefit from a programme of therapy we will contact you by email.

You decide whether you want to continue on-line therapy.

We arrange a suitable time to begin for sessions online.

Full guidance will be given to help you login and connect with us. We will also provide free homework programs and resources (via email) for you to practice at home.

## **When can you start accessing our service?**

We are now up and running, so please contact us to arrange your initial free consultation.

## **How much does it cost?**

Prices are displayed on our website ([www.icommunicatetherapy.com](http://www.icommunicatetherapy.com)). Our initial assessment/consultation is completely free with no obligations to continue any therapy sessions with us (we will make a charge if you require us to write a report following the assessment). Following assessment we will make some recommendations regarding a therapy program if we feel it is needed, and if we feel that we are able to offer the relevant therapy via our service online. We have some basic rates for therapy services depending on the length of each session (this includes speech therapy, consultation, or online training), and our charges will generally be lower than the charges you pay for face-to-face speech therapy.

## **Further Information and Guidelines about Telepractice**

See the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) [Position Statement regarding Telepractice](#). ASHA also provides some other interesting articles relating to online speech therapy:

<http://www.asha.org/docs/html/PS2005-00116.html>

[Telepractice for SLPs and Audiologists:](#)

<http://www.asha.org/practice/telepractice/>

[Knowledge and Skills Needed by Speech-Language Pathologists Providing Clinical Services via Telepractice:](#)

<Http://www.asha.org/docs/html/KS2005-00077.html>

## **Testimonials**

*"I have to be honest, I was a bit sceptical that Online Speech Therapy would work. But it really does! Our 6 year old son actually looked forward to it every week, and we started to notice a difference in his speech within a few weeks". Sarah Rice, Chicago*

*"It was difficult getting private speech therapy for our child because our town is miles from anywhere, thankfully we found online therapy". Danny Schouten, New Zealand*

*"Johan Langfield undertook an assessment of the communication needs of our 15 year old daughter, who has severe multiple disabilities and is non-verbal. She can be a very difficult child to work with due to the complexity of her disabilities. He showed a high level of skill, understanding, and knowledge, to complete a thorough assessment of her needs and capabilities, and was then able to successfully obtain funding for a computerised device that meets those requirements. He also provided training, both at school and at home, to ensure everyone will get optimal use from it. This includes further assistance and follow-up as the need arises. His work was at all times thorough, considerate, professional, and of the highest calibre. We would have absolutely no hesitation in recommending him to anyone requiring the specialist services of a Speech/Language Therapist". Pat and Steve Fox - New Zealand*

*"A big thanks to you Johan!! Julia has really grown in confidence since her speech has improved, she's a different girl". Tracey Girvin, Baton Rouge*

\* Please note, the terms speech therapist, speech pathologist, speech language therapist / pathologist all refer to same type of professional with the same qualifications and skills to practice. In some countries communication professionals are referred to as therapists, and in other countries they are referred to as pathologists.