



The Value of Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) in Acute Care



SLP Involvement in Acute Care Improves Healthcare Quality and Reduces Cost.



Better Patient Health Outcomes

Patients with stroke seen by SLPs in acute care are...

- Less likely to experience death following dysphagia treatment (27%), evaluation (58%), and screening (71%).^{1,2}
- Less likely to develop pneumonia (39%-44%) or dysphagia-related complications.¹⁻³
- More likely to achieve an oral diet (19%) and to functionally swallow at 6 months post discharge following swallowing treatment (41%).²

Patients with tracheostomy seen by an acute-care interdisciplinary team including SLPs...

- Are more likely to tolerate oral diets (89%).⁴
- Initiate oral diets an average of 12 days sooner.⁵
- Are more likely to undergo cuff deflation (7%).⁶
- Decannulate an average of 6-8 days sooner.^{5,7,8}
- Are less likely to experience tracheostomy tube blockages (68%), rapid response calls for respiratory distress (55%), or other adverse events (25%).^{6,9}

Patients with post-extubation dysphagia seen by SLPs in acute care...

- Successfully resume oral diets and eliminate G-tube dependency (87%).⁹



Lower Hospital Costs

Patients with stroke seen by SLPs in acute care have...

- A shorter length of stay (LoS) by an average of 3 days.³

Patients with partial laryngectomy seen by SLPs in acute care are...

- Safely discharged on an oral diet (52%) following a 2-day intensive dysphagia treatment, with an average cost savings of \$8,000.¹⁰

Patients with tracheostomy seen by an acute-care interdisciplinary team including SLPs have...

- A shorter LoS by an average of 8 days.⁸
- A shorter LoS in the ICU by an average of 15 days.⁸



Improved Care Team Self-Efficacy and Performance

Medical team members who receive training by an SLP in acute care...

- Are 3 times more likely to use writing, gestures, lipreading, and yes/no questions.¹⁵
- Are 6 times more likely to be confident using augmentative and alternative communication tools with patients with severe communication deficits.¹⁶
- Are more confident when communicating with people with aphasia (63%).¹⁷
- Can identify an average of 37 more relevant communication strategies.¹⁸
- Are more likely to be confident in working with people with tracheostomy (27%).⁶



Better Patient Communication

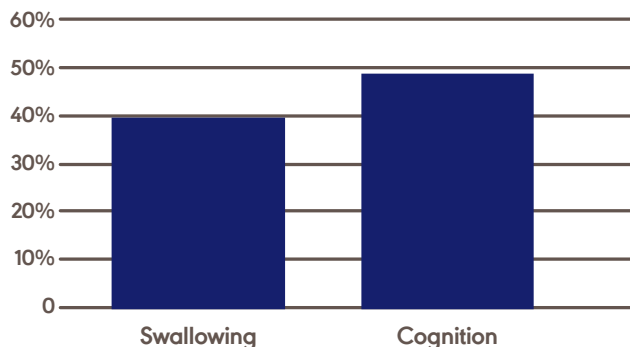
Patients who are intubated and are seen by SLPs in acute care...

- Successfully communicate pain symptoms 4 times more often.¹¹
- Are less likely to experience difficulty communicating with staff (60%).¹²

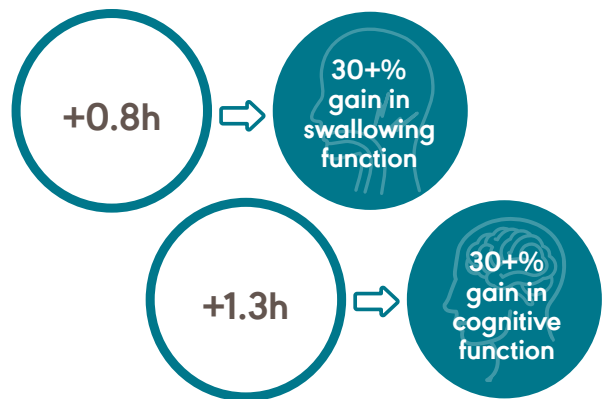
Patients with tracheostomy who receive SLP intervention in acute care...

- Gain functional vocalization (88%) and begin to phonate, on average, 11 days earlier.^{12,13}
- Verbally communicate an average of 9 days sooner.¹⁴
- Are 2-3 times* more likely to use speaking valves.⁷
- Participate in speaking valve trials an average of 16 days* sooner.⁷

% Requiring Less Supervision or Assistance at Discharge



40% of patients with swallowing disorders and 49% of patients with cognitive-communication disorders treated by SLPs in acute care required less supervision or assistance at discharge.¹⁸



Compared with those who made no progress, patients who made a 30+% functional gain in swallowing or cognition received, on average, only 1 additional hour of SLP treatment.¹⁸

* Patients seen by an acute care interdisciplinary team including SLPs

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