

Why be concerned?

The ability to communicate is our most human characteristic. Communication is necessary for a normal, happy life. When a person cannot communicate, isolation from friends, family and society often occurs. Problems in communication affect learning skills, relationships, independence and the well-being of a person.

When should I seek help?

If a child:

- does not develop normal speech,
- does not show that he can understand simple vocabulary at a young age,
- is not understood,
- uses and pronounces words incorrectly,
- consistently uses wrong grammar.

If a person:

- cannot seem to understand or hear others well enough,
- speaks with abnormal variations in pitch, tone, voice volume and voice range,
- hesitates, repeats or prolongs sounds, syllables words or phrases,
- acquires speech and language and/or feeding difficulties following stroke, head injury or other neurological conditions

Where do I find help?

The department operates on an open referral system. This allows the general public to have the best possible access to the service delivered. This means that referrals can be made directly by the client or carer to the speech-language pathologist.



For further information contact:

The Speech Language Department

Tel: 21230822

Email: speechlanguage@gov.mt

Or

Contact the Speech-Language Clinic at the Health Centre in your area



Speech and Language Pathology Services



What are Speech & Language disorders

They are the inability of an individual to understand and/or appropriately use the speech and language systems of society. Such disorders may range from simple sound repetitions or occasional misarticulations to the complete absence of the ability to use speech and language for communication.

Causes of Speech-Language disorders include:

- Hearing Impairment
- Cleft Palate
- Various syndromes
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Learning Disability
- Neuromuscular disorders such as Cerebral Palsy
- Traumatic brain injuries
- Developmental or acquired neurological conditions
- Inadequate speech-language models in the home environment
- Others of unknown origin

What is the role of the Speech Language Pathologist



The Role of the Speech-Language Pathologist includes the care of the communication-impaired individual, the family environment and education of the community.

Responsibilities of the clinician include:

- Diagnostic assessment
- Therapy
- Guidance and information for clients and carers
- Support
- Referral to other professionals
- Education for the general public
- Prevention programmes

Therapy can be carried out on an individual basis or in a group.

Areas of specialisation within Speech and Language

There are various types of Speech & Language problems which vary in severity. These include:

- delayed language,
- specific language impairment,
- dysfluency,
- articulation and/or phonological problems,
- voice disorders,
- aphasia,
- swallowing and feeding disorders.

1 out of every 20 persons may have some form of speech-language difficulty

