

# SPEECH CLINIC: TELEHEALTH SERVICES

An introduction  
to clinical  
services via the  
internet and  
technology

"..the use of telecommunication to  
provide health services  
and education from afar"



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speech clinic

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## About Us:

# SPEECH CLINIC

Speech Clinic is a paediatric-focused speech pathology practice located in Brisbane, Australia. We support children from 18 months through to 18 years of age and help children and teens to reach their communicative-potential when socialising and learning. We currently offer assessment and intervention services for children and teens presenting with difficulties relating to speech clarity, language development, literacy (reading, writing), fluency (stuttering), early interactions and social communication and we also support the communication development of children with diagnoses.

# LAUREN CRUMLISH

Lauren is a paediatric speech pathologist and research higher degree student with the University of Queensland (UQ). Lauren also works within academic and research roles with UQ, including the recent IMPACT project - a project examining telehealth-based cognitive-communication intervention for individuals with an acquired brain injury.



# An introduction to telehealth:

With the introduction of the NBN (national broadband network), Satellite Internet and the soon-to-be rolled out 5G network, medical professionals, clinicians and families are becoming increasingly aware of telepractice speech pathology. However, telepractice is not a new concept, with research occurring since the 1970s.

## What is telepractice?

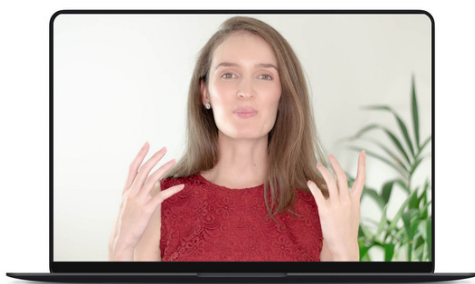
Telepractice refers to the use of telecommunications technology (e.g., computer networks, the Internet) to provide clinical services from afar. Using telepractice, a speech pathologist can undertake assessments and provide intervention to a child or their parents or caregivers. Speech Clinic can deliver speech pathology services to children living anywhere in Australia with Internet Access.

Telepractice can also be known as '[telehealth](#)', '[telerehabilitation](#)', '[online speech therapy](#)' or '[remote speech therapy](#)'. We have experience using telepractice to provide both individual sessions and group sessions.

# What does telehealth speech therapy look like?

In a telehealth appointment, your speech pathologist will send a connecting link to your nominated email address. By simply clicking on this link on either your computer, laptop or tablet, you and your child will be able to access your appointment. Telehealth appointments occur in real-time. This means you will then be able to see, hear and talk with your speech pathologist - just as you would in a face-to-face consultation.

During your speech pathology appointment, your therapist will provide intervention. If your child is school-aged, therapy appointments may involve sharing picture books, reading texts, drawing pictures and figures and writing. All of these traditional therapy activities are possible using telehealth. If you are seeking telehealth appointments for young children (e.g., for stuttering based therapy or "late talking" therapy) telehealth sessions will focus upon parent-based education and consultation (much like face-to-face consultations).



# Technology requirements



Telepractice appointments can occur via computer, laptop or tablet.

PCs or Macs will require:

Webcam

Speakers or headphones

Tablets or Smart Phones will require:

Forward facing camera

The built-in speakers may be sufficient or headphones can help.

Internet access is also a requirement for telehealth appointments. A certain level of connectivity or speed is important to ensure the quality of service. Telehealth requires a minimum of 600 kbps (0.6 mbps) upload speed and 600 kbps (0.6 mbps) download speed. In our experience, we recommend 1500 kbps (1.5 mbps) upload speeds and 1500 mbps (1.5 mbps) download speeds or above. To put this into perspective, the average 4G internet speed around Australia is ~40 mbps.

# How do I know if Telepractice is right for my child?

We will work closely with you to understand your child's needs and to determine if the required intervention approaches can be used, or if necessary adapted, during telehealth appointments. As we work together, we may need to consider your child's physical and sensory needs, cognitive function (including attention), the significance of their communication needs, the cultural and linguistic diversity of your family and the availability of a parent or caregiver to attend and help facilitate therapy activities where necessary.

Like all speech pathology intervention, time needs to be taken to determine if telehealth is the best option and fit for your child. Positively, telehealth services can provide significant benefit for families that live in remote or rural locations or families that have difficulties accessing therapy due to individual differences. However, telehealth may not be the best service delivery option if your family does not have the technology requirements (as listed above) or based upon your child's unique needs.

Speech Clinic prioritises providing the highest level of individualised care regardless of whether appointments occur within the home environment or via telehealth. Even after having successful sessions, we always take the time to evaluate and reflect on how we can continue to provide the highest level of care.



# What does the evidence say about telehealth practices?

Increasing amounts of research are currently being undertaken in the area of telepractice paediatric speech pathology. To date, research has focused upon the role of telehealth to assess and provide treatment for childhood [speech sound disorders](#), [language disorders](#) and [stuttering](#).

Excitingly, recent research has also shown positive outcomes for adolescents presenting [traumatic brain injuries](#) and for [education and consultation](#) for parents of children with autism. Some intervention approaches offered by Speech Clinic, such as Lidcombe Therapy and the Camperdown Program, have already undertaken specific clinical trials for the application of telehealth.

For other clinical areas that have not yet had specific telehealth research trials, telepractice services are based upon the best current face-to-face evidence and are offered with the same level of access and frequency of intervention. For such areas, we ensure that the highest levels of clinical planning, optimisation and evaluation occurs to ensure that the service is tailored for every individual child.



[Speech sound disorders](#)



[Language disorders](#)



[Stuttering](#)



[Traumatic brain injuries](#)



[Parental education + consultation](#)



# Telehealth Client Journey



1

Visit  
[speechclinic.com.au/contact/](https://speechclinic.com.au/contact/)  
and complete our booking  
form

2



We will make contact via  
phone or reply email to learn  
more about your concerns  
and to determine if  
telehealth may be suitable



3

We will work together to  
check and optimise  
technology

4



If we can support your child  
via telehealth and technology  
trials are successful,  
telehealth appointments can  
begin