



Teletherapy

Alight Pediatric Services Inc.

What is it?

According to Speech-Language & Audiology Canada (SAC), teletherapy or “telepractice” is the use of technology to deliver audiology and speech-language pathology services at a distance. Services may be ‘live’ which may include services through telephone or videoconferencing. The scope and nature of activities used via teletherapy is similar to in-person sessions. SAC endorses the use of teletherapy in speech-language pathology as a means of improving access to services provided by qualified professionals.

Who can receive teletherapy?

Toddlers, children, and adults

Technology Needed?

- Device with webcam (laptop preferred)
- Mic & speaker/headphones
- Strong internet (preferably wired)

Skills needed?

Basic mouse control or ability to touch screen if using iPad or tablet. For younger clients, control of the device may not be necessary at all.

What does it look like?

It's similar to Facetime or Skype! Each teletherapy session requires a PIPA compliant platform, or private screen space to conduct the session. Both the clinician and client will be visible on the platform via the camera. At times, the SLP will screen share or display documents or videos. Materials are presented similarly to face-to-face sessions, but in a digital format. Parents may be encouraged to support their children more during teletherapy depending on age.

Is it effective?

Research supports it:

- One study showed that toddlers were able to learn new words through live interaction and live video chats, but not from prerecorded videos (Roseberry, Hirsh-Pasek, and Golinkoff, 2014)
- Another study found children receiving speech and language therapy made significant and similar improvements regardless of whether sessions were online or in person (Wales, Skinner, and Hayman in 2017)
- 1331 cases were reviewed and no differences in scores were found between children receiving services through teletherapy and those receiving in-person sessions (Coufal, Pahlam, Jakubowitz, Howell and Reyes, 2017)

The SLP will communicate with the client and family throughout the therapy process to determine progress and whether teletherapy continues to be an appropriate option to address the specific needs of the client based on best practices, evidence, and sound professional judgement.

A note for parents:

- You will need to be the "hands" on the other side! It is best to be near your child during sessions.
- Please be on time for online sessions. Sessions are often booked back-to-back.
- The environment is important! A quiet, well-lit space is best for your SLP to see your child - seeing your child's face is important for therapy!
- Please be in touch! Technology issues can arise and we want to work with you in making sure your child gets their therapy.