

Inoka Tennakoon, MS, CCC-SLP
Director, Health Care Policy, Coding and Payment, ASHA

Brooke Hatfield, MS, CCC-SLP, CAE
Associate Director, Health Care Services in Speech-Language
Pathology, ASHA

Adena Dacy, MS, CCC-SLP
Associate Director, Health Care Services in Speech-Language
Pathology, ASHA

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH (SDOH)



Unmet needs related to SDOH are often magnified in the presence of speech, language, voice, hearing, and/or cognitive difficulties.^{1,2,3,4}

For clinical interventions to be optimally effective, audiologists and SLPs need to consider the impacts of SDOH in their service delivery.

In late 2023, ASHA launched a multi-phase, long-term marketing and communications campaign on the intersection of SDOH and communication disorders.

PHASE 1 targets ASHA members (e.g. audiologists, SLPs, assistants) who are direct service providers and includes:

- new SDOH resource hub on our website: www.asha.org/practice/social-determinants-of-health/
- visual brand identity with campaign slogan & tag line of “Get the Big Picture”
- digital assets (advertisements, social media graphics, infographics)
- experiential learning content (comparisons, interactive game, case studies)

PHASE 2 will include additional stakeholders (e.g., clinical supervisors, universities, researchers, payers, related professional and community-based organizations) to demonstrate the value audiologists and SLPs bring in supporting SDOH-related client factors.

CAMPAIGN GOALS:

- **Educate ASHA members about SDOH**, relevance to their clinical service delivery, and impacts of a communication disorder on SDOH
- **Equip clinicians to integrate SDOH considerations into person-centered practice** to ensure that quality services are accessible, efficient and effective (e.g., screenings, plans of care, referrals, collaborative partnerships, discharge plans)
- **Advocate for policies, systems and programs** to address health and social needs of people with communication disorders for improved access to care, health outcomes, and costs

References
1. Morris, M. A. (2022). Striving toward equity in health care for people with communication disabilities. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 65(9), 3623-3632. Retrieved from <https://pubs.asha.org/doi/10.1044/2022-jshr-22-00021>
2. Stangor, M. L., James, K. H., & Adams, M. A. (2018). Adults with communication disabilities experience poorer health and healthcare outcomes compared to people without communication disabilities. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 33(7), 747-755. Retrieved from <https://pubs.asha.org/doi/10.1044/2018-jgim-2018-0421>
3. Stangor, M. L., & Morris, M. A. (2019). Adults with Communication Disabilities Face Health Care Obstacles: Adults with communication disabilities struggle to access quality health care significantly more than typical peers. How can we get them needed health information and services? *ADHA Leader*, 24(12), 48-55. Retrieved from <http://www.adha.org/doi/10.1044/2019-leader-12-0001>
4. Wilson, A. L. (2020). *Intersectional Advocacy for Health Care Equity*. Leader Line. Retrieved from <https://pubs.asha.org/doi/10.1044/leader-12-0001>
5. Wang, R. K., Alper, R. H., & Belongia, E. (2018). The cost of not addressing the communication barriers faced by hospitalized patients. *Prevention of Communication Disorders (Position Statement)*. Available from www.asha.org/policy
6. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2018). *Prevention of communication disorders (Position Statement)*. Available from www.asha.org/policy
7. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2018). *Scope of practice in audiology (Scope of Practice)*. Available from www.asha.org/policy
8. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2018). *Scope of practice in speech-language pathology (Scope of Practice)*. Available from www.asha.org/policy

ASHA is launching **two new public health campaigns** that highlight the critical roles of **audiologists and speech-language pathologists (SLPs)** in addressing **social determinants of health and effective communication access to reduce health/health care disparities in people with communication disorders.**



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



Audiologists and SLPs are communication professionals who can provide knowledge, skills and training to help prevent communication barriers that may lead to adverse events^{6,7,8}.

In late 2023, ASHA launched a multi-phase initiative promoting early and effective communication access in care encounters.

GOALS:

1. to improve patient-provider communication, safety, and satisfaction;
2. to improve standards and compliance;
3. to improve shared-decision making and health/health care outcomes for people with speech, language, voice, hearing and/or cognitive difficulties.

PHASE 1 will target health care providers, front-line staff, payers, related professional organizations, and include:

- visual brand identity with campaign slogan & tag line
- flyer with rationale and tips for assuring communication access first before moving forward with care encounters
- awareness campaign with digital assets

How can ASHA help you feel more prepared to meet the communication needs of people with communication differences or disorders?

PHASE 2 will focus on development of:

- effective communication access toolkit o education about communication disorders, potential impacts on care interactions, and roles of audiologists/SLPs o trainings in communication strategies and accommodations that promote effective communication ACCESS poster
- consumer self-advocacy tools
- videos

PHASE 3 AND BEYOND will consider expanding target audiences and toolkit assets for:

- Students in health professions programs
- School settings
- First responders
- Businesses
- Community and recreation centers, libraries