

Te Kāhui Kaiwhakatikatika Reo Kōrero o Aotearoa
New Zealand Speech-language Therapists Association

Annual Report 2024



**New Zealand
Speech-language
Therapists' Association**
*Te Kāhui Kaiwhakatikatika
Reo Kōrero o Aotearoa*

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Our Vision:

A thriving profession working in partnership to enhance lives.

Our Values:

- **Kotahitanga** - Work in partnership with integrity, respect and humility
- **Rangatiratanga** - Share our expertise in the field of communication and swallowing
- **Whanaungatanga** - Be person and whānau centred with a focus on connection and relationships
- **Aroha** - Empower others and provide an equitable and excellent service to all.

The Mission of the NZSTA is:

- To be responsive to te Tiriti o Waitangi and act as a resource for the profession of speech-language therapy in cultural safety.
- To empower speech-language therapists to provide excellent and equitable services to our communities.
- To represent the interests and views of speech-language therapists.
- To promote quality evidence-based practice and research.
- To guide and govern the educational, clinical and ethical standards of speech-language therapy practice.

President's Report



Tēnā koutou,

Whāia te mātauranga hei oranga mō koutou - Seek after learning for the sake of your wellbeing

Reflecting on the past year, we acknowledge our members' dedication, resilience, and commitment to advancing speech-language therapy across Aotearoa. Our challenges as a profession are ever-evolving, yet our collective strength, collaboration, and shared vision continue to drive us forward. 2024 was another year of growth, reflection and learning. We have always believed that when you lead with your values, you will always lead with tikanga and mana. Whilst our presence has been quieter this second half of the year, with Emma being involved with Massey's accreditation of their online programme and Katrina welcoming a new pēpī into the whānau, we have continued to be involved in projects with the support of our executive director, Board members, and volunteers.

Ma pango ma whero, ka oti te mahi.

Strengthening Governance for the Future

As part of NZSTA's commitment to continuous improvement, a comprehensive governance and structural review was undertaken to ensure our leadership and operational framework remain effective and responsive. This review evaluated our decision-making processes, member engagement, and organisational structure.

The review identified opportunities to streamline governance processes, enhance communication channels, and strengthen member representation. Moving forward, NZSTA will implement clearer governance structures, refine operational efficiencies, and create more opportunities for member input. As we move into 2025, NZSTA will establish new committees to better support key areas of focus and increase staffing capacity with a **0.5 FTE role** to strengthen operational support. These changes will ensure that our association remains agile, transparent, and well-equipped to support the profession into the future.

Highlights this year include:

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- This year, we welcomed new board members to the Māori and cultural, professional development, and member networks portfolios.
- Positive feedback from those who have completed Te Rito modules —this is still free for members on the NZSTA website.
- NZSTA supported Māori SLTs for the hui-ā-tau at the start of 2024 in Auckland.
- Advocated for Te Tiriti commitments through submissions on key legislation, including the Treaty Principles Bill and Education and Training Act; highlighted SLT's role in cancer research; and contributed to the Health Select Committee Inquiry on aged care and neurological disorders, with a focus on improving access to speech, language, and swallowing therapy.
- Successful Massey accreditation of the distance programme
- The NZSTA symposium in Otaki offered an intimate learning experience for those who attended.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our members, volunteers, and partners. We extend our heartfelt thanks to each of you for your contributions, leadership, and unwavering commitment to our profession.

We're looking forward to the year ahead and reviewing the strategic plan for 2026 and beyond.



Mauri ora,

Katrina McGarr
Co-president



Emma Quigan
Co-president

Executive Director's Report

This past year has been one of reflection, growth, and action for NZSTA. As we navigate an evolving professional landscape, our focus remains on strengthening our governance, enhancing member engagement, and ensuring that our structures and systems continue to serve the needs of speech-language therapists across Aotearoa.

Our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, evidence-based practice, and professional excellence has shaped key initiatives, including a governance and structural review, developing new frameworks, and expanding member support. As we move into 2025, we are implementing changes that will enhance our ability to advocate for, lead, and support the profession, including establishing new committees and increasing staffing capacity.

This annual report highlights our achievements, the challenges we have navigated, and the steps we are taking to ensure NZSTA remains a strong and responsive professional body. We thank our members, partners, and stakeholders for their contributions and look forward to continuing this journey together.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Smolloy".

Siobhan Molloy
Executive Director NZSTA

From our kaumātua

Tēnā tātou katoa.

Timatatanga/Preamble

The 2020 – 2025 NZSTA Strategic Plan is focused on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, culturally safe practice, and engaging and valuing our members. Rather than focusing on the many wonderful things I've done this year, I thought as kaumātua of NZSTA, I would 'dream' about what I think we can do to make it happen. We are a small association in a small country, but let's have some big, bold dreaming, planning, and actions to benefit all.

Supporting Māori SLTs

In recent years, Māori SLTs have attended wānanga (learning opportunities) at a small marae in Rotorua. There were small numbers attending, but each year, the numbers grew until in 2023, it was obvious that the next wānanga would need to be on a big marae in a big city. For me, the 2024 wānanga was a pivotal moment as:

- the group was now big and courageous enough to 'step out of the shadows.'
- attendees showed pride in being Māori and being an SLT.
- There was a huge wealth of collective knowledge, skills, and energy among all the attendees present, not only in the personal and Māori world but also within the SLT and NZSTA world.

The Māori SLT kaupapa has only just begun. Māori SLTs will need to stay visible and contribute to the association IF they are valued and supported. The hope is that this wānanga continues as long as there are kaupapa Māori within NZSTA activities.

Supporting all NZSTA members

In recent years, I've seen the diversity of ethnicities growing and blooming within NZSTA. The question is, what supports are available to the many who have a different ethnicity to



Māori and even to Pākehā? Māori culture, like many around the world, celebrates cultural differences and helps people find ways to live and work well together. Wānanga on a marae is an excellent example of what should or could be available to all.

The cultural professional development process gives NZSTA members opportunities for cultural learning and experiences that can positively contribute to their SLT work, as well as a culturally savvy New Zealander.

Adding an annual marae stay or wānanga for all SLTs is an opportunity to experience and learn in a cultural and authentic setting that most members do not usually have in their lives. That is why much of the Māori content that SLTs learn does not match with what they do in their region. I'm keen to support, and I'm sure that most SLTs would be keen to support as well.

Whakakapi/Closing

You can contract this cultural 'dream' out to the many providers with 'experts'. BUT you will miss out on tapping into the NZSTA and SLT experts you already have. We could:

- have cultural CPD and marae training **in all NZSTA regions** that fit their calendar
- tap into the region & local connections to Māori people and resources, e.g. marae, hapu and iwi, kaumātua, hauora, wānanga, etc.
- give Māori SLTs an opportunity to learn, lead & share kaupapa Māori in their wānanga
- give non-Māori SLTs an opportunity to learn, lead & share kaupapa Māori in their wānanga.

I've met many of you SLTs who are passionate and educated about culture in the workplace and the community and have asked me if we could have wānanga on marae and run by ourselves. My answer is yes. We can do some real magic if we give NZSTA members a chance.



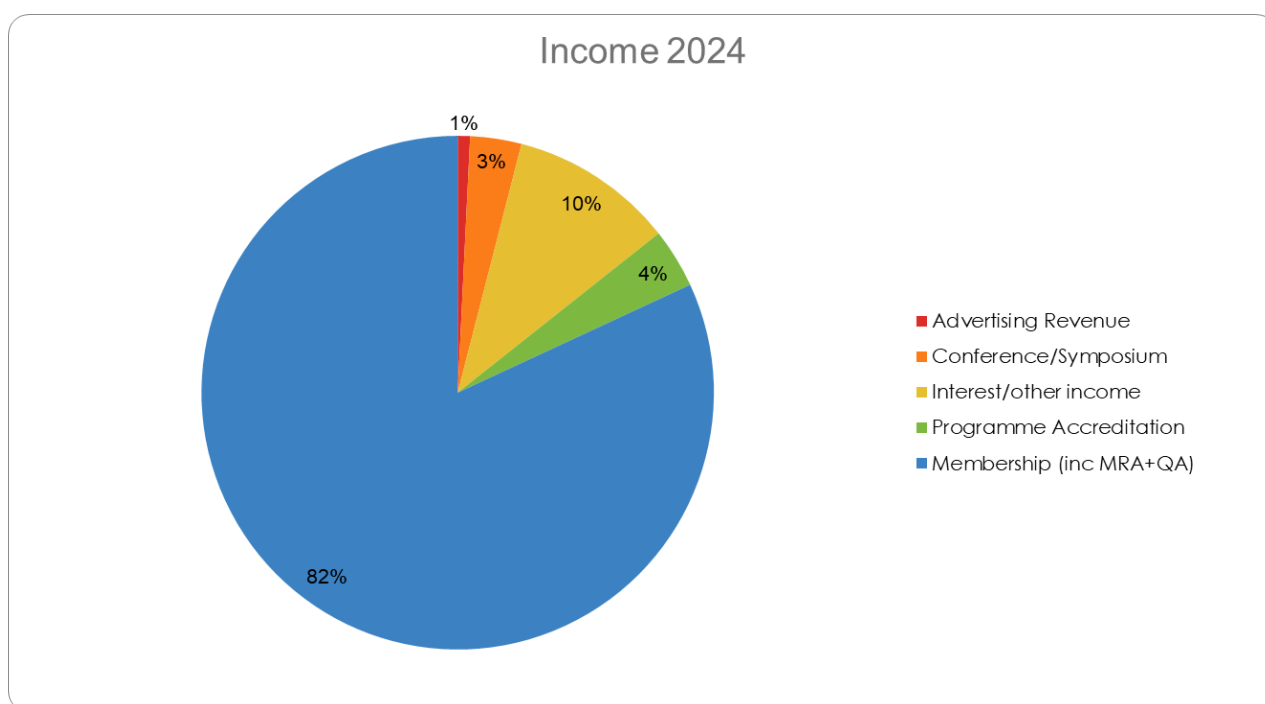
Nākū noa
Rukingi Haupapa, Kaumātua NZSTA

*Photo: Kaumātua Rukingi Haupapa -
Photo credit: Renee Taylor*

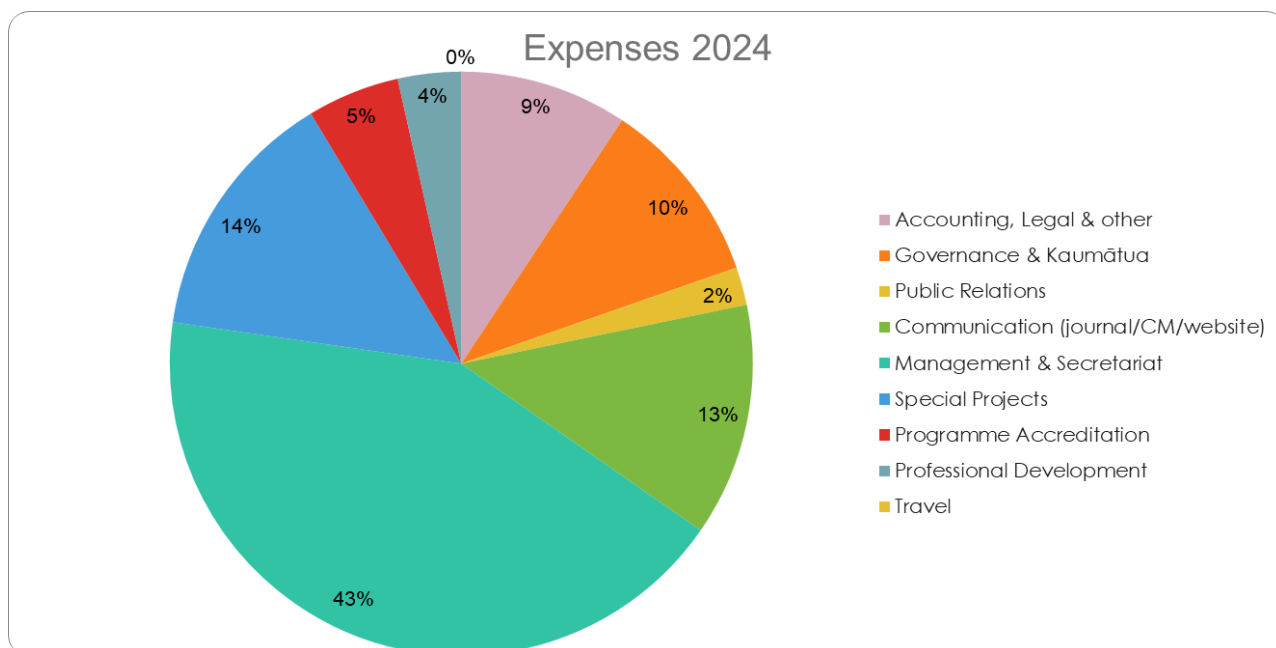
Financial snapshot

Summarised financial statements					
Statement of Profit and Loss			Balance Sheet		
	2024	2023		2024	2023
Total income	685,248	606,076	Total assets	1,610,554	1,475,515
Total expenses	640,000	577,863	Total liabilities	739,820	650,029
Net surplus (deficit)	45,248	28,212	Equity	870,734	825,486

NZSTA Income 2024- Breakdown



NZSTA Expenses 2024 - Breakdown



It is a pleasure to report that the New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association remains in a strong financial position. In 2024, we achieved a net surplus of \$45,248, up from \$28,212 in 2023. Total income grew by 13%, driven primarily by membership growth and sound financial management.

We successfully hosted a symposium delivering professional value and a modest surplus. NZSTA continues to hold no debt, and we closed the year with a total equity of \$870,734. The Association also received a clean audit, with no concerns raised.

These results reflect our commitment to sustainability and careful stewardship of member funds. They also enable NZSTA to increase its staffing in 2025 to continue delivering the outcomes.

Thank you to all members for your continued support. Your contributions directly enable the advocacy, professional development, and sector leadership that NZSTA delivers.

Meet the Executive Board and Representatives



*Image: From Left to right:
Kaumatua Rukingi Haupapa,
Hana Tuwhare (outgoing),
Polly Newton (outgoing), Mel
Street (outgoing), Siobhan
Molloy and Amy Scott.*

*Bottom: Suhui Lim, Emma
Quigan and Katrina McGarr.*



*New board members left
to right: Libby Coates, Alice
Redamare, Jo Mitchell*

NZSTA Executive Board 2024

Co-presidents
Professional Standards:
Professional Development:
Member Networks:
Māori and Cultural Development:
Communications:

Katrina McGarr & Emma Quigan
Suhui Lim
Mel Street/Libby Coates
Polly Newton/Jo Mitchell
Hana Tuwhare/Alice Redamare
Amy Scott

Executive Director

Siobhan Molloy

Social Media Assistant

Caitlin Go

Kaumātua

Rukingi Haupapa

Qualification Approval Officer

Anna Miles

Patron

Judge Andrew Becroft

Communication Matters Editor

Emma Wollum

Programme Accreditation Committee:

A/Prof Felicity Bright (chair), MaryBeth Williams (private practice sector rep), Aoife O'Reilly (health sector rep), Fiona Cook (education sector rep), A/Prof Clare McCann (University of Auckland rep), Gina Tillard (University of Canterbury rep), Su Hui Lim (NZSTA professional standards portfolio holder), Marie Jardine (Māori academic rep), A/Prof Sally Clendon (Massey University rep).

Area Representatives

Northland/Tai Tokerau	Ashley Dean
Auckland	Jocelyn Roxburgh & Noel Byrn/Claire Crooks
Waikato/Bay of Plenty	Alicia Ang/Kate Zame
Central	Alicia Scott
Wellington/Marlborough	Catherine Campbell & Hannah Timms
Canterbury/Westland	Nic Gibbons and Charmain Moyle
Otago/Southland	Ross Harland/Emma Burnip

Student Representatives

Massey University (Albany)	Riya Bhatia & Tamanna Bhatia
The University of Auckland	Ashleigh Stove, Alycia McGray & Ben Twinn
University of Canterbury	Kate Tyson, Madeline(Maddie) Potter & Jiajie Chen

Expert Advisers

Ann Smaill – Alternative and Augmentative Communication
 Anna Miles – Adult Dysphagia / COVID-19
 Annabel Grant – Dementia
 Bryony Forde - Cleft Palate / Velopharyngeal Insufficiency (VPI)
 Carlene Perris – Voice
 Emily Jones – Paediatric Feeding and Swallowing
 Fiona Hewerdine – Adult Neurodegenerative Conditions and Palliative Care
 Jayne Newbury – Child Language
 Liz Fairgray – Hearing Impairment and Cochlear Implant
 Maegan VanSolkema – Traumatic Brain Injury
 Mascha Hoexum-Morenborg - Clinical Ethics and Bioethics
 Patty Govender and Robyn Gibson – Aphasia
 Rebecca Lantz – Head and Neck Cancer
 Sally Kedge – Vulnerable Children and Youth
 Sarah Spence
 Shannon Hennig – Autism and Neurodiversity
 Tika Ormond - Fluency

Secretariat

ONZL Limited

Private Sector Representative

Elisa Mynen

Aspiration 1

The NZSTA and members are responsive to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The profession of speech-language therapy has resources and kaupapa to ensure culturally safe practice.



Image: Kaumātua Rukingi Haupapa, Hana Tuwhare (outgoing Māori and cultural portfolio board member), and Katrina McGarr (NZSTA co-president) at 2024 Hui-ā-tau for Māori SLTs at Waipapa Marae, Tāmaki Makaurau.

Ensure Māori speech-language therapists are valued and supported to practise as Māori.















Increase the cultural diversity of the profession.

Ensure we have a culturally responsive and culturally safe workforce through the values of kotahitanga, rangatiratanga, whanaungatanga, and aroha.

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Achievements - so many highlights this year

- Te Rito** - a complimentary 42-module bicultural competency e-learning, was launched in May. Te Rito is designed to help our members develop their bicultural competencies and better understand Māori perspectives through deep reflection and action. It aims to help create an equitable Aotearoa that honours Te Tiriti in practice. These modules give learners the tools to improve their relationships with Māori colleagues, stakeholders, clients, and communities and change their practice to support social change and equitable outcomes.
- NZSTA Hui-ā-tau:** 16–18 July, Waipapa Marae, Auckland. 45 Māori SLTs and students participated from all over the motu - up 11 from 2023. The focus shifted from whakawhanaungatanga to action and succession planning, and attendees were keen to explore their interests and lead initiatives.
- The Māori SLT Rōpū**, the special interest group of and for Māori SLTs and SLT students, brings together past, present and future SLTs who whakapapa Māori. The rōpū meet monthly, with online hui facilitated by Alice Redamare, Mary Browne and Jemma Bridge, to support and guide each other in navigating mahi, research, and study as Māori. The rōpū also has a private Facebook group for members to keep in touch, discuss, and seek guidance outside the virtual hui. If you are a Māori clinician, researcher, or student, and you are not already connected with the rōpū, we invite you to join by contacting Alice at culturaldevelopment@speechtherapy.org.nz.
- Tiriti o Waitangi Responsiveness Policy** - Following the 2023 hui with tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti with Heather Came and Tracy Karanui-Golf of Heather Came & Associates, the first draft of the Tiriti o Waitangi Responsiveness Policy was circulated and feedback sought. A working group was established to review the feedback and present the NZSTA Board with the next draft. This policy is in the final stages of review and will be socialised with members in early 2025.
- Three bicultural awards were presented at the symposium in September:
 - Tohu Manaaki:**

	C1M01 - Culture - Ahurea 07/05/2024
	C1M02 - Are We One People - He Iwi Tahi Tātou 07/05/2024
	C2M01 - In The Beginning - Whakapapa 07/05/2024
	C2M02 - Spirituality - Wairuatanga 07/05/2024
	C2M03 - Respect - Mana 07/05/2024
	C2M04 - Responsibilities of Guardians - Kaitiakitanga 07/05/2024
	C3M01 - Perspectives on the Past - Ngā Tirohanga ki Mua 07/05/2024
	C3M02 - Te Tiriti & the Treaty - Te Tiriti me te 'Treaty' 07/05/2024
	C3M03 - Debating te Tiriti - Tohea te Tiriti 07/05/2024
	C3M04 - New Zealand Stories - Ngā Kōrero o Aotearoa 07/05/2024
	C4M01 - Marae Visit - Noho Marae 07/05/2024
	C4M02 - Events and Ceremonies - He Kapiti Hono, He Tātai Hono 07/05/2024
	C4M03 - Communication - Whakawhitinga Kōrero 07/05/2024
	C4M04 - Working Together - Mahi Ngātahi 07/05/2024

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- Manaaki Award honours nurturing, respect, and recognising others' status.
- Awarded to Professor Suzanne Purdy for her generosity and commitment to SLT.
- A leader at The University of Auckland, supporting generations of SLT students.
- Advocates for Māori students, addressing inequities in university processes.
- Dedicated mentor, actively involved in open days and community outreach.
- **Tohu Rangahau:**
 - Honours SLT research embracing mātauranga and kaupapa Māori.
 - Awarded to Nicky-Marie Kohere-Smiller, Marie Malone, and Te Aitana a Māhaki researchers.
 - Recognises iwi perspectives on SLT, needed changes, and tamariki-mokopuna wellbeing.
 - Celebrates Te Koekoe o te Tui (May 2024), a framework for indigenising SLT.
 - Developed with whānau and kaiako for tamariki with complex communication needs.
 - Created a kete-rauemi with culturally grounded tools for mild-to-moderate needs.
 - Māori-led research enriching SLT and inspiring future initiatives.
- **Tohu Kaupapa Māori:**
 - Awarded to Siobhan Molloy for her commitment to kaupapa Māori.
 - A key ally in NZSTA's journey to becoming a Te Tiriti-aligned, bicultural association.
 - Leadership contributed to Māori-identifying SLTs increasing from 30 (2020) to 70 (2024).
 - Championed kaumātua kaupapa, Māori noho, Te Tiriti initiatives, and anti-racism workshops.
 - Fostered a board environment where Māori feel valued through aroha and māhaki.
- **Te Tiriti o Waitangi workshops:** The NZ Audiological Society invited NZSTA to share an invitation with its members to register for the workshops. Members from both organisations showed strong interest, appreciating the workshop content and the chance to collaborate with colleagues in a related field.



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- **Communication Matters** published several articles that added to the kaupapa to showcase and encourage bicultural and culturally safe practices:
 - Moemoeā: Aspirations for supporting Māori with dysphagia and their whānau, *Dr Marie Jardine (Ngāpuhi), Te Kupenga Hauora Māori, Waipapa Taumata Rau (University of Auckland)*
 - Ko tōku reo tōku māpihi maurea – Te Reo Māori vocabulary for high-tech AAC, *Sarah Doran and Mary Browne, TalkLink*
 - Taonga: Where speech-language therapy meets art, culture, and climate change, *Tracy Kendall*
 - Kōrero Mai: How a weekly kōrero is increasing the cultural competence of the entire TalkLink organisation, *Rosanna Tilyard, SLT, Talklink*
 - Celebrating diversity for Speech-language Therapy Awareness Week 2024, *Amy Scott, NZSTA*
 - Leo Moana: A fresh look at speech-language therapy in Aotearoa, *Marie Ualesi, on behalf of Leo Moana*

In the pipeline:

- **Finalising the Te Tiriti Policy** and developing a way forward to ensure all NZSTA policies are Te Tiriti aligned.

In Kaumātua Rukingi Haupapa's words: *Kia kaha, kia maia, kia tere = be strong, be brave, and hurry up!!!*
- **Next Wānanga:** Thursday, July 10, to Saturday, July 12, 2025, at Omaka Marae, Blenheim, hosted by Carleen Heemi.

Aspiration 2

The NZSTA membership will be engaged, diverse and valued.

To grow a workforce that reflects the Aotearoa context.

To have all practising speech-language therapists as members.

To provide benefits that are sustainable and of value to the NZSTA members.

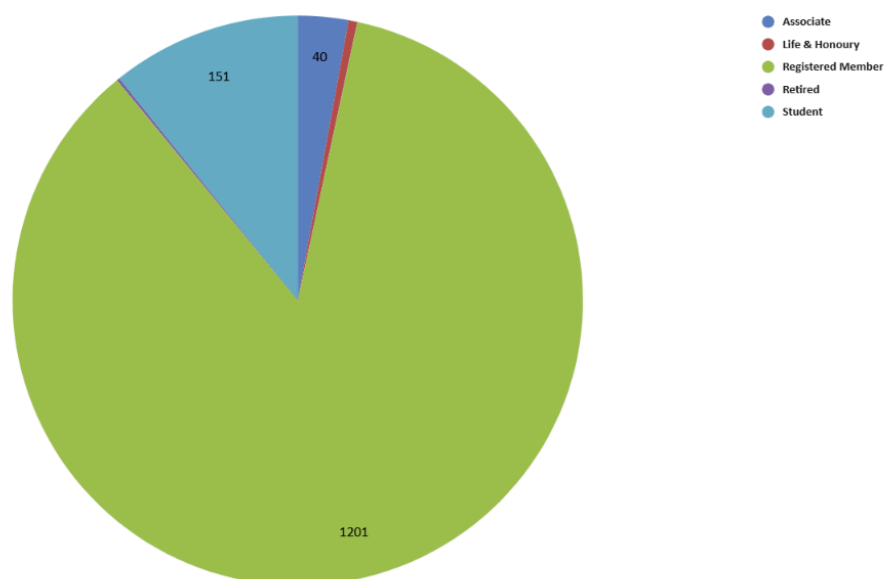
Achievements

- **Membership: Numbers, gender, ethnicity and languages**

NZSTA Membership :	2022	2023	2024
Registered Members:	1055	1104	1201
Student Members:	101	128	151
Associate/Life/Honorary/Retired members:	19	51	49
TOTAL MEMBERS:	1175	1283	1401

Approval of New Members to the NZSTA:	2022	2023	2024
Number of Mutual Recognition agreement successful applications:	14	20	20
Qualification Approval successful applications:	15	25	30
New Graduate to Full Member applications:	47	66	76

NZSTA Membership 2024



Membership: NZSTA continues to grow its membership to 1401, with 1201 registered members. Accounting for overseas-based members, the NZSTA registered membership practising in New Zealand now reflects 95% of the number of people identified as speech-language therapists on the NZ Census 2023. This now equates to 22 speech-language therapists per 100,000 head of population (HoP), the lowest per HoP among NZSTA's MRA partners.

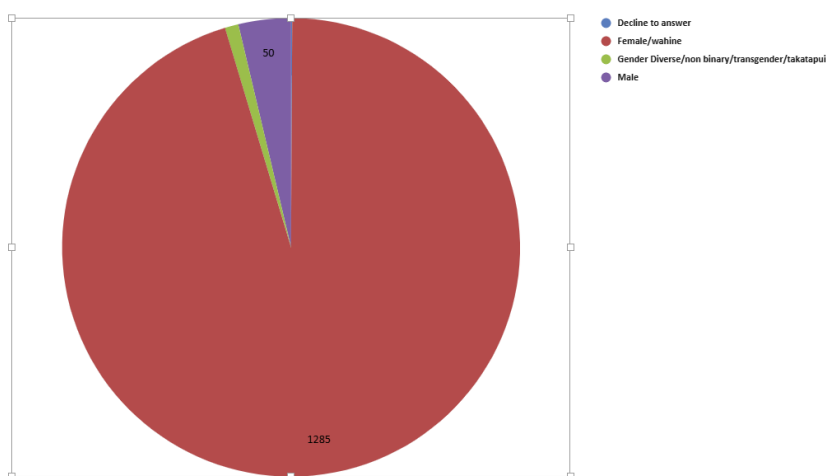
Gender: The gender ratios remain steady at 91% female/wahine (1285), 3% male/tane (50), and the remainder are a mix of gender diverse /transgender/ nonbinary and takatapui (or declines to answer).

Ethnicity: While most members identify as European (NZ, British, Irish, Australian, other), 44 identify as Māori, and there is a spread of other ethnicities from across the globe.

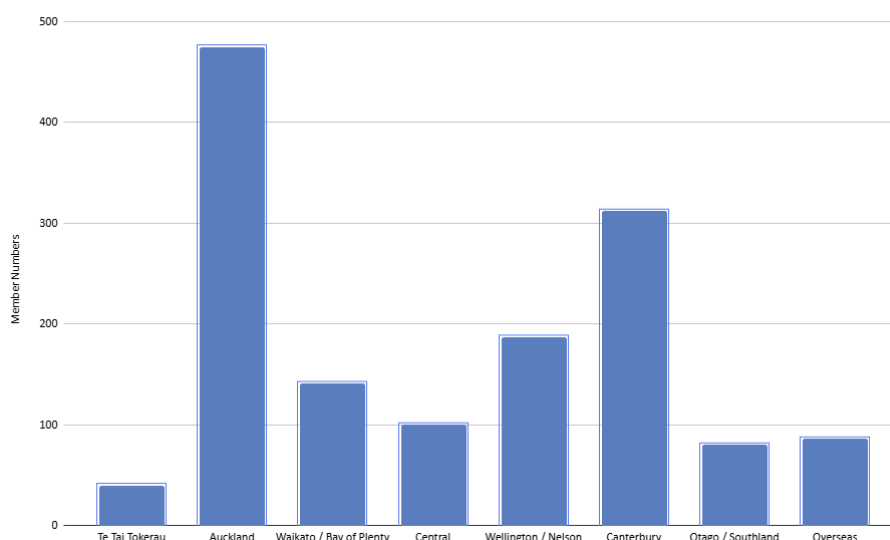
Languages: We have members fluent in NZSL, Arabic, Afrikaans, Bengali, Bulgarian, Cantonese (19), Croatian, Danish, Dutch, Filipino/Tagalog, Finnish, French (33), German (19), Hindi (26), Irish, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Malayalam (15), Mandarin (29), Marathi, Te Reo Māori (7), Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Samoan, Spanish (16), Swahili, Swedish, Tamil (17), Telugu, Thai, Turkish, Urdu, Welsh and Xhosa.

Member areas: Seven-member areas meet quarterly, usually via a Zoom meeting. Auckland remains the largest area, with Te Tai Tokerau being the smallest, with 34 members.

Gender Breakdown 2024



NZSTA Areas 2024



● NZSTA Awards:

Kāore te kūmara e kōrero mō tōna ake reka
The kūmara doesn't speak of its own sweetness

Ngā mihi to all our 2024 award winners.

Tohu Awards

- **See Aspiration 1** for bicultural award winners.
- Honours service to kaupapa Māori, SLT research in mātauranga Māori, and manaakitanga in practice.

Emerging Practitioner Award for Research - Professor Sir Donald Beaven Memorial Award supported by Stella Ward

- Honours Don Beaven, who was a champion of the profession and supported postgraduate study.
- Congratulations to Juhly Paily on completing her master's in speech and language sciences.
- Her research explored public awareness of SLT and communication impairments in Aotearoa.
- Presented findings at an NZSTA professional development event and the IALP congress.
- Her thesis is now published in the International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology.



Marion Saunders Award

- Awarded at the 2024 NZSTA symposium to Sally Kedge & Tracy Karanui-Golf for *Whakakotahitanga: The FASD Diagnostic Guidelines for Aotearoa (2024)*.
- Honours Marion Saunders, NZSTA's first president and a pioneer in speech therapy.
- Recognises innovation in clinical practice and kaupapa relevant to Aotearoa.
- *Whakakotahitanga* is a groundbreaking, collaborative approach to diagnostic guidelines.
- The presentation showcased its broad applicability and impact on the profession's evolution.

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NZSTA Student Achievement Awards

This award recognises the work of one outstanding speech-language therapy student's final year of study from each NZSTA-accredited university programme.

Congratulations to:

Auckland University: Charis Goode

Massey University: Deborah Tey

University of Canterbury: Abbie Low & Marlee Davidovska

Community - Communication Access Awards

Communication access is about creating communication ramps to ensure people can participate fully in their whānau, communities, workplaces, and schools and be involved in decisions affecting all aspects of their lives. This award is open to anyone who demonstrates communication access principles. This year's awards went to

- o **Sarah Mandeno**—*excels in supporting young people with neuro disabilities and trauma, adapting communication to ensure understanding. She involves communication assistants when needed and fosters a supportive environment for clients and whānau. Her careful planning and clarity in legal interactions set a commendable example for professionals.*
- o **Kris Tynan & Tim Webster**—*from Exercise as Medicine NZ is a charitable trust dedicated to communication access for people with challenging health conditions in Christchurch. They collaborate with MS and Parkinson's Canterbury, Te Whatu Ora, Parkinson's NZ, and health professionals to integrate communication goals into their programmes, guided by speech-language therapists. Beyond exercise, they foster social connection, organise supported outings, and strengthen whānau relationships. Their website offers free, well-received resources to enhance quality of life.*

Strengthening Recognition for Excellence

In 2024, three important awards were introduced or expanded to honour excellence in clinical practice, supervision, and community support. While no nominations were received, these awards highlight NZSTA's commitment to recognising outstanding contributions.

- o **Clinical Field Supervisor's Award**—This award recognises therapists who provide exceptional student supervision. The nomination process was expanded to include student submissions, offering a valuable opportunity to refine engagement for 2025.
- o **Emerging Practitioner—Clinical Excellence Award** celebrates early-career therapists who demonstrate leadership, innovation, and excellence. While new, it sets the stage for recognising future contributions.

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- **Community—Mealtimes Matter Award**—This award recognises individuals and organisations that support people with feeding and swallowing difficulties. We know many champions in this space and look forward to celebrating them.

NZSTA remains committed to encouraging nominations in 2025 to ensure these vital contributions are acknowledged.

- **NZSTA Funding Grants**

The NZSTA offers funding grants to members seeking to develop or complete clinical or professional knowledge, study or research that will benefit the NZSTA or the speech-language therapy profession.

- **Annette Rotherham** - *Presenting at the International Aphasia Rehabilitation Conference (IARC) and participating in Better Conversations, a communication partner training course.*
 - **Emily Jones** - *PhD support with a writing retreat and formatting of the thesis.*
 - **Heidi Meyer** - *Master's research funding in child development.*
 - **Juhy Paily** - *for equipment and software to support research in early childhood education*
 - **Liv Thompson** - *Masters research support in head and neck cancer.*
 - **Tracy Kendall** - *Attendance at World Down Syndrome Congress.*
- **Leo Moana:** NZSTA welcomed Leo Moana, a new special interest group of eight experienced Pasefika SLTs with connections to Samoa, Tonga, Australia, and Aotearoa. They work across health, education, and justice in both public and private sectors. Leo Moana represents their professional voice and the voices of the communities they serve, supporting communication and swallowing needs. Moana reflects the deep connections across Pacific nations, uniting their diverse heritage and ongoing ties.



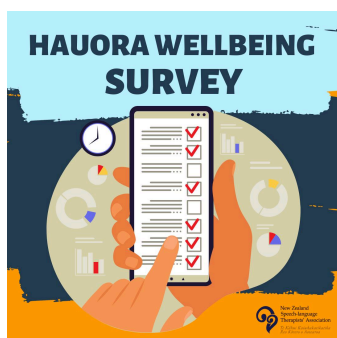
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Image: Leo Moana members from L-R Bianca Vowell, Ina Fautua, Tyra Langton-Fidow, Kylie Scott, Chermei Haufano, Marie Ualesi

- **Special General Meeting:** The Special General Meeting on 17 June showcased NZSTA's commitment to being a member-led organisation, with a thoughtful discussion on whether the Association should call on the government to strengthen its support for a ceasefire in Gaza, humanitarian aid and a long-term peace solution. The motion was passed, reflecting the majority view of those who participated. While this decision led to some differing perspectives and one resignation, it also underscored the engagement and passion of our members. The Board remains committed to transparency and reflection, ensuring our processes uphold our values and best serve our profession moving forward.
- **Strategic Planning Survey:** With 144 responses, the survey reflected a substantial cross-section of our membership, providing valuable insights to guide NZSTA's future direction. Members have highlighted advocacy, online CPD, public awareness, and regulatory functions as key priorities, reinforcing our focus on these areas.

Our strengths lie in publications, equity, Te Tiriti commitments, and e-communications, where members feel well-supported and informed. The feedback gathered has played a vital role in shaping NZSTA's strategic plan for 2026 - 2030.

- **Hauora Wellbeing Survey:**



The member survey (54 participants, <5% of members) highlights key wellbeing trends among SLTs in Aotearoa.

Overall wellbeing is mostly positive, with challenges in work-life balance and moderate social connections. Recommendations include networking opportunities, workload support, wellbeing resources, and advocacy to enhance belonging, mental health, and professional sustainability.

- **SLT Leaders' Summit:** Twenty-three leaders from most sectors (health, education, justice, mental health, private practice and tertiary education providers) participated in the annual hui on the 10th of June. The focus was on equity, intersectionality, and systemic change within the profession. Discussions emphasised the need to challenge ableism, advocate for holistic client care, and recognise SLTs' power in addressing communication barriers. Workforce challenges, including retention, burnout, and long COVID, were raised alongside updates on student financial support and SLT service accessibility.

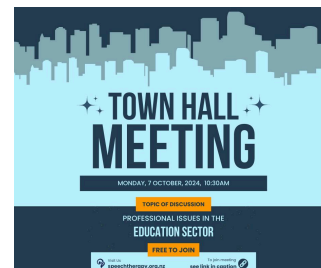


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Cultural safety, regional access, and support for tamariki with feeding and swallowing needs remain priorities. The event reinforced the importance of collaboration, professional reflection, and strengthening networks to ensure a resilient and equitable SLT profession.

- **Townhall Meetings:**

In October, NZSTA hosted a special town hall meeting for members working in the education sector, an opportunity to raise and discuss professional issues affecting SLT practice in education. Issues raised included early intervention access delays, workforce pressures, and systemic barriers with funding and support gaps.



- **Kia ora rawa atu to all our incredible volunteers – you are the heart of NZSTA!**

A special thank you to our outgoing area and student representatives for your dedication and contribution, and a warm welcome to those stepping into these important roles. Your mahi is invaluable in connecting our members and strengthening our profession.

Our area representatives are crucial in bringing members together and coordinating quarterly face-to-face and via Zoom meetings to foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing across regions.

Their work ensures strong connections between members, the Board, and the NZSTA community.



Image: Tai Tokerau Pizza Picnic Party 2025



Meg Grawburg, Kerry Heslop, Tanya Jondahl, Suhui Lim, Victoria Mardell, Claire McCann, Ruth Ramsay, Emma Quigan and Elizabeth Youard.

We also deeply thank our hardworking committee and working group members, many of whose leadership and commitment shape key initiatives and drive meaningful progress. Your passion makes a real difference - thank you for all you do!

Image: The NZSTA principles and rules of ethics working group hui in November 2024 - co-chairs Tracy Karanui-Golf and Mascha Moerenburg, Heidi Bremner, Philippa Friary,

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- A **Governance Journal Club** meets quarterly to review journal articles or webinars and upskill and hone our governance skills. This journal club is open to all members. This year's discussion topics included the differences between the strategic and operational roles of the board. All members are welcome.
- The **private SLT practice sector** is ever-growing. A supportive and informative Facebook group facilitates discussions, shares successes and difficulties, and allows a platform for referrals between SLTs.

In the pipeline:

- Further member consultation on a draft strategic plan for 2026 - 2030.
- Develop a sector-specific framework for future Town Hall meetings to support workforce growth and stay informed on sector developments.
- Research a web-based connection platform for SIG members.



Aspiration 3

Our communities and partners will be knowledgeable about the NZSTA and the needs of people with communication and swallowing disorders in New Zealand.

Increase public awareness of the NZSTA and communication & swallowing disabilities through annual national campaigns.

Amplify the voices of people with lived experience and have their consultation in the activity and policy of awareness and advocacy issues.

Have an accessible and user-friendly website.

Continue to develop our profile internationally.

Achievements:

Advancing Speech-Language Therapy Advocacy in 2024



In 2024, NZSTA made significant progress in advocating for the profession despite challenges from the new coalition Government. Key achievements included face-to-face meetings with Health Select Committee Chair Sam Uffindell and then Minister of Health Dr Shane Reti, where we highlighted the critical role of SLTs across health, education, disability, and justice. A key outcome was encouraging discussions on SLTs as first specialist assessors for voice-related issues.

While initial Government resistance posed challenges, our advocacy laid a strong foundation for future engagement. Our business case proposes practical workforce solutions, including:

- Expanding training placements and financial support
- Strengthening Māori and Pasifika-specific training pathways
- Introducing a voluntary bonding scheme for new SLTs

These initiatives aim to build a sustainable, culturally responsive workforce. NZSTA remains committed to driving these recommendations forward and ensuring our profession's voice is heard. We appreciate the support of our members and all those advocating for meaningful change to strengthen SLT services for Aotearoa.



Ash is keen to work again



Eli: The more support, the more progress



Kathlyn: SLT worked wonders



Laura and Isla: "We really need more SLTs"



Martin has aphasia



Payton still needs a lot more support and therapy



Star Brooks: An amazing journey!



Star's Amazing Journey - Part 2



Star's Amazing Journey - Part 3

Image: [Anecdotes from the Frontlines of Speech-language Therapy](#) - Lived experiences of speech-language therapy services

2024 Submissions Highlights:

- Submitted on the [Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill](#), advocating for upholding Te Tiriti commitments.
- Sent a letter to Hon. Erika Stanford opposing proposed changes to the [Education and Training Act](#).
- I signed the open letter to Christopher Luxon urging the government to [stop the Treaty Principles Bill](#).
- Submitted to the National Cancer Research Network to [highlight the importance of SLT engaging with the network](#) to further relevant research and have highlighted ways to improve cancer outcomes equitably.
- Contributed to the Health Select Committee Inquiry on aged care sector capacity and neurological cognitive disorders: NZSTA provided a [comprehensive submission](#) with multiple recommendations regarding improving access for older New Zealanders to speech, language, and swallowing therapy and made an oral submission to the Health Select Committee.

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- **Paid Placements Aotearoa** - an ongoing campaign for paid training in healthcare, education and social work, has been strongly supported by NZSTA. The petition is close to 20,000. A presentation was made to the Education and Workforce Select Committee highlighting the concerns about the cost of vocational tertiary education and its burden on students.
- NZSTA also supported the **Study Wage for All campaign** run by Te Aka Tauira—Victoria University of Wellington and Otago University Students' Associations to get a universal students' allowance for all tertiary students in NZ, regardless of age, study type, or any other form of qualifier. Speech-language therapy students and members were encouraged to petition the Government for a study wage for all.
- **HPCAA review:** A small working group has been set up to review the current thinking of the HPCAA review team, which leans towards a two-tiered system. The working group has made preliminary comments on the draft proposals and will be poised to submit in 2025 when the formal consultation is released.
- **Awareness Week 23 - 29 September 2024.**

NZSTA celebrated communication diversity with the theme E koekoe te tūī, e ketekete te kākā, e kūkū te kererū. Highlights included daily infographics on communication differences, an online campaign sharing



stories from the community, and a shared story event at Tūranga Library in Christchurch with stories in English, te reo Māori, and NZSL. A colouring competition, digital resources, and creative story submissions enriched the week, showcasing the unique voices that shape Aotearoa.

Image: Trilingual story time with Alice Redamare and Amy Smith.

- **Allied health collaboration:**
 - In 2023, the chief allied health professions officer convened Sector Reference Groups (SRGs) to highlight the unique contributions, challenges, and opportunities of 14 allied health professions under Pae Ora. NZSTA was represented at the **Speech-Language Sector Reference Group**, which resulted in the [MoH Hauora Haumi Allied Health Report 2024](#), a living document showcasing the breadth of allied health expertise.

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- NZSTA is a founding member of the **Allied Health Aotearoa NZ (AHANZ)**, the national voice for allied health professions in New Zealand. In 2024, AHANZ continued strengthening its role as the connected voice for allied health professionals in Aotearoa. The organisation focused on advocacy, including engagement with the Minister of Health and key stakeholders, drawing on evidence such as the NZIER report *Hidden in Plain Sight*. AHANZ delivered a series of impactful Te Tiriti o Waitangi workshops and hosted guest speakers at member meetings on topics including Māori health and workforce development. The executive committee also prepared for re-registration under the new Incorporated Societies Act and grew its membership to 34 full members. Communications and media activities supported greater sector visibility and engagement.
- **Allied Health Professions Day 2024:** On 14 October, AHPs across Aotearoa celebrated their vital contributions to health, education, and disability services. NZSTA led efforts by releasing media content with ideas for marking the day and shared a social media video highlighting the importance of AHPs and their impact on well-being in our communities.
- A heartfelt ngā mihi nui to editor Emma Wollum for delivering [*Communication Matters*](#) each quarter. Her work ensures that speech-language therapists stay informed with clinical and research insights while giving the public a valuable glimpse into our dynamic profession.



In the media:

- **RNZ online - '[Really grim out there](#)': Lack of speech therapists having knock-on impact in classrooms**
Co-president Emma Quigan spoke to RNZ about the ERO report on children starting school with speech challenges. She emphasised solutions over blame, highlighting the need for more speech-language therapists in classrooms and communities to support whānau and address the workforce crisis.

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RNZ Interview - in case you missed it: [ERO research shows more new entrants with low speaking skills](#). Co-president Emma Quigan said research that found too many children are starting school and need help to speak coherently highlights how difficult it is for parents to access support.

Otago Daily Times also picked up on the above story.

In the pipeline:

- Continue NZSTA's advocacy goal of building capacity in the workforce.
- Awareness Week, with the theme 'Wairuatanga'—taking care of ourselves so we can take care of others—will be held from September 15 to 21, 2025.
- Develop special interest group web pages to hold discussions and events to engage your members with the topics that pique their interest.

Aspiration 4

NZSTA members will be lifelong learners.

Support and strengthen the development of special interest groups and other professional learning communities.

Facilitate accessible opportunities for high-quality professional development.

Increase opportunities for online learning.

Recruit and maintain a cohort of expert advisers with diverse professional skills.

Achievements

- **Ngā Hononga Symposium 2024:** In Māori, the concept of "connections" can be expressed through the term "Ngā Hononga." This phrase encompasses the idea of linking, joining, or bonding together. It resonates with the notion of establishing relationships, networking, and fostering connections, which aligns well with the context of a symposium focused on bringing people together.



Ngā Hononga – a noho experience held at Te Wānanga o Raukawa in Ōtaki- showcased evidence-based and practical presentations on tikanga (culture), hāpori me te kotahitanga

(community and togetherness), te ara hou (innovation), and he kaupapa whakahirahira (inspiration). The immersive noho marae experience, including pōwhiri, waiata, weaving and playing the kōauau and poroporoaki, fostered connection and supported the holistic wellbeing of Te Whare Tapa Whā.

Images showing evening activities of learning to play the kōauau, a traditional Māori flute, and harakeke weaving.



- **Online Learning Platform:** The online learning platform continues to grow with the addition of Te Rito - 42-module bicultural competency e-learning.

An enduring MOU with Speech Pathology Australia has been negotiated and signed to provide our respective members with discounted rates on our learning platforms and conferences. **Speech Pathology Australia's Learning Hub** offers over 400 on-demand learning options, including courses, podcasts, and external programs. These resources cover various topics such as adult language and cognition, dysphagia management, and paediatric speech.



Te Rito Bicultural Competency Courses 1-4

FOR REGISTERED SLTs only

Courses 1-4 are designed to deliver foundational bicultural c...



Te Rito Bicultural Competency Courses 5-7

FOR REGISTERED SLTs only

Courses 5-7 deliver training on decolonisation, equity, and anti...

- **Complimentary Online CPD:** NZSTA has curated a webpage on various complementary professional development opportunities provided by multiple providers. For example:

Adult Swallowing Webinars



Early Intervention for the Ventilated ICU Patient: Use It or Lose It!
Presenter: Lori Burkhead-Morgan, PhD, CCC-SLP



How You Breathe Matters: Swallowing Safely
Presenter: Gail M. Sudderth, RRT



Swallow Function: Passy Muir® Valve Use for Evaluation & Rehabilitation
Presenter: Mary Spremulli, MA, CCC-SLP

- **CPD Audit:** Ten per cent of the registered members were audited for compliance with the CPD framework, with a 77 % (68% for 2023 CPD year) immediate pass rate and the remainder achieving a good outcome after feedback. One (overseas) member has had their membership cancelled due to noncompliance with CPD for the 2023 year.
- **Speech, Language, and Hearing (SLH)** is the official journal of the NZSTA and continues to be a vital platform for advancing knowledge in our profession, providing high-quality research that informs and enhances speech-language therapy practice across Aotearoa and globally. Thanks to Dr Anna Miles, editor-in-chief, and many NZSTA members on the international editorial board. There were four editions published in 2024:



Volume 27, Issue 1 - Asia Focus

Volume 27, Issue 2

Volume 27, Issue 3 - Adult Focus

Volume 27, Issue 4

In the pipeline:

- **NZSTA Conference 2025**, 'Navigating the Changing Landscape,' will be hosted 10–12 September at the Napier War Memorial Centre. Keynotes are:
 - Felicity Bright - Grace Gane Memorial Lecture
 - Mary Woodward
 - Heather Came
- Further development of our online learning opportunities for NZSTA members.
- Planning is underway for symposium 26 to be hosted in Waitangi in the Bay of Islands.

Aspiration 5

The NZSTA will promote excellent and ethical practice

Have high-quality standards for all areas of speech-language therapy practice.

Have a high-quality, transparent and fair ethics process.

Have a high-quality, transparent, fair and future-proof programme accreditation process.

Achievements

- **Programme Accreditation Framework: Strengthening the Future of Speech-Language Therapy**

Developed over 18 months, the Programme Accreditation Framework (PAF) 2024 marks a significant step in ensuring high-quality, culturally responsive speech-language therapy education in Aotearoa. Grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and reflecting the evolving needs of the profession, the framework establishes clear accreditation standards that uphold excellence in teaching, research, and clinical practice.

By integrating rigorous quality assurance with a commitment to biculturalism, the PAF supports speech-language therapy programmes to prepare competent, reflective graduates ready to serve diverse communities. This collaborative achievement strengthens the profession's future, fostering a clinically and culturally responsive workforce.



Ngā mihi nui to the governance rōpu of Nicky-Marie Kohere-Smiller, Karen Brewer, Libby Coates, and Felicity Bright, with Carleen Heemi as project manager. Ngā mihi nui also to key sector groups, with PAC and the Programmes contributing to this pleasing outcome.

- **Policy, Position Papers and Guidelines:** The following documents have been reviewed or developed and accepted:

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- Use of Neuromuscular Electrical Stimulation in Speech and Swallowing Rehabilitation - position statement - position statement
- Use of Ultrasound for Swallowing and Upper Airway Assessment - position statement
- Speech-Language Therapy Assistant / Kaiāwhina - position statement
- NZSTA Criminal Convictions / Police Reports - policy
- **Programme Accreditation Success:** Massey University's Bachelor of Speech and Language Therapy programme received full accreditation from NZSTA until 31 December 2031. The Programme Accreditation Committee highlighted its strengths, particularly its significant growth in meeting Aotearoa New Zealand standards, ensuring high-quality education and training for future speech-language therapists.
- **Self-regulating Professions Group:** NZSTA actively contributes to the Self-Regulating Professions Group, recognising the strength of self-regulation in ensuring safe, evidence-based care. This alliance, facilitated by Manatū Hauora, reinforces our commitment to quality and professional integrity, demonstrating that regulation principles can be upheld within and outside legislation.
- **Expert advisors:** NZSTA's expert advisers provide invaluable clinical and non-clinical expertise, ensuring the association can respond effectively to emerging issues, policy development, and member support needs. Their specialised knowledge strengthens our profession by guiding best practice, informing decision-making, and enhancing advocacy across diverse areas of speech-language therapy.
- **Notifications:** The NZSTA received nil requests to investigate competence and ethical practice.
- **Mutual Recognition of Professional Association Credentials Agreement (MRA)** was established in 2004 between six speech-language associations:
 - The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
 - Speech-Language & Audiology Canada (SAC)
 - The Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists (IASLT)
 - The New Zealand Speech-Language Therapists Association (NZSTA)
 - The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)
 - The Speech Pathology Association of Australia (SPA)

The agreement allows members of signatory associations (trained in that country) to apply for mutual recognition of their credentials from another. The premise of substantial equivalence underlies the agreement, i.e. under specific terms and conditions, an individual's credentials are deemed substantially equivalent (MRA updated 2022). This is not equality or reciprocity, as each signatory association has specific applicant requirements.

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The Associations track the number of SLTs using this route each year. This year, 20 experienced SLTs arrived in the country through the MRA, and 59 NZSTA members used this route to work overseas in one of the other signatory countries.

- **Qualifications Approval:** This is the pathway for member applications when the applicant was trained overseas and did not meet the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) criteria. Following an international review with NZSTA's MRA colleagues, NZSTA has altered the proficiency in English requirements. Since 2023, applicants with speech-language therapy degree qualifications completed in a language other than English or those for whom English is their second language must attain an IELTS score of seven or above in all four modules, with no scores lower than seven, is required.

In the pipeline:

- The following policies/position statements are under development:
 - Scope of Practice - in draft stage
 - Principles and Rules of Ethics - in draft stage
 - AAC guideline
 - Supervision
 - Neonatal Unit Competency [Framework]
- Survey and review of expert adviser roles.

Update on NZSTA Clinical Policies and Procedures:

The following policies are now available on our website:

Professional development & supervision

- NZSTA Position Paper on Supervision
- NZSTA New Graduate Framework
- NZSTA Return to Practice Framework
- NZSTA CPD Framework

Clinical practice

- NZSTA Speech-language Therapists Scope of Practice
- Working in the Justice System - scope of practice statement
- NZSTA Infection Control Standards (updated 2022) - standards
- Surgical Voice Restoration – framework
- Surgical Voice Restoration - register
- Speech-language Therapists Working with Individuals with Orofacial Cleft and Velopharyngeal Incompetence - guideline

Position statements

- Rapid Prompting Method - position statement
- Speech-Language Therapy Assistant / Kaiāwhina - position statement
- Surgical Voice Restoration – position statement

Endoscopy and the Speech-language Therapist

- New Zealand FEES Register—This register provides speech-language therapists with a nationwide list of Level 3-6 FEES SLTs and is updated every six months.
- Flexible endoscopic evaluation of swallowing
- (FEES) in adults and children in New Zealand - Practice standards
- Competency Framework: Flexible endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES)
- NZSTA Recommended FEES procedure
 - For child
 - For adult
- NZSTA Recommended FEES report templates
 - For children (PDF | Word)
 - For adults (PDF | Word)

Tracheostomy

- NZSTA Tracheostomy Competency - framework
- NZSTA Tracheostomy Practice - guideline
- NZSTA Tracheostomy Register Sept 2023
- NZSTA Best Clinical Principles in Laryngology
- Flexible Laryngoscopy Competency - framework

Dysphagia

- NZSTA Risk Feeding - guideline

- NZSTA Clinical Practice Guideline for Videofluoroscopic Study of Swallowing (VFSS) - guideline
- NZSTA Competency Framework for VFSS - Adults - competency framework
- Use of Neuromuscular Electrical Stimulation in Speech and Swallowing Rehabilitation - position statement - position statement
- Use of Ultrasound for Swallowing and Upper Airway Assessment - position statement

Paediatrics only

- NZSTA Clinical Practice Paediatric dysphagia - guideline
- NZSTA Competency Framework for VFSS - Paediatrics - competency framework
- Speech-language Therapists Working with Individuals with Orofacial Cleft and Velopharyngeal Incompetence - guideline

Modified Diet Terminology

- IDDSI Framework
- IDDSI Drink Testing
- IDDSI Food Testing Methods
- IDDSI Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)