

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



**Registered  
under  
Self-Regulatory  
Process**

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

## New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association introduces the self-regulatory processes

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Established in 1947, 2018 signifies a turning point for the NZSTA and speech-language therapists across Aotearoa New Zealand.

It is with great pleasure and pride that we launch our Association's first official self-regulatory process.

**The NZSTA has approximately 800 members representing speech-language therapists working across a wide range of settings including:**

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- NGOs
- Private Practice
- Board of Trustees; and
- The tertiary sector.

This document provides the background for this decision to move to an official self-regulatory process. The document describes the self-regulatory processes of the NZSTA and the assurances Membership of the NZSTA provide the public.

This document was created by the New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association with specific acknowledgement to Anna Miles, Clare McCann and Philippa Friary.

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## Who are we?

Established in 1947, the NZSTA has supported speech-language therapists across New Zealand for over 70 years.

The Association has grown and flourished and members are proud and proactive in the education and health sectors, in engagement with the public and advocacy at a government level.

## The NZSTA Vision

A thriving profession working in partnership to enhance lives.

## The NZSTA Values

As speech-language therapists and members of the NZSTA we strive to:

- Work in partnership and with integrity.
- Be leaders in the field of communication and swallowing.
- Be person and whānau centred, working with respect and humility.
- Provide an equitable, excellent service.

## The Mission of the NZSTA is:

- To guide and govern the educational, clinical and ethical standards of SLT practice.
- To empower SLTs to provide excellent and equitable services to our communities.
- To represent the interests and views of SLTs.
- To be responsive to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and an international leader in cultural responsiveness.
- To promote quality evidence based SLT practice and research.

## The NZSTA's Current Strategic Plan (2017-2020)

- The NZSTA will promote excellent and ethical practice.
- The NZSTA membership will be engaged, diverse and valued.
- Our communities and partners will be knowledgeable about the NZSTA and the needs of people with communication and swallowing disorders in New Zealand.
- The NZSTA and members are responsive to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- The NZSTA will be an international leader in cultural responsiveness.
- NZSTA members will be lifelong learners.

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### International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics (IALP) affiliated member

The NZSTA is an affiliated Association of IALP: the worldwide organisation of professionals and scientists in communication, voice, speech language pathology, audiology and swallowing. IALP facilitates science, education, and clinical practice through international cooperation and collaboration, creates and shares knowledge, skills and information and provides a platform for international networking and advocacy. The NZSTA Programme Accreditation Framework for Universities training speech-language therapists in New Zealand is guided by the IALP international standards. IALP provides guidelines on content, duration and range of education routes. They emphasise the importance of a research component to education to foster a research-oriented approach (evidence base) to clinical work. The IALP guidelines emphasise the importance of accreditation standards that allow for and encourage diversity, sensible risk-taking and a sense of ownership and responsibility. All of these principles are supported by the NZSTA.

### Our Mutual Recognition of Credentials Agreement (MRA) relations

In 2004 (revised in 2008 & 2017), a Mutual Recognition of Credentials Agreement was signed between 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) and the Speech Pathology Association of Australia (SPA).

This powerful Agreement offers benefits to the international community by establishing, maintaining and policing a transparent, robust and professionally and ethically sound basis for mutual recognition of the requirements for certification of speech-language therapists.

New Zealand benefits from this Agreement in a number of ways including:

- Establishment of international standards for tertiary education.
- Facilitating exchange of knowledge.
- Promoting and advocating for speech-language therapy internationally.
- Improving mobility of speech-language therapists in to and out of New Zealand.

NZSTA's new official self-regulatory processes are guided by and fully meet the requirements of the Mutual Recognition of Credentials Agreement.

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## Background

NZSTA members have been discussing registration for many years. Unlike teachers (registered under the Education Council) and many of our health professional colleagues (registered under the Health Professional Competency Assurance (HPCA) Act 2003), speech-language therapy has not been a registered profession in New Zealand.

In 2006, the NZSTA applied for registration under HPCA but this was not pursued by the Ministry of Health. Interestingly in 2010, Speech Pathology Australia went through a similar process and were rejected by the Australian Ministry of Health. At the time of writing this document, Speech Pathology Australia has since developed a self-regulatory process for the profession.

The primary reason for registering a profession is to offer safety to the public and protection of title. In New Zealand, this is usually achieved through mandating registration to any suitably qualified person wishing to work under that title. Registration, be it in education, plumbing or healthcare, generally offers similar assurances.

## What the sector thinks

In July 2017, stakeholders (employers of speech-language therapists across Aotearoa New Zealand) were asked to participate in a survey. Respondents represented the opinions of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Private Practice, Insurance and the Accident Compensation Commission including those with professional leadership roles and those with operational/ budget roles. The respondents collectively were responsible for 501 speech-language therapists nationwide.

Sixty-eight percent of respondents were happy with the current regulatory status of speech-language therapists. Employers were unanimous in their view that the credibility of speech-language therapists in New Zealand was not in question. Some employers voiced concerns about protection of title and the risk to the public when only members of the NZSTA are regulated under this current system.

Employers stated time, cost and administration as the main barriers to regulation under the HPCA Act 2003.

A significant barrier was voiced by those working outside of health who felt strongly that not all speech-language therapists identify themselves as health professionals. These speech-language therapists did not want to be regulated by the HPCA Act.

## What speech-language therapists think

In December 2017, speech-language therapists across Aotearoa New Zealand were asked to participate in an opinion poll. Five hundred and sixty-two speech-language therapists and speech-language therapy students responded. While 43% of respondents chose regulation under the HPCA Act 2003; 57% of respondents chose status quo or an enhanced NZSTA regulatory process.

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## NZSTA self-regulates members in the following ways:

ACCOUNTABILITY	METHOD
<p>The NZSTA provides a clear statement of the scope of practice of a profession including what is not within scope for a profession</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope of Practice Policy</li> <li>• Policy documents in specialist areas of practice</li> </ul>
<p>The NZSTA provides quality assurance of the tertiary courses of New Zealand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Accreditation Framework</li> </ul>
<p>The NZSTA provides quality assurance of overseas-trained speech-language therapists requesting membership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualification Approval Process</li> <li>• Mutual Recognition Agreement</li> </ul>
<p>The NZSTA provides a framework ensuring a structured and supervised first year of practice for newly qualified speech-language therapists</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Graduate Framework</li> </ul>
<p>The NZSTA provides continuing quality assurance of its registered professionals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethical Complaints Procedure</li> <li>• Annual declaration of abiding by Code of Ethics &amp; statement of good standing</li> <li>• Annual declaration of recency of practice (hours of practice)</li> <li>• Continuing professional development log and auditing</li> </ul>
<p>The NZSTA provides a framework ensuring a structured and supervised first year of practice for speech-language therapists with fewer than 1,000 hours of practice in the past 5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to Practice Framework</li> </ul>
<p>The NZSTA can restrict a professional's activities to protect the public and in some cases, withdraw membership of an individual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethical Complaints Procedure</li> <li>• Annual declaration of abiding by Code of Ethics &amp; statement of good standing</li> </ul>

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### New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association (NZSTA) 'Registered Members with the NZSTA'

#### Speech-language therapists who:

- i) meet the criteria for membership,
- ii) sign their annual ethical declarations,
- iii) meet recency of practice requirements, and
- iv) meet professional development requirements will now be known as 'speech-language therapists registered members with the NZSTA'.

This new title will appear on the member's Annual Practising Certificate (APC) with the wording 'Registered Member with the NZSTA': including Members, New Graduate Members and Return to Practice Members.

Other membership categories, e.g. Student Members will continue to receive annual membership certificates rather than APCs.

We strongly encourage the public seeking a speech-language therapist to only engage in an agreement with a speech-language therapist who is a registered member with the NZSTA.

We strongly encourage employers only to employ a speech-language therapist who is registered with the NZSTA.

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## NZSTA Vision

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