



New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association

Te Kāhui Kaiwhakatikatika Reo Kōrero o Aotearoa

NZSTA Requirements for Evidence of Dysphagia Competency

Background

During the 2007 Annual General Meeting of the NZSTA, a constitutional change was enacted that required all applicants for Full membership to demonstrate competency in dysphagia. Those members without dysphagia competency will be entitled to become Full Members (not dysphagia trained).

Rationale for requiring Dysphagia competency

As per NZSTA programme accreditation guidelines, all graduates of NZSTA accredited programmes are required to demonstrate competency in dysphagia. Therefore, the same standard should apply for overseas therapists wishing to join the NZSTA. If Dysphagia competency is not obtained, the applicant would not be eligible for Full membership status.

What is documented evidence of Dysphagia competency?

Evidence of Dysphagia competency can be provided in a number of ways. Three preferred forms of evidence are provided below. However, these should not be viewed as the only forms of evidence that will be considered.

1. *Academic coursework.* Evidence of a one-semester course (or a minimum of 15 instructional hours) dedicated to the topic of dysphagia assessment and management.
2. *Clinical coursework.* Evidence of supervised clinical practice in the area of dysphagia. Confirmation by a supervisor that competency in assessment and management of dysphagia would be required.
3. *Workshop/Short Course.* Evidence of completion of a dedicated short course on the topic of dysphagia assessment and management

Alternatively, if applicants are unable to provide sufficient evidence of Dysphagia competency, they may wish to obtain competency upon arrival in New Zealand. The first point of contact for obtaining the necessary competency would be the three NZSTA accredited educational programmes:

The University of Auckland: Prof Suzanne Purdy, sc.purdy@auckland.ac.nz

University of Canterbury: Dr Catherine Moran, catherine.moran@canterbury.ac.nz

Massey University: Assoc Prof Helen Southwood H.Southwood@massey.ac.nz