



**ASHA**  
American  
Speech-Language-Hearing  
Association

SLP Health Care Survey Report:  
Caseload Characteristics  
2005–2019

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## Introduction

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) conducted the *2019 SLP Health Care Survey* to gather information from speech-language pathologists (SLPs) about service provision, practice issues, earnings, the workforce, and other professional topics. Results from this survey are presented in a series of reports, including this report on caseload trends.

Results from the 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2017 *ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys* are included in this report for comparative purposes. Questions and response options differ among surveys; therefore, data on all topics are not available for all survey years.

## Survey Report Highlights

### Age Groups Served

- In 2019, overall, SLPs spent 60% of their clinical services time with adults—the same or about the same as in past years (54%–60% from 2005 to 2017). They spent 40% of their clinical services time with children—the same or about the same as in past years (39%–47% from 2005 to 2017).
- From 2005 to 2019, SLPs in general medical hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, and skilled nursing facilities spent most of their clinical services time with adults. SLPs in home health care settings, outpatient clinics/offices, and pediatric hospitals spent most of their clinical services time with children.

### Pediatric Clinical Services

- From 2015 to 2019, overall, SLPs spent most of their pediatric clinical services time treating children with language and literacy disorders, speech sound disorders, autism spectrum disorder, and swallowing and feeding disorders.
- From 2005 to 2019, overall, SLPs spent less than 5% of their pediatric clinical services time treating children with fluency disorders or voice/resonance disorders.

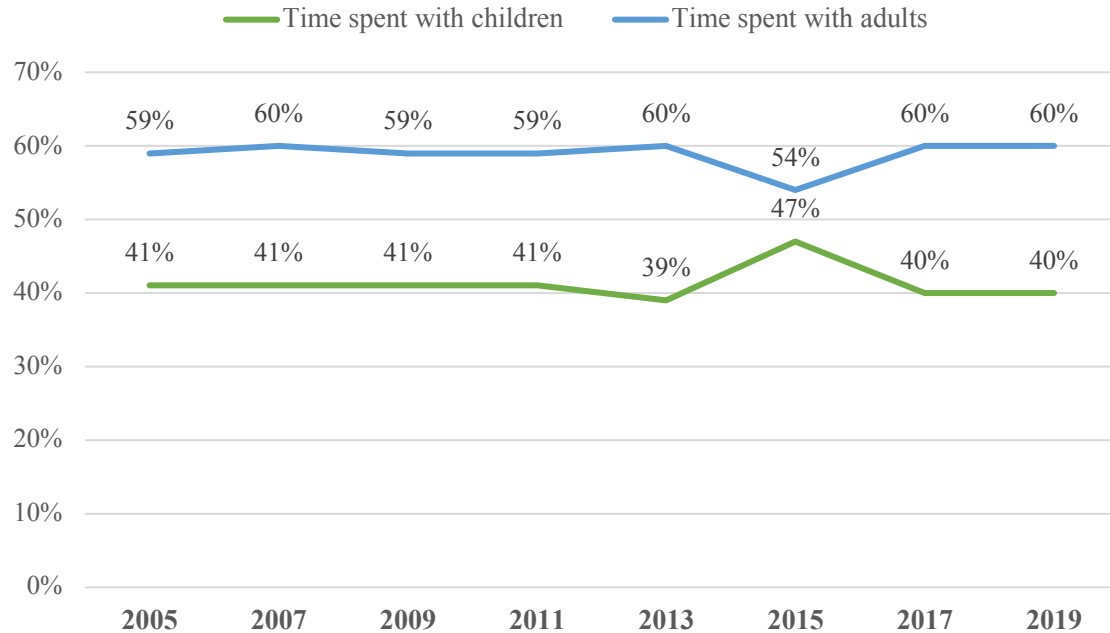
### Adult Clinical Services

- From 2009 to 2019, overall, SLPs spent most of their adult clinical services time treating adults with swallowing disorders, aphasia, and dementia.
- From 2005 to 2019, SLPs in general medical hospitals and skilled nursing facilities spent more of their adult clinical services time treating adults with swallowing disorders than did SLPs in other health care settings.
- From 2009 to 2019, SLPs in skilled nursing facilities spent more of their adult clinical services time treating adults with dementia than did SLPs in other health care settings.

## Age Groups Served

In 2019, overall, SLPs spent 60% of their clinical services time with adults and 40% with children (infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children; see Figure 1 and Appendix Table 1). These figures are largely consistent with those of previous survey years.

**Figure 1.** *Percentage of clinical services time spent by SLPs with children and adults, by year.*



*Note.* These data are from the 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019 *ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys*. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%.

*n* = 1,923 (2005); *n* = 2,229 (2007); *n* = 1,897 (2009); *n* = 2,246 (2011); *n* = 1,686 (2013); *n* = 1,526 (2015); *n* = 1,582 (2017); *n* = 1,898 (2019).

## Age Groups Served, by Health Care Setting

From 2005 to 2019, SLPs in pediatric hospitals spent most of their clinical services time (at least 97%) with children, especially infants and toddlers (see Appendix Table 1). SLPs in outpatient clinics/offices spent most of their clinical services time with children (at least 74%), especially preschoolers and school-age children. SLPs in home health care settings also spent most of their clinical services time (at least 56%) with children, especially infants and toddlers.

From 2005 to 2019, SLPs in skilled nursing facilities spent most of their clinical services time (at least 95%) with adults. SLPs in general medical and rehabilitation hospitals also spent most of their clinical services time (at least 81%) with adults.

## Pediatric Clinical Services

From 2015 to 2019, overall, SLPs spent most of their pediatric clinical services time treating children with language and literacy disorders, speech sound disorders, autism spectrum disorder, and swallowing and feeding disorders (see Table 1 and Appendix Table 2 for data from additional survey years).

**Table 1.** *Of the time that you spend providing pediatric services, approximately what percentage is spent in the following areas? Total must equal 100%.*

Area	%		
	2015 (n = 909)	2017 (n = 780)	2019 (n = 929)
Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)	5	6	5
Autism spectrum disorder	16	17	18
Cognitive-communication	8	12	9
Fluency	4	2	3
Language and literacy <sup>a</sup>	29	21	23
Speech sound disorders <sup>b</sup>	22	21	22
Swallowing and feeding	13	16	15
Voice/resonance	2	3	4
Other	1	2	2

*Note.* These data are from the 2015, 2017, and 2019 ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%. <sup>a</sup>In 2015, this item was *language*. <sup>b</sup>In 2015, this item was *articulation–phonology*.

## Pediatric Clinical Services, by Health Care Setting

From 2015 to 2019:

- SLPs in general medical hospitals spent most of their pediatric clinical services time treating children with swallowing and feeding disorders (at least 23%), speech sound disorders (at least 15%), and language and literacy disorders (at least 11%).
- SLPs in home health care settings spent most of their pediatric clinical services time treating children with language and literacy disorders (at least 23%), speech sound disorders (at least 19%), and autism spectrum disorder (at least 15%).
- SLPs in outpatient clinics/offices spent most of their pediatric clinical services time treating children with speech sound disorders (at least 24%), language and literacy disorders (at least 23%), and autism spectrum disorder (at least 20%).
- SLPs in pediatric hospitals spent most of their pediatric clinical services time treating children with swallowing and feeding disorders (at least 31%), language and literacy disorders (at least 13%), speech sound disorders (at least 10%), and autism spectrum disorder (at least 10%).

These data are not presented in any table.

## Adult Clinical Services

From 2011 to 2019, overall, SLPs spent most of their adult clinical services time treating adults with swallowing disorders, aphasia, and dementia (see Table 2 and Appendix Table 3 for data from additional survey years).

**Table 2.** *Of the time that you spend providing adult services, approximately what percentage is spent in the following areas? Total must equal 100%.*

Area	%				
	2011 (n = 1,528)	2013 (n = 1,148)	2015 (n = 970)	2017 (n = 1,074)	2019 (n = 1,244)
AAC	3	3	4	3	3
Accent modification/ communication effectiveness	1	1	1	< 1	1
Acquired brain injury <sup>a</sup>	8	8	8	8	11
Dementia	13	15	13	15	14
Other cognitive- communication disorder	3	2	3	6	3
Aphasia	17	16	16	14	14
Motor speech	7	7	8	7	7
Swallowing	42	42	41	39	40
Voice/resonance	5	6	5	6	7
Other	2	2	1	2	2

*Note.* These data are from the 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019 *ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys*. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%. <sup>a</sup>From 2011 to 2017, this item was *traumatic brain injury (TBI)*.

## Adult Clinical Services, by Health Care Setting

From 2009 to 2019:

- SLPs in general medical hospitals spent most of their adult clinical services time treating adults with swallowing disorders (at least 55%).
- SLPs in home health care settings spent most of their adult clinical services time treating adults with swallowing disorders (at least 33%), aphasia (at least 16%), and dementia (at least 11%).
- SLPs in outpatient clinics/offices spent most of their adult clinical services time treating adults with swallowing disorders (at least 17%), aphasia (at least 15%), acquired brain injury (at least 11%), and voice/resonance disorders (at least 11%).
- SLPs in rehabilitation hospitals spent most of their adult clinical services time treating adults with swallowing disorders (at least 28%), aphasia (at least 19%), and acquired brain injury (at least 17%).
- SLPs in skilled nursing facilities spent most of their adult clinical services time treating adults with swallowing disorders (at least 42%) and dementia (at least 21%).

These data are not presented in any table.

## Survey Methodology

The survey was sent in February 2019 to a random sample of 4,500 ASHA-certified SLPs who were employed in health care facilities in the United States. The sample was stratified by type of facility and by private practice. Of this group, 2,250 SLPs were assigned to a control group to receive the survey cover letter with the full signature of the ASHA chief executive officer (CEO). The 2,250 SLPs assigned to an experimental group were sent a survey cover letter with only the CEO's first name. Both groups also received a survey pre-notification email at the time of the first postal mailing. Second (March) and third (April) postal mailings followed, at approximately 3- or 4-week intervals.

Because facilities with fewer SLPs, such as pediatric hospitals, were oversampled, ASHA used weighting when presenting survey data.

## Response Rates

Of the original 4,500 SLPs in the sample, 14 had incorrect postal mail addresses, 39 were employed in other types of facilities, seven were not employed in the profession, two were retired, and four were ineligible for other reasons, which left 4,433 possible respondents. The actual number of respondents was 2,232—a 50.3% response rate. Past *ASHA SLP Health Care Survey* response rates were 54.6% (2005), 63.8% (2007), 54.6% (2009), 62.5% (2011), 53.5% (2013), 46.9% (2015), and 52.1% (2017).

## Suggested Citation

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2019). *SLP Health Care Survey report: Caseload characteristics, 2005–2019*. Retrieved from [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org).

## Additional Information

Companion survey reports are available on the ASHA website at [www.asha.org/Research/memberdata/Healthcare-Survey/](http://www.asha.org/Research/memberdata/Healthcare-Survey/).

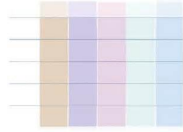
## Questions?

For additional information regarding this report, please contact Monica Sampson, director of Health Care Services, at 800-498-2071, ext. 5686 or [msampson@asha.org](mailto:msampson@asha.org). To learn more about how the Association is working on behalf of ASHA-certified SLPs in health care settings, visit [www.asha.org/slp/healthcare/](http://www.asha.org/slp/healthcare/).

## Acknowledgment

Without the generous cooperation of the members who participate in our surveys, ASHA could not fulfill its mission to provide vital information about the professions and discipline to the Association membership and the public. Thank you!

# Appendix





## Age Groups Served

**Table 1.** *Of the time that you spend providing clinical services, approximately what percentage is spent with the following age groups? Total must equal 100%.*

Age group	%						
	Overall	General medical/ VA/LTAC hospital <sup>a</sup>	Home health care agency/client's home	Outpatient clinic/office	Pediatric hospital	Rehabilitation hospital	Skilled nursing facility
<b>2019</b> ( <i>n</i> = 1,898)							
Infant–toddler	14	5	36	17	44	2	1
Preschooler	14	2	11	31	28	3	< 1
School-age child	13	2	9	29	25	4	1
Adult	60	91	44	23	3	91	99
<b>2017</b> ( <i>n</i> = 1,582)							
Infant–toddler	16	5	41	19	42	2	1
Preschooler	12	3	11	28	30	4	1
School-age child	12	3	8	28	26	5	1
Adult	60	89	40	25	2	89	98
<b>2015</b> ( <i>n</i> = 1,526)							
Infant–toddler	16	4	39	18	40	5	1
Preschooler	16	7	17	30	33	5	2
School-age child	15	5	12	30	26	9	3
Adult	54	85	32	22	1	81	95
<b>2013</b> ( <i>n</i> = 1,686)							
Infant–toddler	15	4	43	15	42	3	< 1
Preschooler	13	4	16	30	32	4	< 1
School-age child	11	3	8	29	25	4	1
Adult	60	89	33	26	1	89	99

(Table Continues)

**Table 1.** Continued

Age group	%						
	Overall	General medical/ VA/LTAC hospital <sup>a</sup>	Home health care agency/client's home	Outpatient clinic/office	Pediatric hospital	Rehabilitation hospital	Skilled nursing facility
<b>2011</b> ( <i>n</i> = 2,031)							
Infant–toddler	17	7	45	18	43	3	1
Preschooler	13	6	16	31	31	5	1
School-age child	11	5	10	29	25	5	1
Adult	59	81	30	23	2	88	98
<b>2009</b> ( <i>n</i> = 1,671)							
Infant–toddler	15	6	39	18	46	3	< 1
Preschooler	14	5	14	31	35	3	1
School-age child	12	3	11	31	18	4	1
Adult	59	86	37	21	1	89	98
<b>2007</b> ( <i>n</i> = 1,960)							
Infant–toddler	16	6	52	18	41	1	1
Preschooler	14	6	14	31	33	3	1
School-age child	12	5	8	30	24	5	1
Adult	59	83	25	21	2	91	98
<b>2005</b> ( <i>n</i> = 1,656)							
Infant–toddler	15	6	48	18	39	3	1
Preschooler	15	8	15	31	38	6	1
School-age child	12	6	10	27	22	8	2
Adult	58	81	28	24	1	83	97

*Note.* These data are from the 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019 *ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys*. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%. <sup>a</sup>From 2005 to 2011, this item was *general medical hospital*. In 2013, it was *general medical/long-term acute care (LTAC) hospital*.

## Pediatric Clinical Services

**Table 2.** *Of the time that you spend providing pediatric services, approximately what percentage is spent in the following areas? Total must equal 100%.*

Area	%							
	2005 (n = 1,034)	2007 (n = 1,189)	2009 (n = 955)	2011 (n = 1,149)	2013 (n = 818)	2015 (n = 909)	2017 (n = 780)	2019 (n = 929)
Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)	—	—	—	5	5	5	6	5
Autism spectrum disorder	—	—	—	—	—	16	17	18
Cognitive-communication	14	14	13	8	8	8	12	9
Fluency	3	3	3	3	3	4	2	3
Language and literacy <sup>a</sup>	36	35	37	38	38	29	21	23
Prevention/wellness	—	1	1	2	1	—	—	—
Speech sound disorders <sup>b</sup>	25	24	24	26	24	22	21	22
Swallowing and feeding	16	17	16	15	15	13	16	15
Voice/resonance	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	4
Other	3	3	3	2	2	1	2	2

*Note.* These data are from the 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019 *ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys*. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%. <sup>a</sup>From 2005 to 2015, this item was *language*. <sup>b</sup>From 2005 to 2015, this item was *articulation-phonology*.

## Adult Clinical Services

**Table 3.** *Of the time that you spend providing adult services, approximately what percentage is spent in the following areas? Total must equal 100%.*

Area	%							
	2005 (n = 1,374)	2007 (n = 1,598)	2009 (n = 1,279)	2011 (n = 1,528)	2013 (n = 1,148)	2015 (n = 970)	2017 (n = 1,074)	2019 (n = 1,244)
AAC	—	—	—	3	3	4	3	3
Accent modification/ communication effectiveness	—	1	1	1	1	1	< 1	1
Aphasia	17	17	17	17	16	16	14	14
Cognitive-communication <sup>a</sup>	21	21	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acquired brain injury <sup>b</sup>	—	—	8	8	8	8	8	11
Dementia	—	—	11	13	15	13	15	14
Other cognitive- communication disorder	—	—	3	3	2	3	6	3
Motor speech	8	8	7	7	7	8	7	7
Prevention	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Swallowing	45	46	45	42	42	41	39	40
Voice/resonance	7	5	6	5	6	5	6	7
Other	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2

*Note.* These data are from the 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019 *ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys*. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%. <sup>a</sup>In 2009, the *cognitive-communication* category was replaced by the more specific *traumatic brain injury (TBI)*, *dementia*, and *other cognitive-communication disorder* subcategories under the heading of *cognitive-communication*.

<sup>b</sup>From 2005 to 2017, this item was *traumatic brain injury (TBI)*.