

What do speech language pathologists (SLPs) do?

- Speech-Language Pathologists work to evaluate and treat speech, language, social communication, cognitive communication, and swallowing disorders in children and adults.

What is the role of the SLP in treating military veterans at SHARE?

- At SHARE, the SLP works with clients on improving thinking & communication skills that may be impaired following a mild to moderate traumatic brain injury
- These skills include:
 - Memory
 - Attention
 - Executive functioning- these skills help you get things done and meet your goals
 - Communication

What can be done to improve thinking and communication skills?

- Strategies/tools
 - For example, learning to use a planner consistently to build a daily routine and help you remember appointments or things you need to do
- Thinking exercises
 - For example, exercises to improve your ability to focus on a task with noise in the background so you can better “tune out” the distracting noise
- Metacognitive exercises
 - This means “thinking intentionally about how you’re thinking”
 - For example, keep a log of communication difficulties you’re having to see if there is a pattern and what strategies could be used to help

What might a speech therapy session look like at SHARE?

- Session activities vary based on each client’s needs and goals. Here are examples of things that might be done during a speech therapy session at SHARE:
 - Researching a calendar app to use as a memory tool and coming up with a system for using it consistently
 - Creating a daily routine or schedule
 - Establishing weekly goals then checking in on progress and obstacles related to those goals
 - Learning strategies for improving attention or focus
 - Using “SWOPS” to plan for an interaction or event. SWOPS is a thinking and planning tool we teach at SHARE to help clients plan the best strategies to use in a situation (instead of reacting in the moment) so they can be satisfied and meet their long-term goals
 - Practicing communication strategies such as active listening- examples are asking questions or restating what the other person said to clarify or summarize information. These strategies also help with being able to better focus and remember details during conversations
 - Learning strategies for taking breaks to reduce mental fatigue- breaks are a way to “fill your mental tank” or “recharge” so your brain doesn’t get overly tired



What might a group speech therapy session look like at SHARE?

- Areas that may be addressed include setting goals, daily scheduling, and planning for situations using “SWOPS.” Here are examples of things that might be done during a group speech therapy session at SHARE:
 - Reviewing progress towards weekly goals and using that information to set new goals for the week
 - Discussing potential situations that could be challenging or require planning ahead- these are good times to use “SWOPS” as a tool to achieve the best outcome
 - Discussing the benefits of having a daily routine and how to best integrate scheduling tools learned at SHARE

What is a “client centered goal?”

- During the evaluation period at SHARE, the SLP guides each client in creating a goal that represents what is most important and motivating to that particular person
 - For example, one client’s goal might be to go back to school and another client’s goal may be to get out more in the community with his/her family.
- We use a tool called “goal attainment scaling” to measure each goal and track levels of progress
- Each therapist at SHARE works with clients to address their client centered goal in different ways
- Clients rate where they feel they are when they first come to SHARE then rate their goal again when they discharge from SHARE. They will also rate their goals during the transition phase of SHARE. This is a key measure we use to track clients’ progress.

Additional Comments: