OUTPATIENT SERVICE DESCRIPTION & TRIAGE GUIDELINES
SPEECH PATHOLOGY
Southern Adelaide Local Health Network (SALHN)

Speech Pathology (Paediatric)

This document provides an overview of SALHN outpatient ***Paediatric*** speech pathology services. Paediatric Speech Pathology services are provided at Flinders Medical Centre and include:

- Feeding or Swallowing Difficulties

Feeding disorders are relatively common: in premature infants or infants with congenital heart disease, following open-heart surgery, nonorganic failure to thrive, craniofacial abnormalities, cerebral palsy, autism, respiratory compromise (i.e. chronic lung disease, oxygen requirement, malacia/floppy airways), pain associated with feeding (i.e. reflux, allergies, strictures, constipation), immature motor, oral motor and/or swallowing skills, sensory processing problems and nutritional deficits (i.e. metabolic disorders, absorption deficit).

Symptoms of feeding disorders in children may present a variety of ways, depending on the age of the child and stage of feeding development.

Services provided

- Feeding or swallowing difficulties in infants and children: Outpatient+GP+Referral+Guidelines+Speech+Pathology+Paediatric+Feeding+Disorders+SALHN.pdf (sahealth.sa.gov.au)

Services not provided

- Assessment and intervention for developmental speech, language, fluency and voice disorders in children (See SALHN Early Childhood and Family services, Flinders University Health2Go, Kudos/NDIS, private providers (Speech Pathology Australia), Department for Education)
- Assessment of tongue tie without associated feeding issues
- Fussy / picky eating behaviors with no characteristics of CAT 1-3 (below)
- Children who are eligible for NDIS funding

For admission or *URGENT* advice contact Speech Pathology on

Mark Oliphant Building Ph: (08) 7117 0690 Email: MOBAdmin@sagov.onmicrosoft.com

Triage Criteria for Outpatient Referrals for initial assessment

Category 1 Target within 4 weeks	Category 2 Target within 3 months	Category 3 Target within 6 months
• Outpatient who requires an assessment to avoid admission to hospital / enteral feeding avoidance • Outpatient of any age showing indications of aspiration / choking **and** has history of chest infections. • Any age with suspected feeding / swallowing / aversion issue which may be contributing to child's ability to meet their nutrition, or hydration needs orally **with** faltering growth. • Under 4 months of age – follow-up post discharge from hospital.	Child with suspected oral feeding/swallowing problems or dysphagia (and not meeting CAT 1) related to: • Indictors of choking/aspiration with no history of chest infections • Oropharyngeal dysphagia • Delayed oro-motor skill development and under 2 years of age • Sensory / fussy / problem feeder / paediatric feeding disorder with evidence of nutritional compromise • Sudden deterioration or change in swallowing that is not associated with a normal childhood illness. • Over 4 months of age- follow-up post discharge from hospital (and not meeting P1).	• Sensory / fussy / problem feeder / paediatric feeding disorder without evidence of nutritional compromise • Child transitioning to / maintaining some oral feeding where the expectation is limited potential for transition to full oral feeding • Referral for swallow assessment not meeting CAT 1 or 2 criteria

General Information to assist with referrals and the and Referral templates for FMC and RGH are available to download from the SALHN Outpatient Services website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHNoutpatients

Version	Date from	Date to	Identifier: CC1.2863 - Amendment
3.0	5/12/2025	5/12/2027	Amended services not provided, contact details and triage criteria

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SA Health