



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

SLP Health Care Survey Report: Caseload Characteristics Trends 2005–2013

AMERICAN SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION

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Introduction

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) conducted the 2013 SLP Health Care Survey to gather information about service provision, earnings, private practice, and other professional topics. Results from this survey are compiled in a series of reports, including this report on caseload characteristics trends.

Results from the 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2011 ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys are included in this report for comparative purposes. Questions differ among surveys, so data on all topics are not available for all survey years.

The statistic that is presented in this report is the mean (average) unless otherwise noted. Note that for 2009 we reported the size of the population of ASHA-certified speech-language pathologists (SLPs) who met certain criteria (*N*); in 2005, 2007, 2011, and 2013 we reported the number of survey respondents (*n*). To preserve confidentiality and provide more certain results, we do not report data for groups of fewer than 25.

Survey Report Highlights

- In 2011–2013, overall, SLPs in health care settings spent most of their time in a typical week providing direct treatment to individuals (at least 67%) and preparing clinical documentation (at least 18%).
- In 2005–2013, overall, SLPs in health care settings spent more than half (at least 59%) of their clinical services time with adults and about 40% with infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children.
- In 2005–2013, SLPs in health care settings spent most of their adult services time on swallowing (at least 42%), cognitive communication (at least 22%), and aphasia (at least 16%).
- In 2005–2013, SLPs in health care settings spent most of their pediatric services time on language (at least 35%), articulation-phonology (at least 24%), and swallowing and feeding (at least 15%).
- In 2013, overall, children with autism accounted for 15% (median) of the caseload of SLPs in health care settings, down from 20% in 2011 but up from 6% in 2009.
- In 2009–2013, children with autism accounted for 20%–25% (medians) of the pediatric caseloads of SLPs in outpatient clinics and offices.
- In 2005–2013, overall, a small percentage (10%–13%) of SLPs reported that professionals other than SLPs were providing primary swallowing services in their respective facilities.
- In 2005–2013, SLPs in pediatric hospitals were most likely to report that professionals other than SLPs were providing primary swallowing services in their respective facilities.

Activities

In 2013, overall, SLPs in health care settings spent most of their time in a typical week providing direct treatment to individuals (73%) and preparing clinical documentation (20%; see Table 1). These figures are fairly consistent with those of 2011.

Table 1. *In a typical week, what percentage of your time do you spend in the following activities? Total must equal 100%.*

Activity	% of time	
	2011 ^a	2013 ^b
Direct treatment (individual)	67	73
Direct treatment (group)	4	1
Clinical documentation (reports, progress notes)	18	20
Other activity	11	6

Note. From 2011 and 2013 ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys. Percentages have been rounded.

^a*n* = 2,264; ^b*n* = 1,663.

Activities by Health Care Setting

In 2013, the percentage of time SLPs in health care settings spent in a typical week providing direct treatment to individuals ranged from 67% in pediatric hospitals to 77% in skilled nursing facilities (data not shown in any table). In 2011, it ranged from 64% in pediatric hospitals to 70% in home health.

In 2013, the percentage of time SLPs spent in a regular week providing direct treatment to groups ranged from 1% in skilled nursing facilities and home health to 3% in rehabilitation hospitals. In 2011, it ranged from 1% in general medical hospitals to 6% in skilled nursing facilities.

In 2013, the percentage of time SLPs spent in a regular week preparing clinical documentation ranged from 17% in skilled nursing facilities to 23% in general medical, long-term acute care (LTAC), and pediatric hospitals. In 2011, it ranged from 16% in rehabilitation hospitals and skilled nursing facilities to 20% in general medical and pediatric hospitals.



Age Groups Served

SLPs in health care settings provided clinical services to a variety of age groups. In 2013, they spent more than half (60%) of their clinical services time with adults and 39% with infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children (see Table 2). These figures are largely consistent with those of previous years.

Table 2. *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	% of time				
	2005 ^a	2007 ^b	2009 ^c	2011 ^d	2013 ^e
Infants and toddlers	14	16	15	16	15
Preschoolers	15	13	14	13	13
School-age children	12	12	12	12	11
Adults	59	60	59	59	60

Note. From 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013 ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys. Percentages have been rounded. ^a*n* = 1,923; ^b*n* = 2,229; ^c*N* = 1,897; ^d*n* = 2,246; ^e*n* = 1,686.

Age Groups Served by Health Care Setting

In 2005–2013, SLPs in general medical hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, and skilled nursing facilities spent most (at least 80%) of their clinical services time with adults (data not shown in any table). In contrast, SLPs in pediatric hospitals spent most (at least 98%) of their clinical services time with infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children.

SLPs from home health spent most (at least 64%) of their clinical services time with children, especially infants and toddlers. SLPs in outpatient clinics and offices spent most (at least 74%) of their clinical services time with children, especially preschoolers and school-age children.



Adult Services

In 2013, SLPs in health care settings spent most of their adult services time on swallowing (42%), followed by aphasia (16%) and dementia (15%; see Table 3). These figures are largely consistent with those of previous years.

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	% of time				
	2005 ^a	2007 ^b	2009 ^c	2011 ^d	2013 ^e
Accent modification/communication effectiveness	—	1	1	1	1
Aphasia	17	17	17	17	16
Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)	—	—	—	3	3
Cognitive communication: dementia	—	—	11	13	15
Cognitive communication: traumatic brain injury (TBI)	—	—	8	8	8
Other cognitive communication	—	—	3	3	2
Motor speech	8	8	7	7	7
Swallowing	45	46	45	42	42
Voice/resonance	7	5	6	5	6
Other area	3	2	2	2	2

Note. From 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013 ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys. Percentages have been rounded.

Dash indicates item was not included in survey.

^a*n* = 1,374; ^b*n* = 1,598; ^c*N* = 1,279; ^d*n* = 1,528; ^e*n* = 1,148.

Adult Services by Health Care Setting

In 2005–2013, SLPs in general medical hospitals spent more than half (at least 57%) of their adult services time on swallowing (data not shown in any table).

In 2009–2013, SLPs in rehabilitation hospitals spent more of their time (at least 19%) on TBI than did SLPs in other health care settings. SLPs in skilled nursing facilities spent more of their time (at least 21%) on dementia than did SLPs in other health care settings.

From 2005–2013, SLPs from home health spent most of their time on swallowing (at least 35%), cognitive communication (at least 20%), and aphasia (at least 19%). SLPs in in outpatient clinics and offices spent more of their time (at least 12%) on voice/resonance than did SLPs in other health care settings.

Pediatric Services

In 2013, SLPs in health care settings spent most of their pediatric services time on language (38%), followed by articulation-phonology (24%), and swallowing and feeding (15%; see Table 4). These figures are largely consistent with those of previous years.

Table 4. *Of the time that you spend providing pediatric services, approximately what percentage is spent in the following areas? Total must equal 100%.*

Area	% of time				
	2005 ^a	2007 ^b	2009 ^c	2011 ^d	2013 ^e
AAC	—	—	—	5	6
Articulation-phonology	25	24	24	26	24
Cognitive communication	14	14	13	8	8
Fluency	3	3	3	3	3
Language	36	35	37	38	38
Prevention/wellness	—	1	1	2	1
Swallowing and feeding	16	17	16	15	15
Voice	—	—	—	—	2
Resonance	—	—	—	—	1
Other area	3	3	3	2	2

Note. From 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013 ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys. Percentages have been rounded. Dash indicates item was not included in survey.

^a*n* = 1,034; ^b*n* = 1,189; ^c*N* = 955; ^d*n* = 1,149; ^e*n* = 818.

Pediatric Services by Health Care Setting

In 2005–2013, SLPs in general medical hospitals and pediatric hospitals spent more of their pediatric services time (at least 30%) on swallowing and feeding than did SLPs in other health care settings (data not shown in any table). SLPs in rehabilitation hospitals spent more of their time (at least 21%) on cognitive communication than did SLPs in other health care settings.

SLPs from home health spent more of their time (at least 44%) on language than did SLPs in other health care settings. SLPs in outpatient clinics and offices spent most of their time on language (at least 38%) and articulation-phonology (at least 28%).



Children With Autism

In 2013, overall, children with autism accounted for 15% (median) of the pediatric caseload of SLPs in health care settings (see Table 5). This figure varied somewhat from those of previous years (20% for 2011 and 6% for 2009).

Children With Autism by Health Care Setting

In 2013, the median percentage of children with autism on the pediatric caseloads of SLPs in health care settings ranged from 0% in general medical or LTAC hospitals to 25% in outpatient clinics and offices. These figures differed slightly from those of previous years.

Table 5. *Children with autism account for what percentage of your pediatric caseload?*

Health Care Setting	%					
	2009 ^a		2011 ^b		2013 ^c	
	mean	median	mean	median	mean	median
Overall	16	6	22	20	22	15
General medical hospital ^d	6	0	14	10	11	0
Rehabilitation hospital	5	0	18	10	17	1
Pediatric hospital	18	10	25	20	21	10
Skilled nursing facility	4	0	6	0	<i>n</i> < 25	<i>n</i> < 25
Home health/client's home	16	10	23	20	20	15
Outpatient clinic or office	26	20	28	20	28	25

Note. From 2009, 2011, and 2013 ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys. Percentages have been rounded.

^a*N* = 1,109; ^b*n* = 994; ^c*n* = 844; ^dIn 2013, this item was "General medical or LTAC hospital."



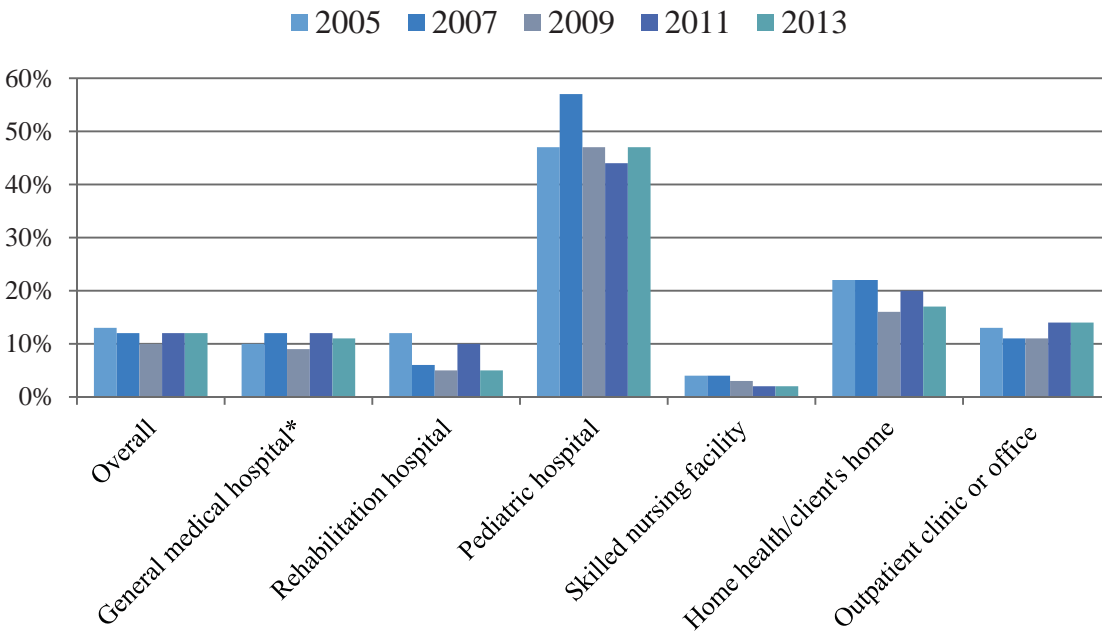
Primary Swallowing Services

In 2013, a small percentage (12%) of survey respondents reported that professionals other than SLPs were providing primary swallowing services in their respective facilities (see Figure 1). This figure is largely consistent with those of previous years (12% for 2011, 10% for 2009, 12% for 2007, and 13% for 2005).

Primary Swallowing Services by Health Care Facility

In 2013, the percentage of respondents reporting that professionals other than SLPs were providing primary swallowing services in their respective facilities ranged from 2% in skilled nursing facilities to 47% in pediatric hospitals. These figures are fairly consistent with those of previous years.

Figure 1. Percentage of respondents answering “yes” to the question “In your facility, do any professionals other than SLPs provide primary swallowing services (e.g., assessment, treatment, or instrumental studies)?”



Note. From 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013 ASHA SLP Health Care Surveys. Percentages have been rounded.

*In 2013, this item was “General medical or LTAC hospital.”

n = 1,943 (2005); *n* = 2,224 (2007); *N* = 1,894 (2009); *n* = 2,288 (2011); *n* = 1,896 (2013)

Survey Response Rate

The survey was mailed in February 2013 to a random sample of 4,000 ASHA-certified SLPs who were employed in health care settings in the United States. Settings included general medical or LTAC hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, pediatric hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies and clients' homes, and outpatient clinics and offices. An e-mail reminder was sent a week later. Second (March) and third (April) mailings followed, at approximately 3- or 4-week intervals, to individuals who had not responded to earlier mailings.

The sample was a random sample, stratified by type of facility and by private practice. Small groups, such as pediatric hospitals, were oversampled. Therefore, weighting was used when presenting data to reflect the actual distribution of SLPs in each type of facility within ASHA.

Of the original 4,000 SLPs in the sample, 1 was deceased, 10 were retired, 4 had bad addresses, 133 were employed in other types of facilities, 20 were not employed in the field, and 5 were ineligible for other reasons, leaving 3,827 possible respondents. The actual number of respondents was 2,048, resulting in a 53.5% response rate.

Past SLP Health Care Survey response rates were: 54.6% (2005); 63.8% (2007); 54.6% (2009); and 62.5% (2011).

Suggested Citation

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2013). *SLP Health Care Survey report: Caseload characteristics trends, 2005–2013*. Available from www.asha.org.

Additional Information

Companion survey reports are available on the ASHA website at www.asha.org/Research/memberdata/HealthcareSurvey/.

Questions?

For additional information regarding this report, please contact Gennith Johnson, associate director of Health Care Services, at 800-498-2071, ext. 5681, or gjohnson@asha.org; Monica Sampson, associate director of Health Care Services, at ext. 5686 or msampson@asha.org; or Janet Brown, director of Health Care Services, at ext. 5679 or jbrown@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.

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 public. Thank you!