



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: Speech and Language Telepractice Services

Introduction:

The Speech and Language program is a consultative model delivered by Speech Language Pathologists and Communicative Disorder Assistants who are employees of the Lambton Kent District School Board. (Speech and Language Services A-SE-304).

In the event of extenuating circumstances, such as an extended school closure (i.e. due to pandemic), the Lambton Kent District School Board may offer some telepractice speech and language service through a live interactive video conferencing software platform that meets the privacy and security standards approved by the LKDSB Information Technology Department.

The College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO) defines telepractice as "the application of telecommunications technology to deliver professional services at a distance". This service delivery model is supported by CASLPO.

Telepractice is viewed as a mode of delivery of health care services, not a separate form of practice. There are no legal prohibitions to using technology in the practice of speech language pathology if the practice is done by an Ontario licensed practitioner. The standard of care is the same whether the patient is provided service in person, through telepractice or by other methods of electronically enabled health care.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) Speech and Language staff may use an email address provided by the parent/guardian to share speech and language information regarding their child. The Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) will have a conversation with the parent/guardian about the type of information that the parent/guardian is comfortable having shared by email (i.e. assessment or progress report, asking and answering questions, home suggestions, etc.) prior to use. The result of this discussion will be documented in the student's speech record. All LKDSB email containing confidential information will be encrypted per instructions provided by the LKDSB IT Department. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the email account is protected on their end as well. LKDSB cannot fully guarantee the security/confidentiality of email communication.

In addition, the LKDSB's speech and language team will also make available home programming materials and suggestions to identified families as determined through collaboration with school-based teams. The students' family will indicate their interest in these materials and will be given access to them through a secure electronic means once email correspondence has been confirmed. This programming will be based on specific speech and language goals and will be updated on a weekly basis with an ending date to be determined by the speech language team. The speech and language team will be available to provide some support and feedback about the materials that have been provided.

Speech and Language staff will address the following discussion points with the parent/guardian prior to use of email during provision of speech and language services:

- Does parent/guardian wish to communicate via email (telepractice service cannot go ahead without use of email).
- What type of information is parent/guardian comfortable with sharing-scheduling of meetings, initiation of telepractice session, assessment and or progress reports, asking and answering questions, suggestions for home programming support, etc.
- LKDSB cannot fully guarantee the security of email transmission (i.e. viruses, auditing of system, hacking, loss of portable device, etc.)
- Parent/guardian must immediately inform SLP if their email address changes.
- Parent/guardian has the right to rescind the use of email on request.
- Parent/guardian is responsible to ensure no unwanted access to email at their end by use of passwords, etc.

Procedures for Teletherapy / Telepractice:

1. Speech and Language Team will connect with Resource Teachers to discuss which parents/guardians to contact regarding feedback meetings, programming, or other supports offered by the Team.
2. SLP/CDA will initiate initial contact with parent/guardian - LKDSB staff phone numbers will be blocked as per LKDSB protocol if needed.
3. After verbal consent is received, the SLP/CDA we will email the parent the “Email and Telepractice Informed Consent” document (Appendix A), the parent will email it back or verbal consent can be discussed with the parent and documented in the student’s file.
(Parent/guardian expectations are outlined on the Informed Consent for Speech and Language Department Use of Email and Telepractice Service – Appendix A)

TELETHERAPY	TELEPRACTICE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Parent is emailed a schedule of date(s)/time(s) for their session(s)/meeting(s). 5. A secure meeting link is emailed to the parent, using an encrypted email through Outlook. 6. SLP/CDA will sign into the meeting <i>before the parent</i> 7. SLP/CDA will hold the session/meeting with the student and/or parent. 8. LKDSB Staff will wait for all attendees to leave the meeting. 9. SLP/CDA will delete the meeting after all attendees have left. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The LKDSB Staff Member will share appropriate documents with Parents, via Google Drive using the approved LKDSB guidelines. 5. Parent can email CDA/SLP with questions about activities in the folder or about other ways to work with their child to achieve their speech and language goals.

Implementation Date: April 29, 2020

Revised: October 1, 2020

Reference: LKDSB Procedure - Speech and Language Services A-SE-304

**APPENDIX A****Informed Consent for Speech and Language Department Use of Email and Telepractice Service**

Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) speech and language staff may use an email address provided by the parent/guardian to share speech and language information regarding their child. The Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) will have a conversation with the parent/guardian about the type of information that the parent/guardian is comfortable having shared by email (i.e. assessment or progress report, asking and answering questions, home suggestions, etc.) prior to use. The result of this discussion will be documented in the student's speech record. All LKDSB email containing confidential information will be encrypted, as per guidelines provided by the LKDSB IT Department. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the email account is protected on their end as well. LKDSB cannot fully guarantee the security/confidentiality of email communication.

The College of Audiologist and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO) defines telepractice as "the application of telecommunications technology to delivery of professional services at a distance". This service delivery model is supported by CASLPO, our licensing college.

Telepractice is viewed as a mode of delivery of health care services, not a separate form of practice. There are no legal prohibitions to using technology in the practice of speech language pathology if the practice is done by an Ontario licensed practitioner. The standard of care is the same whether the patient is provided service in person, through telepractice or by other methods of electronically enabled health care.

In addition, the LKDSB's speech and language team will also make available home programming materials and suggestions to interested families. The students' family will indicate their interest in these materials and will be given access to them through a secure electronic means once email correspondence has been confirmed. This programming will be based on specific speech and language goals and will be updated on a weekly basis with an ending date to be determined by the speech language team. The speech and language team will be available to provide some support and feedback about the materials that have been provided.

Due to the closure of schools as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, LKDSB may be offering some telepractice speech and language service through the live interactive video conferencing software platform Google Meet. A student and/or their parent/guardian may connect over the internet by a link provided through an email from the LKDSB SLP/Communicative Disorders Assistant (CDA). The SLP/CDA will then admit the client to the meeting when services are ready to be provided. The SLP/CDA and the student and parent/guardian will then be able to see and hear each other in real time. The SLP/CDA will be able to provide services as determined by the speech language team.

Our business agreement with the Google Meet platform incorporates software security measures that meets the LKDSB security standards. Should you require more information about the privacy features of the platform, please enquire via your SLP/CDA.

Parent/Guardian acknowledges the following when providing informed consent for telepractice speech and language service:

1. All components of the original informed consent signed by parent or guardian remain in place regarding protecting confidentiality, and risk and benefit of service.
2. That "telepractice" includes treatment using interactive audio, video, or data communications. I understand that telepractice also involves the communication of my health and personal information, both orally and visually.
3. That the standard of care is the same whether the student is provided service in person or through telepractice and that I will be notified immediately if it is determined that this delivery model is not appropriate for the student.

4. That I have the right to withhold or withdraw consent to participate in telepractice at any time without it affecting my child’s access to future treatment but that the treatment may not be available through LKDSB at this time.
5. That my child’s personal and health information may be shared with CDAs and school staff involved with your child for the purposes of implementing a student’s intervention plan and that these individuals involved will at all times maintain confidentiality of the information obtained and the laws that protect privacy and confidentiality of information equally apply to telepractice.
6. That I am responsible for providing the necessary computer, telecommunications equipment (camera and microphone) and internet access for my telepractice sessions.
7. That as an adult facilitator/helper, I will be required to be present in the room for assisting with technical difficulties or keeping a student on task if teletherapy is the form of service determined by speech language staff.
8. That I am responsible for arranging a quiet location with sufficient lighting and privacy that is free from distractions or intrusions for the telepractice session to take place in. I recognize that private health information could be discussed during the session and that I am responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of that information by having a private space.
9. That I will not record the session in either video or audio formats.
(The telepractice session will not be recorded. A record of the session will be maintained in the same way ‘in person’ sessions are documented in accordance with our policies.)
10. I am aware that the SLP /CDA is only able to provide services while my child is within the province of Ontario.
11. That I am responsible for keeping my passwords safe and limiting access to my device or computer to only those who require access.
12. That there are benefits, risks, and possible consequences associated with telepractice including:
 - a) Benefits – support for development of my child’s language and communication skills.
 - b) Risks – include and not limited to, the possibility, despite reasonable efforts on the part of LKDSB, that: the transmission of my information could be disrupted or distorted by technical failures; that there is a remote possibility that the transmission of my information could be interrupted by unauthorized persons; and/or the electronic storage of my health information could be accessed by unauthorized persons.

Student Name: _____

School: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

An email containing this information was sent to the parent/guardian on _____ at the following email address _____ at the request of the parent/guardian.

Parent/guardian verbally agrees that they have understood the information provided and that all questions/concerns they may have at this time have been answered to their satisfaction.

Speech Language Pathologist signature Date



Informed Consent for Speech and Language Department Use of Email

Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) speech and language staff may use an email address provided by the parent/guardian to share speech and language information regarding their student. A speech and language staff member will have a conversation with the parent/guardian about the type of information that the parent/guardian is comfortable having shared by email prior to use (i.e. reports, covid-19 screen, asking and answering questions, home suggestions, etc.). The result of this discussion will be documented. All LKDSB email containing confidential information will be encrypted, as per guidelines provided by the LKDSB IT Department. It is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to ensure that the email account is protected on their end as well. LKDSB cannot fully guarantee the security/confidentiality of email communication.

Parent/Guardian acknowledges the following when providing informed consent for email communication as part of their student’s speech and language service:

1. All components of the original informed consent signed by parent or guardian remain in place regarding protecting confidentiality, and risk and benefit of service.
2. That parent/guardian has the right to withhold or withdraw consent for the use of email to communicate speech and language information at any time without it affecting the student’s access to future speech and language support.
3. That the student’s personal and health information may be shared with CDAs and school staff involved with the student for the purposes of implementing the student’s intervention plan. These individuals involved will at all times maintain confidentiality of the information obtained and the laws that protect privacy and confidentiality of information.
4. That the parent/guardian is responsible for keeping their passwords safe and limiting access to their device or computer to only those who require access.
5. That there are benefits, risks, and possible consequences associated with the use of email including:
 - Benefits – support for development of the student’s language and communication skills.
 - Risks – include and not limited to, the possibility, despite reasonable efforts on the part of LKDSB, that the transmission of the student’s information could be disrupted or distorted by technical failures, that there is a remote possibility that the transmission of the student’s information could be interrupted by unauthorized persons, and/or the electronic storage of the student’s health information could be accessed by unauthorized persons.

Student Name: _____
 School: _____
 Parent/Guardian Name: _____

An email containing this information was sent to the parent/guardian on _____ at the following email address _____ at the request of the parent/guardian.

Parent/guardian verbally agrees that they have understood the information provided and that all questions/concerns they may have at this time have been answered to their satisfaction.

 Speech-Language Pathologist

 Date