



NEMMLDC APPROACH TO SPEECH PATHOLOGY SERVICE DELIVERY

DESCRIPTION & DEFINITION OF SERVICES

NEMMLDC speech pathologists provide specialised speech and language services to support students with speech, language and literacy impairments. Support may be provided at the whole school, cohort, class, small group or individual level. Services may be provided directly to students or through consultation with families and educators.

Levels of Support

The NEMMLDC Speech Pathology service delivery model follows the 'Response to Intervention' model, a best practice model for the provision of speech pathology services in schools. This model is delivered within the context of the most effective evidenced based, teaching and learning practices and prescribes multiple tiers (waves) of service provision:

Wave 1: Supporting Oral Language and Literacy Development across the School: High-quality, evidence-based teaching and learning that supports oral language and literacy development across the school. Support at this level may be also focussed on a cohort or individual class.

Wave 2: Small Group Differentiated Instruction: A group of students from within or across NEMMLDC classes who require more intense focus and specialisation and differentiation of a particular learning goal.

Wave 3: Individualised Intensive Intervention: A NEMMLDC student with more intensive or chronic needs is provided with specialised therapeutic intervention.

Service Type

The approach to speech pathology service delivery within the NEMMLDC is supported by research, which has demonstrated that:

- classroom based services may be as effective as withdrawal intervention (Cirin et al, 2010)
- effective speech pathology service delivery in schools needs to move beyond traditional student withdrawal methods to a more facilitative and consultative model to meet the needs of the greatest number of students
- speech pathologists should be recognised as essential providers in the educational team (SPA, 2010, pp.6-7)
- educators benefit from speech pathologist delivered coaching (Namasivayam, et al., 2015)
- when effectively trained, parents can be as effective as speech pathologists in delivered specific types of intervention (Hanen, 2016).

The types of speech pathology services delivered within the NEMMLDC are:

1. **Capacity building services:** Services that occur whenever the NEMMLDC speech pathologist works with a teacher, education assistant, parent, or other individual involved in the educational program.
2. **Direct services:** Services that are provided by the speech pathologist while in direct contact with NEMMLDC student/s.

Each type of support offers unique advantages for reaching specific goals, however there is a particular focus on building the skills and capacity of NEMLDC staff so that they can effectively address the need of all NEMLDC students.

Table 1: Summary of capacity building speech pathology services delivered within the NEMLDC.

SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
Whole school language and literacy programming	The NEMLDC speech pathologist plays an active role in the development of the school's vision and shared goals around speech, language and literacy development. Current research drives the ongoing development and review of effective whole school oral language learning programs.
Teacher consultation	Regular meetings between priority teaching staff and speech pathologists occur to support planning for effective delivery of the oral language and literacy programs.
In class observations and feedback	With the purpose of providing feedback regarding an individual student, groups of students or teaching staff, or to evaluate of the overall language learning environment, the NEMLDC speech pathologists conducts in class observations. The purpose is clear to all parties and feedback is immediate.
In class modelling	The NEMLDC speech pathologist may provide short term modelling to a teacher, parent or education assistant of a specific assessment or intervention strategy. The purpose of the modelling is clear to all parties prior to modelling and feedback is immediate.
Caregiver training and consultation	With the aim of empowering parents, parent training workshops are held regularly. The NEMLDC speech pathologist participates in individual case conferences with families as needed.
External service provider consultation	The NEMLDC speech pathologist regularly initiates and responds to communication with relevant parties providing outside services and agencies such as paediatricians, physiotherapist, occupational therapists, social workers and community speech pathologists.

Table 2: Summary of direct speech pathology services delivered within the NEMLDC.

SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
Assessment	Speech and language skills of students are assessed as needed by the NEMLDC speech pathologist using both formal and informal assessments. Assessment data is used to establish student learning goals, evaluate progress or to seek information that will support transition.
Group intervention	The NEMLDC speech pathologist may deliver intensive, specialised intervention for small groups of students considered at risk. The primary purpose of this service is to administer targeted remedial instruction or trial specific intervention techniques or approaches.
Individual intervention	When it is determined by the administration team that it is the most appropriate and effective service delivery option, the NEMLDC speech pathologist may provide therapeutic, individualised intervention to students. The intervention goals are clearly defined prior to the commencement of therapy. Families and teachers are aware of and, where possible, involved in the intervention program.

SERVICE SELECTION AND ALLOCATION

The speech pathology service delivery within the NEMLDC is dynamic and changes with the needs of the staff, students and their families. In selecting and directing the type, location and amount of service the NEMLDC administration team considers:

- professional learning needs of NEMLDC staff in line with the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*
- the priority areas of the school, as outlined in the NEMLDC Business Plan
- expertise and skills of individual speech pathology team members
- individual student characteristics including complexity of case, response to intervention and level of performance or progress
- research surrounding the most effective service type according to the nature and severity of the language deficit.

SERVICE QUALITY & EVALUATION

Regular performance management of speech pathology staff ensures standards in competency across several dimensions are maintained. The NEMLDC speech pathologist continues to develop skills through ongoing professional learning, including accessing professional learning activities, engaging in professional reading, peer consultation and coaching.

The effectiveness of the NEMLDC speech pathology service is underpinned by regular evaluation, which is supported by annual data collection and research. Student performance data is maintained and analysed with the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of individual and group intervention, and the oral language and literacy learning programs. Feedback from teaching staff, caregivers and NEMLDC administrators is routinely sought and analysed following the delivery of professional learning workshops and presentations.

The NEMLDC supports relevant external research and undertakes internal research to determine the efficacy of a specific intervention strategy or approach.