

Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations **Q & A**

What is the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations?

- The Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations is a formal collaborative agreement between professional associations ensuring that resources are pooled to effectively address priorities for our professions. Pooled resources provide more power in numbers as well as ideas, finances, connections, resources, etc.
- Only professional associations can effectively lobby for client services and jobs for professionals.
- Within Canada, provincial and national associations have different jurisdictions when it comes to influencing the nature and availability of speech, language and hearing services. These powers are complementary so that the national and provincial/ territorial organizations need to work together to achieve the maximum benefits for members. Working together also minimizes duplication of services, projects, etc.
- The Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations therefore, ensures that collectively we are best able to make the case for increased service and resource requirements for the communicatively impaired.
- Finally, in a rapidly changing world, the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations helps ensure that we can proactively plan for our professional futures, rather than reacting to crises as they arise.

I'm still not clear on the role of CASLPA, the role of the provinces/territories and the role of regulatory bodies. Can you please clarify this for me?

CASLPA is the national association representing the interests of speech-language pathologists and audiologists. CASLPA's focus is on national programs and activities, certification, international agreements, lobbying at the federal level, liaising at the national level with other national health/education associations, national conference, online learning, professional journal, etc.

Provincial/Territorial Associations represent the interests and unique needs of speech-language pathologists and audiologists within their respective province/territory. They lobby governments on funding and legislative issues at the provincial level, provide a forum for communication within the province/territory, they communicate with media, health care professionals, and other provincial/territorial professional associations and consumer organizations that share an interest in health and educational needs relating to communication and they provide some continuing education.

The purpose of the **regulatory bodies/colleges** is to regulate the professions, in the public interest, and to govern their respective members in accordance with the Regulated Health Professions Act in their province.

How is the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations better or different than CASLPA or my provincial association? Aren't they just providing these same services?

The best way to illustrate this is through an example:

Health care providers are the backbone of Canada's health care system. Planners and policy makers need timely and accurate information to ensure a continued supply of providers offering appropriate services to all Canadians. Our Provincial and Territorial associations each need to lobby and make their Ministers of Health aware of our professions and stress the importance of being included in this data collection. CASLPA can then use this aggregate data to lobby federal governments and work collectively with the members of the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations on an advocacy campaign that would target both provincial/territorial and federal levels of government on the same issue.

The Federal Government is influenced to a great extent by the provincial/territorial committees – for both education and health. We need a mechanism/coalition/alliance to be able to facilitate collaborative efforts on priority areas for our members to be able to have maximum influence. Each of us doing it on our own will have little or no effect. I know it sounds cliché – but together we CAN make a difference.

We believe the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations can make this difference.

This example could be a lobbying issue for school-based speech-language pathologists, audiologists in private practice or any work setting.

Doesn't CASLPA have provincial representatives on the Board who can do the same thing?

CASLPA does have provincial representatives on their board – but they do not represent their respective provincial associations. (i.e., BCASLPA, OSLA, PEISHA, etc.) They obtain feedback and bring provincial/territorial experience and expertise to the national board table- to make *national* decisions. The provincial/territorial associations are the only ones who can represent the provincial/territorial needs of S-LPs and Auds in their respective provinces/territories.

Why do we have to formalize collaboration with the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations? Why can't we just agree to collaborate?

- Experience with all associations has demonstrated that unless collaboration is formalized, i.e. planned, it will not occur. Good intentions are not enough. Agreed upon plans and goals can be implemented, even when volunteers leaders turn over.
- Current examples of formalized agreements exist everywhere in our globalized world, i.e. NATO, the European Common Market, NAFTA, Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT), etc.
- Collaboration enhances the chance of successful outcomes. We have experienced this through our work on the National Coalition on Noisy Toys and HEAL (Health Action Lobby – which is a group

of 30 national health organizations that lobby government collectively on key areas of mutual concern)

- Among the current Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations members, the amount of collaboration and communication is many, many times more extensive than it ever was before – and promises to become even greater. It is important to highlight here that this collaboration and communication has occurred between all members of the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations.
- The Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations meets by teleconference 2-3 times per year and once per year in conjunction with the CASLPA conference – thus minimizing expenses.

What are the Roles of the Presidential Representatives of the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations?

The Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations Agreement defines the roles of national and provincial/ territorial organizations as unique, autonomous and complementary within Canada. As such, this formal collaborative agreement supports an open, team-oriented approach to pursuing the best interests of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists and their respective clients across Canada. With this perspective, below we define the unique roles for members of the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations.

Role of the Presidential Representatives of the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations:

- They help define, prioritize and implement the objectives set at the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations meetings.
- They could help to:
 - ◇ implement national media, governmental and public relations strategies and
 - ◇ coordinate nation-wide public relations initiatives, by bringing shared media to the respective provinces/territories to educate the public about the vital roles Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists play to further the well-being of Canadians.
- They support ongoing communication processes among the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations to help improve planning and coordination of initiatives.
- They share materials, i.e. brochures, guidelines, position papers, etc., for the collective benefit of the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations.
- They recommend improvements to enhance the collaborative relationships of the agreement.
- Each president gets one vote, therefore the voices are equal (including CASLPA).

What is the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations currently working on?

1. Client/Service Waitlists
2. Incidence of Speech, Language and Hearing disorders
3. National Human Resources Forum (recruitment & retention of S-LPs and Audiologists)
4. Supportive personnel in S-LP and Audiology

Since there are different definitions for waitlists, definitions used in various provinces/territories will be collected and shared so that the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations can agree on which one they prefer.

How does the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations differ from joint membership?

Joint *membership* is an agreement between CASLPA and a province/territory to harmonize the collection of membership fees for full, reduced and student membership categories. Current provinces that have a joint membership agreement requiring 100% of their members to belong to both CASLPA and their provincial territorial association include: PEI, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Yukon and the Northwest Territories. These provinces receive the following benefits from CASLPA:

- CASLPA collects the annual membership fees and remits the provincial/territorial portion to the province/territory (members only have to renew with one association);
- CASLPA provides \$400 per year towards Directors' and Officers' liability insurance when purchased through CASLPA's provider;
- CASLPA provides complimentary registration for the provincial/territorial president to attend the CASLPA conference; and
- CASLPA invites the provincial/territorial president to a complementary volunteer development session held in conjunction with the CASLPA conference.

The Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations does not require mandatory membership between CASLPA and the province/territory. The Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Associations focuses on priority activities that meet the collective, current and future needs of our professions.