

Speech Pathology · Preschool stuttering: a father's worry about 'slowing down'

SPK-SPE-01 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Community health centre, paediatric speech pathology clinic

You are a speech pathologist. Leo, aged 3, started stuttering about four months ago, and you completed his initial assessment last week. His stuttering is mild to moderate, with repeated sounds and words and some blocks, and his language skills are otherwise developing well. His father, Mr Alejandro Fuentes, has come back without Leo to discuss the results. At the assessment you noticed that Mr Fuentes often told Leo to 'slow down and take a breath' and finished his sentences for him.

Interlocutor: PARENT

Your tasks

1. Find out how the stuttering affects Leo day to day and how the family respond when he stutters
2. Explain the outlook for stuttering in young children (many children recover; effective early treatment is available)
3. Advise Mr Fuentes on more helpful ways to respond (e.g. giving Leo time, not finishing his sentences, not telling him to slow down)
4. Reassure Mr Fuentes that he has not caused the stutter and respond to his concerns
5. Agree a plan for treatment or monitoring, including review

Speech Pathology · Speech sound errors and a request to 'cut the tongue-tie'

SPK-SPE-02 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Private paediatric speech pathology clinic

You are a speech pathologist. Last week you assessed Amira, aged 4, who was referred by her preschool teacher. She has a speech sound disorder, mainly replacing /k/ and /g/ with /t/ and /d/ (for example, 'tup' for 'cup'). You noted a mild tongue-tie, but her tongue movement for speech looked adequate. Her mother, Ms Abena Barbieri, has come back to discuss the results and start therapy, but she has asked for a letter supporting tongue-tie surgery instead.

Interlocutor: PARENT

Your tasks

1. Find out what Ms Barbieri has heard about tongue-tie and why she prefers surgery
2. Explain in simple terms why the tongue-tie is unlikely to be causing Amira's speech errors (sounds made at the back of the tongue)
3. Persuade her of the benefits of speech therapy (weekly sessions, short daily home practice)
4. Respond to her concerns about time and commitment
5. Agree a plan for therapy and next steps if she still wants a medical opinion about the tongue-tie

Speech Pathology · Parkinson's disease: intensive voice therapy and the time commitment

SPK-SPE-03 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Hospital outpatient speech pathology department

You are a speech pathologist. Mrs Jing Ghani's mother, aged 80, has had Parkinson's disease for six years. Her voice has become very quiet and the family struggle to hear her. You assessed her last week and recommended an intensive voice treatment programme: four 1-hour sessions a week for 4 weeks, plus daily home practice. Mrs Ghani, who works full-time and would have to drive her mother, has asked to speak with you before agreeing.

Interlocutor: RELATIVE

Your tasks

1. Find out how her mother's quiet voice is affecting daily life and what concerns Mrs Ghani has about the programme
2. Explain why the treatment is delivered intensively (frequent sessions, daily home practice, building a habit of a louder voice)
3. Respond to her doubts about whether the effort is worthwhile for a progressive condition
4. Discuss practical ways to make attendance manageable (e.g. session times, sharing the driving, transport options)
5. Agree a plan for starting the programme

Speech Pathology · Aphasia after stroke: a frustrated husband

SPK-SPE-04 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Home visit, community rehabilitation service

You are a speech pathologist with the community rehabilitation team. Mr Khoa Phan, aged 65, is the husband and main carer of a 63-year-old woman who had a left-hemisphere stroke three months ago. She has moderate expressive aphasia, but she understands simple sentences relatively well. At your last visit you noticed that Mr Phan asks her to repeat words correctly before he responds. She has started to withdraw from conversation.

Interlocutor: CARER

Your tasks

1. Find out how communication is going at home and how Mr Phan is coping (daily conversations, his wife's withdrawal and mood, his own wellbeing)
2. Explain in simple terms what expressive aphasia is (a language difficulty, not a lack of effort or intelligence)
3. Explain communication strategies that can help (allowing time, short sentences, yes/no questions, gesture, writing, pictures)
4. Respond to his belief that she could speak properly if she tried harder, and persuade him to try a different approach
5. Agree a plan for home communication and therapy practice, and arrange follow-up (including any further support needed)

Speech Pathology · Dysphagia after stroke: refusing thickened fluids

SPK-SPE-05 | Original simulated candidate card

Setting: Hospital ward, stroke rehabilitation unit

You are a speech pathologist. Mr Bongani Andreou, aged 78, had a stroke ten days ago. A videofluoroscopic swallow study (a swallowing X-ray) three days ago showed that thin fluids enter his airway without him coughing, so he has been prescribed mildly thick fluids. The nurses report that he has been asking visitors to bring him ordinary tea and has said he will drink what he likes.

Interlocutor: PATIENT

Your tasks

1. Find out Mr Andreou's views on his thickened drinks and what he has been drinking (how he feels about them, how much he drinks, visitors bringing tea)
2. Explain the results of his swallow X-ray in simple terms (thin drinks going into the airway, why no cough does not mean he is safe, what thickened drinks can and cannot do)
3. Respond to his anger and reassure him that the thickened drinks are intended to be reviewed as his swallow recovers
4. Discuss ways to make the thickened drinks more acceptable to him
5. Agree a plan (drinking enough, drinks from visitors, mouth care, review of his swallowing)