



PERSPECTIVES OF EXPERTISE FROM NEW ZEALAND

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The Speech-language therapy (SLT) community in New Zealand (NZ) is culturally and linguistically diverse with a mix of NZ and overseas-trained therapists. With a Mutual Recognition Agreement in place between Canadian and NZ registration bodies, insights from the NZ community will add to understanding of internationally educated health personnel.

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PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

Our study aimed to capture perceptions of professional expertise amongst the speech-language therapy community in New Zealand. It may shed light on whether, and what, experts and expertise contributes to the workforce.

FINDINGS/IMPACT/OUTCOMES

Preliminary analysis of results suggests that SLTs were broadly aligned in their view of experts at a national and local level, being those who are highly knowledgeable in the anatomy, physiology and functioning of the swallow and are highly experienced in a clinical area. Many therapists were strongly of the view that current clinical practice is an essential element of expertise, whilst only 4 participants identified having a PhD as being a element they valued. Over half the respondents mentioned experts as having a strongly client-centred approach, with an ability to work with complexity. Providing evidence-based, clinically relevant and functional advice/ training were also commonly mentioned. Therapists were positive in their views of NZ-based experts, often mentioning that being approachable and available was important.

CONCLUSIONS

Further analysis and interpretation of results is required before conclusions can be drawn, but this study is the the first to address the concept of expertise amongst the SLT community in NZ. Future studies will explore the behaviours and practices of community-identified experts through a critical, professional development lens.