



Speech-Language &
Audiology Canada
Communicating care

2020

ANNUAL REPORT



Introduction

SAC is the only national organization supporting and representing speech-language pathologists, audiologists and communication health assistants inclusively. Through this support, we champion the needs of people with communication disorders.

Vision



Ensuring all people of Canada achieve optimal communication health.

Mission



Supporting and empowering our members and associates to maximize the communication health for all.

Values

- ✓ **Accountable** - Board decisions are fiscally responsible and transparent.
- ✓ **Evidence-based** - Decisions based on the best available information and research.
- ✓ **Inclusive** - The diversity of members' and associates' cultures, locations and practices are considered.
- ✓ **Member-driven** - Decisions reflect the priorities of members and associates.
- ✓ **Responsive** - The strategic plan allows flexibility to respond to new opportunities and to minimize the impact of external challenges.
- ✓ **Visionary** - Decisions are guided by long-term needs of members, associates and the public, and informed by social and political forecasts and trends.



**Jennifer O'Donnell,
M.Sc., S-LP(C),
CCC-SLP**

SAC Chair 2020

A message from the SAC Board Chair

The year 2020 was full of new directions for SAC. I was excited to be able to step back into my role as Chair and welcome our new CEO Dawn Wilson. Dawn brings a range of executive leadership experience in the non-profit and private sectors to SAC. Prior to joining the SAC family, Dawn served as Executive Director at the Canadian Association of General Surgeons, Colon and Rectal Surgeons, and the Canadian Hernia Society. It was my pleasure to onboard our new CEO and an honour to continue leading our Board, including six new directors, through 2020. In the process, the leadership team developed a new onboarding presentation for directors that is also beneficial to staff.

In serving SAC this past year, the Board worked on various initiatives to advance the association. The global pandemic provided us with the additional challenge of doing so remotely, more so than usual (given our pan-Canadian composition), embracing change and innovation.

Unfortunately, this ongoing global challenge disrupted our Speech & Hearing Month campaign and in-person conferences. Thank you to volunteers and staff who dedicated time and effort to these endeavours! One of our priorities for 2021 will be to find ways to resume delivery of these hallmark events and campaigns through online media.

The past year also involved work to redefine the Canadian Entry-to-Practice (CETP) Exams for Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. Board directors maintained SAC's commitment to moving toward an association with a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture and assisted with essential preparatory work to achieve that goal. SAC has partnered with an outside firm to create short- and long-term strategies to help define, nurture and sustain a vibrant and diverse culture.

As always, SAC continued to listen to our members and associates. We rely on your input regarding your needs to shape the direction of the association and our efforts. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic yielded challenges, changes and uncertainty for all of us and you shared your needs with SAC. We are proud to have been able to collaborate with many front-line members and associates to nimbly provide information, tailored resources and links as additional supports.

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A message from the SAC Board Chair (Continued)

The involvement and contribution of our SAC student associate population is wonderful. Students' resilience and dedication in the pursuit of their studies and advancement into the professions, despite the turbulent challenges presented in the past year, is remarkable. Dawn, our CEO, and the Board are committed to supporting students through established scholarships, awards and initiatives as well as considering additional ways to do so.

The ongoing advocacy work SAC does for our professions is achieved through participation in numerous national and international committees and partnerships. As an active participant and frequent leader, SAC continues to advance awareness of communication health and our professions. Participation around the Health Action Lobby (HEAL) table and with the Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Professional Associations (PCA) ensures audiology and speech-language pathology issues are elevated to the national agenda for consideration in health and education policy discussions across Canada.

I see 2021 as a year of positive transformation as we continue to adjust to and be inspired by an ever-changing world. I am confident that SAC, as our national professional association, will continue to support members and associates with the connections and customized resources, tools and professional development needed to anticipate and navigate the challenges and opportunities that await us.

Sincerely,

Jenn O'Donnell
SAC Board Chair 2020



Dawn Wilson, CAE

SAC Chief Executive Officer

A message from our CEO

It was truly an honour for me to join SAC in late June 2020. As someone who has a passion for working in healthcare, I have enjoyed learning about the rich work done by SAC members and associates and understanding the impact of the care you provide across the lifespan. What has become even clearer to me is the critical role SAC members and associates play to support the communication health of so many people in multiple settings across the country. Personally, I have been touched by hearing loss in my family and have seen the impact of communication disabilities firsthand. I am committed to continuing to raise the profile of the work of our member professions with government, the public and other stakeholders.

Starting a new role in the middle of a pandemic was no easy feat. 2020 was a year like no other in recent history. Despite working remotely, I placed tremendous emphasis on supporting SAC staff members to ensure they were equipped to continue to deliver important products and services to you. I work with an extremely dedicated team and they are integral to our success. Getting to know them has been a pleasure and a privilege and, I am grateful for the support of the SAC Board, countless volunteers, members and associates and our team.

I am especially proud of the ongoing support we provided in the face of COVID-19 by delivering regular and timely updates to allow you to stay ahead of issues and information. We hope these updates have helped you to navigate the many issues you have faced during this most challenging time.

Although speech-language pathology members were unable to meet in person at our conference in May 2020, SAC quickly adapted to deliver content in an online format to continue to meet your needs. I hope that we will be able to return to in-person events in 2022 following the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines this year.

2020 was a pivotal year with the delivery of the first ever Canadian Entry-to-Practice (CETP) Exams for the professions of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. Despite a very uncertain landscape with the onset of the pandemic, we were able to hold the exam in November 2020. Future exams will be taking place twice per year starting in 2021.

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A message from our CEO (Continued)

In 2020, it became clear that SAC needed to implement organizational wide changes to support equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). We engaged with HRx, a well-respected Canadian organization, and thought-leader in EDI. They are working with SAC on a comprehensive EDI audit with the aim of delivering a data-driven strategy. This strategy will provide a roadmap for structural and systemic changes to address inequities and provide an inclusive environment for all stakeholders. I am looking forward to delivering this plan in the coming year.

I am also pleased to advise that in 2021 SAC will engage in a new strategic plan. Our current plan was developed in 2016 and, as we know the world is now a very different place. Our strategic plan will be developed with multi-level stakeholder feedback and will also be informed by the member survey we sent out in the Spring of 2021. I look forward to sharing our next member focused strategic plan when ready.

If there is one thing I want each of you to know about me, it is that I am passionate in the work that I do for SAC, and my priority every day is to be member facing and member focused. My work with SAC has made me increasingly aware that life is impossible without communication.

Sincerely,

Dawn Wilson, CAE
SAC Chief Executive Officer

Activities in 2020 were driven by our 2016-2020 Strategic plan

1. Promote

communication as a basic human right by advocating for access to optimal communication health services and supports across the lifespan.

2. Champion

professional excellence and quality in service delivery.

3. Establish

Speech-Language & Audiology Canada as the central hub for communication health in Canada.

4. Ensure

a resilient and sustainable Speech-Language & Audiology Canada.

“The World Health Organization declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020, and a pandemic on 11 March 2020.”



COVID-19

**COVID-19
UPDATE**

Information for
SAC members
and associates

The pandemic had a significant impact on the personal and professional lives of SAC members and associates. SAC quickly developed COVID-19 resources and supports in response to the needs of our membership.



20 COVID-19
Updates in 2020



4 Official
Statements



5 Info
Sheets



Community of
Practice for Front-
line Professionals



COVID-19 webpages

Professional
Resources

Federal
Government

Advocacy

Insurance
Information

Maintaining
Mental
Health

2020 Speech-Language Pathology Conference

“The SAC Executive Committee made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Speech-Language Pathology Conference in Ottawa.”



10 conference presentations were offered as webcasts or webinars from April to June

COVID-19 Webinar Series

7
telepractice
webinars

2 general
knowledge
webinars

In light of the COVID Pandemic and the disruption on Clinical Placements, SAC worked to support student associates.



Call for clinical educators to support student clinical placements

SAC engaged in advocacy about:

Aerosol generating
procedures



Transparent masks

High risk of COVID-19
mortality among
individuals with
developmental
disorders



Access to COVID-19
vaccines



Financial support for
private practitioners

Inclusion of coverage
for telepractice
audiology services by
third-party payers



Communication as a
basic human right

Pandemic pay
for S-LPs and
audiologists in
Ontario

Commitment to Diversity

SAC engaged in a comprehensive diversity, equity and inclusivity audit.



Findings of this engagement, along with a reinforced commitment statement and action plan, will be released in 2021



STRATEGY



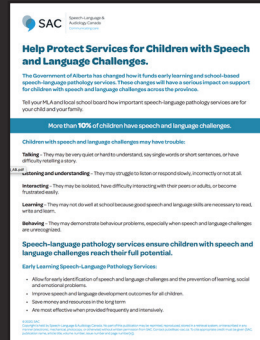
Promote communication as a basic human right by advocating for access to optimal communication health services and supports across the lifespan.



ADVOCACY

FEDERAL ADVOCACY

- Minister of Employment
- Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion Statistics Canada



PROVINCIAL ADVOCACY

- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Ontario
- Saskatchewan



CANADIAN ADVOCACY PARTNERS

- Canadian Coalition on Adult Hearing Health
- Canadian Coalition for Public Health in the Twenty-first Century (CCPH21)
- Canadian Infant Hearing Task Force (CIHTF)
- Extended Healthcare Professionals Coalition (EHPC)
- Federal Healthcare Partnership (FHP)
- Health Action Lobby (HEAL)
- Hearing Health Alliance of Canada (HHAC)
- Pan Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Professional Associations (PCA)



NEW SPEECH & HEARING MONTH RESOURCES



3 INFO SHEETS



2 POSTERS

STRATEGY

2

**Champion
professional
excellence and
quality in service
delivery.**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

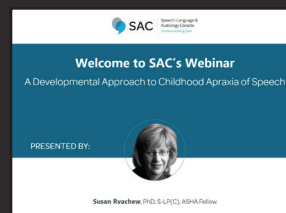
MOST VIEWED WEBCAST

**SAC Telepractice Webcast:
Teletherapy - Not As Scary As
You Think! by Chelsey Chichak**



MOST VIEWED S-LP WEBINAR

**Developmental Approach to
Childhood Apraxia of Speech
by Susan Rvachew**



MOST VIEWED AUDIOLOGY WEBINAR

**Tinnitus in Canada: How
Audiologists Can Step Up to the
Challenge by Dany Pineault**



5,050

**registered participants for
SAC online professional
development events.**

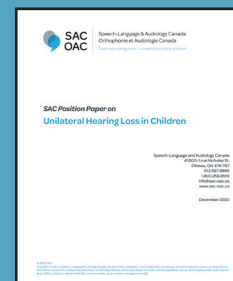
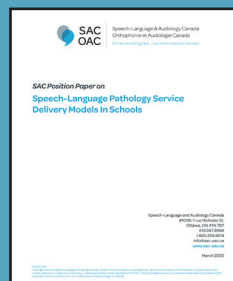
8,943

**views of webcasts through
SAC's webcast library**

171

**webcasts in the SAC's
webcast library**

2 POSITION PAPERS



CERTIFICATION



Final SAC Certification
Exam on
March 7, 2020



4,809
certified members



NEW CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

SAC Certification is recognized and well-respected in Canada and internationally. In 2020, SAC introduced Provisional Certification in place of the SAC Clinical Certification exam. SAC modernized its approach to certification to allow members to attain their S-LP(C) and Aud(C) designation through continuing education as well as to identify areas of Professional Interest. SAC Certification is a voluntary program and not a requirement for membership, however most members choose to pursue certification to demonstrate their commitment to life-long learning.

CANADIAN ENTRY-TO-PRACTICE (CETP) EXAMS

CETP Exams AUD/SLP

CANADIAN ENTRY-TO-PRACTICE EXAMS FOR
AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

The CETP Exams – AUD/SLP are the Canadian Entry-to-Practice Exams for the professions of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. Successful completion of the CETP Exams – AUD/SLP is one of the criteria required for registration/licensing purposes in many Canadian regulated jurisdictions. SAC is the owner of the CETP Exams – AUD/SLP and is responsible for their development and administration.



First CETP Exams – AUD/SLP
November 21, 2020



58
exam candidates

The CETP Exams – AUD/SLP were held in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador.





SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

87

applications for SAC
Scholarships



\$4,865

donated by SAC members and
associates to help support
SAC's Clinical Research Grants,
Scholarships and CJSIPA

24

scholarships were awarded
in 2020 worth \$32,000



1

SAC Clinical Research
Grant awarded

**4 AWARDS GIVEN
TO 10 MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES**



Canadian Journal of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (CJSLPA)



The Canadian Journal of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (CJSLPA) is a peer-reviewed, online journal of clinical practice for audiologists, S-LPs and researchers. Its publication is made possible by SAC.



Volume 44
was published in 2020



12 Articles
were published in total

4

clinical focus articles

7

research articles

1

tutorial article

STRATEGY

3

**Establish Speech-
Language & Audiology
Canada as the central hub
for communication health
in Canada.**

TWITTER

3.35%

increase in Twitter
followers in 2020

334

tweets mentioning
@SAC_OAC in 2020

209

new followers
in 2020

19.3K

average impressions/
month in 2020

TOP TWEETS



SAC | OAC @SAC_OAC

May 14 is Apraxia Awareness Day! In honour of that, we've developed a one-stop-shop to share all of SAC's apraxia-focused resources -

<https://tinyurl.com/y93pquel>

[#communicateawareness](#)

[#apraxiaawarenessday](#)

pic.twitter.com/XIGSHVX2WS

SAC | OAC @SAC_OAC

Did you know that reading difficulties are primarily language-based? Language & literacy skills are vital to child development and S-LPs use early identification and intervention to help kids at risk for reading disorders More info: <https://tinyurl.com/y6wrw4fc>

[#communicateawareness](#)

FACEBOOK

7,944
total followers



7,880
likes in 2020

TOP POSTS



INSTAGRAM

919

total followers
(523 more than
in 2019)



20

new posts
in 2020

TOP POSTS



TOP 9



LINKEDIN

7,103

LinkedIn
followers



2,864

visits to LinkedIn page
from April 1, 2020 to
March 31, 2021.



STRATEGY

4

**Ensure a resilient
and sustainable
Speech-Language &
Audiology Canada.**

MEMBERSHIP



6,828

total SAC members and
associates



91.5%

of SAC membership
renewed



78

career development program
mentor/mentee pairings



501

student associate new grads
became SAC members or
associates



SAC has members in

34

countries around the globe



432

members and associates

THANK YOU

We'd like to thank the members and associates who continued their support of SAC, as well as those who generously gave their time to help SAC support our membership community. Despite being an unprecedented year, your ongoing contributions have made 2020 one to be proud of. Thank you to every single one of you who helped make it all possible.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR

Jennifer O'Donnell, S-LP(C)

1ST VICE-CHAIR

Jennifer Cameron-Turley, S-LP(C)

2ND VICE-CHAIR

Darin Quinn, S-LP

DIRECTOR

Andrea Bull, Aud(C)

DIRECTOR

Christine Santilli, Aud(C)

DIRECTOR-Communication Health Assistant

Gillian Purdy, Communication
Health Assistant

DIRECTOR-STUDENT

Keara Boyce, S-LP Student

DIRECTOR

Loredana Cuglietta, S-LP(C)

DIRECTOR

Merrill Tanner, S-LP(C)

DIRECTOR

Shari Linde, S-LP(C)

DIRECTOR

Sharon Walker, S-LP(C)

DIRECTOR-UNIVERSITY

Susan Wagner, S-LP(C)