



SAC

Speech-Language
& Audiology Canada

Communicating care

2021 Annual Report

MISSION

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

VISION

Ensuring all people of Canada achieve optimal communication health.





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Shari Linde,
M.Sc., RSLP, S-LP(C)
2021-2022 SAC Chair

Chair Message

Despite all of the challenges faced as a result of the pandemic, 2021 has been a great year for SAC. I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish thanks to the work of SAC volunteers and staff.

One major accomplishment over the past year was the development of SAC's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, which will guide our association over the next three years. I would like to thank all of you who took the time to participate in our surveys and consultations over the past year that assisted us in developing the plan.

As part of the strategic planning process, the SAC Board of Directors also took the opportunity to update the association's mission and vision statements. We know that the scopes of practice of speech-language pathologists (S-LPs), audiologists and communication health assistants continue to evolve. It is important that SAC's mission and vision evolve as well to reflect not only

the strategic direction of the association but also the diversity of practice within our professions.

Another highlight for me over the past year has been SAC's focus on developing stronger working relationships with provincial and regulatory bodies, including discussions that led to our recent amalgamation with OSLA. We truly are stronger when we all work together. I look forward to further collaboration with provincial associations across Canada in support of their provincial advocacy priorities and building an advocacy presence in provinces such as Alberta and Saskatchewan that lack a provincial speech-language pathology and audiology association.

"We truly are stronger when we all work together."

-Shari Linde

One of SAC's strengths is its focus on developing programs and services that support a wide range of members and associates. As the owner of a private practice and long time SAC member, I appreciate the much-needed support and information SAC provides to those in private practice. Including:

- Access to a comprehensive Personal Liability Insurance program
- Availability of a variety of FREE professional development (critical for many members who do not have access to continuing education funds through an employer)
- Availability of communities of practice or specific interest groups/working groups, allowing members to collaborate with other professionals across the country

- Access to the ASHA journals and CINAHL database for those needing more specific information on topics or interest or need

I know through my work on the board of directors that SAC will continue to adapt to the changing needs of the professions and look for new ways to support the membership and address emerging professional issues.

Ultimately, SAC is YOUR association and it is through your continued support that we are able to achieve all we have over the past year.



Shari Linde,
M.Sc., RSLP, S-LP(C)

2021-2022 SAC Chair





Dawn Wilson, CAE
Chief Executive Officer

CEO Message

2021 marks my first full year as CEO of Speech-Language & Audiology Canada. It is privilege to serve such passionate professionals and to advocate on a daily basis for the importance of access to speech-language pathology and audiology services across the country.

While the continuing pandemic meant we had to cancel our in-person SAC Audiology Event, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to travel to BC for Speech and Hearing BC's annual conference. It was wonderful to have the chance to meet so many of our members and associates in-person.

This past year has very much been a building year for SAC leading up to the launch of our new strategic plan in early January. The feedback we received through the 2021 SAC Membership Survey and equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) consultations in spring 2021 on the challenges facing the professions in Canada and our role as your national professional association was extremely important in shaping our strategic priorities as an association and helping SAC staff develop new programs and services. Thank you to everyone who took the time to participate.

As the professions evolve it is important that we at SAC evolve as well. We recently hired SAC's first Manager of Government Relations to increase our advocacy presence across the country. We also added two new audiology advisors to assist in the development of SAC resources and official documents.

I am proud in particular of the steps we have taken over the past year to continue to support federal advocacy. We participated in many meetings with government officials in support of our 2021 advocacy priorities:

- Development of a national study on speech-language pathology services for children and adolescents
- Participation in the federal government's development of national standards for long-term care

- Increased profile with governments for speech language pathologists (S-LPs), audiologists and communication health assistants

In addition to our three core advocacy priorities we met with government officials at the federal and provincial level on topics related to COVID-19 and other professional issues. In the sections below, we have highlighted some of this work, as well as new professional resources to support members and associates in their own advocacy efforts.

Over the past year we also held discussions with the Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (OSLA) regarding the opportunity to merge their association into SAC in order to prioritize advocacy and help grow the voice of our professions with government and continue to raise the profile of our professions with the public. Ontario members voted overwhelmingly in favor of dissolving OSLA to help advance these goals. This work builds on our ongoing collaboration

with provincial associations across the country to support their advocacy priorities. I look forward to further collaboration in 2022.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you who have reached out to me directly over the past year to share your thoughts on issues facing the professions and our work as an association. I want to stress how important it is to me to hear directly from the membership on how our team at SAC can best support you. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at: dawn@sac-oac.ca and I hope to have the opportunity to meet with you in-person in the near future.



Dawn Wilson, CAE

Chief Executive Officer

"It is privilege to serve such passionate professionals and to advocate on a daily basis for the importance of access to speech-language pathology and audiology services across the country."

-Dawn Wilson





Special Message

SAC's 2021 projects and initiatives were very much driven by our current operating environment, including the impact COVID-19 has had on our members and associates and staff.

We have continued to develop resources for members and associates during this time despite the challenges of working remotely, less cohesively and during a difficult time for most people in the face of the ongoing pandemic. This is thanks in large part to the work of SAC staff and volunteers. We would like to acknowledge in particular the work of our 2020–2021 SAC Ad-Hoc and Standing Committees:

- SAC Appeals Committee
- SAC Awards & Recognition Committee
- SAC Clinical Research Grants Committee
- SAC Education Committee
- SAC Nominations Committee
- SAC Scholarships Committee
- SAC 2022 Speech-Language Pathology Conference Working Groups
- Audiology CETP Exam Committee
- Audiology Event Advisory Group
- Audiology Item Writers Workgroup
- Audiology Services in Long-Term Care Working Group
- Speech-Language Pathology Services in Long-Term Care Working Group
- Virtual Care Position Paper Ad-Hoc Committee
- Speech-Language Pathology (S-LP) Caseload and Workload Issues In Schools Ad Hoc Committee
- S-LP CETP Exam Committee
- S-LP Item Writers Workgroup
- S-LP Management of Dysphagia Across the Lifespan Ad Hoc Committee
- The Role of Speech-Language Pathologists in Long-term Care Ad Hoc Committee

"The quality and depth of SAC's work has been truly remarkable, and I know how much time and effort has been involved in the delivery of each offering. Additionally, you have maintained your steadfast support of future clinicians through it all. You have truly demonstrated your value under ridiculous conditions this year."

-SAC member



1. Professional Excellence

SAC champions professional excellence through our SAC Clinical Research Grants, SAC Professional Development opportunities and our SAC Certification Program.



Highlights:

SAC Professional Development Program

4,612

registrations for SAC online PD events

5,877

views of SAC Webcasts

2021 Audiology Event Webinar series

8

Webinars

338

attendees

38

SAC Webinars

- Most popular SAC Speech-Language Pathology Webinar: Criteria and Crucial Conversations About DLD – Part One
- Most popular SAC Audiology Webinar: Hearables and In-Ear Technologies Roadmap Unveiled: Can We End Noise-Induced Hearing Loss in Workers?

2021 Awards and Recognition Program Winners

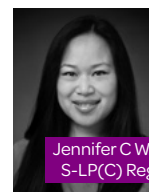
- Eve Kassirer Award for Lifetime Achievement



M. Kathleen Pichora-Fuller

- CJSLPA Editor's Award

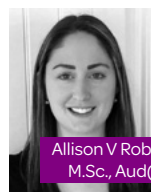
- Pandemic Planning for Hospital-Based Speech-Language Pathologists: Emerging Lessons from Coronavirus Disease



Jennifer C Wong, MHS, S-LP(C) Reg. CASLPO

- National Clinical Certification Exam Award

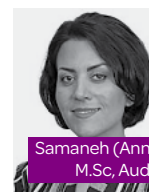
Final recipients for this award



Allison V Robbins, M.Sc., Aud(C)



Marissa Woods, BA, MSc, RSLP, S-LP(C)



Samaneh (Anna) Yekta, M.Sc, Aud(C)

1. Professional Excellence



Delivered in 2021
as a webinar series



Jérémie Voix
MS, M.A.Sc, PhD, P. Eng.

May 11, 2021 @ 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. (ET)



Hearables and In-Ear Technologies Roadmap Unveiled: Can
We End Noise-Induced Hearing Loss in Workers?

2021 SAC Clinical Research Grant Recipients

- Rina Dulku: *Cultural Humility and Cultural Safety in Early Intervention Services for Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and their Families: Perspectives from Parents and Practitioners*



Rina Dulku

SAC Certification

207

SAC members completed
Provisional Certification and
became SAC Certified

190

SAC members enrolled
in Provisional Certification
for 2022

300

SAC members in Cycle A
declared a professional
interest area for 2022



"I just watched the recording of the SAC Webinar; Culturally Responsive Practices for S-LPs Working with Trans/GNC Patients, Clients & Students Across Settings and wanted to thank you for hosting this wonderful presentation."

-SAC member

"This series has been fantastic. Thank you so much for the time and hard work you have put into making such a diverse and high-quality set of webinars."

-SAC member on SAC Audiology Event webinar series

2. Advocacy

SAC advocates for communication as a basic human right and for access to speech-language pathology and audiology services across the lifespan.

Highlights:

Raising the profile of the Professions

- Hiring SAC's first Manager of Government Relations
- Establishing a dedicated advocacy presence in Alberta and Saskatchewan
- 2021 World Hearing Day Webinar ["Starting the Conversation: What the WHO World Report on Hearing Means for Canada"](#) to mark the release of the World Report on Hearing.
- [Official Statement on Speech-Language Pathology Services in Medical Assistance in Dying](#)
- [Pre-budget submission](#) to the Standing Committee on Finance focused on improving access to speech-language pathology and audiology services across Canada.
- Participation by speech-language pathology and audiology members in the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS) [Assessment on Autism](#).
- [Participation in the Canadian Health Workforce Network to help inform Health Human Resource Planning](#)

Long-term care

- Meetings with the Federal Minister of Health's Office, the Federal Minister of Senior's Office, and the Health Standards Organization to highlight the importance of including speech-language pathology and audiology services in the new national standards for long-term care.
- [Technical Brief on the Role of the Professions in Long-term Care](#)
- Participation in the Health Standards Organization's development of Canada's new National Long-Term Care Standard.



2. Advocacy

Speech-language pathology services for children and adolescents

- Meetings with the Public Health Agency of Canada: to discuss the impacts of childhood speech, language and literacy challenges on children's health outcomes as well as opportunities for ongoing collaboration.
- [Official Statement of Evidence-Based Speech-Language Pathology Practice in Schools](#)
- [Position Statement on Learning a Second Language in the Context of Language Disorder](#)
- [Information Graphic on the role of S-LPs in Schools](#)
- Meetings with Alberta's Deputy Minister of Education and Assistant Deputy Minister of Program and Systems Support to raise concerns about the province's Special Education Coding criteria.

Work with coalitions and like-minded groups

- **HEAL, Organizations for Health Action Participation** – SAC participated in the **HEAL Covid-19 Taskforce** which met biweekly with the office of the Minister of Health on areas of concern such as redeployment, access to PPE, COVID recovery and mental health issues and burnout in healthcare workers. Through the taskforce, SAC met with politicians and key decision makers including the Minister of Health and parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Health. SAC also endorsed a HEAL statement on mandatory vaccination for healthcare workers.
- **Federal Healthcare Partnership (FHP)** – SAC, in collaboration with the Canadian Academy of Audiology, hosted a virtual FHP meeting in May. The FHP includes Veterans Affairs Canada, Medavie Blue Cross, the Department of National Defence, the RCMP, Non-Insured Health Benefits (Indigenous Services Canada) and BC's First Nations Health Authority. SAC, used this opportunity to share questions and concerns from SAC members with the group. The question and answer document can be found here.
- **Canadian Infant Hearing Task Force (CIHTF)** – met with officials from the federal Ministry of Health and the Public Health Agency of Canada about the need for standardized hearing health services for all infants in Canada. As a result, the CIHTF has applied to the Intersectoral Action Fund for support to examine the social determinants of infant hearing health care in Canada. The taskforce has also written a joint position statement with cCMV Canada on the need for increased infant screening for cCMV across Canada.



2. Advocacy

- **Canadian Coalition for Adult Hearing Health** – continued its work to develop a webinar to provide family physicians with information on how to assist patients with issues related to hearing loss, and grow referral pathways through family physicians to audiologists.
 - **International Communication Project** – recently provided a [submission](#) to the 24th session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to highlight the impact of communication disabilities on work and employment.
 - **Hearing Health Alliance of Canada** – continued its work to address the needs of people in Canada with hearing health challenges and encourage the federal government to develop a national hearing health strategy.
 - **Extended Healthcare Professions Coalition** – focused efforts on the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and advocated for priority access to vaccines for healthcare workers. SAC has worked closely with the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association (CLHIA) and our fellow members of the Extended Healthcare Professionals Coalition (EHPC) on the need to support healthcare providers in providing information on private insurance.
 - **Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association** – released a [new guide](#) to support providers of health services covered through private health insurance plans. The guide is intended to help healthcare providers understand the private health insurance environment so they can in turn help their patients understand the services they receive through their insurance plan.
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"I also wanted to share some positive feedback with you regarding the school S-LP documents SAC has produced recently. My S-LP colleagues and I were able to use those documents in my school district to successfully advocate for a new S-LP position being added to our team. I feel this is monumental in a time where across Canada S-LPs in schools are being devalued and jobs and programs cut."

-SAC member regarding new additions to SAC's S-LPs in Schools Toolkit



3. Professional Resources

SAC is committed to producing evidence-based professional resources to guide the work of our members and associates.

Highlights:

2022 Speech and Hearing Month

65

entries to the Kids Contest

NEW

Social Media and Resource toolkits

4

new resources



Information Sheet on Sudden Sensorineural Hearing Loss (SSNHL) as part of Speech and Hearing Month

Public Awareness Poster on Aphasia as part of Speech and Hearing Month

Poster Promoting the Work of Communication Health Assistants as part of Speech and Hearing Month

Covid-19 resources

- » Updated information sheet on the use of N-95 masks
- » Official Statements on [vaccination against COVID-19](#), and Speech-Language Pathology Services in [Healthcare](#) and [Schools](#) During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- » Collaboration with like-minded associations on [Rehabilitation for Clients with Post COVID-19 Condition \(Long COVID\): Guidance for Canadian Rehabilitation and Exercise Professionals](#)



"I just wanted to say a huge THANK YOU for publishing this position statement. It is research-based, well-worded, easily read, and contains content that is easily shared with others. This was really needed!"

-SAC member regarding the Learning an Additional Language in the Context of Language Disorder position statement.



4.

Strength as an Association

SAC invests in programs and services to support our members and associates throughout their career.

Highlights:

Membership

6,959

Total Members and Associates for 2021, a 12% increase!

63

SAC Career Development Program Mentorship pairings

- [Completion of 2021 SAC Membership Survey](#)
- Launch of [SAC Connects](#), our online engagement platform allowing you to form meaningful connections with SAC members and associates across the country.
- [2 NEW KIDSPEECH™ Scholarships](#) - KIDSPEECH™ Doctoral Scholarship and Travelling Fellowship
- SAC Audiology Leadership Scholarship

147

Applications to [SAC's Scholarship Program](#)

\$3,430

donated by SAC members and associates as part of our 2021 membership renewal campaign

Welcome to SAC Connects

Collaborate with peers to share strategic advice, solve challenges and develop new approaches.

[Learn More](#)



Explore

Discover communities to enrich your experience and learning opportunities.

[More](#)



Connect

Find others with whom you may seek advice and share common challenges.

[More](#)



Engage

Join in discussions with your peers and industry leaders to expand your knowledge.

[More](#)



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- Insight Survey sent out to the membership
- Interviews and Focus Groups with diverse cross-section of the membership
- Results of the consultations used to develop an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report for SAC
- EDI training for SAC staff and volunteers

Canadian Journal of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

4

Issues

20

Published manuscripts

"I really appreciate SAC coordinating this program, as I believe it benefits new professionals as well as those of us mentoring them. I learn things every time!"

-Audiology Mentor

"I can't say enough good things about this mentorship. Thank you so much for pairing me up with my mentor!"

-S-LP Mentee



5. Social Media

Top Facebook Post

As we lead up to Speech & Hearing Month, we'd like to recognize three SAC members who have been making great strides in revolutionizing the way educators teach reading!

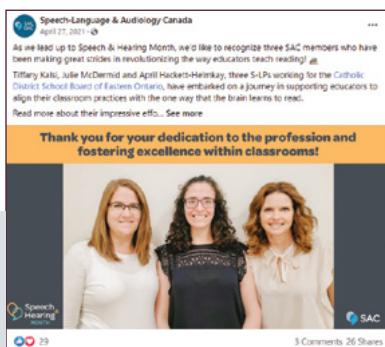
Tiffany Kalsi, Julie McDermid and April Hackett-Helmkay, three S-LPs working for the [Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario](#), have embarked on a journey in supporting educators to align their classroom practices with the one way that the brain learns to read. Read more about their impressive efforts on [SAC's Communiqué Blog](#).

Top Tweet

Speech & Hearing Month has arrived! We're thrilled to begin our annual celebration of S-LPs, audiologists and communication health assistants. An announcement is coming tomorrow - keep an eye out! In the meantime, check out the website to see what's new:

speechandhearing.ca

pic.twitter.com/hPyseQ030M



5. Social Media

Top LinkedIn Post

Did you know humans swallow between 500–700 times each day?

Swallowing is an essential part of everyday life, and countless people are affected by swallowing difficulties, which is why bringing attention to Swallowing Awareness Day is so important.

The theme for Swallowing Awareness Day 2021 is “Dysphagia: A Difficult Diagnosis to Swallow”, emphasizing swallowing disorders and highlighting the importance of speech-language pathologists and how they can help people with these disorders. Dysphagia is a swallowing disorder, meaning a difficulty or inability to swallow and can include problems swallowing, eating/drinking, sucking, etc.

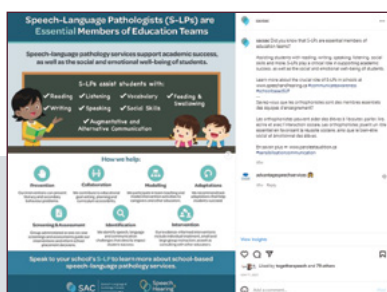
Click here: <https://bit.ly/30OPxgl> to learn more about Swallowing Awareness Day and visit <https://lnkd.in/egSnK9> to learn about the vital role S-LPs play in helping those with Dysphagia. [#dysphagia](#) [#SwallowAware2021](#)

Top Instagram Post

Did you know that S-LPs are essential members of education teams?

Assisting students with reading, writing, speaking, listening, social skills and more, S-LPs play a critical role in supporting academic success, as well as the social and emotional well-being of students.

Learn more about the crucial role of S-LPs in schools at the link in our bio. [#communicateawareness](#) [#schoolbasedSLP](#)



2021–2022 SAC Board of Directors

Thank you to our 2021–2022 Board of Directors for their leadership over the past year, in particular their work in developing SAC's 2022–2025 Strategic Plan.

- > Shari Linde, Chair
- > Darin Quinn, 1st Vice-Chair
- > Loredana Cuglietta, 2nd Vice-Chair
- > Andrea Bull, Director
- > Christine Santili, Director
- > Merrill Tanner, Director
- > John Hillier, Director
- > Patty Matsuo, Director
- > Kelly Root, Director
- > Susan J. Wagner, Director-University
- > Gillian Purdy, Director-Communication Health Assistant
- > Lisa Nguyen, Director-Student

Looking to the Future

We are proud of what we have been able to accomplish over the past year with your support and are excited for 2022, including the launch of a new SAC web presence, changes to improve our membership database and new projects based on the objectives and strategies outlined in our [2022–2025 Strategic Plan](#).