



Speech-Language & Audiology Canada
Orthophonie et Audiologie Canada
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COLLEGE OF SPEECH-LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGISTS AND AUDIOLOGISTS
OF SASKATCHEWAN

July 3, 2025

Saskatchewan Medical Association
201 – 2174 Airport Drive
Saskatoon, SK
S7L 6M6

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of Speech-Language and Audiology Canada (SAC) and the College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists of Saskatchewan (CSASK), we are writing to request a letter of support from the Saskatchewan Medical Association regarding an important joint initiative of public interest.

SAC is the only national association in Canada representing approximately 7,000 Speech-Language Pathologists (S-LPs), Audiologists and Communication Health Assistants. We champion the needs of people with communication, swallowing, hearing and balance disorders.

CSASK is the regulatory body for all Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists in Saskatchewan. The college's mission is to license and regulate the competent, safe and ethical practice of audiology and speech-language pathology in the province.

In mid-2024, SAC and CSASK partnered with the Canadian Association of Audiology (CAA) and convened a working group of S-LPs and Audiologists from across Saskatchewan to work on a business case regarding direct referral to Otolaryngology (ENT).

S-LPs and Audiologists see patients across the lifespan with speech, language, fluency, cognitive-communication, hearing/balance and swallowing disorders. Currently, S-LPs and Audiologists must refer patients with concerning findings—such as eardrum perforations or suspected laryngeal anomalies—to family physicians before an ENT consultation can be initiated. This creates delays, often exacerbated by the shortage of family physicians, leaving patients reliant on crowded emergency rooms or walk-in clinics. In fact, approximately 200,000, or one-in-six Saskatchewan residents lack access to a family physician, further straining the system and delaying essential specialist care.

The Direct Referral Model, already successfully implemented in Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Prince Edward Island and the Northwest Territories, has demonstrated clear benefits. It reduces wait times for ENT consultations, streamlines care pathways, and alleviates the burden on family physicians.

As per the *National [Audiology](#) and [Speech-Language Pathology](#) Competency Profiles*, Audiologists and S-LPs entering practice in Canada must demonstrate the following competencies relevant to this initiative:

- Identify and recommend alternative services for a client whose needs are beyond the professional limitations of the audiologist/speech-language pathologist.
- Refer to other health care or educational professionals as required.
- Facilitate transfer of care within and across professions.

Consult with the appropriate individual(s) and/or organization(s) to obtain available services and resources for the client. We have met with the Division Head of Otolaryngology in Saskatoon, Dr. Russell Murphy, to ensure that the direct referral process meets the needs of these professionals. A letter of support from Otolaryngology for this initiative has also been forwarded to you.

Initial contact was made with the Medical Services Branch of the Ministry of Health, and we intend to submit a business case to support the required regulation changes. To this end, a letter of support from your association would be greatly appreciated. We would be happy to set up a meeting to discuss any feedback or concerns you might have about the direct referral process.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Cameron-Turley, M.Sc., S-LP(C), Reg. SK

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