

2025 Ontario Election Toolkit



SAC

Speech-Language
& Audiology Canada
Communicating care

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Introduction: Ontario 2025 Election

As Ontarians will be heading to the polls on February 27, 2025, this is a **key opportunity for Ontario-based SAC members to advocate for essential policy changes** in communication health services.

Why This Matters

This toolkit is designed to equip members with the tools and information they need to engage with political candidates and advocate for the priorities that matter most to us during this election and onwards.

One of the major topics on SAC's radar is scope of practice expansion for speech-language pathologists (S-LPs) and audiologists. Based on recent meetings and promising communication with the Ministry of Health and CASLPO, we are determined to continue our efforts to elevate the voices and experiences of the professions' and those they serve. Increasing the duties and responsibilities of S-LPs and audiologists in alignment with their core competencies, education, and training will allow the professions to streamline processes and better respond to patient and client needs.

Together, we can advance communication and swallowing health and create a stronger and more effective healthcare system for all.



Scope of practice expansion can enable a positive shift across various areas important to our members:

- Increased funding and resources to support S-LPs, audiologists, and clinical placement students
- Improved access to communication health services in underserved and rural communities
- Increased visibility for the professions and pathways to advocate for integration in interdisciplinary primary care teams
- Expanded access to communication health services in early childhood education and primary school settings

About SAC and Our Advocacy Work

Speech-Language & Audiology Canada (SAC) is the national professional association representing **speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and communication health assistants**. We work to advance the profession and improve access to high-quality communication health services across Canada.

For more information, visit: www.sac-oac.ca

Tips for Effective Advocacy

Step 1: Get Prepared

S-LPs and audiologists play a **critical role** in Ontario's healthcare system by supporting individuals with speech, language, hearing, balance, and swallowing disorders. They work in hospitals, schools, private practices, community-based clinics, long-term care homes, and rehabilitation centers, delivering essential care to **people of all ages**.

Key Advocacy Priorities for the Election



SAC's advocacy efforts for scope of practice expansion focuses on four major areas:

- 1 Direct referrals:** Enabling S-LPs and audiologists to refer patients directly to specialists without requiring physician approval.
- 2 Communicating a diagnosis:** Allowing S-LPs and audiologists to diagnose and communicate specific conditions within their scope of practice and area expertise.
- 3 Controlled acts:** Expanding S-LPs' ability to perform swallowing assessments, instrumental swallowing studies and voice restoration.
- 4 Improving access:** Enhancing service availability in **schools, rural communities, and primary care settings**.

Broader Policy Priorities

In addition to scope of practice expansion, SAC has identified other key **policy priorities in our [2025 Ontario Advocacy Plan](#)** to further support the professions and improve access to communication health services:

Step 2: Identify Your MPP and Candidates & Make Your Voice Heard

Understanding your Member of Provincial Parliament's (MPP) and local candidates party affiliation, policy stance, and committee assignments can help tailor your advocacy. Visit the [Voter Information Service](#) and [Elections Ontario](#) websites for more details and to access helpful resources.

Step 3: Get Involved

Engagement Opportunities

Every interaction is a chance to **educate decision-makers** and **build support** for communication health policy improvements.

- **Letter writing:** *Send a letter or email* to your local election candidates.
- **Meetings with candidates:** Request one-on-one meetings to discuss **communication health priorities**.
- **Town halls and debates:** Attend public forums to ask candidates about their stance on **speech, language, and hearing services**.
- **Networking with campaign staff:** If you cannot speak to a candidate directly, engage with their staff—they can relay your concerns.
- **Social media engagement:** *Share your message on social media* to raise awareness and put communication health on the political agenda.

Questions To Ask Candidates

- What are your priorities for **improving healthcare accessibility** in Ontario?
- Will you support **expanding the scope of practice** for speech-language pathologists and audiologists?
- How will your party **address wait times** and improve access to communication health services?
- What steps will you take to **increase public funding** for speech, language, and hearing services?
- How will your party ensure **children and adults with communication disorders** receive the support they need?

General Best Practices

When engaging with a candidate by letter, email, or at an in-person meeting or event, clearly communicate your policy asks and be prepared to elaborate on how it aligns with the government's commitment to improving healthcare accessibility.

- **Be prepared:** Know your key messages and your “ask” before speaking to a candidate.
- **Be concise:** Stick to two to three key messages for clarity and impact.
- **Make it personal:** Share your professional experiences or patient stories to highlight real-world impact.
- **Share research and evidence regarding your topic.**
- **Remain nonpartisan:** Focus on issues, not political parties.
- **Respect their time:** Meetings are often short, so be professional and to the point.
- **Follow up:** Send a thank-you email and reiterate your key points after your meeting.

By focusing on **clear, actionable requests**, you can **help shape policy discussions** that impact the future of communication health services in Ontario.

Social Media Engagement

Online platforms are great resources for sharing information and messaging about the professions. Here are a few examples of how you can optimize social media during the election:

- Follow election candidates and engage with their posts.
- Share personal stories or experiences that highlight the need for policy change.
- Use hashtags to contribute to larger conversations and connect with like-minded advocates.
- Tag candidates in posts to bring communication health issues to their attention.
- Share SAC's election advocacy posts and encourage colleagues and patients to get involved.

- **Sample Post:** *Ontarians deserve better access to speech, language, and hearing services. Let's expand the scope of practice for S-LPs & audiologists!*
- **Sample Post:** *Long wait times prevent timely care. Expanding scope of practice will help speech-language pathologists and audiologists serve more patients efficiently.*

Letter Writing

Writing an impactful letter or email to your MPP or local candidates is an effective way to **raise awareness about communication health priorities** and **influence policy discussions**.

Here are some key writing tips to ensure your message is clear and persuasive:

- Use a professional and appropriate salutation and format (see chart below)
- Make your letter personal and provide fact
- Include a clear call to action

Salutation Guide

Dignitary	Written Address	Salutation	In Conversation
Premier of Ontario	The Hon. <i>[First Last]</i> , Premier of Ontario	Dear Premier <i>[Last Name]</i>	Premier <i>[Last Name]</i>
Cabinet Minister	The Hon. <i>[First Last]</i> , Minister of <i>[Portfolio]</i>	Dear Minister <i>[Last Name]</i>	Minister <i>[Last Name]</i>
Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP)	<i>[First Last]</i> , MPP or The Hon. <i>[First Last]</i> , MPP (if a cabinet minister)	Dear MPP <i>[Last Name]</i>	MPP <i>[Last Name]</i>
Election Candidate	<i>[First Last]</i> , Candidate for <i>[Party]</i> in <i>[Riding]</i>	Dear <i>[First Last]</i>	Mr./Ms. <i>[Last Name]</i>

Letter & Email Samples

Sample 1

Subject: *Meeting Request: Expanding Communication Health Services in Ontario*

Dear [MPP/Candidate's Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I am a [Speech-Language Pathologist/Audiologist] in [City/Riding]. As a professional in Ontario's communication health sector, I am reaching out to request a meeting to discuss the urgent need to expand the scope of practice for S-LPs and audiologists.

The communication health sector is filled with capable and passionate service providers who care about the health and wellbeing of Ontarians. Expanding scope of practice for the professions will reduce patient wait times and administrative burdens and improve access to underserved communities.

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this topic further. Please let me know a convenient time for a meeting (in person, virtual, or phone).

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Professional Title/Your Contact Information]

Letter & Email Samples

Sample 2

Subject: *Maximizing Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists Capacity in Ontario's Healthcare System*

Dear **[MPP/Candidate's Name]**,

I am writing to you as a professional in the communication health sector to highlight the critical role speech-language pathologists (S-LPs) and audiologists play in improving the health and well-being of Ontarians. We provide essential services and support to people of all ages.

However, current policy limitations prevent these professionals from providing the most timely and efficient care possible. I am seeking your support in expanding the scope of practice for S-LPs and audiologists to:

1. Enable S-LPs and audiologists to provide direct referrals to speciality medicine
2. Enable S-LPs and audiologists to communicate a diagnosis that is in alignment with their scope of practice
3. Include the addition of the authority to perform (4) controlled acts for S-LPs under the RHPA
4. Remove limitations in other statutory provisions, to enable ordering of important resources and activities by S-LPs with appropriate demonstrated competency

These changes will **reduce patient wait times, improve healthcare outcomes, and optimize healthcare resources**. I welcome the opportunity to provide further information and discuss how we can work together to support these changes.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Professional Title/Your Contact Information]

We want to hear from you!

Please send questions and comments to advocacy@sac-oac.ca