Telepractice: Application to Pediatric Feeding Disorder (PFD) Care

Telepractice is the delivery of healthcare services at a distance. Whilst historically viewed as a service model reserved for remote clients, there is increasing evidence supporting the utility of telepractice for a range of clients and circumstances, even in metropolitan settings. Indeed, timely access to pediatric feeding care is critical for children with feeding and/or swallowing difficulties, and telepractice is one potential option to support flexible service access. Whilst the interest and uptake of telepractice increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, many clinicians experienced difficulties with the rapid shift to this service model with limited training and support, and reverted back to their usual practice models when pandemic precautions lifted.

This course will explore the use of telepractice in the context of pediatric feeding disorder (PFD), with particular consideration of the post-pandemic landscape. Learners will gain knowledge of recent evidence regarding assessment and treatment of PFD via telepractice, including insights from the presenters’ own research experiences. The key principles of practice for immediate implementation to clinical care will be discussed, including considerations around safety and PFD-specific risks. This research summary and clinical application will then be applied in context to a recent case study. The presenters will then explore the application of telepractice to different aspects of PFD care, including the provision of training and clinical supervision/tele-mentoring.

**Dr. Jeanne Marshall**

Dr Marshall is a speech pathologist with many years of clinical experience in pediatric feeding and swallowing. She is currently employed in a conjoint senior research fellow role between Children’s Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service and The University of Queensland. Dr Marshall’s research interests include pediatric feeding disorders and dysphagia, particularly education and training, diagnostics, management, and advocacy. Dr Marshall also has a special interest in telepractice. Jeanne also has a passion for research translation and in building the links between research and practice.

Disclosures:
Financial – Dr. Marshall is employed by Children’s Health Queensland Hospital and The University of Queensland and receives a salary. She also receives a salary from The Informed SLP. She receives consulting and speaking fees from Speech Pathology Australia. She received a speaking fee from the AB-SSD for this presentation.
Non-financial – Dr. Marshall is a volunteer teacher for the Trinh Foundation, Vietnam. She’s also a volunteer member for the American Speech-Hearing Association, Speech Pathology Australia, Dysphagia Research Society, and is the Associate Editor for the Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing

**Dr. Madeline Raatz**

Dr Raatz is a speech pathologist with over a decade of clinical experience in pediatric feeding and dysphagia. She has both clinical and research experience in the delivery of pediatric feeding services via telepractice. Her PhD investigated the validity and reliability of using telepractice to conduct pediatric feeding assessments. Dr Raatz’s research interests include pediatric feeding, dysphagia and telepractice.

Disclosures:
Financial – Dr. Raatz is employed by Children’s Health Queensland and receives a salary. She receives grant funding from the Children’s Hospital Foundation. She received a speaking fee from the AB-SSD for this presentation.
Non-financial – She is a volunteer member of Speech Pathology Australia

**Learning Objectives:**
- Discuss key literature and evidence for assessing and treating pediatric feeding and dysphagia via telepractice.
- Identify the key principles of practice in telepractice for pediatric feeding and dysphagia.
- Describe the key principles of practice to a pediatric feeding case study.
- Discuss different ways that telepractice can be integrated into pediatric feeding services.
Agenda:
Introductions and disclosures – 5 min
Background theory – 5 min
Literature summary – 10 min
Considerations in a post-Covid landscape – 10 min
Key principles of practice – 10 min
Case study – 10 min
Flexible use of telepractice to enhance service delivery – 10 min