

Communication Care

If your patient is having difficulty communicating, a **speech-language pathologist** can help by:

- Developing a functional communication system
- Educating caregivers and the health-care team about strategies to support communication
- Troubleshooting hearing aids and providing assistive listening or communication tools and devices
- Facilitating comprehension of prognosis as well as the risks and benefits of treatment options
- Helping the patient express care goals and end-of-life wishes
- Facilitating advanced care planning
- Contributing to competency or capacity assessments
- Offering communication strategies to support sharing, closeness and socialization with loved ones

Swallowing Care

If your patient has a swallowing difficulty or disorder, a **speech-language pathologist** can help by:

- Identifying and re-evaluating care goals related to eating and drinking
- Offering strategies for pleasurable eating and drinking
- Providing strategies that reduce the risk of respiratory complications related to aspiration
- Counselling regarding the patient's level of consciousness in relation to eating or drinking
- Supporting patient choices related to hydration and nutrition
- Offering alternatives to artificial hydration and nutrition, such as comfort feeding
- Providing strategies to address dry mouth and secretion management
- Providing education and guidance on issues like declining swallowing function and the natural reduction or discontinuation of eating and drinking in the final stages of dying

Hearing and Balance Care

If your patient has hearing or balance difficulties, an **audiologist** can help by:

- Assessing hearing and prescribing and fitting hearing aids
- Assessing and managing vestibular or balance issues and tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- Monitoring changes in hearing (e.g., due to drug or treatment side effects) and adjusting hearing aids
- Providing care for cerumen (ear wax) build-up
- Troubleshooting or repairing broken hearing aids
- Providing assistive listening devices
- Educating patients, families and the health-care team about strategies to support communication