

### **Professor Publishes Third Book in Three Years**

Increasingly, the use of telecommunications technology is shaping how individuals receive healthcare services. Models of telehealth are being adopted by physicians and other medical providers to deliver diagnostic and treatment interventions to patients across the lifespan. Telepractice, the term that describes the delivery of audiology and speech-language pathology services using distance technology, is becoming a more common service delivery model for patients with speech, language, and hearing disorders. In *Telepractice In Audiology* (2016, Plural Publishing), Professor K. Todd Houston in the School of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology has co-edited, with colleague Emma Rushbrooke at the Hear and Say Centre in Brisbane, Australia, the first book in the field addressing the use of telepractice service delivery models in audiology.

“For children and adults with hearing loss, having the option to receive audiological diagnostic and treatment services, technology troubleshooting, counseling, Auditory-Verbal Therapy, adult aural rehabilitation, and even cochlear implant mapping through telepractice is often a huge benefit. I’m thrilled that Emma and I had the opportunity to capture this shift in service delivery in this book,” Houston said. “Sometimes individuals with hearing loss or their families may not have a well-trained audiologist in their community, so telepractice allows them to connect with providers directly without having to drive long distances or endure other inconveniences.”

Additionally, parents of young children with hearing loss often seek family-centered early intervention to facilitate age-appropriate listening and spoken language outcomes. Likewise, access to qualified speech-language pathologists who can deliver those services may be unavailable to them. By connecting with a professional through telepractice,

parents can receive the guidance and coaching that will help them improve their own language facilitation strategies, and, in turn, foster improved spoken language outcomes for their child.

“Here at the University of Akron Audiology and Speech Center, we have a robust clinical and telepractice program that focuses on listening and spoken language outcomes for children with hearing loss. Many families choose to come into our Center; however, many others choose to receive most of their intervention through telepractice. Often, we’re able to connect to the families’ homes using distance technology and a connected device they own, such as a laptop computer, tablet, or even a smartphone. From the Center, we are able to demonstrate activities and then coach the parents to model language and use strategies that support listening and spoken language. It is exciting to see the parents’ skills grow as well as the children acquiring intelligible spoken language that rivals their hearing peers,” Houston said.

To complete *Telepractice In Audiology*, Houston worked closely with co-editor Emma Rushbrooke, an audiologist and clinical director the Hear & Say Centre in Brisbane, Australia. The Hear and Say Centre has an international reputation and is known for its services to children with hearing loss and their families. Hear and Say is one of the largest Auditory-Verbal Therapy, early intervention, and hearing implant programs in Australia. Its main center is located in Brisbane with five additional regional centers and a dedicated telepractice program for both listening and spoken language therapy and audiology services.

Houston’s second book, *Assessing Listening and Spoken Language in Children with Hearing Loss* (2015, Plural Publishing), was co-edited with his colleague, Tamala S.

Bradham, an audiologist and quality consultant at Vanderbilt University. Through this collaboration, the co-editors were able to solicit 23 contributing authors who are experts in assessment, early intervention, psychosocial development, auditory development, hearing technology, medicine, language acquisition, speech production, and family support.

“My friend and colleague, Tami (Tamala), and I were discussing a potential project to collaborate on, and we began to realize that there wasn’t a specific book on assessing the child with hearing loss who was acquiring listening and spoken language. As professionals, we must begin our interventions by first getting strong assessments of the child’s present level of functioning. We wanted one book that brought together all of these disciplines to discuss evidence-based assessment practices for these children. We’re very pleased with the final product,” Houston said.

In 2014, Houston published his first edited book, *Telepractice In Speech-Language Pathology* (Plural Publishing), which also was the first book of its kind in the field. The book addressed the history of telepractice and the use of distance technology in speech-language pathology. Twenty contributing authors and researchers shared their experiences providing evidence-based telepractice services to children and adults with a range of speech and language challenges, such as fluency disorders, adult speech and swallowing disorders, hearing loss, and aphasia.

“This was really the first book devoted entirely to telepractice in speech-language pathology, and I enjoyed editing it. The contributing authors were wonderful collaborators, and each one is a passionate believer in telepractice. The book is only two years old, but I am planning on a new edition in the next year. It just shows how quickly the technology is changing and how rapidly telepractice is being adopted in the field,” Houston said.

All three of Houston's books were published by Plural Publishing in San Diego, CA, a leading publisher of books and other materials in speech-language pathology, audiology, hearing science, and related disciplines.