

Working effectively with children who have autism and their families

Masterclass Facilitators

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CPD Points: 6 points (Category 2)

Overview:

Autism is a lifelong developmental condition that is characterised by difficulties in social interaction, communication, restricted and repetitive interests and behaviours, and sensory sensitivities. An estimated 1 in 70 Australians are on the autism spectrum, and it is four times more common in boys than in girls. The impact of autism on the individual varies across a spectrum.

Since both hearing loss and autism have an impact upon communication, the audiologist plays a vital role in ensuring children who experience communication difficulties are provided with the most appropriate intervention by:

- Contributing to the diagnosis of autism through accurate assessment of hearing;
- Identifying children who would benefit from a paediatrician's evaluation, when hearing loss does not explain the communication difficulties and;
- Providing assessment and ongoing audiological management for children who have already been diagnosed with autism.

Audiological management of children who are on the autism spectrum is further complicated since the displayed characteristics affect behavioural hearing assessment, interaction with the child client and the management and use of hearing technologies.

This masterclass entails a multi-disciplinary perspective on the management of children who have Autism Spectrum Disorder. It will draw upon expertise from audiology, early intervention and paediatrics, combined with lived experience of families.

The format comprises a blend of presentations, case studies and panel discussions, during which participants will have the opportunity to both share their own experiences and learn from the experiences of the presenters, colleagues and parents.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Outline practical strategies for effectively managing audiology appointments to maximise the benefits for families and for the child's audiological management;
- Describe the ways in which a family's journey with autism spectrum disorder could affect their experience of audiology services;
- Identify tools and 'red flags' that an audiologist can use to determine when a child should be referred for further assessment;
- Provide an overview of how autism spectrum disorder is diagnosed and describe how the audiologist can contribute to the diagnosis and;
- Describe how a multi-disciplinary team can assist families of children who have autism spectrum disorder