



College of Education
Speech and Hearing Clinic
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Communication Sciences and Disorders Program Speech and Hearing Clinic

INFORMATION FOR CLIENTS

Quality of Services: The Speech and Hearing Clinic in the Communication Sciences and Disorders Program (CMSD) provides clinical education that is required for students obtaining a master's degree in speech-language pathology. Students receive education to meet the standards set by the Council on Academic Accreditation of the American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), which accredits our graduate program. Clients of all ages with speech, language, swallowing, or hearing problems are provided evaluations and treatments that are state-of-the-art and are directly supervised or provided by state-licensed audiologists or speech-language pathologists holding the ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence. Supervisors assume legal and ethical responsibility for the clinical services provided by the graduate students.

Hours of Operation: Speech-Language Pathology services at the UGA Speech and Hearing Clinic are provided during the term when university classes are in session. Audiology clinic runs throughout the year, and special clinic hours may vary. If you have questions about appointment times, please discuss it with your supervisor.

The general operating hours of the Clinic are 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. If you telephone the Clinic office and our voice mail answers, please leave a message. Someone will return your call as soon as possible. If you need to reach someone immediately, please call the Clinic Director.

Scheduling: Appointment times are limited by schedules for the supervisors and students. We make every effort to make appointment times as convenient as possible. If your schedule is unsuitable for you, please notify us in advance of your appointment time so that we can attempt to reschedule.

We may not be able to schedule all clients requesting services. Clients not scheduled will be placed on our waiting list to be considered for the future when an appointment time is available. Names of other resources in the community who may be able to provide more immediate services will also be provided, as requested.

Attendance/Absences: Please make every effort to be on time and attend each session so that you will receive the full benefit from therapy and the time that has been reserved for you. We ask that you **notify the Clinic office as soon as possible, if you will be late or must cancel an appointment.** There will be a \$25.00 charge for appointments missed without at least a 24-hour notice. This amount will be the client or guardian's responsibility and may not be billed to third party payers. We will reschedule missed appointments when possible.

If you are more than 15 minutes late, the supervisor may cancel the session, and an absence will be recorded. **Clients who are absent without prior notification for any two sessions or who cancel more than three times during a semester may be discharged from treatment.** If this occurs, you will be notified that therapy has been terminated, and you may be placed on our waiting list for future scheduling consideration. You will also be given names of other resources in the community who may be able to provide services for you.

Illnesses: Please cancel or reschedule therapy sessions when the client has a fever (100° or above) or any contagious condition (chicken pox, pink eye, flu, lice, etc.). Cancellation of therapy is required until the illness is no longer contagious. If a client is receiving medical care for an illness, please call the physician regarding when it will be safe to resume therapy.

Confidentiality and Privacy: Clinic personnel and students comply with federal laws regarding privacy and security of your protected health information. A Notice of Privacy Practices, which includes your rights and our responsibilities for protecting your health information, is available for you to review in our waiting room and on our website at <http://www.coe.uga.edu/csdclinic/about/privacy-notice/>. You may also request a copy from the Clinic Office. If you have questions or concerns, please speak with your supervisor or the Clinic Privacy Officer/Clinic Director (706-542-4559).

Session Observation Policy: As therapy sessions are confidential, information may not be discussed with others who are not part of the client's treatment or diagnostic team. Therapy sessions may be typically observed only by the client's parents, spouse, caregivers, supervisors, or by students in the Communication Sciences and Disorders Program. Others wishing to observe should check with the supervisor before the observation. Due to HIPAA Privacy Regulations, outside individuals must have written authorization from the client or client's guardian to observe. Additionally, for observations in rooms that allow viewing into more than one treatment area, only one client may be observed during a session, and observers other than clinic personnel should be accompanied by a clinic supervisor.

Due to patient and student education privacy laws, written permission is required for you to take photographs of our clinic sessions. Audio or video recordings of our clients or students are not permitted, except when made for student education purposes by clinic personnel. Please contact your supervisor, if you wish to take pictures in our clinic or have questions about this policy.

We request that parents or spouses do not observe during the first three sessions of each semester. If you wish to observe, please check with the supervisor for permission before the session. At times when student education or other circumstances make it impossible for a particular session to be observed, the supervisor will make every effort to arrange a convenient observation time.

If bringing small children to appointments, please do not leave them unattended in the observation room, waiting area, or in the Clinic area. It may not be safe, and it may create a distraction or interruption, if brothers or sisters accompany parents in the observation room.

Parent / Caregiver Attendance: A parent or caregiver **must be in the building during the therapy session** for all clients under the age of 18 and for clients who may require adult supervision or caregiver for assistance. Notify your clinician or our office personnel, if you must leave the floor temporarily during the session. Let us know where to locate you and leave a cell phone number so that we may contact you, if needed.

Parking: Special parking is provided for clients attending clinics housed in Aderhold Hall. The red parking permit enclosed in your appointment packet is for Speech and Hearing Clinic clients and must be in view through your windshield. If you did not receive a parking permit, ask for one immediately upon arrival at our Clinic. We cannot appeal parking tickets for our clients. If you receive a ticket, read the information on the ticket and respond as directed. To appeal a ticket, contact UGA Parking Services at 706-542-7275.

If you should have difficulty finding parking in the Clinic parking lot, please let us know so that we may try to help you find a parking location.

Clinical Services and Fees:

- **Fees and Billing:** The UGA Speech and Hearing Clinic must charge fees for its services to cover a portion of the operating costs. Our fees are lower than fees in the community for speech therapy services, due to the graduate education program that we provide. Please ask for fee information before the service begins. Payment for ongoing therapy should be made monthly based on the number of sessions received. We accept payment by cash, check, or credit cards.

We will provide you with a statement that you may submit to your insurance company, if you have coverage for services. You are responsible to provide physician prescriptions or a referral, if required for reimbursement or the type of service you will receive.

If we do not participate in your insurance plan, we will file a claim with your insurance company as a courtesy to you. You should confirm with your insurance company (including Blue Cross Blue Shield) that we have a provider in our clinic on your specific plan and that the services you will receive are covered under your plan, or you may be responsible for payment. You are responsible for any amount not paid by your insurance company or adjusted because of provider agreements. If we submit claims to your insurance company or Medicare, we must collect required co-payments. Medicare requirements vary for speech and audiology, so please ask for information to determine if Medicare will cover your services.

Audiology services for Medicaid beneficiaries may be filed for Amerigroup or general Medicaid only, when the type of service is covered by Medicaid.

Please discuss any concerns about payment or a different payment schedule with our accountant. Failure to make payments as agreed may result in termination of treatment.

- **Financial Assistance:** Clients seeking financial assistance for audiology or speech-language pathology services may apply to have fees reduced on our sliding fee scale. Some services require a minimum payment. If other assistance with fees is needed, clients may apply for scholarship funding, when available through our Foundation. No client will be refused services because of an inability to pay. Please inquire in our clinic office for a sliding fee scale or scholarship application, if needed.
- **Required documentation:** All clients are requested to complete a Client Information and Financial Policy form at the first visit. We will also need to update this information when you have any changes in our coverage or address. Due to requirements we have for identify theft prevention, we must make a copy of your photo ID at your first visit.
- **Accountant Meeting:** All clients should talk about payment arrangements (insurance, private pay, financial assistance, or other) with our accountant, Ms. Kathy Moss, at the beginning of the semester. Please come to room 570D to meet with her at your first visit or contact her at 706-542-3895 to discuss your account. She will be able to set up any needed payment plans or to assist you with insurance claims.

Conferences/Reports: Your input is important as we plan services for you or your family member. Supervisors are available to talk with you about progress or concerns relating to your therapy. Please let your graduate student clinician know that you want to talk with the supervisor, if you do not see the supervisor at the time of your visit. Conferences may be scheduled at any time, but typically, your clinician will discuss the Treatment Plan with you at the beginning of the semester and will review the Progress Report at the end of the semester. You will also be given copies of our reports for your files.

We will provide you with information about the services provided and recommendations so that you can make appropriate decisions regarding treatment. Depending on the client's needs, home program activities and education will also be provided to reinforce treatment techniques at home. Please feel free to direct questions about your treatment program to your clinician and/or the supervisor.

Evaluation of Services: At the end of each semester, you will be asked to evaluate the speech therapy services you received. There are also questionnaires available at the front desk for audiology and diagnostic evaluations. Your feedback helps us to improve our services, so please complete the questionnaire, and provide any comments or suggestions that you may have.

Gifts: Students and supervisors may not accept personal gifts from clients. Clients who wish to show appreciation for services received may make a tax-deductible donation to our Clinic Foundation account. Contributions are greatly appreciated and are primarily used to fund scholarships for those who need financial assistance. Please let us know if you would like information to make a donation.

Emergency Exit Procedures: In case of a fire or emergency, alarms sound and lights flash in the hallways at the exits. In such an emergency, everyone in the building is expected to exit by the stairways. Please follow the directions provided by the clinic supervisors and safety marshals should a drill or emergency occur.

In an emergency, student clinicians will return to the waiting area with clients and will escort clients and families downstairs and outside through the second floor doorway. If parents or caregivers are not present, the clinician will exit with the client.

If a client has a disability that may make it difficult or impossible to evacuate in an emergency, the student will discuss an evacuation plan with the supervisor before the first meeting with the client. If a plan has not yet been developed, family members, UGA staff, and/or emergency staff should remove the client from the building in the event of an emergency. Individuals with disabilities should go to or be escorted to the stairway nearest to the clinic area. Additional staff members will be available to assist in evacuating those individuals.

Inclement Weather: The Clinic will be closed if the University of Georgia is closed. Current information is provided to local radio and TV stations and on the UGA home page at www.uga.edu. If a decision is made to close the clinic because of the possibility of inclement weather, which may affect student and client safety, we will contact you to cancel your appointment.

Accessibility and Discrimination Policy: The UGA Speech and Hearing Clinic is accessible to all individuals. If there are any difficulties accessing services at the Clinic, please consult with your supervisor or the Clinic Director, so that we can correct the situation.

A wheelchair is available, if needed, to assist clients. Please let us know if you would like us to provide you with wheelchair assistance to our Clinic.

The UGA Speech and Hearing Clinic complies with applicable federal civil rights laws. Students, faculty, staff, and persons served are treated in a nondiscriminatory manner without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, citizenship, culture, disability, participation restriction, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/gender expression, genetic information, language, dialect, or status as a parent or veteran.

For more information, see the Clinic's Notice of Nondiscrimination and Language Assistance Services located in the clinic waiting room and at <http://www.coe.uga.edu/shc>.

Questions/Emergency Contact: Any questions regarding these policies or practices may be directed to your supervisor or to the Clinic Director.

UGA Speech and Hearing Clinic
593 Aderhold Hall, Athens, GA 30602
706.542.4598 (Office) / 706.542.4574 (Fax) / <http://www.coe.uga.edu/shc>
706.542.4559 (Clinic Director Office)

Thank you for choosing the UGA Speech and Hearing Clinic. We look forward to working with you and your family!