



# FAQS

## USE OF SUPPORT PERSONNEL BY SLPS

APPROVED

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### Question 1:

I am working as an Initial Practice Registrant (IPR) and part of my role is to supervise support personnel. Is this allowed?

### Answer 1:

Yes, if you make supervision a learning goal with your mentor and your mentor agrees to the goal. Please review the [Initial Practice Period Guidelines](#)

“If the IPR is required to supervise supportive personnel during his/her IPP, the IPR must review and adhere to the following position statements regarding the use of supportive personnel and guidance must be provided by the IPR’s mentor regarding the use of supportive personnel during the IPP.”

### Question 2:

I work in a busy hospital and time is always a challenge. Are support personnel allowed to complete a chart review or participate in ‘rounds’ to gather patient information?

### Answer 2:

Support personnel can be assigned the activity of collecting information. The types of information will vary according to the clinical setting. They can include but are not limited to: demographic information, substitute decision makers, availability of patients, families and significant others, dates of appointments and procedures etc.

If your chart review requires clinical interpretation of other health professionals’ documentation then that task cannot be assigned to support personnel. With regard to participating in interdisciplinary ‘rounds’, the support personnel may report information you have developed on your behalf. Under your direction, the support personnel may also collect information from other team members, verbatim and without clinical interpretation.

### Question 3:

Can a CDA (support personnel) obtain consent for speech language pathology services?

### Answer 3:

Yes, support personnel can obtain consent from patients or their substitute decision makers (parents, adult children etc.) as long as the supervising SLP considers that they have the knowledge, skills and judgement to do so. This would include a thorough knowledge of the organization’s SLP services and under what circumstances to defer to

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the supervising SLP to answer a question. Refer to the [Guide: Obtaining consent for services](#)

#### Question 4:

I work in a hospital and one of our support personnel is a regulated health professional (registered practical nurse - RPN) who has received on the job training. As she is regulated, do I still have to supervise her?

#### Answer 4:

Regulated health professionals can be support personnel. If you are assigning [clinical tasks](#) and related work, then you are required to supervise the RPN in their role as support personnel.

#### Question 5:

I am employed by a school board where early childhood educators (ECEs) work with children who have speech and language difficulties. I have assessed the children and I am expected to provide the ECEs with programs to help develop speech and language skills. However, I do not directly supervise them. Are they still my support personnel?

#### Answer 5:

If you do not have the authority to supervise the ECEs, which entails setting specific goals, directly observing the ECE with the child, modifying tasks, and training, then you should not be assigning [clinical tasks](#) to the ECEs. This does not prevent you from working with them however as part of an interprofessional team. You may give the ECEs tasks to maintain and reinforce established speech/language/communication skills but not tasks that help establish new skills.

You may wish to advocate for more authority with your school board administration. Ensure they understand what CASLPO means by 'supervision' and your College requirements if you are to provide the programming they want for the students. It may be possible for you to supervise ECEs when it concerns assigning speech and language tasks.

#### Question 6:

All Rehab Assistants have been asked to work on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Can a CDA (support personnel) work in a hospital setting during the weekend if an SLP is not available?

#### Answer 6:

It will depend on the knowledge, skills and professional judgement of the CDA, and the tasks you assign. As long as they continue to provide service within their role and defer any activities that are not within their scope until the SLP's return, this should be acceptable.

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#### Question 7:

Would it be acceptable for a CDA (support personnel) to prepare and give presentations about communication disorders in a hospital volunteer program? I would review and discuss the presentation before hand.

#### Answer 7:

Support Personnel can provide public education such as presenting facts on prevention of communication disorders, typical speech and language development, treatment approaches etc. Support personnel cannot provide information about an individual patient. Where appropriate, they must refer to SLP services as needed.

#### Question 8:

I work in a school board that employs CDAs. How many support personnel can I supervise at one time?

#### Answer 8:

It depends. You must allot sufficient time to provide adequate supervision to all of the support personnel (see Section 5, Supervision). If you believe that you do not have enough time, you need to discuss the issue with your employer.

#### Question 9:

Why do you use the term 'support personnel' and not Communication Disorders Assistants?

#### Answer 9:

CASLPO does not regulate support personnel, and nor does any other regulatory body in Ontario. There is no legislation regarding title for support personnel. In different settings support personnel have different titles such as: Communicative Disorders Assistants, Communication Health Assistants, Speech Language Assistants, Rehab Assistants, Stroke Rehab Assistants etc.

