

Parkinson's Disease



What is it?

Parkinson's Disease is a progressive, neurodegenerative disorder of the nervous system. Symptoms of Parkinson's Disease vary across individuals, and may include a tremor (often when resting or fatigued), muscle rigidity or stiffness, stooped posture and difficulty with balance.

Parkinson's Disease can affect communication across a range of domains, including changes to speech clarity, voice volume and quality, and non-verbal skills such as facial expressions, writing, language ability and changes to cognitive functioning.

What ChatAbout can do:

Changes to an individual's speech, voice and communication can negatively impact their quality of life, as the individual may feel less confident participating in a conversation or in social settings. Speech Pathologists can help to support people with Parkinson's through tailored and individualised therapy to build a person's communicative abilities and independence.

Speech Pathologists can help to support people with Parkinson's Disease by:

- Supporting the individual to speak loudly, clearly and with intention through evidence-based programs such as Lee Silverman Voice Treatment (LSVT).
- Utilising alternate forms of augmentative communication (AAC), to enhance the individual's ability to communicate their thoughts and messages
- Enhancing the individual's non-verbal skills such as displaying emotion with facial cues.
- Empowering and supporting the individual to identify strengths and strategies to improve their cognitive functioning. Such strategies may include memory retaining strategies, or self-cueing strategies to increase the speech and accuracy of word-finding, in conversation.



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