

Angelman syndrome (AS)

Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)

A Speech-language therapist/pathologist is a health professional trained to evaluate and treat people who have speech, language, voice or swallowing disorders (including hearing impairment) that affect their ability to communicate. A hearing test is often included in the evaluation because a hearing problem can also affect speech and language development.

Speech and language are tools that humans use to communicate. Language is the set of rules shared by the individuals that allows them to exchange thoughts, ideas, or emotions. Language may be expressed through a combination of speech, writing, signing, gestures, pointing, or using communication devices.

For patients with Angelman syndrome, it is ideal to have access to a SLT who is a specialist in/has experience with **Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)**. Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) is a multi-modal approach to communication that is very well suited for people with AS. Special augmentative aids such as electronic devices (eg. tablets or iPads) with voice output or picture and symbol communication boards, are now available to help non-speakers express themselves.

Having access to AAC will give the person with Angelman syndrome their own voice. This can help to avoid isolation, frustration and behaviours by increasing their social interaction, confidence, learning, school performance, and feelings of self-worth.

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