



Alberta College of
Speech-Language Pathologists
and Audiologists

Position Statement:

Vaccine Hesitancy

December 2019
Revised: May 2021

Vaccine Hesitancy

Position Statement: *Sets out the official position or stand of “the College” on an issue or matter that is significant to the professions of speech-language pathology and/or audiology, and to outside agencies or groups.*

Vaccine hesitancy is described as a delay in acceptance or refusal to vaccinate, despite the availability of vaccination services. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) vaccine hesitancy is now one of the top 10 threats to global health, despite robust evidence showing the effectiveness and safety of vaccines. The WHO also acknowledges that health care professionals are among the most trusted sources of information when parents make decisions regarding vaccination.

In the context of vaccination and vaccine hesitancy, ACSLPA regulated members are reminded that the following apply when they are acting in their professional capacity:

- (1) Commenting on the efficacy of vaccines is not typically within the scope of practice of speech-language pathologists and/or audiologists. Therefore, unless clinically relevant, ACSLPA regulated members should not provide vaccine information, opinions or advice.
- (2) Regulated members will direct concerned members of the public to credible and reliable sources of information which may include re-direction of questions to a local public health or community health clinic, or to the health care team physician.
- (3) In (1), above, or when asked, ACSLPA regulated members should only communicate scientifically valid information and must not promote or encourage anti-vaccination messages or **alternative therapies** in relation to vaccination.

Alternative therapies refer to non-mainstream practices used in place of conventional medicine (National Centre for Complementary and Integrative Health, 2017).