

The ACT speech pathology workforce is young, female, Australian-trained, and practice in high need areas where fewer children and older adults live.

Voices of the future – An exploration of the ACT Speech Pathology Workforce

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Introduction:

As a self-regulated profession, there remains no consistent and reliable source of speech pathology workforce data.

Aims:

To establish a workforce data set of the speech pathology workforce in the Australian Capital Territory.

Methods

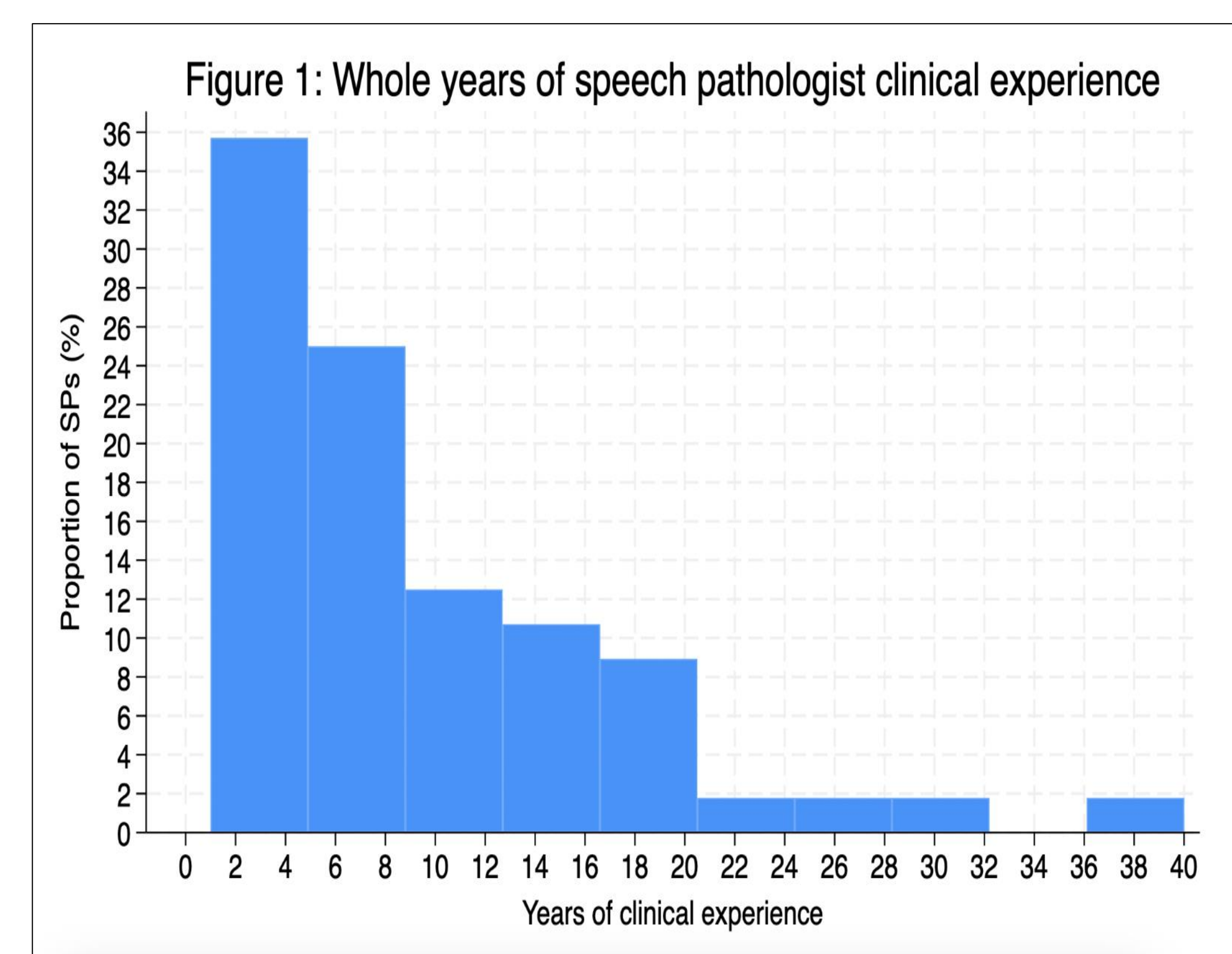
A custom survey, modelled on Ahpra professions and tailored to speech pathologists' scope of practice, was distributed to publicly listed speech pathologists in the ACT.

Results

The survey identified a young, inexperienced, and unevenly distributed speech pathology workforce in the ACT, with demographics and employment characteristics aligning with 2021 Census and SPA data, while offering more detailed insights comparable to other Ahpra professions.

Conclusion

Locally, this methodology and measurement of SP workforce metrics will inform workforce planning to optimize timely access to SP services in the ACT. It also provides a data framework for other self-regulated professions. This study stands to support the implementation of recommendations from the recent Allied Health Scope of Practice Review.



Speech pathologists		2024 Online survey n=52	2023 SPA ¹⁰	2021 Census ¹⁰ n=132
Number in the ACT		67	136 ^{ab}	132
		% of respondents	% of national SP workforce	% of ACT SP workforce
Gender	Female	90.91		100.00
	Male	1.52	Not available	0.00
Qualification	Bachelor degree	40.91		55.81
	Master degree	51.52		43.41
	PhD	3.03	Not available	3.10
Country of SP training	Australia	89.39		
	Other	3.03	Not available	Not available
Age	21-25 years	9.09		15.15
	26-30 years	33.33		29.55
	31-35 years	13.64		16.67
	36-40 years	12.12		14.39
	41-45 years	12.12		7.58
	46-50 years	1.52		6.82
	51-55 years	7.58		2.27
	56-60 years	1.52		0
	61-65 years	1.52	Not available	5.30

SPA = Speech Pathology Australia

Outcome variable: Practice setting	LPM Coefficient (SE)	Logit Coefficient ^a (SE)	Probit Coefficient ^a (SE)
Age group			
Reference: 21-25 years			
26-30 years	-0.0995 (0.2860)	-0.0964 (0.3150)	-0.0836 (0.2995)
31-35 years	0.1418 (0.3455)	0.1341 (0.3762)	0.1429 (0.3599)
36-40 years	0.3229 (0.3407)	0.3141 (0.3751)	0.3256 (0.3606)
41 years or older	-0.1129 (0.3746)	-0.1065 (0.3827)	-0.0978 (0.3671)
Cultural background			
Reference: Not Australian			
Years of clinical experience	0.0181 (0.0161)	0.0170 (0.1520)	0.0173 (0.0152)
Qualification	-0.1512 (0.1821)	-0.1438 (0.1603)	-0.1425 (0.1602)
Reference: Masters/PhD			
Constant	0.3605 (0.3067)	-0.6076 (1.4794)	-0.3949 (0.8554)
Observations	51	51	51
Adjusted R ² /Pseudo R ²	0.0459**	0.1380	0.1381

Statistical significance (p): * = 0.10, ** < 0.05, *** < 0.01.
^aCoefficient, SE and (p) represent marginal effects