

BOOK REVIEW-TELEPRACTICE IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

JEAN BLOSSER, CCC-SLP, EdD

CREATIVE STRATEGIES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION, BALTIMORE, MD, USA

ABSTRACT

This article presents a review of the book: *Telepractice in Speech-Language Pathology*, authored by K. Todd Houston, PhD, CCC-SLP, LSLs Cert. AVT and 20 contributing authors. This is the first book entirely devoted to the delivery of speech-language pathology services at a distance. It provides practical information including technical requirements, policy and regulatory issues, current applications in speech-language pathology, international perspectives on practice, and tele-supervision. Reviewer Dr. Jean Blosser highly recommends the work as a comprehensive resource on the topic of telepractice.

Keywords: Speech-language pathology, telehealth, telepractice, telespeech

BOOK: *Telepractice in Speech-Language Pathology*

AUTHOR: K. Todd Houston, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, LSLs Cert. AVT

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS: Robin Alvares, PhD, CCC-SLP; Marnee Brick, MSc, S-LP; Kelly J. Brown, MA; Michael F. Campbell, MS, MBA, CCC-SLP; Charles H. Carlin, PhD, CCC-SLP; Emily L. Carlin, MA, CCC-SLP; Gabriella Constantinescu, PhD, BSpPath (Hons); Sena Crutchley, MS, CCC-SLP; Dimity Dornan, AM, Associate Professor UQ, HonDUniv USQ, BSpThy, FSPAA, CpSp, LSLs Cert AVT; Anne M. Fleming, MA; Rodney Gabel, PhD, CCC-SLP, BRS-FD; Susan Grogan-Johnson, PhD, CCC-SLP; Farzan Irani, PhD, CCC-SLP; Jennifer L. Milam, PhD; Jessica M. Nafe; Scott T. Palasik, PhD, CCC-SLP; Arlene Stredler-Brown, CCC-SLP, CED; Lyn R. Tindall, PhD, CCC-SLP; Kami Zeckzer Walters, MA; Tali R. Weinberg, BA

Prior to reading Houston's book, *Telepractice in Speech-Language Pathology*, I made a mental note of questions I often hear regarding telepractice and service delivery in our profession. My five questions concerned: technical specifications, reimbursement, professional qualifications, populations that would benefit from services in this mode, and recommendations for application. I wondered if this book would address those questions. I'm happy to report that it did. Thus, I give this book a "thumbs up" and highly recommend it as a good addition to your

library if you want to understand telepractice, consider delivering services via technology, invest in alternative approaches to treatment or supervision, or add this delivery method as a new service option to your practice.

This is the first book I am aware of that is entirely devoted to the delivery of speech-language pathology and rehabilitation services at a distance. The 12 chapters were contributed by Houston and a host of other professionals who are seen as experts and/or pioneers in the field. They cover a wide range of geographic regions, disability populations, business interests, and service options. While there were a number of contributors, Houston did a great job of ensuring that the content was presented cohesively. The book lays an excellent foundation by providing a historical perspective on the evolution of telepractice and an overview on how other professions utilize telepractice. There is also a thoughtful explanation of where to begin if interested in initiating telepractice services. The role of federal regulations was clearly explored. The book supported the concept that the quality, security, and treatment outcomes of service delivery via a telepractice platform must be the same as those services offered onsite.

One of the strengths of the book is the focus on efficacy. Many chapters included discussion of challenges, benefits, and recommendations for utilizing telepractice in service delivery and highlighted how this mechanism can be applied to specific populations or aspects of service delivery. For example, challenges such as time, travel, logistics, availability of qualified professionals, and continuity of services can be resolved.

Authors addressing provision of telepractice in the school setting offered information, practical suggestions, and guidelines. A helpful needs assessment form was included. Chapters also addressed employing telepractice for supervision of university students and Clinical Fellows, stuttering, and adult speech and swallowing disorders.

Individuals and organizations that are considering incorporating telepractice into their practice or business model will appreciate the authors' experiences and perspectives on important personnel, business health, and financial aspects. Discussions include comments about tools for business as well as developing and growing a customer base. Of interest as well is the discussion about telepractice in international services. The last chapter is very interesting as the authors provide insights into the future of telepractice and service delivery. The Appendices contain practical tools and information including the School-Based Telepractice Needs Assessment (Crutchley, Dudding, Grogan-Johnson, & Alvares, 2010) and information about the ASHA (2015) Practice Portal: Telepractice. Finally, there is the American Telemedicine Association's (2010) *A Blueprint for Telerehabilitation Guidelines* with highlights of administrative, clinical, technical, and ethical principles.

This book is now on my shelf and will be my "go to" resource for questions I receive when I consult with schools, healthcare programs, and businesses interested in knowing more about telepractice.

REFERENCES

- American Telemedicine Association. (2010). *A blueprint for telerehabilitation guidelines*. Retrieved from <http://www.americantelemed.org/docs/default-source/standards/a-blueprint-for-telerehabilitation-guidelines.pdf?sfvrsn=4>
- American Speech-Hearing-Language Association. (2015). *Practice portal: Telepractice*. Retrieved from <http://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Professional-Issues/Telepractice/>
- Crutchley, S., Dudding, C.C., Grogan-Johnson, S. & Alvares, R. (2010, November). *School-based telepractice needs assessment, establishing telespeech in the educational setting*. Short course presented at ASHA National Convention, Philadelphia, PA.
- Houston, KT. (2014). *Telepractice in speech-language pathology*. San Diego: Plural Publishing, Inc.