

Ursidae: The Undergraduate Research Journal at the University of Northern Colorado

Volume 7

Number 1 *Research Day 2017 - Undergraduate
Research Excellence Award Winners & Finalists*

Article 4

December 2017

Speech and Language Intervention for Schizophrenia: An Interdisciplinary Survey Study

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Recommended Citation

Cook, Tori (2017) "Speech and Language Intervention for Schizophrenia: An Interdisciplinary Survey Study," *Ursidae: The Undergraduate Research Journal at the University of Northern Colorado*: Vol. 7 : No. 1 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://digscholarship.unco.edu/urj/vol7/iss1/4>

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Speech and Language Intervention for Schizophrenia: An Interdisciplinary Survey Study

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Faculty Sponsor: Kirkland, Rena

According to the Scope of Practice for speech-language pathologists (SLPs), set forth by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, SLPs are responsible for offering therapy to individuals with psychiatric illnesses, including schizophrenia. People with schizophrenia often struggle with social use of language which may lead to difficulty maintaining relationships and employment. These individuals may also experience negative stigma as a result of expressive and receptive language difficulties. Although the treatment of schizophrenia has traditionally remained in the realm of psychiatry, some studies have shown that individuals with schizophrenia can benefit from speech-language therapy. The purpose of this study was to examine schizophrenia from a communication sciences perspective. An anonymous online survey was completed by individuals involved with either psychology, audiology, or speech-language sciences (n=221) in order to determine what differences are present in knowledge and beliefs of the role of language in schizophrenia. The results show that there are significant differences in knowledge and beliefs about schizophrenia between the fields of psychology and communication sciences which may have implications for the need for further involvement of SLPs in the treatment of schizophrenia.