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ABSTRACT BOOK

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P101. PORTUGUESE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS' PRACTICES: SERVICES DELIVERY FOR CHILDREN WITH SPEECH SOUND DISORDERS

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Background: Factors such as session frequency and format (individual and/or group) can impact the efficacy of therapeutic interventions for children with speech sound disorders (SSD). Although research on this topic is limited, it is important to understand the current practices of Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) and compare them to existing studies on services delivery for SSD.

Aim/ Objectives: This study aims characterize the Portuguese SLT services delivery for children with SSD.

Methods: A survey was conducted in Portugal using a translated and culturally adapted questionnaire from Brumbaugh and Smit's 2013 study. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Results: Among the 128 participants surveyed, 96.1% were female, with over 70% holding a Bachelor's degree. 69% had undergone specialized training in SSD, with 63.4% therapists treating more than half of their preschool caseload with this diagnostic. The majority of service delivery took place in private clinics (70.4%), with all therapists providing individual sessions. Of these sessions, 75% were scheduled on a weekly basis and 60.2% reported that each session is 45 minutes duration. Additionally, occasionally, 32.1% of therapists held group sessions with two children (20.3%), whereby 19.5% utilized homogeneous groups for their group interventions.

Conclusions/take-home message: More research is needed to understand how the delivery of services to children with SSD affects the effectiveness of intervention. Until then, describing SLT practices such as frequency, duration, and type of intervention can help improve interventions and it is important to increase the body of scientific evidence to support the practice of SLT with children with SSD.

Keywords: Speech Sound Disorders; services delivery; preschool-age children; SLT practice