Abstract

Tele-medicine has the potential to extend services to rural populations in speech-language pathology and can provide much needed care and follow up care for patients in remote areas of Alaska. This technology allows speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to use video-conferencing or applications-sharing to bridge the gap between the locations of the patient and hearing healthcare provider (Swanepoel, 2010). Tele-medicine is one solution, as it can bring specialized care at a distance to rural areas and education to patients through technology. It is important to have knowledgeable and skillful healthcare professionals providing the highest quality of care for rural communities.

This is an assessment to evaluate the SLPs in the Alaska Scottish Rite, RiteCare Foundation group in Alaska on their knowledge and current practices related to tele-medicine. Additionally, the assessment considered their perspective and comfort levels of the use of tele-medicine tools for their practices as well as their educational needs. This was determined through a survey administered by the principal investigator in person or via tele-communicational tools. The pathologists in the Alaska Scottish Rite, RiteCare Foundation group were located in the cities of Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai, and Juneau.