



BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

At Limestone Speech we:

- prepare for each of our appointments properly
- limit the number of clients we see each day to ensure we are providing a quality service to each of our clients.

If you book an appointment with us and don't attend, or if you contact us to cancel an appointment with short notice, three things happen:

1. We lose the time we have spent preparing for your appointment. This is time we could have spent helping another client.
2. We may not have enough time to reschedule another client for your appointment time, which reduces the total number of clients we can help that day.
3. We lose income, which makes it more difficult for us to invest adequately in our staff and resources.

Speech therapy is most effective when we trust and value each other. We know that things happen i.e. cars break down, kids get sick, and important travel commitments arise at short notice.

However, "no shows" and late cancellations, particularly if they happen more than once, can interfere with our trust in each other and, over time, can affect the quality of care. We take pride in our work and don't want this to happen.

FEES

As of the 7th of July 2025, we are offering 70-minute appointments. The allocation of time in each 70-minute appointment includes:

- 45 minutes for working directly with the child and/or speaking with the parent/caregiver
- 15 minutes of therapist time for writing a progress note
- 10 minutes for planning, preparation, or pack-up related to the child's session

Sessions can consist of a face-to-face session, Telehealth, phone consultation, or non-face-to-face tasks.

If you are late to your appointment, Limestone Speech is not obligated to make up this time. The time will be deducted from your face-to-face time with your Speech Pathologist.

The fees for appointments are:

- \$226.32 for a 70-minute Speech Pathologist session.
- \$101.25 for a 70-minute Speech Pathology Assistant session.
- \$193.99 per hour for a qualified Speech Pathologist to:
 - prepare a therapy plan and provide support to a Speech Pathology Assistant
 - oversee speech pathology students completing placements

We may also complete additional non-face-to-face tasks outside the dedicated session time. These tasks may include, but are not restricted to:

- scoring assessments
- writing reports
- making resources
- attending Child Development Unit (CDU) meetings
- attending Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings
- completing phone calls and correspondence with teachers and other services.

Time used outside of the scheduled 70-minute total appointment time will encounter additional fees, and will be charged accordingly to the extra time spent. The current fees for non-face-to-face tasks are:

- \$193.99 per hour for a qualified Speech Pathologist.
- \$86.79 per hour for a Speech Pathology Assistant.

Sessions fees for private clients or clients with self-managed NDIS funding must be paid at the conclusion of the appointment. Fees can be paid either by using automatic payments via our system or by using our Square device. If any non-face-to-face tasks are required to be completed following your session, including assessment scoring, the task will be charged accordingly and an invoice will be sent to you to be paid within 7 days. This can be done by direct debit or coming into the clinic to pay via our Square device.

PRIVATE HEALTH FUNDS

Depending on the level and type of cover, your private health fund may also cover some or all of the consultation cost for private speech pathology sessions. However, speech pathology needs to be included in your policy. Once you have paid for the session in full on the day of your appointment, you can take the paid invoice to your private health insurer to receive your rebate. Please note, you may only be able to claim your session if it is scheduled with a qualified Speech Pathologist.

MEDICARE REBATES

Limestone Speech can provide speech pathology sessions under a Chronic Disease Management (CDM) plan. Only a person with a chronic medical condition and complex care needs can access this plan. A person can be referred to an eligible allied health

professional by their GP for up to five individual sessions per calendar year. The client will need to present the referral form to the allied health professional at the first consultation unless the GP has previously provided it directly to the allied health professional. From the 1st of July 2025, the rebate from Medicare is currently \$61.80 per session. Please note that only qualified Speech Pathologist sessions are eligible for this rebate.

Additionally, children under 13 years with specific diagnoses may be eligible to receive a rebate from Medicare for up to 4 sessions (per lifetime) to assist with assessment, diagnosis, and development of a treatment plan. Children under 15 years may also be eligible for up to 20 treatment sessions (per lifetime) as well.

A child with Autism Spectrum Disorder can be referred by a Consultant Psychiatrist or Paediatrician. A child with another eligible disability can be referred by a specialist, Consultant Physician, or GP for these sessions. From the 1st of July 2025, the rebate from Medicare is currently \$87.25 per session.

If you are eligible for Medicare rebates, you are required to pay in full at the conclusion of your session. We can then process this claim immediately using our system. Alternatively you can take your paid invoice to a Medicare office at a later date or use the Express Plus Medicare app to claim your rebates.

CANCELLATIONS, CHANGES TO BOOKINGS AND FAILURES TO ATTEND APPOINTMENTS

If you need to cancel an appointment, it is a requirement that you please make sure to call the clinic at least 24 hours in advance. This includes any changes that need to be made during the weekend. Our phone line is available 24/7, so please leave a voice message and our Client Coordinator will return your call on the next business day.

Appointments are in high demand, and giving as much notice as possible will allow another client access to that appointment time. To cancel or reschedule your appointment, please call our Client Coordinator on 1300 911 561.

A cancellation is considered late when the appointment is cancelled less than 24 hours before the scheduled time. The following options apply to late cancellations:

- **Option 1** - Incur a cancellation fee of 100% of the original cost.
- **Option 2** - Reschedule to an alternative time within 7 days of the cancelled session (subject to therapist availability). If there is no availability you will be placed on a waitlist. However, if no session occurs you will incur a full cancellation fee.
- **Option 3** - Change the appointment to Telehealth or a phone consultation (full session fee applies).
- **Option 4** - Your Speech Pathologist/assistant can create resources to be used at home or in education settings (full session fee applies).

If frequent cancellations of appointments occur, you will automatically incur a 100% cancellation fee with no options offered. Please note that missing your rescheduled appointment will result in an additional cancellation fee.

CANCELLATION AND FEE INFORMATION

If you fail to attend two or more appointments, we reserve the right to discharge you and/or any children in your care from our service without notice. At the end of each term all client's attendance will be checked. If you have missed or have failed to attend two or more appointments, your permanent time slot may be given to another waiting client and you may be added to our weekly waitlist for casual appointments. Limestone Speech will not hold session spots and reserve the right to pass a spot onto the next waiting client.

If one or more invoices are outstanding, all future appointments will be cancelled until all outstanding invoices have been paid. If payment has not been made within a month, we reserve the right to discharge you from our caseload and engage a debt collector.

If Limestone Speech need to cancel an appointment for any reason, we may do so at any time before the appointment is scheduled to begin. We do not expect this to happen except in exceptional circumstances and we will offer you a choice of alternative available dates and times to reschedule your appointment to. However, we will not be liable to compensate you for any other expenses you've incurred in connection with the appointment. We will attempt to notify clients of cancellations promptly, but cannot guarantee this, especially when an appointment is cancelled at short notice e.g. if your treating Speech Pathologist is ill.

ARRIVING AT YOUR APPOINTMENT

Limestone Speech is open by appointment only. Our Speech Pathologists have back-to-back clients everyday, which means they are unavailable to see you at a time other than your scheduled appointment time.

Please follow the below steps when you arrive at the clinic:

Step 1. Arrive at the clinic at your scheduled appointment time.

Step 2. Ring the door bell and wait for your Speech Pathologist to collect you.

Please note and be aware that if you arrive before your scheduled treatment time, our Speech Pathologists are not obligated to commence your session earlier. In the event that your session does begin earlier, it will still adhere to the standard duration of 45 minutes. Therefore, it will either conclude prior to your usual end time or be billed accordingly if it exceeds the allocated time.

If you need any assistance, please contact us on **1300 911 561** or email admin@limestonespeech.com.au.

At Limestone Speech we reserve the right to refuse service at any time due to illness, violence, or any form of abuse or disrespect. Please refer to a reliable health source, such as SA Health or your GP, for exclusion periods for infectious diseases e.g. gastro; school sores; hand, foot and mouth; chicken pox.