

Children’s Therapy Network of Manitoba Priority Ratings: Speech-Language Pathology

Priority Rating	Ideal Time Frame	Presenting Concerns/Diagnosis
1	Within 2 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Feeding difficulties → Cleft palate where child has not been seen by craniofacial in Winnipeg, or requires a second referral → Hearing loss (suspected or confirmed) → Voice concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Send letter to physician requesting a referral to ENT Children’s Hospital and pediatric voice Children’s Hospital. → Diagnosed/suspected medical conditions (e.g., Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Child Development Clinic referral in process) → Limited pre-language skills or no communicative intent by 18 months (e.g., no shared attention, not responding to communication)
2	2 - 4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Child not speaking or using few simple words at age 18 months or older → Speech unintelligible past age 2.5 years → Fluency concerns → Receptive language disorder/delay
3	4 - 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Speech at three years of age or older is intelligible only with careful listening and when context is known → Child speaks in sentences, but concerns remain regarding expressive language (e.g., grammar, pronouns)
4	6 - 8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → A few sound errors, but speech is intelligible → School aged children who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attending private, non-funded schools ○ Homeschooled

Notes:

1. Therapist’s clinical judgement may impact the Priority Level assigned, shifting a referral into a category other than where it would fall based solely on the above criteria.
2. It may not be possible to meet the “Ideal Time Frame” due to various factors, e.g., staffing, referral rates, etc.
3. The Priority Rating is best suited for preschool or out-patient school-age services. Criteria for school-based services will be addressed at another time.
4. References:

Pan Canadian Alliance – Assessment and Intervention Wait Times Benchmarks: Children with Language Disorders
 Rvachew & Razaar (2014). Report on Benchmark Wait Times for Pediatric Speech Sound Disorders
 Pan-Canadian Alliance of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Organizations – Benchmark Wait Times for Speech Sound Disorders
 CASLPA - Wait List Project – Report on Benchmark Wait Times for Fluency