

The Basics of Outcomes

RTI. . . EBP. . . NCLB. . . Pay for Performance. . . IDEA. . .



All of these have a common thread—they require accountability for outcomes. The push to deliver effective and efficient speech-language interventions is driven by several factors:

- Evaluation of outcomes is a component of evidence-based practice (EBP).
- IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act) 2004 calls for clinicians to use scientific, research-based interventions.
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) sets accountability for student achievement as a “linchpin” for change.
- Response to Intervention (RTI) places a strong emphasis on improving outcomes for all students through an integrated approach. This approach requires frequent monitoring (i.e., measuring) of students’ responses to intervention in order to prevent academic failure.
- Medicare is investigating ways to link reimbursement to quality of outcomes. Pay-for-performance has emerged as a potential solution to rein in staggering costs in the healthcare industry.

Every intervention has an outcome. Outcomes information can be incorporated into therapy by:

1. Determining baseline performance through assessment/evaluation
2. Stating measurable objectives at the beginning of the intervention
3. Providing intervention and measuring the client’s response to treatment
4. Assessing the client’s progress toward the stated objectives by reviewing the measured responses to treatment
5. Adjusting therapeutic interventions as needed (based upon outcome measurements) in order to reach the treatment objectives
6. Using objective data to justify continuation of treatment

Outcomes information can help you answer clinically-relevant questions, such as:

1. How much progress was achieved over the course of therapy time?
2. How did a specific therapeutic technique affect the student’s progress toward the objectives?
3. Is this client ready for discharge?

Measuring treatment outcomes is integral to the provision of effective interventions and protecting the welfare of those we serve.

