

THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND HEARING PROFESSIONS

TREATMENT OF PATIENTS WITH DYSPHAGIA USING VITALSTIM THERAPY

The Professional Board has received a number of concerns regarding treatment of patients with dysphagia through Vitalstim Therapy. The following are some of the concerns that Professional Board is exploring:

1. Evidence for use in very young infants and across the age spectrum, as well as its diagnostic and therapeutic efficacy is not conclusive;
2. There is no evidence that the Vitalstim electrical stimulator followed all safety procedures for use on the public;
3. Vitalstim therapy equipment purchase had been made a prerequisite for attending the training offered.

In light of the above, Board wished to alert the Profession that Board had commissioned an investigation on the use of Vitalstim Therapy and equipment on children, as such, any person who knows of any health practitioner who uses vital-stim in children and who, on good grounds, is of the view that the use of such vital-stim is not evidence based is entitled to lay a formal complaint of unprofessional conduct with the HPCSA for investigation and prosecution.

Statement issued by the Professional Boards for and Speech, Language and Hearing Professions.