

Thinking Clearly: How SLPs Help COVID-19 Survivors With Cognition Problems

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) are trained to help people improve their thinking skills. Many individuals with—or recovering from—COVID-19 are reporting cognitive problems—with persistent “brain fog” among the more common concerns. This is especially true for long-haulers. Cognitive problems can be debilitating, preventing a return to work and impacting family responsibilities and relationships.



The focus of an SLP's work is helping people do the things that are most important to them. This might be different for each person, depending on their job, family life, hobbies, and more. **SLPs help in several areas, including:**

- **Memory:** Working with survivors to improve their memory by recovering their skills and using external tools such as organizers.
- **Attention:** Helping people learn strategies to better pay attention to a task or conversation. This might include recommendations for reducing outside distractions as well as choosing to work on difficult tasks only when one is fully rested.
- **Organization, Planning, and Problem Solving:** Recommending tips for effectively keeping track of important details and approaching a problem or task with multiple steps.
- **Learning:** Helping people to process new information they receive as well as to think and express themselves more clearly.
- **Social Communication:** Helping someone re-learn conversational rules, like taking turns and not interrupting; understand nonverbal cues, like when someone shrugs their shoulders; and recognize jokes and emotions behind words.
- **Family Education:** Working with family members to better understand their loved one's challenges and how they can help them function and make progress in their recovery.
- **Workplace Reintegration:** Helping employers establish accommodations and supports for survivors to ensure they can be successful upon return to work.

Find an SLP at www.asha.org/profind, or ask your doctor for a recommendation.



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