

Monday, 23 August 2021

University launches Speech Pathology to further support state's allied health workforce

Local opportunities to study Speech Pathology are now a reality as the University of Tasmania launches a new postgraduate program.

From mid-2022, people will be able to study a Master of Speech Pathology in Tasmania, helping to further support the allied health workforce needs and local communities across the State.

The new postgraduate course is part of the University's Allied Health Expansion Program. The program includes the Master of Physiotherapy which will also be available from mid next year.

The Allied Health Expansion Program is a collaboration between the University, the Department of Health, the Department of Education and Tasmania's allied health sector to increase allied health education and training programs across the State.

The University's School of Health Sciences, in the College of Health and Medicine, is co-designing the study programs with the local health industry and key professional bodies.

Tasmanian branch Chair of Speech Pathology Australia (SPA) Kathryn Fordyce said the introduction of locally developed and delivered education pathways for speech pathology is crucial to supporting the State's workforce needs.

"Speech pathologists offer important services across the lifespan; from supporting communication development in early childhood through to enhancing communication and swallowing for people in aged care," Ms Fordyce said.

"We've seen increasing demand for speech pathology services across the state and difficulties with the recruitment and retention of speech pathologists. Developing a local workforce who can respond to regional and rural needs is essential for Tasmania."

Professor Nuala Byrne, Head of the University's School of Health Sciences, said it is very exciting to provide new study opportunities for Tasmanians.

"We are looking forward to welcoming our students and fostering the development of the next generation of allied health professionals," Professor Byrne said.

"We are extremely grateful to industry and key stakeholders who have, and continue to, provide expertise and input into the Allied Health Expansion Program."

The Master of Speech Pathology will provide entry-to-practice pathways, with the study program being flexibly delivered in a combination of digitalised learning platforms and on-campus intensives.

Students will participate in work-based learning in health care facilities, schools, disability services and private practices across Tasmania, where they will engage with practising health and education professionals.

The Master of Speech Pathology will be available for entry in August, 2022, along with plans to also introduce a Master of Occupational Therapy.

For more information about the Allied Health Expansion Program, and courses, visit the program's webpage [here](#).

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