

## **The Impact of Dysphagia and its Management Strategies on Clients' Life Style; Clients' Perspective**

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Dysphagia refers to difficulty with delivering food from the mouth to the stomach (Logemann, 1998). Clients' perceptions and their level of awareness of the condition needs to be explored in Sri Lanka in order to understand more effective methods of service delivery. A descriptive cross sectional study with both quantitative and qualitative components was undertaken with thirty-two participants. A semi-structured, interview administered questionnaire was used to gather data, which was developed with five speech therapists, currently practicing dysphagia in the Sri Lankan context, and 'Swallowing quality of life questionnaires' were referred to (SWAL-QOL and MDAI) during the process. According to their level of understanding, the dysphagia management focuses on improving general health, to improve swallowing function in particular and to prevent a life threatening risk. The mean score for the impact of dysphagia on ADL was 47.88 (SD=16.50) out of 100. The degree of impact on a client's ADL does not depend on gender or the onset of the condition. Dysphagia has an impact on their emotional, functional and social life. Clients expect the speech therapists to help accelerate the recovery. The implications include organizing client supportive groups and workshops to minimize the emotional, functional and social impact.