

University of Michigan Aphasia Program (UMAP)

Approach and Components

The **University of Michigan Aphasia Program** is an intensive, innovative, and individualized program that helps people with aphasia recover or learn new communication techniques.

About UMAP

Our clients come from different backgrounds, represent a spectrum of ages, and live in all different parts of the world. Yet, they have one thing in common: Aphasia.

All of our clients have experienced a brain trauma (through a stroke, injury, or illness) that has left them without the ability to speak, read, write and/or comprehend language in the ways they once did. Our program is designed to help you or your loved one strengthen communication abilities and work toward recovery from aphasia, while creating a community of those who share this experience.

Intensive and Individualized

Our intensive program, the first in the country, is built on research, our clinical experience, and feedback from our clients. Our program has been used as a model for other aphasia therapy programs and has shown to be effective for people of all abilities. While we rely on our experience and what we know to work, we also continually explore new therapy methods and stay on the cutting edge to provide the best combination of care.

UMAP is one of about 12 Intensive Comprehensive Aphasia Programs (ICAPs) in the world. Our clients attend speech language therapy in sessions that usually run 4 weeks, with 25 hours of therapy per week, along with additional supportive therapies and education available. UMAP takes a Life Participation Approach to Aphasia (LPAA), meaning we work toward independence and focus on strengthening and developing communication skills each client *wants* to target. We offer therapy both in-person and via teletherapy.

Insurance Coverage and Financial Support

Even though we are a fee-for-service program, it may be possible to get insurance support to pay for a portion of the program. We offer generous financial assistance to Michigan residents, as well as non-Michigan residents, when they meet certain income requirements. We also offer seasonal discounts during the winter months. For more details, see: mari.umich.edu/financial

Program Overview

- Sessions run 3-5 weeks in-person
- 25 hours of therapy each week
- Individual and group therapy
- Social and recreational activities
- Computer and technology learning
- Caregiver curriculum
- Full-time with part-time options available
- Customized exit plan to continue progress
- Teletherapy for some candidates (dependent upon where we are licensed, if a good fit for virtual, etc.)

"UMAP was extremely worthwhile. It helped give my partner the confidence that he can do this."

- UMAP Client Care Partner

Call (734) 764-8440 or visit AphasiaHelp.com to learn more.



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Success Stories

University of Michigan Aphasia Program (UMAP)

Meet: Bruce Dean, Chief Battalion Firefighter + Stroke Survivor

“Every time we come, I get a little piece of my husband back,” –Lois Dean, care partner



Bruce and his wife Lois travel all the way from Alta Loma, California to attend UMAP. He survived a stroke and a radical brain surgery and has made remarkable speech and language recovery, attending UMAP multiple times since his stroke.

Bruce (center) and his fellow clients have made lasting connections. They have motivated each other and stay in touch. He also made a lasting bond with his primary and team of Speech Language Pathologists, pictured.

Meet: Theron Coleman, Cherry Farmer + Stroke Survivor

“He wasn’t talking, and now he can talk to his kids.” – Amy Coleman, care partner

Theron, a cherry farmer, was in the orchard with his kids when he was suddenly unable to speak and collapsed. He had experienced a stroke. Theron and his wife Amy didn’t know what to expect when aphasia was diagnosed. “I had never heard of aphasia before,” said Amy. For two weeks, Theron was unable to speak.

As he started to physically mend, Theron was working hard on language recovery, but wasn’t making the progress he wanted. They turned to UMAP. At UMAP, Theron met another person with aphasia for the first time. Amy said meeting other people with aphasia and care partners helped. “After Theron’s first few days at UMAP, I knew it was the right decision,” she said. “I wish we would have gone sooner.”

“I am different now, but I won’t stop working on getting better,” he said.



Visit mari.umich.edu/success to learn more about UMAP clients and care partners who have found success, connection, and confidence in their aphasia recovery.

aphasiahelp.com | (734) 764-8440 | Ucll@umich.edu



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U-M Aphasia Program (UMAP) Client Outcome Data

The question most people have when considering the U-M Aphasia Program is: *Does intensive aphasia therapy work?* Our decades of experience and data tell us: **yes.**

This outcome data is gathered from U-M Aphasia Program clients who completed their first, full-time UMAP session (typically 4 weeks long) from 2011-2019. Data represents various types of aphasia, severity, and time-since-onset. Results may vary for individual clients.

How effective is intensive, individualized speech-language therapy for aphasia?

Clients saw an average increase of 10.8 points on the WAB-R following just one month-long session. A *clinically significant* improvement in WAB-R scores is 5 points. Averaged UMAP client scores were **more than double** the clinically significant benchmark.



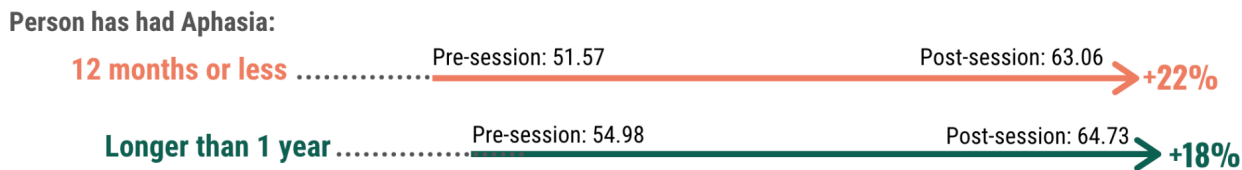
That is an average **20% improvement** in WAB-R scores after just one month.

Average client WAB-R scores before and after their first intensive U-M Aphasia Program session.



Does this apply to people who have had aphasia for more than one year?

The general advice you might hear is that after one year, speech-language therapy for aphasia is not worth pursuing. For most people, we have found that not to be true. While early intervention is important, we still see significant progress in those who pursue intensive aphasia therapy 2, 5, or even 10 years later (average 18% increase on WAB-R scores).



"UMAP adds value to stroke victims' quality of life. My daughter was not using any verbs when she arrived at UMAP. She works hard daily to speak and form sentences, and now she has tools.

- Michelle, Client Care Partner

Why WAB-R Scores?

The Western Aphasia Battery-Revised (WAB-R) assessment is used across health care settings to gauge the language function in adults following stroke, head injury, and certain illness. We use the WAB-R as one of our baseline measures for gathering information about the client's overall performance with speaking, understanding, reading, and writing. It is a stepping stone to help us see each client's communication strengths and challenges in a structured and measurable manner. It is just one piece of the UMAP assessment, which also typically includes other formal and informal, functional, and daily life measures that help us tailor our approach for each client's aphasia recovery.

Our program is highly individualized and begins with understanding the person with aphasia, not only test and assessment scores.

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