


Building Capacity for Autism Assessments: The Role of Speech Language Pathologists

By allowing Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) to complete parts of the Autism (ASD) assessment, wait times can be reduced, and costs can be saved

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Why does this matter?

- Throughout BC, waitlists for ASD assessment are long, due in part to workforce capacity challenges and geographic barriers. For example, Northern Health has many more SLPs than pediatricians.
- Currently, in order to diagnose ASD, a qualified physician or psychologist must complete a standardized observation and interview (ADOS-2 and ADI-R)
- SLPs and other allied health professionals have the skills, knowledge, and ability to complete standardized assessments that are an essential part of the autism diagnostic process.

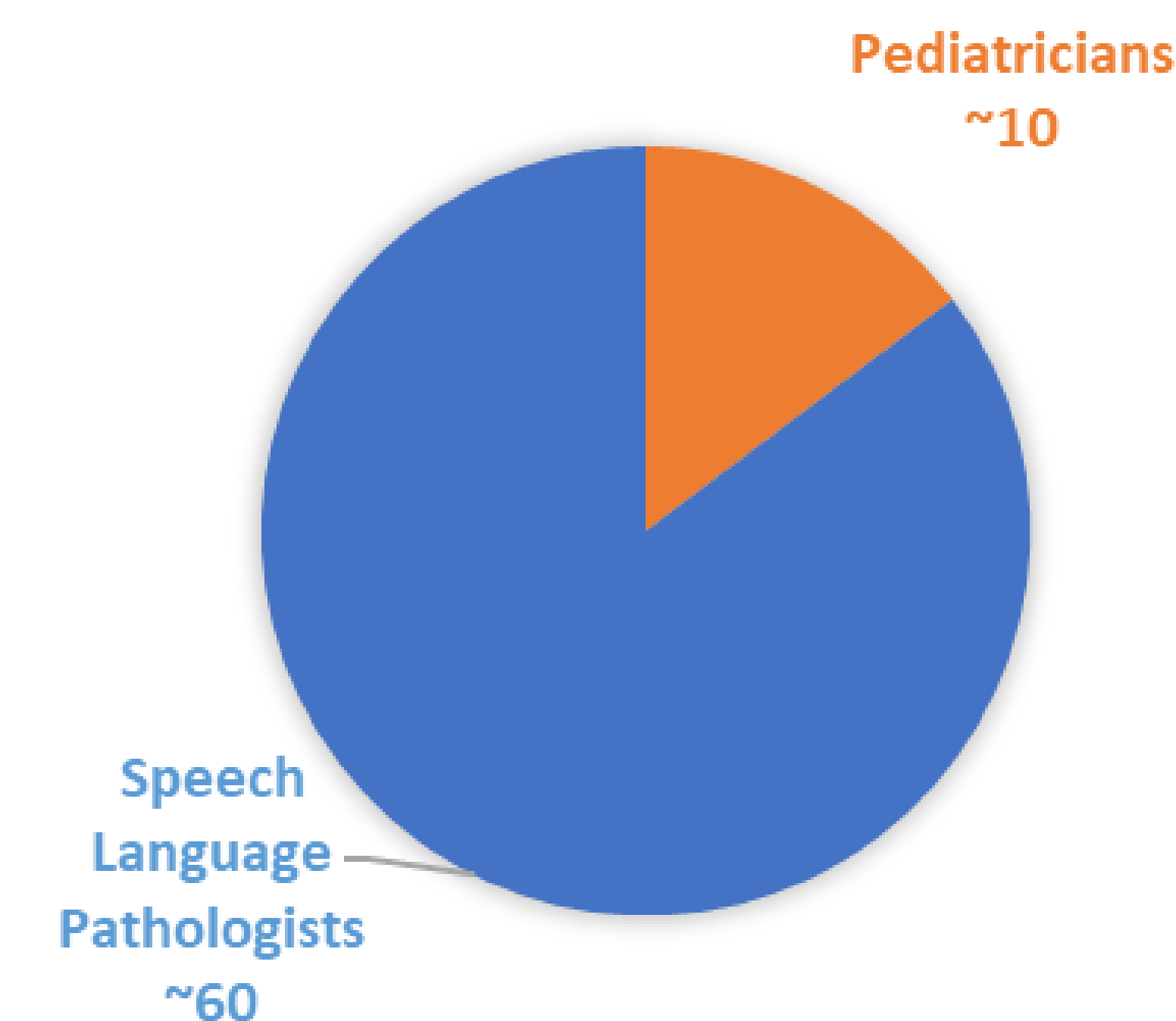
What did we do?

- We trained 3 community SLPs to administer two standardized tests for autism (ADOS-2 and ADI-R).
- These SLPs worked in partnership with pediatricians, who completed medical assessment and together provided feedback to the family around autism diagnosis.

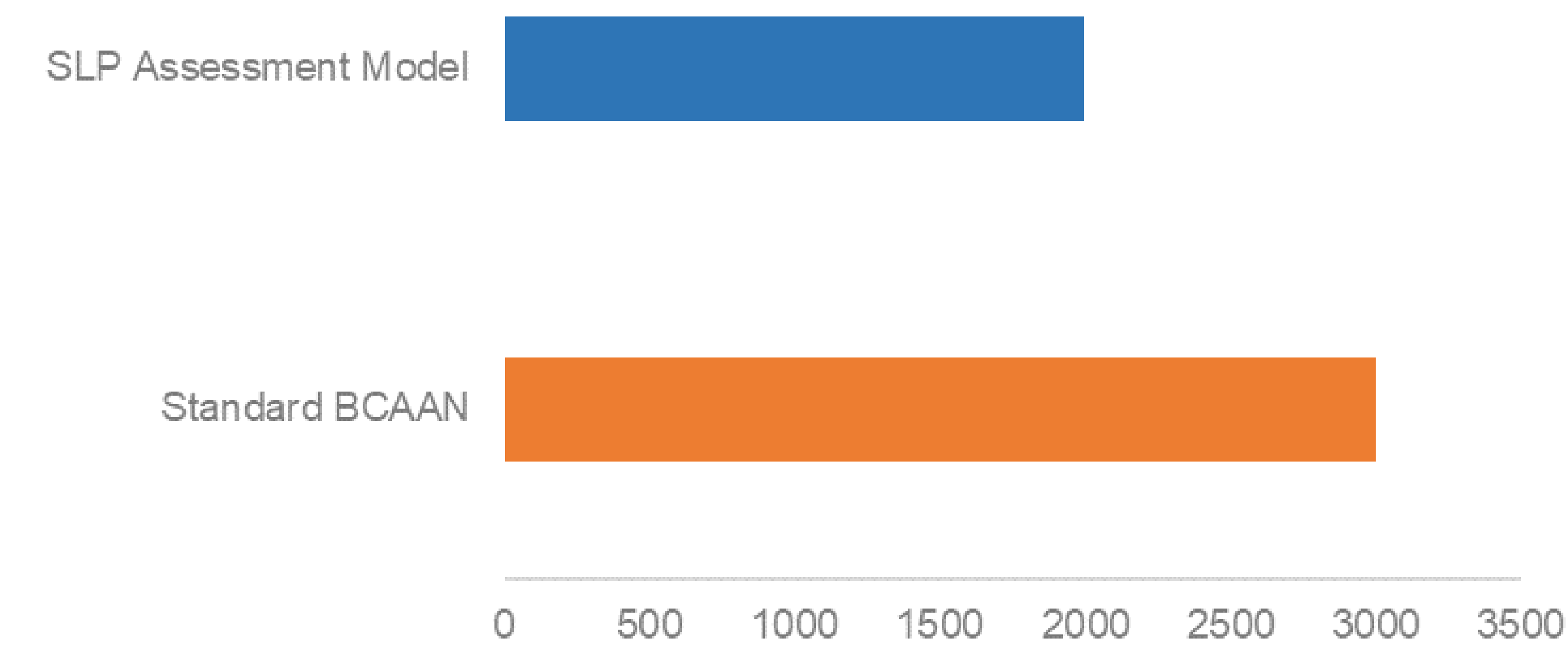
What did we learn?

- The BCAAN workforce may be expanded, through innovative reallocation of assessment roles.
- By utilizing the skills of SLPs, there is potential for significant cost savings, while maintaining high-quality assessments.
- Community capacity is increased and ultimately, will allow families to receive the support they need earlier and closer to home.

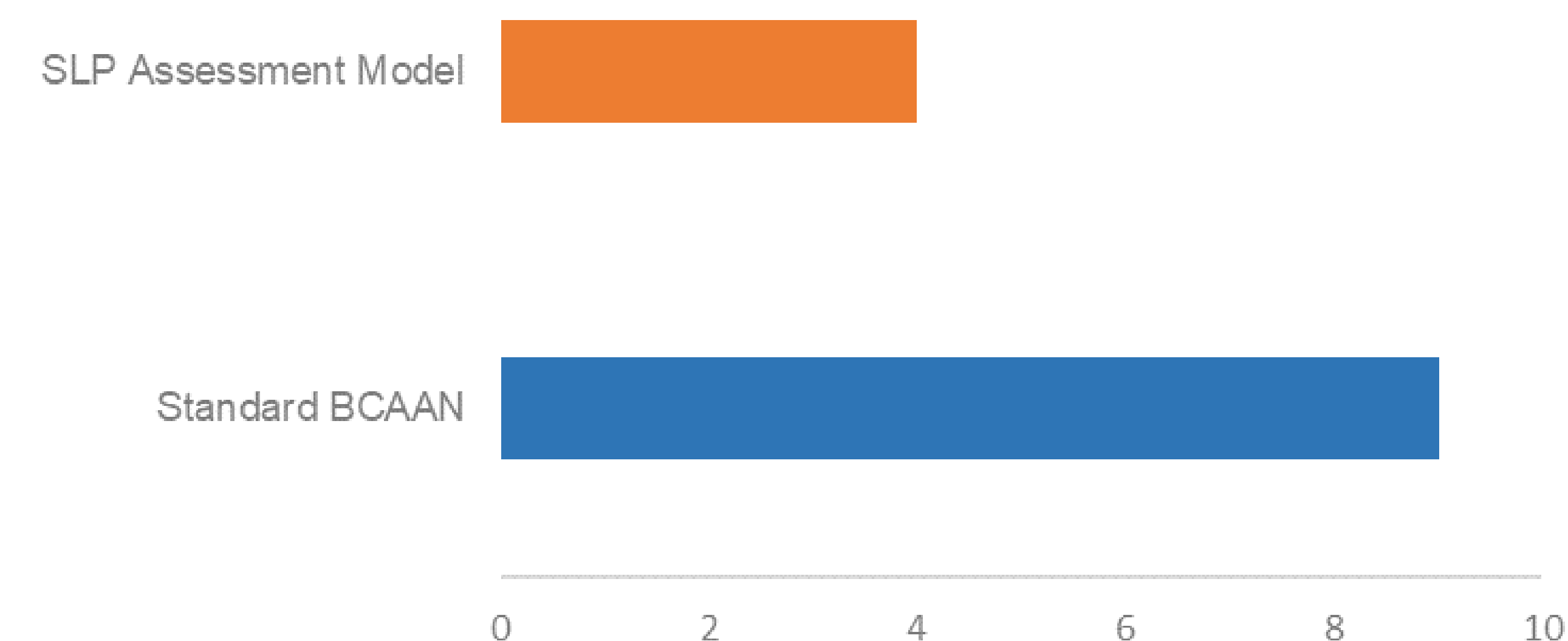
CAPACITY FOR ASSESSMENTS IN
NORTHERN BC



Cost per assessment (dollars)




Time per assessment (hours)



**Sunny Hill
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